By Dmitri Trenin
and Bobo Lo

The Landscape of Russian Foreign Policy Decision-Making

МОСКОВСКИЙ ЦЕНТР КАРНЕГИ
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INTRODUCTION

During the 1990s Russia went through a period of revolutionary turmoil, characterized by chaotic and haphazard decision-making. By the end of Boris Yeltsin's eight-year presidential reign, Russia had earned the dubious distinction of being one of the world's most unpredictable nations. By contrast, Vladimir Putin, who succeeded Yeltsin on New Year's Eve 1999, has tried hard to recast the country in the image of an orderly, if moderately authoritarian state. To Putin's supporters, the state has once again become the prime subject of politics ("*государство вернуло себе правосубъектность*").[1] To his critics, bureaucratic over-centralization threatens to distort the process of modernization, if not to stop it altogether.[2]

Yet, despite the announced comeback of the state, Moscow's foreign policy decisions continue to surprise, and sometimes baffle, outside observers. Some of the key decisions of Putin's first presidential term could scarcely have been foreseen. Consider the following:

- Lord Robertson's visit to Moscow in February 2000. NATO's then secretary-general was one of the first foreign dignitaries to visit Moscow after Putin became interim president, despite the fact that only a few months earlier Russia and NATO had nearly come to blows—first (diplomatically) over and then (physically) in Kosovo.[3] The Russian military is known to have vehemently opposed the visit, yet it went ahead, led to a breakthrough at a face-to-face session with Putin, and laid the basis for a closer and more businesslike interaction between Russia and the alliance.

- Putin's endorsement of the U.S.-led military operation in Afghanistan and his acceptance of U.S. troop deployments in Central Asia.
  Ten days after 9/11, the Russian president made one of his most intriguing and crucial decisions when he overruled his senior associates and decided to back American military action. For the first time U.S. forces were deployed in the states of former Soviet Central Asia, and yet Putin declared this was "nothing to be afraid of".[4] Not only did he offer intelligence and logistical support, but he also pushed the Afghan Northern Alliance to support the U.S.-led operation. Once the Taliban was routed, Putin refrained from using these Russian proxies in a competition for influence in Afghanistan.

- Acceptance of U.S. withdrawal from the 1972 ABM Treaty.
  For decades Russia, and before that the Soviet Union, had viewed this treaty as the cornerstone of national security. Ever since the Reagan era (1980–1988), the threat of possible American withdrawal had been uniformly portrayed in Moscow as the signal for the start of an all-out, no-holds-barred strategic nuclear race, with an added and critical space dimension. However, when George W. Bush announced America's intention to withdraw from the treaty in December 2001, Putin merely called the move "mistaken,"[5] and even proceeded in the following spring to conclude a new treaty on further reducing strategic offensive forces.

- Virulent anti-Americanism in the Russian media.
  On the other side of the ledger, the new U.S.-Russian strategic partnership and anti-terrorist coalition notwithstanding, Russian state-run television engaged in massive anti-American broadsides in the spring of 2002, ostensibly over the alleged bias against Russian athletes at the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics, but essentially directed at Washington's policies and attitudes. Later, while Putin was still calling for partnership with the West, "his" media usually took a much harder line toward Russia's partners. This could be interpreted as good-cop/bad-cop gaming, except that it did much to discredit the president's foreign policy.

• Moscow's handling of the east Siberian oil pipeline issue in 2003–2004.
The Russian government reneged on an earlier agreement with Beijing to route the pipeline to Daqing in Manchuria, and leaned instead towards a Japanese-backed proposal to build a longer pipeline to Nakhodka/Perevoznaya. This issue could have a serious impact on Russia's relations with its two key Asian partners, China and Japan. Even the normally reserved Chinese have been outraged by the behavior of their strategic but seemingly unreliable partner. (Indeed, Moscow had also let them down two years previously, when Putin decided not to protest against U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty; this, only months after having joined with Chinese President Jiang Zemin in defense of it.)

The list could be longer, to include, prominently, Russia's handling in 2004 of the presidential elections in Georgia's breakaway republic of Abkhazia and in Ukraine. The purpose of the above, however, is not to condemn Russian foreign policy for its allegedly treacherous nature, opacity or indeed continuing unpredictability. Rather, these snapshots are meant to illustrate the immense problem that confronts both domestic and foreign students of Russia's foreign policy. In a nutshell, the problem can be summarized as follows:

• Who actually decides on foreign policy issues?
• How are these decisions conceived, shaped, and "sold"?
• Why do decision-makers decide as they do? What is the relative importance of their ideas, instincts, and interests?
• How are decisions, once taken, carried out?
• Who can influence decisions, both from inside the country and from outside?

These are anything but trifling questions. While Russia's international influence has declined dramatically since its Soviet superpower days, it is still an important international player, in particular in its neighborhood. Moscow's decisions on its policies toward Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova or Belarus can potentially make the difference between war and peace, territorial integrity and secession, and continuation of a regime or its change. Furthermore, Russia is a major nuclear power, possesses a huge arsenal of all kinds of conventional weapons, is a permanent member of the UN Security Council (P-5) and the G-8, and a top exporter of hydrocarbons.

To Russians, penetrating the opacity of foreign policy decision-making could be the first step to understanding the workings of an apparatus that perpetuates one of the country's most solid and venerated traditions, "great-powerdom" (*великодержавие*), in a world that has been profoundly transformed. In the post-Soviet era, Russians have been very unsure about where they stand in this new world, and where they can realistically expect themselves to be in the medium to long term. Foreign policy has become a major battleground in the struggle for a new national identity between the traditionalist/conservative and innovative/liberal trends in Russian society.[6] The outcome of this struggle will largely determine what Russia will be for its neighbors and the rest of the world in the 21st century.

Problems of Omission and Commission

Despite the evident importance of the subject, a comprehensive treatment of Russian foreign policy decision-making in the post-Soviet period has yet to emerge—a state of affairs that contrasts markedly with the extensive discussion of Soviet foreign policy-making, particularly during the 1980s.[7] There are many reasons for this neglect, the most obvious being the difficulty of the enterprise. Although the revolution of the 1980s and 1990s was succeeded by a period of partial stabilization in the 2000s, Russia continues to be unfinished business, with many crucial issues still hanging in the balance. Also, while the demise of the Soviet system appeared initially to open up the workings of decision-makers to greater scrutiny, a decade and a half later the formulation of foreign policy remains an elite preserve, obscured by a pervasive culture of confidentiality. The "transparency dividend" from efforts to democratize Russian polity and society remains small, even if contemporary Russian foreign policy *seems* more open and accountable than its Soviet and tsarist predecessors.[8]

As a result, most Western scholars have eschewed this daunting task in favor of apparently more accessible subjects, such as Russian-U.S. relations or Moscow's approach to international security issues. Yet the problem is not only one of omission, but of commission also. The few analyses that exist of contemporary Russian foreign policy-making have tended to focus on a narrow institutional context, namely, policy "actors and mechanisms."[9] This approach, which relies more on calculated guesswork than direct knowledge and experience, follows in the tradition of Kremlinology—extrapolating from very limited and often skewed information to identify key associations, ideas, and interests. The result, however, often tells us more about the perspective of the writer than about the subject itself. Thus, complex processes of decision-making are reduced to highly colored but essentially shallow accounts of bureaucratic infighting between discrete institutional units—*derzhavniki* versus liberals, reactionary *siloviki* versus Westernizing reformers. Even if the question of *who* makes Russian foreign policy can be partially answered (with the exact contribution of the various actors often in dispute), the question why certain decisions are made and not others is rarely addressed.

Much of this oversimplification is a natural reaction to the elusiveness of the subject. But it owes something also to the predilection among Western observers to normative stereotypes about Russia and Russians. It is evident, for example, in the frequent charge that an atavistic imperialist mindset permeates Moscow's attitude toward the former Soviet Union (FSU),[10] or that Russian foreign policy has always been motivated by a timeless aggressive agenda—not only during the heyday of the Cold War,[11] but in tsarist and post-Soviet times as well. This school of thought believes that Russia is incorrigibly imperialistic, and that the only effective way of dealing with it is to check its ambitions through a policy of containment. Little attention is given to the fact that Moscow terminated the Cold War largely of its own free will rather than under outside pressure, and that Russia's abandonment of its empire was mainly voluntary and remarkably peaceful. Suffice it to compare the record here with other cases of imperial decline and fall.

At the other end of the scale, there are those who apply theories of democratic transitionism[12] to Russian foreign policy-making. Such ideas provided the philosophical and intellectual underpinning of the Clinton administration's approach to Russia in the 1990s. The development of democracy, market capitalism, and civil society are not seen simply as intrinsic goods, but also as facilitating the emergence of a more cooperative Russian foreign policy.[13] In short, Russia's foreign policy can only be as good as the country's domestic condition. The policy recipe that emerges from this assumption is that one has to help Russia change from within before one can live with it. This view is both wildly optimistic (as regards Russian society's current capabilities and the difference that Western intervention can make in Russia's transformation process) and exceedingly pessimistic (for Russia is not going to live up to the optimists' unrealistic expectations). Such an over-the-horizon view ignores the Russia at hand.

That said, Western prejudice and stereotyping are not solely (or perhaps even mainly) to blame for such misconceptions. Russian practitioners and commentators have much to answer for. To put it bluntly, to date there has been too much opinion offered and too little research undertaken. This is not an oversight. In today's Russia, foreign policy remains a field of intense, even fierce, political and intellectual debate. Attitudes toward foreign policy closely reflect different political convictions, philosophies, and sets of values. With very few people seeking to remain above the fray (and even fewer succeeding), virtually every scholar has defined his or her position. This situation affects not only contemporary studies, but also recent history. While tsarist foreign policy can be studied more or less dispassionately, the Soviet period is only slightly less politicized than current affairs. It is no accident that no comprehensive study of Soviet foreign policy has appeared in Russia since the demise of the USSR.

Basically, Russian interpretations of the country's foreign policy vary greatly depending on whether the writer is a pro-Western "integrationist," a middle-of-the-road *gosudarstvennik* or an anti-Western revisionist. The first group tends to be too dismissive of Russia's historical heritage, too idealistic in outlook, and given to wishful thinking. The second group, by contrast, emphasizes that "history is not bunk," but often fails to see what part of that heritage can and should be preserved and modernized, and what needs to be discarded. In short, they have little sense of the future. As to the third group, their careless talk, grandiose declarations, and specious analyses have contributed to the widespread perception in the West that, in Russia, "the more things change, the more they stay the same." Whether in the form of a quasi-mystical Eurasianism, assertions about "spheres of interests," or primitive anti-Westernist rhetoric, pronouncements by members of this third (and occasionally also the second) group have added grist to an already active mill.

In this connection, the challenge of gaining a proper understanding of the forces shaping Russian foreign policy has been complicated by the instrumentalization of ideas and their conflation with interests. Ideas and principles can rarely be taken at face value, but need to be seen as reflections of particular political and commercial agendas. Furthermore, in much the same way that the Soviet regime manipulated ideology in order to provide moral rationalization for otherwise unpalatable policies, so today's Russian elite is apt to exploit labels in "selling" individual policies to a domestic audience. The overt politicization of some foreign policy issues, most notably through the use of nationalistic devices, has clouded the distinction between ideas, goals, and means.[14]

Towards an Integrated Approach: A New Methodology

We propose a broadly thematic approach to the study of Russian foreign policy decision-making. Section I focuses on the institutional context and highlights aspects of bureaucratic and administrative culture dating back to Soviet and tsarist times. It considers the role of different individual and institutional actors, as well as traditions of institutionalism and individualism (or "personalism") in governance. In Section II, we shift the focus from mechanisms and process to the role of ideas—their use and abuse. This includes conceptions about Russia's national identity, its international position and role, and the notion of "the national interest." Section III examines decision-making through the prism of concrete interests. The accent here is on the tangible and sometimes venal influence of sectional political, economic and even social interests. Finally, Section IV examines the impact of external factors and their interaction with the domestic sources of Russian foreign policy. It considers how far Moscow's approach to the world reflects the influence of endogenous historical factors, and whether foreign policy decision-making is essentially hostage to larger international forces such as economic globalization and the global information revolution.

These broad themes only make sense, however, if they are seen as parts of a larger whole. Ultimately, the most serious flaw of recent analyses of Russian foreign policy-making is their piecemeal approach. Actors, mechanisms, ideas, interests, and external influences are treated as separate factors, more or less unrelated to one another and divorced from a wider context. Some writers have focused on personality and process viewed through a largely mechanistic prism;[15] others have emphasized the influence of dominant ideas such as Russia's "great power" complex or neo-imperialism;[16] a third group sees particular sectional interests—the *siloviki*, big business, the military, the Foreign Ministry, the Presidential Administration—as largely monolithic entities;[17] while still others view Moscow's approach to international relations as largely ad hoc, haphazard and reactive.[18]

Each of these perspectives contributes something to the overall picture. But in isolation, they are misleading. The task of the following pages, then, is twofold: first, to highlight the interrelationship between the different elements that inform Russian foreign policy decision-making; and, second, to identify some conceptual principles that may serve as an effective basis for understanding.

The Limits and Possibilities of Understanding

The first step in this process is to address the question of what is knowable and what is not. It is important not to pretend that we can invariably draw precise, long-term conclusions on the basis of major policy statements, government actions, personnel changes or administrative restructuring. Policy studies cannot be an exact science, if only because social life is so much more complex and less predictable than nature.

"We would like to think," the American theorist and practitioner Roger Hilsman wrote (about the United States), "not only that policy-making is a conscious and deliberate act, one of analyzing problems and systematically examining grand alternatives in all their implications, but also that the alternative chosen is aimed at achieving ends that serve a high moral purpose."[19] The reality, however, reveals confusion about goals, or competition among goals and their mutual incompatibility. Against this background, one hears calls for renewed national purpose, a unifying ideology, or "for a national strategy that will both function and set guidelines for all of policy."[20] This might well have been written about Russia—or any other modern country for that matter.

Any notion of decision-making as an orderly rational process guided by clear ideas and well-defined interests is false. Foreign policy-making in most developed countries is a highly intricate and messy process that involves many subjective and even ran-

dom elements alongside more rational and comprehensible considerations. We should therefore be wary of making definitive judgments from often suspect data.[21]

On the other hand, there is still much we can glean about the nature of foreign policy decision-making from a close study of the different factors involved in it. Although many of the sources available to us are imperfect and contradictory, they nevertheless shed valuable light on Moscow's approach to international relations. Thus, we can develop a good sense of the mentality of today's policy-makers by re-examining traditions of governance inherited from the tsarist and Soviet periods—on which there is abundant material. Similarly, a historical perspective is helpful in supplying insights about contemporary policy mechanisms and processes, even if these have evolved considerably over the past 150 years.[22]

Ideas of one kind and another are crucial in any foreign policy—and Russia's is no exception. Despite claims that following the fall of the Soviet system Moscow has pursued a largely "non-ideological" approach,[23] ideas—if not necessarily a coherent, comprehensive ideology as such—continue to play a central role in shaping, legitimating and prosecuting foreign policy. By examining, for example, conceptions of Russian identity in the post-Cold War world, we open up a fruitful avenue of understanding to a major predispositional influence on contemporary decision-makers. It is of secondary importance whether such ideas are instrumentalized or inspirational. What concerns us is the outcome—namely, how they feed into the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. And while an overly literal, facile reading of the causal connection between a given idea (or ideas) and subsequent policy action is to be avoided, the potential pitfalls should not lead us to underestimate the motivating power of ideas in decision-making.

This is all the more important given that ideas are frequently associated with concrete political, security, economic and other interests. One of the most critical consequences of the fall of the USSR has been the diversification and proliferation of different, often competing interests. Democratization, the transition to a market economy, the beginnings of a civil society are not just normative achievements, but have also contributed to the creation of a vastly more complex, interests-based policy environment. In such fluid and dynamic circumstances, it is no longer meaningful to speak of a single, universalist national interest or even permanent national interests, but rather to recognize that there exist multiple conceptions of the "national good." In the absence of a political nation in Russia, which can only emerge as the middle class matures and gradually weighs in on policy-making in general, the national interest remains a phrase to be interpreted and exploited by various cliques within the small ruling elite in pursuit of essentially *subnational* interests. To grasp these, it is essential to investigate the interplay between the various sectional agendas that make up the post-Soviet Russian polity.

A 'Normal' Foreign Policy

This brings us to the issue of Russia's "normality." Some specialists are apt to view Russia—and Russian foreign policy by extension—as a "special" case that operates according to a set of very specific and very different rules. There exists an implicit assumption that Russian policy-makers behave inherently less rationally than their foreign counterparts, being driven not so much by concrete national interests as by highly subjective and even personal impulses.[24] Such assertions, although not entirely without foundation, greatly overstate the extent of Russia's specificity[25]—with unfortunate consequences. In arbitrarily deciding what is "normal" and "rational," some Western policy-makers and thinkers have transformed Russia from an object of serious scientific enquiry into a mystical and virtually "unknowable" entity.

The key to understanding foreign policy decision-making in Russia is to recognize it as a "normal" country. Normal here does not imply subscribing to Western norms and mores—a distant and possibly dubious prospect, which also begs the question these days, "what is Western?"—or of conforming to a restrictive "one-size-fits-all" paradigm of international relations behavior.[26] Rather, it entails acting according to generally predictable and comprehensible "rules of engagement" in the pursuit of concrete goals. Although the West may sometimes find these latter inimical, this does not make Russia an irrational actor that functions in ways far beyond our ken and with whom a broadly cooperative relationship is therefore unattainable.[27] Here, it is worth recalling the general definition of decision-making offered by Snyder, Brack, and Sapin 50 years ago as "a process which results in the selection from a socially defined, limited number of problematical, alternative projects of one project intended to bring about the particular future state of affairs envisaged by the decision-makers."[28] The latter, in turn, are influenced by three key determinants: their spheres of professional competence; various means and channels of communication and information; and motivations of different types.[29] There is nothing in such understandings of decision-making that suggests we should consider Russian foreign policy as anything other than a "normal" subject.

Another aspect of Russia's normality, particularly important for our study, is the relative abundance of sources for researching its foreign policy decision-making. While the recent archives remain closed and the leakages of genuine documents to the news media, a trickle at best in Yeltsin's times, have been reduced to a few occasional drops, there are still useful memoirs, revealing interviews with former officials, and bits and pieces to be distilled from press reports. Interestingly, the Russian print media have

not developed the culture of diplomatic correspondents with good access to the foreign policy establishment. Rather, opinions and superficial descriptions of diplomatic events dominate in even the best newspapers. They can be interesting or entertaining, as the case may be,[30] but often light on substance. However, the fact alone that foreign relations after the end of the Cold War have focused heavily on economic issues provides an important insight into decision-making practices. This allows research to proceed way beyond the personalities-centered guessing games typical of old Kremlinology.

Section I: The Institutional Context

This section could be subtitled as "Who Decides?" Viewed simply, decision-making revolves around key players and the processes through which they make policy. Yet the obvious smallness and the new tightness of the "magic circle" of decision-makers present considerable analytical difficulties. On the one hand, it is clear that foreign policy-making in Russia cannot be grasped through a literal reading of the constitutional and other legal functions of major state institutions—the Presidency, the Presidential Administration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, the security and intelligence agencies—as outlined in official documents (the Constitution, the Foreign Policy Concept, the National Security Concept, the Military Doctrine).

On the other hand, neither is the search for understanding well served by facile speculation about the "shadowy" influence allegedly exerted by the *siloviki*, members of the Yeltsin "Family," [31] the military, big business interests and so on, or by glib categorizations of various bureaucratic bodies as "weak" or "strong." Such crude judgments underestimate the untidiness of the policy environment, notably the complex web of personal and bureaucratic interactions—between different officials (and certain well-connected "private citizens") and government (and non-government) entities—that is usually informal and often results in *zakulisnye sdelki* (behind-the-scenes deals) rather than open decisions arrived at in formal settings. The proliferation of policy actors in contemporary Russia has not only undermined traditional monopolies of decision-making; it has also transformed them, so that the exercise of influence and interests frequently cuts across formal divisions of responsibility and power.

The political life of post-Soviet Russia has been characterized by strong individuals operating at the expense of ever weaker institutions in an intensely competitive environment.[32] At the same time, however, we need to place the question of foreign policy decision-making in a broader historical and institutional context. Given the unstable allegiances and fortunes of Russian politicians, it is as important to identify, behind the seemingly personal power plays, the inherited and emerging patterns of relationships in the leadership group. To do so, we must amplify our understanding of the current Russian political system and bureaucratic culture by referring back not only to Soviet but also tsarist times.

It has become increasingly fashionable in recent years to speak of a super- or hyper-presidential system in Russia.[33] While this observation is fair in itself, it tells only part of the story. The institution of **the Presidency** has ancient roots, dating back beyond the Soviet tradition of the dominant Party General Secretary to the even more paramount position of the Emperor. Indeed, some Russian authors call the post-Soviet presidency an elected monarchy.[34] In Boris Yeltsin's entourage (Tsar Boris's court, in the words of the courtiers themselves), there was a more or less clear notion of what was worthy of the elected monarch's attention and action, and what was not. In the latter case, Yeltsin would be advised by his lieutenants that the matter was *ne tsarskoe delo*—that is, an affair too insignificant or menial to disturb the tsar.[35]

In the Russian tradition, foreign-policymaking is definitely a *tsarskoe delo*—to such an extent that Yeltsin regarded Russia's foreign policy essentially as the sum total of his personal relations with foreign leaders. His penchant for informal Boris-and-Bill, Boris-and-Helmut, etc., contacts and the "no neckties" summits with "friends" Jacques (Chirac) and Ryu(taro Hashimoto) was in many ways a throwback to an era when sovereigns across Europe addressed each other as "Mon frère…" It is not much of an overstatement to say that the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is little but an institutionalized gathering of the sovereign post-Soviet presidents. This also explains Moscow's interest in being accepted into the G-7 in the 1990s and its nervous reaction to any suggestion that Russia be expelled from the G-8.[36] To the Kremlin, membership in the premier club of the world's most powerful leaders is the ultimate badge of personal prestige, building upon the World War II Big Three of Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill.

Equally, today's themes of statist control and centralized power and policy have solid antecedents in pre-revolutionary as well as Soviet practice. Valentin Falin, reputed to be Andrei Gromyko's best pupil and the leading Soviet expert on the German Question, said in a recent interview that decisions regarding German reunification in 1989–1990 were made personally by Gorbachev, advised by Anatoly Chernyaev and Georgi Shakhnazarov. The Party Central Committee (where Falin then worked as secretary, i.e. a sort of Party minister) and even Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze were generally not in the loop.[37] It is easy to forget today that the sectionalism of the Yeltsin period[38] and Moscow's erratic direction of foreign policy were historical aberrations. Putin's statist project signifies a return to the historical norm of strong leadership. The much discussed notion of the *vertikal*[39] may be better known in a domestic context, but it also informs Putin's approach to foreign policy management—one founded in enhanced control and tight policy coordination.

Critical continuities are evident in two other aspects of contemporary institutional culture. The first is the primacy of individuals over institutions. At first sight, the 70-year lifespan of that seemingly most dominant of bodies, the Soviet Communist Party, and its collective leadership organs, the Central Committee, the Secretariat and the Politburo (or Presidium), would seem to belie this thesis. But even in the USSR, foreign policy, more than any other area of political life, was shaped and driven by key individuals—Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, right up to and including the last General Secretary, Mikhail Gorbachev. They, not the Party Central Committee and its Politburo, not to speak of the clearly subordinate Foreign Ministry, directed and embodied Moscow's approach to the world. Institutions played important roles, but mainly in executing policy.[40] This is truer than ever under Putin, who appears to be the sole decision-maker on all important foreign policy matters. The current president's intimate identification with foreign policy decision-making is consistent with this model, as it is also with the pattern of tsarist management of external relations. Thus, Russian foreign policy during the long reign of Emperor Nicholas I (1825–1855) reflected the latter's spiritual, messianic vision of nationalism,[41] while more than a century later Gorbachev personified to an unprecedented degree the principles of "new thinking" in Soviet foreign policy.[42] Tellingly, Putin does not seem to need a real foreign policy advisor, only an aide to help him with the daily routine and flow of information. Evidently, the president believes he knows it all himself.

At the same time, individuals are products of their environment—historical, cultural, professional. For example, Putin's approach to power and policy shows the imprint of the many and diverse experiences that have shaped him: 15 years as a career intelligence officer; his specialist interest in Germany; a posting in Dresden, at the end of which he witnessed the collapse of East Germany and, subsequently, the Soviet Union itself; his political ups and downs as a deputy (in charge of foreign economic relations) to St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoly Sobchak in the early 1990s; first-hand knowledge of the anarchic and corrupt policy and business milieu of the later Yeltsin years.[43] Putin differs from all his predecessors since Lenin in two key aspects. First, he had lived abroad before he became the nation's leader. Second, he speaks a foreign language (German) fluently and started learning another one (English) on the job. He is also the first leader who was born in one of Russia's historical capitals. Like Gorbachev, but unlike all others since Lenin, Putin has a legal education. What is true of Putin applies equally to other major players: Individuals may be paramount, but they bring to the policy process all kinds of "baggage" from the past as well as present.[44]

Whenever the word Kremlin is used, more is meant than Russia's First Person.[45] The presidency at its core functions as a tightly knit apparatus, the **Presidential Administration** . It is actually accommodated at the Kremlin, around the president's office, but it also retains the former offices of the Communist Party Central Committee in Staraya Ploshchad, thus straddling the two epochs. In a way, the Administration is a successor of sorts to the Central Committee, but it is more clearly subordinated to the head of state than its forerunner was to the Party chief. Formally as well as informally, this is the presidential household, whose members serve at the president's pleasure. The Administration is the true national government, fully and exclusively answerable to the president.

The head of the Presidential Administration, sometimes referred to as the Kremlin chief of staff because of his proximity to the president and the presumed confidence he enjoys with him, can perform many important foreign policy-related roles. Again, the personalities of the "chief" and his president are all-important. The chief of staff can be a very useful high-level channel of private communication with foreign leaders. (This happened, in particular, with Alexander Voloshin, who held the post in 1998–2003.) A more extrovert chief can assume a more active role in actually making foreign policy, as was the case with Anatoly Chubais in 1997–1998. Or the Kremlin chief may be a "technical figure," an executive assistant to the president, like the current incumbent Dmitri Medvedev. In any event, since the position of head of the Presidential Administration exists in several post-Soviet states, notably in Ukraine and Belarus, the "chief-to-chief" channel is the key communication and negotiating link between Russia and its key partners in the CIS, in particular the two above-mentioned countries. This is a distant but distinct reminder of a previous era when Moscow's relations with other Communist states were handled at the level of Party Central Committee rather than by the Foreign Ministry.

Among other Administration officials, deputy chiefs of staff can assume important roles in foreign policy-making or implementation. Dmitri Kozak in 2003 tried, unsuccessfully, to mediate in conflict resolution between Moldova and its breakaway Transdniestria (*Pridnestrovie*) region. The influence of Viktor Ivanov and Igor Sechin, respectively a deputy chief of staff and the head of the president's private secretariat, is considerable in both domestic—political as well as economic—and foreign affairs. By contrast, the foreign policy advisor to the head of state is primarily concerned with preparation of the president's numerous international engagements. The advisor acts more like an assistant to his boss, and his staff is too small for anything beyond this day-to-day occupation.[46] Yeltsin's advisor, Dmitri Ryurikov, and his successor Sergei Prikhodko, who has served under Yeltsin and Putin, were career diplomats who have lacked the ambition for a larger, more decisive (Kissinger-type) role. Again, this is paralleled by the Soviet-era culture when assistants to the general secretary were usually self-effacing figures, relatively junior in rank and virtually unknown outside the Central Committee apparatus: Andrei Alexandrov-Agentov under Brezhnev, Anatoly Chernyaev under Gorbachev.[47] They were clearly outranked not only by members of the Politburo and secretaries of the Central Committee, but also by Central Committee department heads. However, in future one cannot rule out the possibility that this could change under an innovative president and ambitious advisor. It is interesting to note in this respect that the G-8 dossier has been handled by the president's economic advisors, Alexander Livshits under Yeltsin and Andrei Illarionov (2001–2004) under Putin. Illarionov was succeeded in early 2005 by another Kremlin aide, Igor Shuvalov.[48]

When the **Security Council of the Russian Federation** was first established in 1992, it was thought that it might become a latter-day version of the Politburo. In reality, it never lived up to that expectation.[49] Yeltsin, whose memories of the Politburo were anything but pleasant, preferred to rule alone while imposing checks and balances on his associates. The first Security Council secretary, Yuri Skokov, aspired to be an all-powerful coordinator of the principal ministries, but was sidelined by the ministers who did not wish to have a mediator between them and the president. Since then, the function of the Security Council has changed almost as many times as the president has changed its secretaries. The council has dealt with various security issues, notably Chechnya (under Ivan Rybkin and his nominal deputy, Boris Berezovsky), and helped prepare policy documents, such as the National Security Concept. It has also functioned sporadically as a primarily foreign policy tool under Andrei Kokoshin (1998–1999), Sergei Ivanov (1999–2001) and Igor Ivanov, the former foreign minister (2003–present).

Under Yeltsin, the Presidential Administration included a national security advisor and, briefly, a Defense Council. The former position is unlikely to be resurrected, its functions now divided between the foreign policy advisor and the Security Council secretary. As to the Defense Council, it was a bureaucratic ploy to get round the Defense Ministry at a time when the Security Council was almost entirely preoccupied with Chechnya.

While the Security Council as an apparatus plays an auxiliary role to the president as an analytical tool, its secretary can undertake delicate diplomatic missions on behalf of the head of state. Igor Ivanov handled the Georgian crises in 2003 and the trial in Qatar in 2004 of the Russian intelligence agents accused of assassinating the Chechen separatist leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiev. However, Igor Ivanov remained virtually eclipsed during the most acute Ukrainian crisis of November–December 2004. The Russian Security Council secretary is also a natural counterpart to the U.S. National Security Advisor and officials holding similar positions in other countries, such as India and the countries of the CIS. Within the CIS, there is a formal institutionalized conference of Security Council secretaries.

The Security Council serves also as the president's principal private council (in a King-in-Council format), where major foreign policy decisions are discussed and decided upon. This is an informal weekly meeting involving the top officials dealing with foreign affairs and national security: the prime minister, the ministers of foreign affairs, defense, and finance, the head of the Presidential Administration, and the directors of the domestic security and foreign intelligence services. The circle of principal co-decision-makers around the president is likely to be even smaller. Under Putin, it certainly includes the president's most trusted confidants, Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov (reputedly Putin's deputy) and Nikolai Patrushev, the director of the Federal Security Service (FSB, or *Federalnaya sluzhba bezopasnosti*).

In Russia, as in the Soviet Union, there is a clear distinction between "high" policy, which comprises matters of war and peace, foreign affairs, defense and domestic security, and "low" policy, which includes economic, financial, social and other issues. The former is the province of the head of state, whether the president or the general secretary. Under the Constitution, the so-called "power ministers" (defense, security, emergencies, and foreign affairs) are answerable directly to the president. Under Yeltsin, they did not even have to participate in Cabinet meetings. However, with economics becoming more important in the age of globalization, **the Cabinet** , officially called the Government, is gradually assuming a more important role. The IMF and World Bank loans under Yeltsin, and relations with the EU, WTO accession and ratification of the Kyoto treaty under Putin, were all discussed and decided upon with substantial input from the Cabinet.

The prime minister is potentially a figure second only to the president in foreign policy-making. Usually Russian premiers start out as economic managers but then see their brief expand to include foreign affairs. Yegor Gaidar, as acting premier in 1991–1992, had to be involved in much more than economic reform. Viktor Chernomyrdin (1992–1998) steadily raised his foreign policy profile until cut short by a jealous Yeltsin. Sergei Kiriyenko and Sergei Stepashin, although spending only a few months each in the PM's office (in 1998), immediately had to conduct political negotiations with foreign leaders. Yevgeny Primakov (1998–1999), of course, was the country's most experienced foreign policy expert. Putin himself in his 100 days in office as prime minister in 1999 had to double up for Yeltsin in meetings with Clinton and EU and Asian leaders. Mikhail Kasyanov (2000–2004) sought to keep away from "high politics," but the supposedly high and low agendas met fatefully in the Yukos affair. Mikhail Fradkov, appointed in 2004, is essentially the president's representative in the PM's chair rather than an independent political figure. However, closer to the 2008 presidential election, the prime ministerial job will go to Putin's choice as his successor, and the post may again become important.

A more intriguing scenario ahead of the 2008 race is a drastic reapportioning of power and authority between the president and the prime minister, in which the president becomes essentially the "guarantor of the Constitution" and a symbol of national unity, much like the German head of state, and executive power—and supreme authority—is vested in the prime minister. This institutional transfer of power would spare the Russian elite the need to face, every four (eight) years, the agonizing choice of the next head of state. It would assure, through a renewable mandate, continuity of power and privilege under a PM at the head of the dominant political party returned to power in one election after another. In early 2005, this remains an important idea.

It should be noted that the notion of a policy-influential PM is not foreign to Russian history. While tsarist Russia had institutionally weak chairmen of the Council of Ministers, some—Count Sergei Witte and Petr Stolypin—excelled as effective states-

men, managers, and diplomats. In Soviet days, Lenin, Stalin, and Khrushchev, as party leaders, all opted for PM jobs, leaving the post of the nominal head of state to second- and even third-rank associates. Brezhnev started the alternative tradition of combining the party post with the "presidential" one, which lasted through Gorbachev. In principle, this more recent tradition could be reversed, but would require a major constitutional rearrangement.

While the premier and the Cabinet are only involved in foreign policy-making on an occasional basis, **the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**(MFA) is the most visible actor in the field. Under Putin, it has become increasingly fashionable to dismiss the Foreign Ministry as an institution of minimal significance, supplanted by the Presidential Administration as the epicenter of foreign policy decision-making.[50] Critics note, with some justice, that the MFA's once elevated status (e.g. under Eduard Shevardnadze) has been undermined by the emergence of new policy players. It exerts at best a secondary influence in a number of key areas, such as WTO accession and the relationship with the EU, which are the province of the economic wing of the Cabinet. More generally, its input into strategic decisions on the overall approach and orientation of Russian's foreign relations is modest.[51]

On the other hand, the MFA's situation has improved in important respects. First, it is no longer restricted to an essentially executive role, as it was by the Party Central Committee in Soviet times; these days it has greater license and opportunity to feed into Putin's thinking. Second, its position as the main repository of knowledge on international affairs enables it to influence the handling of many less fashionable but still critical issues, for example, Russia's "strategic partnership" with China. Third, it may act as a "braking mechanism" in decision-making;[52] unable to assert its own agenda, it can still frustrate or slow down the agendas of others. Finally, the relationship between the Foreign Ministry and the Presidential Administration is a complicated one that cannot be viewed in simple zero-sum terms. Both Yeltsin's and Putin's foreign policy advisors were previously career diplomats who maintain(ed) close ties with former colleagues from the MFA.[53] While it is unclear how far these links translate into decision-making, they certainly should not be dismissed out of hand.

The defense establishment, which used to be a highly influential foreign policy actor during the Cold War, has lost some of its former clout. In the early 1990s, it was still the principal agency in the post-Soviet conflict areas, such as Transdniestria, Tajikistan and the Transcaucasus, or in negotiations over the Black Sea Fleet and Crimea. Since the start of the first post-Soviet Chechen War, the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and the General Staff have been primarily occupied with the conflict in the North Caucasus.

Under Putin, the ministry's role has changed markedly. Since 2001, it has been headed by the president's close confidant and possible successor, Sergei Ivanov. Unlike his army and air force predecessors, Ivanov is not a serving military officer but an intelligence professional. In his present capacity, he can best be described as a top bureaucratic politician. Since 2004, the minister is the unchallenged head of the defense establishment; the chief of the General Staff, in tsarist and Soviet times a figure with direct access to the top leader, has been placed firmly under the minister's authority. Whereas in the past the Defense Ministry was essentially confined to "one storey in the General Staff headquarters," this relationship is changing in favor of the ministry, which is responsible for policy and has overall command authority. The General Staff, the "brain of the Army," has been left with mainly planning and analytical functions.

In the realm of foreign policy, the ministry has a large say in the evolution of Russia's security relations with CIS countries (in particular, Georgia), and in the development of ties with NATO and the United States (strategic posture, anti-terrorist coalition, residual arms control).

The security services , which in Soviet times were a major foreign policy instrument and whose role decreased sharply in the Yeltsin years, are again influential under Putin. The FSB is headed by a close ally of the president, Nikolai Patrushev. Crucially, the FSB and its sister service, the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR, or *Sluzhba vneshnei razvedki*), seem to provide the Kremlin with much of the analysis of the domestic and international situation, as well as policy proposals. Before being picked by Putin as a key member of his inner circle, Lt.-Gen. Sergei Ivanov had been head of the analytical department of the SVR. It is no exaggeration to say that much of what the president, as the ultimate decision-maker, knows about the outside world (both domestically and beyond Russia's borders) comes from the security community. The formulation of all major foreign policy decisions comes with a strong input from that wing of the government.

This also means the relative decline of the traditional (and generally more liberal) foreign policy advisors drawn from **academe**. In the 1960s, Central Committee analysts, and later those from the institutes of the Academy of Sciences (*institutchiki*, as they were known in the West), rose to the position of privileged and trusted advisors to the nation's leadership.[54] Their heyday came under Gorbachev, when some of them (Primakov, Andrei Kokoshin, Vladimir Lukin) rose to senior government positions. Under Yeltsin, through inertia, they retained a modest influence for some time under the rubric of the Presidential Council and the institution of presidential advisors (Yuri Baturin, Georgi Satarov, and others, who tended to be liberal intellectuals), but this has since tapered off. Putin, by contrast, rarely seeks the advice of independent scholars. The Kremlin's own analytical branch, the Expertise and Analysis Department, is squarely focused on economic issues. So is the Center for Strategic Research, a think tank close to the Kremlin. On foreign policy, the president evidently feels more comfortable with the advice provided by his former colleagues.

In Yeltsin's years, despite the "super-presidential" Constitution, the separation of powers was more than a constitutional slogan thanks to the intense struggle between the Kremlin and the Communist (in fact, leftist nationalist) opposition. Under Putin, political power has become recentralized. The field of public politics has shrunk to its smallest since the beginning of Gorbachev's perestroika. Since 2000, **the Federal Assembly** , Russia's bicameral legislature, has been more or less the legislative arm of the Presidency. Its foreign policy role, besides ratification of international agreements, is to "work" with foreign parliaments, voice undiplomatic opinions on issues of concern to Russia (in particular, the treatment of Russian minorities in Latvia and Estonia), and to counter foreign criticism of Russian policies (most notably on Chechnya in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe). The speakers of the State Duma (lower house) and Federation Council (upper chamber), both trusted lieutenants of the president, are occasionally charged with foreign policy missions, but their real, as opposed to protocol, roles are minimal. The heads of the Duma's and Federation Council's foreign affairs committees in 2005 are Kremlin insiders with good career prospects.[55] Their role, however, is not so much to help make policy as to explain it to the outside world. (In comparison, the defense and security committees of both houses do not deal much with foreign policy issues.)

With the pro-Kremlin factions making up more than two-thirds of the Duma, and an even greater proportion in the Federation Council, the **opposition parties'** views of foreign policy are scarcely relevant for now. Under Putin, liberal and Communist politicians can at best function as analysts or propagandists offering a dissenting view, rather than as representatives of influential political forces.

During the Yeltsin era, a "Russia of the regions" emerged. Even as a challenger to Gorbachev, Yeltsin invited **the regional leaders** to "take as much sovereignty as you can swallow."[56] Later, the regional heads dominated the Federation Council, with genuine expertise in defense, security, and foreign affairs. Some regions proceeded to establish relations with foreign countries, especially in the economic sphere. A few even took out foreign loans or sold Eurobonds. In certain cases, the regions' activities impacted on national foreign policy. Thus, the regions in the Far East (Khabarovsk, Primorie, Sakhalin, Amur) came out strongly in the 1990s against any territorial concessions to China and Japan. In the same period, Kaliningrad leaned away from Moscow and closer to Western Europe. In yet another case, Russia's Muslim republics, led by Tatarstan, which viewed its relationship with the rest of Russia as an "association," pursued an active external policy *à tous azimuths*.

Under Putin, the autonomy of regional leaders has been drastically reduced. They received presidential overseers in newly created federal districts and lost their "senatorial" status in the Federation Council. In 2004 the president replaced their popular election with direct appointment by the Kremlin. In a striking example of new regional conformism, Khabarovsk's Governor Viktor Ishaev accompanied Putin to Beijing in 2004 and witnessed the conclusion of a border agreement involving the transfer of island territory near Khabarovsk, a sore point with the local population.

A striking feature of Russian foreign policy is the marginalization of **the public** in decision-making. From time to time, politicians have claimed that the people "will not accept" this or that Western action, or that the Kremlin's options are limited by "the force of public opinion."[57] In reality, such claims are generally disingenuous. Except in a few areas where ordinary people are directly affected—the demarcation of territory or border-crossing regimes—what is at issue here are elite attitudes, not those of a population that has little interest in foreign policy and that, in any event, has consistently been excluded from its deliberations. In this context, Putin's emphasis on public diplomacy should not be misconstrued as signaling genuine participation by "the masses." On the contrary, the continuing dichotomy between declared ("virtual") and actual foreign policy highlights a "Potemkin village syndrome" [58] in which elites, domestic and foreign, are the main audience for the representation (or misrepresentation) of Russian positions.

The marginalization of the public and the establishment of virtual realities are consistent with a bureaucratic mentality that deems non-transparency a virtue and views it as an instrument of preserving power. Even by the murky standards of Russian governance, the workings of foreign policy have been characterized by a particularly strong culture of secrecy.[59] This is not only manifested in non-accountability to the general public, but also within the elite itself. Operating under a more than usually tight version of the "need-to-know" principle, Putin's Kremlin has reinforced the trend of previous administrations (including those of Gorbachev and Yeltsin) in limiting strategic decision-making to the very few.

In his first term, Putin destroyed the power of Russian **oligarchs** who became dominant political players under Yeltsin. Boris Berezovsky, the most prominent of them, was deputy secretary and de facto head of the Security Council, and later CIS executive secretary. Vladimir Gusinsky owned Russia's NTV channel, the most powerful collective opinion leader on domestic and foreign policy issues. Both were pushed into exile soon after the succession in the Kremlin. Khodorkovsky, who challenged Putin politically and was thinking of merging Yukos with U.S. oil majors, was jailed on tax evasion charges. These days Russia's big business has to look for guidance from the Presidential Administration on all major policy issues. To reinforce this control, the Kremlin has deputized its senior officials to sit on the boards of companies where the state has a major stake. However, Kremlin-friendly businessmen, some of them dubbed "Orthodox bankers," wield considerable power behind the scenes, which has some relevance for foreign policy as well.

The Russian Orthodox Church , although in theory only one of four "native" religious institutions in the secular Russian state (along with Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism), plays a distinct role in foreign affairs. The Church, genuinely autonomous vis-à-

vis the state for the first time in 300 years, continues in the tradition of loyalty toward the temporal authority. In return, the Synod expects the government to heed its overall doctrine of conservative Russian patriotism and to help promote its special interests. These latter touch on Moscow's relations with the Vatican, the Moscow Patriarchate's authority and property in Ukraine and Estonia, the missionary activities of the Catholic Church in Russia as well as Belarus, and the spread of Protestant "sects." The Russian Orthodox Church has vowed to resist these incursions into its "canonical territory," which includes Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine (where the local church split three ways after 1991). The authorities, who need the blessing of the Church, which is the country's most trusted institution,[60] are usually sympathetic and helpful. The Patriarch's word carries distinct moral authority within Russian society. For his part, President Putin has been instrumental in bringing together the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.

Russia's big and growing **Muslim community** has far less weight institutionally than the Orthodox Church. Its leaders' clout is no match for that of the Patriarch. However, the Muslim factor weighs heavily on the thinking of Russian leaders. Over the past quarter-century Russia has been involved in wars and conflicts almost exclusively with Muslim fighters (in Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Chechnya, Dagestan). Putin's decision in 2003 to distance himself from the U.S.-led Iraq war was due in no small measure to the anticipated reaction of the Muslim community in Russia. Moscow's wish to make Muslims feel at home in Russia was also behind the (successful) application for observer status with the Organization of Islamic Conference.

Although the number of Jews in Russia has declined dramatically from 2 million in the 1970s to a mere 230,000 in 2002,[61] **Jewish community** organizations are active and influential. Out of all Russian/Soviet leaders, Putin is by far the most sympathetic toward the Jewish community and the state of Israel. Official anti-Semitism is non-existent. Since 2004, for the first time in the country's history, Russia has a Jewish prime minister. During the 1990s, official and public attitudes in Russia toward the conflict in the Middle East changed significantly. Israel, formerly off-limits and now home to around 1 million Russian speakers, is generally regarded as a friendly country. In particular, the Chechen war—waged in parallel to the *intifada*—has created a sense of common threat between the Russians and the Israelis.

The **Buddhists** arguably have the weakest influence of all the religious communities on Russian foreign policy-making. However, in one particular instance they have had a say. In the face of objections from Beijing, Moscow permitted the Dalai Lama to undertake in 2004 an "apolitical" pastoral visit to Russia, out of concern for its Buddhist minorities in Kalmykia, Buryatia, and Tuva.

Next to religious communities, Russian foreign policy is influenced by various **ethnic lobbies** , in particular Armenian and Serbian (prior to 2000). A very special case is represented by the **unrecognized states** of Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Transdniestria, which have survived thanks to Russian support and which rely on a web of contacts with Russian officials to maintain and expand that support. Until his ouster at the hands of the United States, Iraq's Saddam Hussein also maintained a lobby in Moscow.

Section II: Ideas and Ideology

When President Putin at the beginning of his first term signed a number of documents of supposedly fundamental importance, such as the National Security Concept, the Foreign Policy Concept, and the Military Doctrine, this initially came as a relief both to Russian officialdom and many foreign observers. The latter wanted clarity and the former a guide to action. Instead, however, what they got was a piece of policy *literature* that was largely useless as an operational document, if highly interesting as a conceptual "layered pie."

One of the most popular theses of the 1990s concerned the "de-ideologization" of Russian foreign policy—a theme to which Yeltsin, and later Putin and senior members of his administration have returned frequently.[62] Initially, de-ideologization meant de-Communization. In his famous tour de force immediately following the failed putsch of August 1991, Yeltsin made Gorbachev publicly sign a decree banning the Communist Party, which the latter still formally led. In the thinking of people such as Acting Prime Minister Gaidar and Foreign Minister Kozyrev, communism had been replaced by liberal democracy. It was still ideology, albeit a different one. However, this liberal democracy remained the creed of a few. Yeltsin, an anti-communist as president, was essentially a pragmatist. Others around him were utterly free from ideology, while some barely subscribed to any system of values at all. At the same time, opposition forces, strongly represented in the parliament, proudly described themselves as communists and/or nationalists.

For both these groups, Russian foreign policy as implemented by Kozyrev was a favorite target. Kozyrev, for his part, was unable to build a constituency for the policy of Western integration he espoused. The bankruptcy of a simple "communism-to-democracy" conversion was reflected in a major debate on the national interest that started in 1992–1993. The foreign minister's opponents put forward the thesis of the primacy of the national interest. Russian foreign policy, in marked con-

trast to its Soviet predecessor, should be conditioned not by ideological biases—whether rivalry with the West or integration into it—but by concrete national interests. Yevgeny Primakov, who succeeded Kozyrev in January 1996, adapted Palmerston's dictum in claiming that Russia "does not have permanent friends, but permanent interests".[63] This became a mantra with Russian leaders, officials, and many commentators. Primakov's choice of Alexander Gorchakov, Russia's foreign minister under Tsar Alexander II, as his role model was widely applauded in the foreign policy establishment. In the late 1990s, Moscow's purported emphasis on interests instead of ideology became endorsed, in Russia and the West, by the imprimatur of pragmatism.[64] In practice, such pragmatism was expressed principally in a less "romantic" (or pro-Western), more assertive approach to parlaying Russia's trumps—P-5 membership, massive nuclear arsenal, geostrategic reach—into increased regional and global influence.[65]

To the extent that the post-Soviet period has witnessed no overarching state ideology, one can agree that Russian foreign policy has become "de-ideologized." However, this does not mean that ideas or ideologies have become irrelevant, replaced by an "objective" understanding of "true" national interests. On the contrary, if we accept the definition of ideology as "a set of predispositional influences,"[66] then the distinction between ideas and interests is exposed as both artificial and misleading. The Gorchakov/Primakov thesis of "permanent interests" can be sustained insofar as it relates to broad objectives such as national security, territorial integrity (although even this is debatable), and economic prosperity. But at the level of specifics, there has been little consensus. Ideas and perceptions of the national interest differ according to time, place, and perspective, and are highly susceptible to altered circumstances at home and abroad.

The last 10–15 years has witnessed a veritable explosion of ideas, rushing to fill the void left by the final collapse of Communist state ideology: "Western-style liberalism" and "humanistic universalism," [67] notions of Russia's "great powerdom" (*derzhavnost*), imperialism and proto-imperialism, and nationalism of various types. The notion of a "battle of ideas" has been much played up by Russian and Western writers who routinely speak of conflicts between "patriots" and Westernizers, *derzhavniki* and "liberals," "nationalists" and "pragmatists," and so on.[68]

Such representations suffer from many problems, the most serious of which is oversimplification. For one thing, there are many different kinds of "nationalism" or "liberalism." The epithet "nationalist" has been applied to figures as diverse as President Putin, the wily political operator Vladimir Zhirinovsky, and neo-fascist politicians such as General Albert Makashov. Such labels may be either laudatory or pejorative, depending on the commentator's perspective. Thus, Putin speaks of nationalism (using the word "patriotism," for nationalism has negative connotations in contemporary Russian) as a source of pride and strength; but when non-Russians refer to Russian nationalism (whether that of Putin or others), they see it as a threatening, anti-Western phenomenon.[69] It is a similar story with "liberalism." The Western press on the whole approves of it, if deploring its distortions. But many Russians blame an indeterminate liberalism and its companion, "democracy," almost entirely for the country's woes in the post-Soviet period.[70]

It is symptomatic of how little de-ideologization has occurred that even seemingly neutral concepts have been contaminated. During the 1990s "pragmatism" became a heavily loaded term, signifying very different things to different people. On becoming foreign minister, Primakov offered it as a rational centrist corrective to the excesses of pro-Westernism and the "ideologized democratic internationalism" associated with Kozyrev.[71] Primakov's critics, however, saw his "pragmatism" as highly ideological, symptomatic of a confrontational approach toward the West.[72] Today, supporters and opponents of Primakovian pragmatism have united to hail the latest Putin model, as defined by a much tighter correlation between objectives and capabilities.[73] But it remains to be seen whether this consensus is genuine or simply a cynical accommodation in response to Putin's political dominance. Underpinning all this is a larger conceptual difficulty: One person's pragmatism is another's romanticism—a problem exacerbated by the routine hijacking of such terms for political purposes.

A second, related conundrum is that politicians rarely behave according to a cohesive, logically consistent set of ideas, but are influenced by contradictory sources of inspiration and motivation. At various times during Putin's first presidential term, the Western media described Russian foreign policy as "multipolar," "independent," "nationalist," "imperialist," "pro-Western," "anti-Western," "Eurocentric," "Americacentric." This cornucopia reveals not only the suspect basis of such labeling, but also the breadth of ideational forces that drive foreign policy decision-making.

Ideological bias among foreign policy practitioners and thinkers is a serious barrier to understanding Russian decision-making. The recentness of the Cold War, Yeltsin's erratic conduct of foreign relations, as well as a host of other factors, have done much to cement extant prejudices. In this tendentious atmosphere, it is all too tempting to over-extrapolate from individual developments to assert the emergence of larger negative trends. Thus, Moscow's interest in developments in Georgia becomes equated with a revived imperialist project;[74] nuclear cooperation with Iran is seen as a Soviet-style tactic to get at the Americans;[75] and the "strategic partnership" with China is viewed through the prism of global balancing.[76]

Ideas cannot be seen in a vacuum, as "pure" thought, but must be contextualized in time and place. They may change in response to specific imperatives or, more capriciously, reflect the dictates of political fashion. It is unsurprising, for example, that in meetings with CIS leaders Putin emphasizes a common historical heritage, geographical proximity, and continuing security and eco-

nomic ties, or that he plays up Russia's European identity when speaking with the EU or major European powers such as France and Germany. By the same token, when Putin talks to Chinese or other Asian leaders, he stresses Russia's position as a Eurasian country. One of the features of his management of foreign policy is that he tailors conceptions of Russian identity to circumstances and objectives—a linkage revealed most vividly by the Kremlin's shift to an overt Americacentrism following 9/11.[77] On the whole, the record of Putin's first term indicates that he believes he can be all things to all people and pursue a diverse range of interests on many fronts with little prejudice to any. What some Western analysts interpret as lack of vision or, worse still, unprincipled game playing, can therefore be interpreted as reflecting a certain conception of positive-sum international relations.[78]

Putin's eclectic, "multi-vectored" approach [79] highlights, too, the instrumentalization of ideas—a phenomenon by no means restricted to Russia, but typical of any "normal" foreign policy. Ideas and principles serve multiple purposes. Sometimes they point to genuine convictions or strategic insecurities, such as the fear of Western "encroachment" in the FSU. At other times they are bargaining chips, used and discarded for tactical purposes. In a similar vein, they may also package very tangible interests—as in the self-interested support of WTO accession by some of Russia's oligarchs. Ideas may provide a moral veneer for controversial policies, as shown by the unnuanced conflation of Chechen armed groups with international terrorism, or they may reflect the politicization of foreign policy in response to domestic priorities. The situation of Russian-speaking minorities in Estonia and Latvia undoubtedly has emotional resonance in Moscow, including with Putin himself. However, more important is that as an issue on which the elite can easily agree it contributes to Putin's larger project of political and national consensus building, as well as being a useful card in negotiations with Brussels over a visa-free regime and extension of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA).[80] It is interesting and telling that the issue of far harsher restrictions imposed on Russian *citizens* in Turkmenistan arose only briefly, to be completely forgotten in the wake of an agreement between Ashgabat and Gazprom.

Ideas about foreign policy should be distinguished from the **foreign policy instincts** of the Russian elite, which can be just as powerful. These instincts, derived from a realpolitik mentality, can be summarized as follows: self-image as a great power, preference for bilateralism, emphasis on the more traditional elements of national might, desire for equal status with the most powerful members of a given system, and condescension or benign neglect toward "minor" states. Some of these instincts are now being challenged by the advent of the money factor, previously secondary or nonexistent.

Finally, ideas are not timeless, but evolve in response to changing conditions—strategic, political, economic, psychological. Some "givens," such as historical insecurities or sense of geostrategic space, have had a formative and lasting impact on Russian consciousness.[81] But even such structural realities are far from immutable. For example, the collapse of the USSR followed by a bitter post-Soviet transition forced policy-makers to adjust—albeit reluctantly—to economic disintegration, territorial loss, and strategic retrenchment. For the first time since Ivan the Terrible's conquest of Kazan, Russia is evolving toward a nation-state rather than an empire. (The recent rise of "positive" nationalism is doubtless related to that phenomenon.) It took the Russian elite and the general public a decade to internalize Ukraine's independence from Moscow (and, by extension, Crimea's belonging with Ukraine.) Ukraine is belatedly regarded as a separate state from Russia, although recent developments have shown that it is by no means as "foreign" as, say, Poland or the Czech Republic. Today, the juggernaut of globalization is leading Moscow to take greater account not just of economic imperatives in general, but also of developments that directly challenge traditional Russian insularities: the enlargement of Europe, the growth of Islamic extremism and international terrorism, the rise of China and India as world powers, and the world's growing energy dependence.

Section III: The Play of Interests

The spectacular political, economic and social changes in Russia in the two decades since the advent of Gorbachev have had a transforming effect on Russian foreign policy decision-making. It is not so much that Soviet foreign policy operated largely free of domestic constraints, but rather that many of the constraints on policy-making have changed out of all recognition.

In the aftermath of the Soviet demise, the uneven transition to political democracy, market economy, and a civil society opened up decision-making, in foreign policy as well as other areas of public life. It was no longer the case, as before, that the foreign policy-making "class" comprised the MFA and Party Central Committee only. Foreign policy may have continued to be an elite preserve, but the much more diverse composition of the post-Soviet establishment[82] meant that decision-making became an increasingly complex enterprise. Institutionally, the MFA benefited from the collapse of the Soviet system and the removal of the Central Committee as the supreme foreign policy-making body. But, as discussed in Section I, other actors—old and new, large and small—entered the policy scene, obtaining access at the very highest levels and challenging the Foreign Ministry's primacy.[83] The Defense Ministry assumed the leading role in the former Soviet Union; the interests of the Atomic Energy Ministry, or Minatom, dominated relations with India and especially Iran; and the Presidential Administration emerged as an alternative and often more influential source of general foreign policy advice in Yeltsin's second term.[84] Critically, many of the new (or

revived) constituencies became highly influential, not only in promoting their sectional interests, but also in affecting the overall management and orientation of Russian foreign policy.[85]

Yet even a careful description of institutional actors and their interests fails to tell the whole story of "who decides." Special attention needs to be paid to the *cliques*. Again, this is nothing new in terms of Russia's history. However, in contemporary Russia's variegated political setting, great care is required when attempting to discern the inclinations and interests of particular elite groups. Commentators, Russian and Western, are prone to making pat judgments on this score. In the 1990s, too much was made of Yeltsin's "Family," which included such different people as privatization tsar Anatoly Chubais, tycoon Boris Berezovsky, and presidential bodyguard Alexander Korzhakov. Nowadays, the *siloviki*, i.e. people with a military, police or security services background, are generally seen as a group with a distinct corporate culture of toeing the "party line," obsessed with security priorities and little else.[86] And it is much the same story with the various **special interests** , be it big business, the armed forces or the military-industrial complex. Typically, such oversimplification is characterized by the indiscriminate application of normative labels—"liberal" ("progressive") and "conservative," "pro-Western" and "anti-Western." Institutions such as the MFA and especially the military are almost invariably labeled "conservative" and "retrograde," whereas export-oriented economic interests are on the whole "forward-looking" and enterprising.[87]

The real story is much less clear. In the diversified environment of post-Soviet Russia, entities such as the Foreign Ministry, the military, and big business are scarcely unitary, but contain within themselves many conflicting views and interests.[88] Moreover, attitudes toward some issues may be shaped not by ideological or institutional allegiances, but derive from specific interests and concrete agendas.[89] On WTO accession, for example, the polarization of views between RusAl head Oleg Deripaska (strongly opposed) and former Yukos CEO Mikhail Khodorkovsky (equally strongly in favor) were not indicators of conservatism or enlightenment, but reflected the reality that the former controls industries—namely, aluminium and car manufacturing—that are much more vulnerable to foreign competition than the oil sector which is (was) the basis of Khodorkovsky's wealth.[90] Equally, the support of the military-industrial complex and Minatom (since demoted to the Federal Agency for Atomic Energy) for, respectively, an aggressive arms exports policy and Russian nuclear assistance to Iran, does not highlight "unreconstructed" anti-Western attitudes so much as the pull of economic self-interest.[91]

The diversification of the elite has generated a far greater range of foreign policy goals. These are no longer restricted to traditional priorities—defense and security, geopolitics, "great power" relations—but include economic objectives that, until relatively recently, were kept to a minimum, due to the autarkic nature of the Soviet economy. The salience of Russia's WTO accession bid and international energy issues testifies to the degree to which external economic policy has become a central preoccupation of the Putin administration. This is partly the result of historical experience—drawing the lesson from the Soviet past that Russia cannot be a great power except on the basis of a strong economy [92]—but it is also a measure of the country's wider development over the past 15–20 years and, in particular, the emergence of big business interests as major policy actors. At a more general level, a richer, more pluralistic (in the broadest sense) polity and society have given birth to a multi-dimensional approach to foreign policy—a trend accelerated by the exigencies of an ever more globalized international environment.

This multidimensionality is reflected, too, in the diversity of means used to achieve foreign policy ends. Whereas Russia once relied on its political-military trumps—rough nuclear weapons parity with the United States, an enormous military machine, geostrategic reach—it now uses many instruments, including economic and moral. Moscow's attention to Caspian Sea energy development, the construction of oil and gas pipelines, and ties with CIS member-states not only reflects the importance of these priorities, but also an appreciation that economic means are often the most effective in pursuing strategic and political objectives, such as power projection.[93] Similarly, the significance attached to public diplomacy in relation to, say, Chechnya, is a reminder that Russian foreign policy takes place in a very different context to that of Soviet and tsarist rule. Direct popular input may continue to be minimal, but the government nevertheless feels the need to "sell" its policies to a domestic as well as foreign audience. The focus on what was long a peripheral aspect of foreign policy management is testament to Russia's political and societal transformation.

That said, in a society that generally operates according to opaque "understandings" rather than laws and formal regulations, the nexus between domestic interests and foreign policy functions in paradoxical ways. For example, although the democratization of post-Soviet society has opened up foreign policy-making, the public can hardly be said to exert a *direct* influence in this area.[94] Its impact is more subtle. The Kremlin may not be especially exercised by potential popular opposition toward a given policy, but it is inclined nonetheless to avoid needless controversies. One instance of just such a prophylactic approach was Yeltsin's appointment of the "centrist" Primakov as foreign minister in the run-up to the 1996 presidential elections. Although foreign policy would have played only a marginal role at best in the campaign, Yeltsin wished to eliminate even the notional possibility that it might serve as a focus of anti-regime sentiment.[95] More generally, the absence of major foreign policy initiatives around election time suggests that democratization acts as a constraining, conservative influence on decision-making, in external affairs as well as in the more obvious sphere of domestic politics.

Section IV: External Factors

Russia's strategic and economic decline over the past two decades has ensured that in international affairs it is often less an actor than acted upon. Despite its still sizeable nuclear weapons stockpile, membership of the UN Security Council and the G-8, and position as one of the world's leading energy producers, Russia's influence on the wider world stage is patchy. It may be a "regional superpower" in relation to the FSU,[96] but beyond the so-called Near Abroad its capacity to project power and influence is limited.[97]

For much of the 1990s Russian decision-makers, as post-imperial elites elsewhere, were often in denial, refusing to scale down ambitious Soviet-era objectives in response to the country's diminishing resources and capabilities. Unable to adjust to new imperatives or articulate (let alone implement) a viable foreign policy vision, the approach of the Yeltsin administration became increasingly reactive, ad hoc and at times hysterical, as the full extent of Russia's strategic impotence became clear. For the most part, it could only observe—and be affected by—far-reaching regional and global developments: America's ascendancy as the post-Cold War hyperpower, European integration, the rise of China and India, economic globalization, and the growth of Islamist militancy.

It is somewhat ironic, then, that the current international climate provides considerable opportunities for Russian interests. Although Moscow retains a jaundiced view of many contemporary trends—the assertiveness of the United States, the eastward enlargement of Europe, China's steady transformation into a global player—these are having the salutary effect of forcing Russian decision-makers to develop adequate policy responses. Thus, Putin's current modernization agenda is a result not merely of personal conviction or the lessons of history, but also a heightened awareness that Russia has no choice but to adapt to the demands of a rapidly changing world.[98] Much of Putin's pragmatism lies precisely in his readiness to absorb unpalatable realities and react positively by instigating major changes to domestic and foreign policy.

This realism has been characterized by an opportunistic streak—with a twist. Putin has been quick to seize on openings afforded him by international circumstances, but he has generally done so with an eye to Russia's strategic positioning over the longer term. In the aftermath of 9/11, he refrained from attempting to exploit American discomfiture by extracting specific concessions, opting instead to place Russia within mainstream (Western) "civilization" by associating unconditionally with the United States in the "global war on terror."[99] Although this "strategic choice"[100] has been attacked for failing to reap tangible benefits,[101] the bigger international picture is now more favorable to Moscow—an outcome scarcely conceivable had Putin taken an oppositionist or even neutral stance at the time. Although 9/11 provoked a more assertive and unilateralist American foreign policy, it also initiated a sequence of events—the operation in Afghanistan, the intervention against Iraq—following which Russia regained some of its former stature as an important international player. In relation to Iraq, most notably, Russia's original marginalization gave way to a rising profile in post-conflict resolution, as Washington strove to rebuild a rough consensus in the face of Iraq's deteriorating security situation, the breakdown of the unitary West, and the specter of American "imperial overstretch."[102]

Alexei Arbatov has formulated the West's quintessential dilemma regarding Russia.[103] Does it want a country that is domestically stable and relatively docile in foreign affairs or should it pursue a more activist and ambitious approach in support of Russian democracy, even if the Russia that emerges does not always join the bandwagon? The issue, then, is not so much whether Russian decision-making is responsive to external stimuli, but to what extent and how. In the first place, do such considerations outweigh essentially internal factors—the institutional context, ideational forces, historical and geographical heritage, the structure of polity and society—or do they flow naturally from them? This question goes to the heart of how far Western (and other) actions can act as a force for good or ill in shaping Russian foreign policy, or whether they merely catalyze already extant tendencies. Is Moscow's worldview informed by an innate "great power complex," a stubborn geopolitical mindset, or are outside forces largely to "blame" for the Russia we see today, a country many in the West regard as an increasingly reluctant and difficult "partner"? [104]

As in other areas of the foreign policy discussion, answers to this question have been heavily colored by normative and ideological sentiment, ranging from a "national humiliation complex," a "besieged-fortress mentality,"[105] and a culture of (mutual) disappointment, to self-righteousness and assumptions of moral superiority in both Russia and the West.[106] From different standpoints, many have a stake in playing up the impact of external factors on policy-making. For example, the occasion of Ronald Reagan's death in June 2004 saw the rehashing of claims that his tough stance over Star Wars had been instrumental in bringing down the Soviet Union,[107] a claim we believe is widely off the mark. More routinely, Russian politicians habitually assert that Western actions limit their room for maneuver and undermine effective cooperation. For them, the inference is clear: Favorable Western policies engender positive Russian responses, while "hostile" moves—such as NATO enlargement—foster negative, anti-Western sentiment among the Russian elite and public.[108] If nothing else, such conclusions emphasize the nexus between ideas (and prejudices) and interests referred to earlier. In assessing the impact of external factors on foreign policy decision-making, we need to treat them not as isolated, separate events with straightforward causalities, but as part of a complex web of diverse yet interrelated elements.

Change and Continuity in Russian Foreign Policy Decision-Making

Perceptions of contemporary Russian foreign policy tend to fall into two categories. The first, increasingly modish interpretation argues that its fundamentals have remained constant, even though Russia has undergone considerable political, economic and social changes, particularly over the past 20 years. In this vein, Nikolai Gvosdev has referred to George Kennan's famous 1947 article, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," and concluded that its "observations … are just as valid today when considering Vladimir Putin's Russia." [109] The second, more or less diametrically opposite view posits that Russia's extraordinary transformation, not only in recent times, but in the half century or so since Kennan, has altered the nature of decision-making so radically as to discredit any attempt to draw meaningful analogies with the past. The disintegration of the Soviet Union; the liberalization of politics, economy, and society; an international environment changed almost beyond belief—these factors have revolutionized the character and substance of Russian foreign policy, notwithstanding certain historical continuities.

The truth probably lies somewhere between the two. Kennan's remarks regarding the conduct of Soviet foreign policy, namely, its "secretiveness," "lack of frankness," "duplicity," "wary suspiciousness,"[110] resonate powerfully today. On the other hand, the experience of the American-led campaign against Iraq in 2003 suggests that such descriptions could equally be applied to describe the conduct of the major Western powers, who manipulated/exaggerated intelligence about Iraq's alleged stocks of chemical and biological weapons to justify military action against Saddam Hussein. Likewise, Kennan's claim that "there can never be on Moscow's side a sincere assumption of a community of aims between the Soviet Union and powers which are regarded as capitalist"[111] could be directed today at Western capitals whose motives and priorities in cooperating with Russia often differ substantially from Moscow's.[112] The pattern that emerges here is not so much one of historical continuity from one era to the next, as of attitudinal similarities between very different international actors during the same period.

It is important to remember, too, that Kennan's article was written from the point of view not of the disinterested or independent scholar, but of a policy-maker in the thick of things. It was based on the implicit normative assumption that the West and its values were fundamentally "right," and those of the Soviet Union evil and misguided. Ultimately, Kennan believed, the latter would have to reform itself or else collapse under the weight of its own contradictions. Given the very particular genesis of the "Long Telegram,"[113] then, it seems more logical to see it as a manual to American policy-makers on how to handle their Soviet counterparts at an extremely tense moment in history, rather than as a timeless guide to understanding the psyche and motivations of decision-makers in Moscow.

Today, the atmosphere and the priorities in Russia's relations with the West are very different. Russia may still be a difficult "partner," with ingrained prejudices, strategic preconceptions of one kind and another, frequently conflicting interests, and a dysfunctional institutional culture. Nevertheless, despite these problems it remains more a partner than a "rival," the term Kennan used to describe the Soviet Union. Russia can be a local or regional competitor of the United States or the EU, but this competition is no longer a zero-sum game. In strategic terms Putin's Russia does want "peace," "stability," and a "happy mutual interaction" (if not more), even while there continue to be serious disagreements over individual policy and the normative basis for cooperation.[114]

As with many other nations, "the sources of Russian conduct" toward the outside world encompass multiple, interconnected continuities and differences, dynamic along with (relatively) static features. Notions of identity, orientation and "destiny" are conditioned by long-term realities such as geographical location, historical insecurities, and strategic culture, but they also evolve (or become "modernized") in response to changing requirements and conditions, internal as well as external. Paradoxically, the single greatest continuity in Russian foreign policy decision-making may lie in this very susceptibility and changeability. With the frequent intrusion of short-term considerations in Russia's relations with the United States, Europe, and Northeast Asia,[115] Putin's much-vaunted pragmatism is less strategic than tactical in character. Now, as at the height of the Cold War, "caution, circumspection, flexibility and deception are the valuable qualities [whose] value finds a natural appreciation in the Russian … mind."[116] These are the qualities that link the past with the present by sustaining and giving new shape to the predispositional influences and institutional features inherited from previous eras.

NOTES

[1] In the words of one such commentator, Andranik Migranyan.

[2] Lilia Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003), pp. 268-70.

[3] On June 4, 1999, 200 Russian paratroopers led by Lt.-Gen. Viktor Zavarzin seized Slatina airport near Pristina. The American commander of NATO forces, Gen. Wesley Clark, ordered Lt.-Gen. Sir Michael Jackson, the commander of KFOR, to eject the Russian contingent by force if necessary. Fortunately, Jackson refused to obey the command and the crisis was defused peacefully.

[4] Joint press conference with George W. Bush in Washington DC, November 13, 2001, http://www.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2001/11/28698.shtml.

[5] Presidential statement of December 13, 2001, http://www.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2001/12/28746.shtml.

[6] Among the most solid Russian works on the issue cf. *Vneshnyaya politika i bezopasnost'* (Moscow: Antologia, 2000) and three special issues of the *Pro et Contra* journal: *Vneshnyaya politika Rossii* 1991-2000, Part I (Winter-Spring 2001) and Part II (Fall 2001), *Vneshnyaya politika novogo veka* (Fall 2002).

[7] See, for example, Adam B. Ulam, "Anatomy of Policymaking," *The Washington Quarterly*, vol.6, no.2, (Spring 1983), pp.71-82; Jerry F. Hough, "The Foreign Policy Establishment," in *Soviet Leadership in Transition* (Washington DC: Brookings, 1980), pp.109-30; Rose E. Goettemoeller, "decision-making for Arms Limitation in the Soviet Union," in Hans G. Brauch and Duncan L. Clarke, eds., *Decisionmaking for Arms Limitation: Assessments and Prospects* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Ballinger Publishing, 1983); and Robert W. Kitrinos, "The CPSU Central Committee's International Department," *Problems of Communism*, vol.33, no.5 (September/October 1984), pp. 47-65.

[8] In their 1954 seminal work, "Decision-making as an Approach to the Study of International Politics," Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin noted the problems of extracting information on foreign policy-making in general: "… governments are prone to suppress many things which the scholar must and wants to know. Diplomatic records and memoirs are published years after the events occurred. Negotiations are held in secret or semi-secret. Security regulations—necessary and otherwise—hide many vital facts. Busy administrators have been known to have little sympathy for the scholarly curiosity of the academic man." Richard C. Snyder, H.W. Bruck, and Burton Sapin, *Foreign Policy Decision-Making* (Revisited) (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p.52.

[9] Laetitia Spetschinsky, "Acteurs et mecanismes de la politique etrangere," in Tanguy de Wilde d'Estmael and Laetitia Spetschinsky, eds., *La politique etrangere de la Russie et l'Europe* (Brussels: P.I.E.-Peter Lang, 2004), pp.73-97; Jeffrey Checkel, "Structures, Institutions, and Process: Russia's Changing Foreign Policy," in Adeed Dawisha and Karen Dawisha, eds., *The Making of Foreign Policy in Russia and the New States of Eurasia* (Armonk and London: M.E. Sharpe, 1995), pp.42-65; Irina Kobrinskaya, "The Foreign Policy Decision-making Process in Russia," in Jakub M. Godzimirski, ed., *New and Old Actors in Russian Foreign Policy* (Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 2000), pp.43-59.

[10] Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Premature Partnership," *Foreign Affairs*, vol.73, no.2 (March/April 1994), pp.67-82; Richard Pipes, "Is Russia Still an Enemy?" *Foreign Affairs*, vol.76, no.5 (September/October 1997), pp.65-78; Stephen J. Blank, "Putin's Twelve-Step Program," *Washington Quarterly*, vol.25, no.1 (Winter 2002), pp.147-60; Janusz Bugajski, "Russia's New Europe," *The National Interest*, no.74 (Winter 2003/04), pp.85-90.

[11] Mr. X (George Kennan), "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs* (July 1947).

[12] For a damning critique of democratic transitionism, and its core assumption that most states are in inevitable if uneven transition toward democracy, see Thomas Carothers, "Democracy Without Illusions," *Foreign Affairs*, vol.76, no.1 (January/February 1997), pp.85-99.

[13] This theme runs through Strobe Talbott's memoirs of his time as the senior advisor on Russia in the Clinton administration, *The Russia Hand: A Memoir of Presidential Diplomacy* (New York: Random House, 2003).

[14] This was particularly true during the Yeltsin presidency, when Moscow linked the growth of anti-Westernism in Russia to allegedly hostile Western actions such as NATO enlargement and the alliance's 1999 military intervention over Kosovo. In fact, popular attitudes toward the West were far more liberal and forgiving than those of the Russian foreign policy establishment – see, for example, Vitalii Golovachov, "'Kholodnaya voina' v proshlom?" *Trud*, March 7, 2000, p.1. Whereas most people tended to focus much more on everyday concerns, foreign policy setbacks became for much of the elite a natural focus for longstanding national insecurities, historical suspicions about Western intentions, and disorientation arising from the drastic decline in Russia's strategic fortunes.

[15] Spetschinsky, "Acteurs et mecanismes de la politique etrangere russe," pp.78-93.

[16] Most notably, Richard Pipes, "Flight from Freedom: What Russians Think and Want," *Foreign Affairs*, vol.83, no.3 (May/June 2004), pp.14-15; see also Blank, "Putin's Twelve-Step Program," pp.147-60. A very detailed analysis of Russian foreign policy thinking was provided by Sabine Fischer, *Russlands Westpolitik in der Krise 1992-2000* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2004).

[17] Olga Kryshtanovskaya, *Anatomy of the Russian Elite*, cited in Arkady Ostrovsky, "Putin Oversees Big Rise in Influence of Security Apparatus," Financial Times, November 1–2, 2003, p.3. See also Brian D. Taylor, "Strong Men, Weak State: Power Ministry Officials and the Federal Districts," PONARS Policy Memo no. 284, October 2002; Richard Staar, "Siloviki Inside," November 2003, http://www.bu.edu/iscip/vol14/Staar.html. By contrast, Tor Bukkvoll emphasizes the multifaceted character of the *siloviki*, differentiated according to bureaucratic allegiance (Interior Ministry vs. FSB/SVR) and even geography (St. Petersburg vs. Moscow). See "Putin's Strategic Partnership with the West: The Domestic Politics of Russian Foreign Policy," *Comparative Strategy*, no.22 (2003), pp.229-32.

[18] Alex Pravda, "Foreign Policy," in Stephen White, Alex Pravda, and Zvi Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian Politics* (5th edition), p.215.

[19] Roger Hilsman, "Policy-Making Is Politics," in James Rosenau, ed., *International Politics and Foreign Policy* (NY: Free Press, 1969), p. 222-223

[20] Hilsman, p. 223

[21] Fifty years ago, Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin remarked on the tendency of observers attempting "to compensate for a feeling of inadequacy in the face of many and complex phenomena by making simplifying assumptions about these phenomena," *Foreign Policy Decision-Making.*., p.52.

[22] In 2002, Tom Graham—later the senior Russia advisor in the George W. Bush administration—claimed that "[i]n its fundamentals, Putin's Russia bears a close resemblance to tsarist Russia." These fundamentals include the nexus between power and property, the primacy of informal networks over formal institutions, the dispersal of power, and the gulf between the elite and the rest of society. See Thomas E. Graham, Jr., *Russia's Decline and Uncertain Recovery* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2002), pp.59-60.

[23] Kobrinskaya, "The Foreign Policy Decision-making Process in Russia," p.45.

[24] This view is implicit in unflattering accounts of the impact of Yeltsin's temper tantrums and alcoholic episodes on Russian policy in the 1990s. See Strobe Talbott's *The Russia Hand*. The role of subjectivity/irrationality has also been highlighted by such episodes as the seizure of Slatina airport by Russian paratroopers in June 1999. In his memoirs, Yeltsin sought to justify this reckless move by asserting that Russia "had not permitted itself to be defeated in the moral sense," *Midnight Diaries* (London: Phoenix Press, 2001), p.266.

[25] Otherwise known as the Russian *spetsifika*

[26] In his paper, "Imagining Russia in Western International Relations Theory," William D. Jackson criticizes the "overly reductionist character of the dominant general theories of international relations and the tendency of the leading paradigms to marginalize enquiry into particular unit level characteristics." He advocates, instead, a constructivist approach that investigates "the Russian sense of state actor identity and the social and political practices through which the identity is reproduced, as well as the Russian understanding of the international context and the identity and interests of other states."

[27] See Dmitri Trenin, "Russia and the West: What You See Is What You Get," *The World Today* (April 2004), pp.13-15. Richard Sakwa writes that from the outset Putin sought the "normalisation of Russian foreign policy. Russia was to be treated as neither supplicant nor potential disruptor, but as just one more 'normal' great power." For Sakwa, such "normality" is defined by its being "treated no differently than any other country" and facing up to the same "harsh realities of the post-post-cold war," *Putin: Russia's Choice* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), pp.207-8.

[28] Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin, *Foreign Policy Decision-Making*., p.78.

[29] *Ibid*., p.141.

[30] As is evidenced by the success of *Kommersant's* Andrei Kolesnikov, who mixes social reporting with purported policy analysis. See *Ya videl Putina*, published in December 2004.

[31] The circle of family members and confidants around Yeltsin. Prominent members of this group included Yeltsin's younger daughter Tatyana Dyachenko; Valentin Yumashev, her husband and one-time head of the Presidential Administration; his successor as Kremlin chief of staff, Alexander Voloshin; and the tycoon Boris Berezovsky, described by the late Paul Klebnikov of *Forbes* magazine as "Godfather of the Kremlin."

[32] George Breslauer notes in particular the "personalism" of Boris Yeltsin. See "Boris Yeltsin as Patriarch," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol.15, no.2 (1999), pp.186-200; *Gorbachev and Yeltsin as Leaders* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), pp.175-9. See also Checkel, "Structure,

Institutions, and Process," p.54.

[33] Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, p.126.

[34] Lilia Shevtsova, *Yeltsin's Russia: Myths and Reality* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999), p.289.

[35] For first-hand (but hardly disinterested) accounts of presidential foreign policy-making cf. Boris Yeltsin, *Zapiski prezidenta* Gorbachev's memoirs, *Zhizn i reformy* are far less revealing.

[36] During 2004, there were calls for Russia to be expelled from the G-8 in response to diminishing political and social freedoms in the country.

[37] Valentin Falin's interview with the *Postscriptum* current affairs program, TV Tsentr, November 14, 2004.

[38] Bobo Lo, *Russian Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Reality, Illusion and Mythmaking* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp.5-6.

[39] Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, pp.96-7.

[40] This was especially true of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is generally claimed that in Soviet times the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee played a key role in foreign policy decision-making, at least until the later Gorbachev period (see, for example, Nodari Simonia, "Russia's Foreign Policy Priorities," in Dawisha and Dawisha, *The Making of Foreign Policy...*, pp.25-6). On the other hand, there are countless examples of "unilateral" decision-making by Soviet leaders acting on their own personal initiative or whims: Stalin's critical role in the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop pact; Khrushchev's brinkmanship during the Berlin and Cuban Missile crises; and Gorbachev's refusal to engage the Soviet Union militarily in preserving the communist regimes of Eastern Europe in 1989. See Archie Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.249.

[41] See Iver B. Neumann, *Russia and the Idea of Europe: A Study in Identity and International Relations* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), pp.42-4.

[42] Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, pp.220-5.

[43] See *Ot pervogo litsa: razgovory s Vladimirom Putinym* (Moscow: Vagrius, 2000), pp.105-6.

[44] In their discussion of the role of personality in decision-making, Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin (*Foreign Policy Decision-Making...*, pp.132-3) highlight the role of (i) "training and professional or technical experience inside or outside the decision-making organization"; (ii) "continued professional affiliations"; and (iii) "working theories of knowledge," i.e. ideas and concepts about human nature circulating in a particular culture. All three aspects would seem to have played a formative role in Putin's approach to foreign policy decision-making.

[45] It is indicative that Putin's first book—in the form of a series of interviews with hand-picked journalists—should be entitled *Ot pervogo litsa* (which can be translated both as *In the First Person* and *From the Chief Executive*).

[46] See comments by Sergei Kortunov at a Carnegie Moscow Center roundtable, "Mekhanizm prinyatia vneshnepoliticheskikh reshenii," July 22, 2004, www.carnegie.ru/ru/pubs/media89422004-07-22.doc.

[47] Chernyaev left very interesting memoirs, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym* (Moscow: Progress, 1993).

[48] While this practice is not dissimilar from that of the G-7, it illustrates the predominance of the Kremlin on all important foreign policy issues.

[49] See Neil Malcolm, "Russian Foreign Policy Decision-Making," in Peter Shearman, ed., *Russian Foreign Policy Since 1990* (Boulder and Oxford: Westview Press, 1995), p.29.

[50] Comments by Sergei Markov, in Gregory Feifer, "Who Stands Behind Russia's Foreign Policy?" *St. Petersburg Times*, April 9, 2002, http://www.eng.yabloko.ru/Publ/2002/papers/spb-times-090402.html.

[51] See, for example, "The president's ear," *The Economist*, February 16-22, 2002, p.46.

[52] This term was first used by Mikhail Gorbachev to describe the bureaucracy's efforts to obstruct his political and economic reforms. See *Perestroika i novoe myshlenie dlya nashei strany i dlya vsego mira* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1987), p.13.

[53] Strobe Talbott observes, in particular, that Ryurikov appeared to be less the source of independent advice than a conduit of MFA views,

The Russia Hand…, pp.182-3. See also Suzanne Crow, "The Role of the Presidential Administration," in Gozdimirski, ed., *New and Old Actors in Russian Foreign Policy*, p. 66.

[54] Top of the list were the Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) and the Institute for the USA and Canada (ISKRAN). IMEMO's house journal, *MeiMO*, published an interesting insight into how this government consulting operated in Soviet days: *MeiMO*, "From the Institute's History" (series of articles, April 2002–September 2004).

[55] Konstantin Kosachev is the head of the State Duma's International Affairs Committee, while Mikhail Margelov occupies the analogous position in the Federation Council.

[56] Yeltsin's invitation to regional leaders "to take as much sovereignty as you can swallow" was made in Kazan during a tour of the regions in summer 1990.

[57] For example, as early as 1995 Andrei Kozyrev claimed that the influence of public opinion on Russian foreign policy was just as important as in the West: "Partnership or Cold Peace," *Foreign Policy*, no.99 (Summer 1995), p.8. Although Russian politicians have repeatedly highlighted the allegedly constraining influence of public opinion, they have supplied very little hard evidence to support this contention.

[58] Vladimir Lukin was the first to use this well-known image in connection with foreign policy. See "Bengalskii ogon v araviiskikh peskakh," *Moskovskie novosti*, no.50, October 23-30, 1994, p.13.

[59] In this respect, the current situation differs little from that in the 1980s. As Ulam noted then, '[e]litist and secretive as the process of Soviet decision-making is in general, it is especially so when it comes to foreign policy' – 'Anatomy of Policymaking', p.71.

[60] According to studies by ROMIR Monitoring, 73 percent of Russians trust the Russian Orthodox Church, while 23 percent do not. See *Obshestvennoe mnenie Rossii* (Moscow: ROMIR, 2004), p. 378.

[61] According to official statistics, there are 230,000 Jews living in Russia. However, one of Russia's most prominent rabbis, Berl Lazar, believes the number to be higher: *Novye izvestia*, December 21, 2004, pp.1 and 7.

[62] See Igor Ivanov, *The New Russian Diplomacy* (Washington DC: Brookings, 2002), p.13.

[63] Yevgeny Primakov, "Ministr, kotorogo ne rugaet oppozitsiya," interview in *Obshchaya gazeta*, no.37, September 19-25, 1996, p.4.

[64] In this connection, Margot Light has applied the term "pragmatic nationalists" to advocates of a centrist Russian foreign policy: "Foreign Policy Thinking," in Neil Malcolm, Alex Pravda, Roy Allison, and Margot Light, *Internal Factors in Russian Foreign Policy* (Oxford: The Royal Institute of International Affairs and Clarendon Press, 1996), p.34.

[65] Sergei Karaganov, "Novaya vneshnyaya politika," *Moskovskie novosti*, no.8, February 29–March 6, 2000, p.11.

[66] Alex Pravda, "Ideology and the Policy Process," in Stephen White and Alex Pravda, eds., *Ideology and Soviet Politics* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press, 1988), p.239.

[67] Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, pp.221-5.

[68] See Vladimir Lukin, "Our Security Predicament," *Foreign Policy*, no.88 (Fall 1992), pp.57-75; Light, "Foreign Policy Thinking," pp.33-100; Alexei Pushkov, "Russia and America: The Honeymoon's Over," *Foreign Policy*, no.93 (Winter 1993-94), pp.76-90; Alexander Lukin, "Russia Between East and West: Perceptions and Reality," paper presented at the Joint Session of the European Consortium for Political Research, (Edinburgh, March 28–April 2, 2003), p.10.

[69] Henry Hale, "Is Russian Nationalism on the Rise?" PONARS Policy Memo no.110, February 2000; Blank, "Putin's Twelve-Step Program," pp.147-8.

[70] Vladimir Petukhov and Andrei Ryabov, "Public Attitudes about Democracy," in Michael McFaul, Nikolai Petrov, and Andrei Ryabov, *Between Dictatorship and Democracy: Russian Post-Communist Political Reform* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2004), p.271.

[71] Lukin, "Our Security Predicament," pp.65-6. Kozyrev's own 1995 book, *Preobrazhenie*, a half-memoir, half-policy statement, strikes one as fairly ideological.

[72] Andrei Kozyrev, "Zapadnya tsentrizma," *Moskovskie novosti*, No. 2, January 18–24, 2000, p.6; also Karaganov, "Novaya vneshnyaya politika," p. 11; Sakwa, *Putin: Russia's Choice*, pp.208-9.

[73] Angela Stent and Lilia Shevtsova, "America, Russia and Europe: A Realignment?" *Survival*, vol. 44, no. 4 (Winter 2002/03), p.123; Sakwa, *Putin: Russia's Choice*, p. 210. Bugajski ("Russia's New Europe," p.84), is an exception to the general rule.

[74] Comments by Nino Burjanadze, speaker of the Georgian parliament, at a Chatham House meeting on September 17, 2004.

[75] Stephen Sestanovich, "Dual Frustration: America, Russia and the Persian Gulf," *The National Interest*, no.70 (Winter 2002/03), p.157.

[76] See, for example, Blank, "Putin's Twelve-Step Program," p.157.

[77] Lo, *Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy* (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House, and Blackwell's, 2003), p.128.

[78] Yevgeny Primakov, *Mir posle 11 sentyabrya* (Moscow: Mysl', 2002), p.188.

[79] The notion of a multi-vectored foreign policy was enunciated by Yeltsin in his very first address to the MFA, when he called for a "full-scale foreign policy with multiple vectors. While developing our relations with Western countries … we must work with equal diligence in the eastern direction …" ("Chto skazal Yeltsin rossiiskim diplomatam," *Rossiiskie vesti*, October 29, 1992, p.1). Subsequently, Kokoshin outlined a somewhat more subtle vision, whereby Russia's interests would best be served by a "flexible policy of diverse partnerships with individual countries or groups of countries interested in building ties with Russia." See Andrei A. Kokoshin, *Soviet Strategic Thought, 1917-91* (Cambridge, MA, and London: MIT Press, 1998).

[80] Lo, *Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy*, p.128

[81] See Dmitri Trenin, *The End of Eurasia: Russia on the Border Between Geopolitics and Globalization* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2001); also Sergei Medvedev, "Power, Space, and Russian Foreign Policy," in Ted Hopf, ed., *Understandings of Russian Foreign Policy* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999).

[82] See T.H. Rigby, "New Top Elites for Old in Russian Politics," *British Journal of Political Science*, vol. 29, no. 2, 1999 pp. 323-43.

[83] Checkel, "Structures, Institutions, and Process," pp.49-50.

[84] One of the authors witnessed at first hand the consternation of senior MFA officials over the fact that Yastrzhembsky rather than Primakov had accompanied Yeltsin to the Krasnoyarsk "no neckties" summit with Japanese Prime Minister Hashimoto in November 1997.

[85] One salient example of this connection is the way the issue of Russian nuclear assistance to Iran has impinged on the larger Russia-U.S. relationship. Stephen Sestanovich has written that in the 1990s "[n]o other issue was said to threaten the Russian-American relationship so fundamentally, was tied so closely to mutual confidence between presidents, was so incessantly discussed by officials at all levels, or was linked to such large material inducements" (in "Dual Frustration…," p.156).

[86] In a presentation at Chatham House on January 26, 2004, Olga Kryshtanovskaya claimed that the similarities between different branches of the *siloviki* greatly outweighed the differences between them. Among these similarities was the primacy of security priorities. Kryshtanovskaya's assessment has been strongly challenged by other scholars, such as Julian Cooper.

[87] Yuri E. Fyodorov, "Russian New Industrialists and Foreign Policy," in Godzimirski, ed., *New and Old Actors in Russian Foreign Policy*, p.220.

[88] See Bukkvoll, "Putin's Strategic Partnership with the West," pp. 229-32.

[89] For a good early discussion of the impact of the business community on Russian foreign policy, see the Summer 1997 issue of *Pro et Contra, Biznes i vneshnyaya politika*.

[90] See Paul Hare, "Why the WTO matters for Russia," in Katinka Barysch, Robert Cottrell, Franco Frattini, Paul Hare, Pascal Lamy, Maxim Medvedkov, and Yevgeny Yasin, *Russia and the WTO* (London: Centre for European Reform, 2002), pp.65-6, 70-1.

[91] Senior figures in the Clinton administration appeared to have had a somewhat one-dimensional understanding of Russian motives in pursuing nuclear cooperation with Iran, seeing it largely as a reflection of Moscow's geopolitical ambition, See Strobe Talbott, *The Russia Hand…*, p.254.

[92] See Putin's address to the Federal Assembly on July 8, 2000, http://www.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2000/07/28782.shtml.

[93] Bobo Lo, "The Securitization of Russian Foreign Policy," in Gabriel Gorodetsky, ed., *Russia between East and West: Russia on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century* (London: Frank Cass, 2003)

[94] The confusion of some writers is reflected in such vague comments as "[t]here are grounds for serious dispute over the impact of mass publics in Russian foreign policy, 1991-2000. What is not at issue, though, is that Russian publics did play some role," William Zimmerman, *The Russian People and Foreign Policy: Russian Elite and Mass Perspectives, 1993-2000* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), p.13.

[95] Sergei Karaganov, "Diplomatiya: kommunisty ukhodyat bez boya," *Moskovskie novosti*, No. 25, June 23-30, 1996, p.5. Karaganov belies Zimmerman's assertion that "broad-gauged concerns about Russia's relation to the outside world had a demonstrable impact on the outcome of the 1996 presidential elections" (*The Russian People and Foreign Policy*, pp.13-14).

[96] Leon Aron, "The Foreign Policy Doctrine of Postcommunist Russia and its Domestic Context," in Michael Mandelbaum, ed., *The New Russian Foreign Policy* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1998), p.33.

[97] Some American scholars go so far as to claim that "[t]he internal political, economic, societal, and defense challenges with which the Russian leadership continues to struggle will preclude Russia from achieving great-power status in the near future," Eugene B. Rumer and Celeste A. Wallander, "Russia: Power in Weakness?" *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 1 (Winter 2003/04), p.68.

[98] Vladimir Putin, address to the Federal Assembly, April 18, 2002, http://www.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2002/04/28876.html.

[99] Stent and Shevtsova, "America, Russia and Europe…," p.123.

[100] Dmitri Trenin, "'Osenii marafon' Vladimir Putina i rozhdenie rossiiskoi vneshnepoliticheskoi strategii," briefing paper no. 11, p.6 (Moscow: Carnegie Moscow Center), November 2001.

[101] Andranik Migranyan, comments at a conference on "Regional Security in Europe and the Middle East in the Wake of 11 September 2001" (Munich, January 10, 2003).

[102] Paul Kennedy's famous term (first used in his book *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Regional Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, Hyman and Unwin, 1988) seems particularly apt in light of the United States' continuing difficulties in Iraq.

[103] At a Carnegie Moscow Center seminar on October 8, 2004.

[104] Blank, "Putin's Twelve-Step Program," pp. 147-60.

[105] The expression, "besieged fortress," was used by Lenin in a speech at the First All-Russia Congress of Mineworkers on April 1, 1920 (http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/apr/01.htm).

[106] A certain moral smugness is evident in such writings as Strobe Talbott's memoirs (*The Russia Hand*). Many Russians, for their part, like to pretend that they possess greater soul (*dusha*) and spirituality. In a famous discourse in 1954, Isaiah Berlin summed up Russian ambivalence toward the West as a "combination of intellectual inadequacy and emotional superiority" (*Russian Thinkers*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1978, p.181). In more recent times, religious leaders such as Patriarch Alexi II have inveighed against the impact of Western decadence and immorality on Russian society.

[107] In a fulsome tribute, an *Economist* editorial claimed that Reagan's escalation of the arms race in the 1980s took at least 20 years off the life of the Soviet Union: "The Man Who Beat Communism," *The Economist*, June 12-18, 2004, p.13.

[108] This is a regular refrain of Russian politicians. For example, in his book *Mir posle 11 sentyabrya*, Primakov puts the onus squarely on Washington to maintain the strategic rapprochement between Russia and the United States (see pp.186-8). The head of the Duma's International Affairs Committee, Konstantin Kosachev, told one of the authors in 2003 that the West needed to "help" Putin's post-9/11 foreign policy shift by pursuing more cooperative, less adversarial policies toward Russia. For a Western view on this, see Alex Pravda, "Putin's Foreign Policy after 11 September," in Gorodetsky, ed., *Russia between East and West*, pp.52-5.

[109] Nikolai Gvosdev, "The Sources of Russian Conduct," The National Interest, no.75 (Spring 2004), p.29.

[110] Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct."

[111] *Ibid.*

[112] One of the more obvious conclusions to be drawn from Russian-U.S. disagreements over the Iraq war and Moscow's nuclear relationship with Tehran is that a rough consensus over "common threats" in no way implies agreement on concrete policies, let alone their implementation. See Primakov, *Mir posle 11 sentyabrya*, p.188; Trenin, "What You See Is What You Get," pp.14-15; Bukkvoll, "Putin's Strategic Partnership with the West," p.238.

[113] Originally, Kennan's article in *Foreign Affairs* took the form of a discursive telegram from the American Embassy in Moscow to the U.S. State Department.

[114] Robert Legvold, "All the Way: Crafting a U.S.-Russian Alliance," *The National Interest*, no.70 (Winter 2002/03), pp.21-31.

[115] Dmitri Trenin, "Pirouettes and Priorities: Distilling a Putin Doctrine," *The National Interest*, no.74 (Winter 2003/04), p.82.

[116] Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct."

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