

"POST-COLD WAR RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY  
TOWARD EAST CENTRAL EUROPE:  
SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY RESEARCH  
REVISITED AND REAPPLIED"

by  
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CHAPTER 1  
INTRODUCTION

Over the past four years the leadership of the Russian Federation has been in the process of formulating the country's foreign policy to address the new international system and a new relationship with East Central Europe (ECE). More recently, Russian leaders have chosen to take a more assertive stand on issues pertaining to East Central Europe, namely the civil war in the former Yugoslavia and NATO membership for East European nations. This dynamic behavior indicates that Russian foreign policy towards the countries of the region has not fully stabilized. Factors determining Russia's foreign policy have been significantly altered due to the sweeping events of the past several years in East Central Europe and Russia itself, yielding important questions concerning the development of Russia's foreign policy toward the region. This study attempts to address the Russian Federation's emerging foreign policy characteristics, in particular toward East Central Europe, by examining past studies of Russian and Soviet foreign policy to identify a reliable model for explaining Russia's current foreign policy. In doing so, certain important questions are raised: What are the factors and influences

being considered in the formulation of Russian foreign policy, vis-a-vis East Central Europe? Are these older Soviet foreign policy studies outdated, or can we still salvage some knowledge about current Russian policy from them?

#### WHY EAST CENTRAL EUROPE (ECE)?

The importance of these questions pertaining to Russian foreign policy must be understood before undertaking concentrated research regarding Russian foreign policy. My research targets ECE, as opposed to the Middle East or Far East for example, as a regional ground for the testing and examination of Russian foreign policy due to its historical importance in world affairs and its potential impact on present and future international developments. This study defines East Central Europe as comprising the nations of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary; to a lesser extent the southern tier of East European states, such as Albania, Bulgaria, and the former republics of Yugoslavia, also apply. Historically, ECE has been the battleground for the competing spheres of the East and West. The participants of this struggle have included the Russian and Ottoman Empires in the East and Germany, Austria-Hungary, and other West European nations in the

West. More recently, involvement in the Cold War put ECE between the Soviet Union on one side and the United States and other NATO countries on the other. The experience of history includes centuries of traditional relationships between Russia and the region of ECE. The ominous fact that both world wars in this century began over control of ECE remains the most emphatic argument for the importance of ECE in world affairs.<sup>1</sup> Today, East Central Europe is "the scene of a gigantic social transformation breeding instability, acute conflicts, and economic difficulties while at the same time promising in the event of success a radical improvement in the political climate all over Europe."<sup>2</sup> This uncertainty has attracted the attention of Europe (the EU), the United States, and Russia: the overlapping interests of so many nations makes ECE an important region in the development of a new, post-Cold War world order.<sup>3</sup>

THEORETICAL IMPORTANCE OF POST-COLD WAR  
RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Both theoretical and substantive reasons exist that justify the examination of Russian foreign policy towards

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<sup>1</sup> Bogomolov, Oleg. August 1994. "Russia and Eastern Europe." *International Affairs* (Russia), No. 8, p. 22-26.

<sup>2</sup> Bogomolov, p. 22-26.

<sup>3</sup> Brusstar, James H. Fall 1994. "Russian Vital Interests and Western Security." *ORBIS*, No. 3, p. 607-619.

East Central Europe. Theoretical reasons for studying Russia's foreign policy perceptions and motivations are traced to the broader questions regarding the future of Sovietology after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The field of Sovietology lost interest and political urgency during this impasse. Post-Sovietology is therefore confronting serious questions about its own viability and usefulness in today's study of the former Soviet Union. Researchers are being forced to reassess old concepts of the Soviet system and formulate new approaches to address the political and economic changes in the region.<sup>4</sup> William Odom asserts that the totalitarian model is quite useful in examining Russia's current difficulties, because it provides important departure points which indicate the obstacles that Russia must overcome on its road to dismantling the old Soviet system and building new democratic institutions.<sup>5</sup> In fact a wealth of literature is erupting regarding the study of post-Soviet Russia: although these books and articles have the benefit of hindsight in examining the problems of the Soviet Union, this clear vision should

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<sup>4</sup> Remnick, David. "Getting Russia Right.", p. 20.

<sup>5</sup> Odom, William E. 1992. "Soviet Politics and After: Old and New Concepts." *World Politics*, Vol. 45, No. 1, p. 66-68.

provide keen insight into the problems that the Russian Federation is contending with today.

The majority of post-Sovietology literature has been geared toward the domestic side of the Soviet equation. This study attempts to break new ground and confront the foreign policy area of post-Sovietology, asking the question, "Does the collapse of the Soviet Union mean that we should discard the models of Soviet foreign policy, or can we learn from them important information about current Russian foreign policy?"

Charles King writes that the adjustments that post-Sovietology has had to make has led to divisions within the community of scholars regarding the future of post-Soviet studies. The source of this dichotomy, he postulates, lies in the history of Sovietology: Sovietologists have "tended to see rival theories of the Soviet Union's future as mutually exclusive." King believes that post-Sovietologists might finally begin to build upon each others' research rather than disregard it.<sup>6</sup> This study attempts to do just that: examine past Soviet foreign policy models, test a model which incorporates many of them together in relation to today's Russia, and draw conclusions about the

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<sup>6</sup> King, Charles. 1994. "Post-Sovietology: area studies or social science?" *International Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 2, p. 291-297.

future of Russian foreign policy, complimenting past efforts rather than excluding them.

Theoretical Soviet interests in East Central Europe were well defined as a result of decades of practice and observation; however, their questionable validity today necessitates revision vis-a-vis Russian interest in East Central Europe. Theoretically, were Soviet interests in East Central Europe fundamentally different from Russian interests now? Stephen F. Larrabee classified Soviet interests in East Central Europe into four major areas: military/security; ideological/political; economic; and political/diplomatic.

On the military/security dimension, the Soviet Union regarded East Central Europe as a buffer zone, protecting the Soviet Union against invasion from the West. From the time of Yalta, East Central Europe offered the Soviets several important military benefits. It allowed forwarddeployment of Soviet military forces. Soviet control also gave Soviet forces the opportunity to attack Western Europe and the ability to stage a major offensive against NATO. East Central European control also increased the number of troops at the disposal of the Soviet military. Lastly in the military area, Larrabee points out that East Central Europe served as a base for political intimidation

of Western Europe.<sup>7</sup> J. F. Brown describes this last advantage as the springboard factor, which is explained as the political penetration of Western Europe, and diplomatic manipulation of this penetration, vis-a-vis the threat of military aggression against Western Europe.<sup>8</sup>

The Soviet Union also maintained an important ideological/political interest in East Central Europe, which helped contribute to its control over the region and legitimize Soviet expansionist policies. According to Larrabee, ideology of Marxism-Leninism manifested in the form of the Communist Party allowed Moscow to preserve its hegemony in the countries of East Central Europe. Therefore, when the role of the Communist Parties in East Central Europe ever diminished or deviated from Moscow, the Soviets typically reacted very quickly and forcefully, as was the case in Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Poland in 1980-81.<sup>9</sup> In expansionist terms, the international revolutionary doctrine of the Communists revered East Central Europe as a stronghold of Communist states leading

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<sup>7</sup> Larrabee, Stephen F. Dec 1994. *The Challenge to Soviet Interests in Eastern Europe*, A Project AIR FORCE Report prepared for the USAF, R-3190-AF. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Brown, J.F. Nov 1975. *Relations Between the Soviet Union and Its Eastern Allies: A Survey*, A report prepared for the United States Air Force Project RAND, R-1742-PR. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, p. 7.

<sup>9</sup> Larrabee, pp. 4-5.



the world in revolution. East Central Europe was therefore an asset to the Soviet Union in legitimizing their Communist internationalist policies.<sup>10</sup>

The Soviet Union found economic interests to be a factor in its relationship with East Central Europe; though the effects of this relationship changed over time. Initially, the Soviet Union's economic relationship with East Central Europe was one of exploitation in the favor of Moscow. The Soviets used their East Central European allies much as a mother country would use its colonies, depleting the resources from those countries to fuel the Soviet military-industrial complex. This trade relationship changed toward the end of Soviet rule: Moscow "paid an increasingly steep price to maintain its domination over Eastern Europe." East Central Europe became the benefactor of the situation, receiving oil and other goods at prices well below those in the international market.<sup>11</sup>

Another advantage that the Soviet Union benefited from can be labeled as political/diplomatic. Moscow received support for its foreign policies objectives from an East Central European bloc in international organizations, such as the United Nations. The Soviet Union's interests were

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<sup>10</sup> Brown, p. 8.

<sup>11</sup> Larrabee, p. 6.

represented by the countries of East Central Europe through involvement in peace-keeping operations and other international monitoring arrangements.<sup>12</sup>

SUBSTANTIVE IMPORTANCE OF POST-COLD WAR  
RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY

In addition to the theoretical reasons for examining Russian foreign policy, substantive reasons exist due to the involvement of Russia in many of the current international developments and debates which will have a great impact on the future of European and world affairs. Many of these substantive issues necessarily involve the states of ECE, reinforcing the objective of studying Russian foreign policy in this area. These substantive issues in the study of Russian foreign policy toward ECE result from the political, economic, and security concerns of renewed Russian interests in the region, illustrated in Table 1.

Perhaps the most controversial substantive issue where Russian interests in ECE necessitate the study of Russian foreign policy can be found in the expansion of NATO to include the newly democratic states of ECE. This issue has brought the relationship between ECE and Russia to the attention of the international community. The overnight

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<sup>12</sup> Larrabee, pp. 6-7.

resurrection of Russian interest in ECE beginning in mid-1993, including the diplomatic efforts in the former Yugoslavia, shows the urgency in the region for the states of ECE to join NATO as a solution to what many perceive to be a "security vacuum" in ECE.<sup>13</sup> Aggressive Russian involvement in the affairs of the former Soviet Union, including the dispatch of Russian military forces to many areas, has contributed to calls for NATO's eastward expansion to protect these nations from what appears to many to be neo-imperialist tendencies in Russian foreign policy.<sup>14</sup> Some individuals play down the threat of Russian neo-imperialism, either stating that such a policy is not the case with the present administration or maintaining that Russia does not have the military and economic capabilities to act on such neo-imperialist tendencies where ECE is concerned.<sup>15</sup> But these individuals take a short-sighted approach to the problem, failing to consider the possible eventuality of Russia returning to economic and military prosperity.

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<sup>13</sup> Lynch, Allen. 25 Mar 1994. "After Empire: Russia and Its Western Neighbors." *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 11.

<sup>14</sup> Mihalka, Michael. 26 Aug 1994. "European-Russian Security and NATO's Partnership for Peace." *RFE/RL Research Report*. Vol. 3, No. 33, p. 35.

<sup>15</sup> Brusstar, p. 618.

Russia has emphatically opposed expansion of NATO to ECE without simultaneous admission of Russia: in fact Russia perceives that it must be involved in any security arrangement affecting Europe to ensure that ECE does not become a potential source of danger to Russia's territorial and economic security.<sup>16</sup> This stance follows suit with the statement made by Colonel-General Rodionov, chief of the General Staff Academy, when he outlined what he thought were the goals of Russian foreign policy: one such goal was the neutrality of ECE and the construction of friendly diplomatic relations between the countries of the region and Russia.<sup>17</sup> In this respect, Moscow has stated its preference for the creation of a new collective security arrangement in Europe based on strengthening the CSCE.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, the issue of NATO expansion entails security interests on behalf of the Russian Federation.

Moscow also has a political interest in preventing the expansion of NATO to ECE without the simultaneous inclusion of Russia. Yeltsin and many of Russia's political elites fear "domestic political reverberations" from such an expansion. The inclusion of the countries of ECE in NATO

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<sup>16</sup> Lynch, p. 14.

<sup>17</sup> Brusstar, p. 609.

<sup>18</sup> Lepingwell, John W.R. 10 June 1994. "The Soviet Legacy and Russian Foreign Policy." *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 3, No. 23, p. 6.

without Russia would expose Yeltsin's government to political attacks by military elites and ultra-nationalists.<sup>19</sup> With the democrats already in a precarious position due to the December 1993 elections, real danger to the future of democracy exists in the form of nationalists and military conservatives in Russia's congress. Perhaps an even greater and unspeakable form of political reverberation lies in the future presidential election, where Yeltsin's re-election is far from certain. Within Russian there exists a solid consensus on the opposition of ECE joining NATO; this attitude is caused by a fear of the unknown and, more to the point, a fear of being isolated from Western Europe.<sup>20</sup>

In January 1994, the Clinton administration unveiled its Partnership for Peace plan, an effort to institute a gradual, step-by-step inclusion of the countries of ECE in NATO. This effort, which included Russia in the arrangement, attempted to end Russian concern over the extension of NATO.<sup>21</sup> The debate over the terms of Partnership for Peace rested on claims of "Russian exceptionalism" or special recognition of its status as a world power, culminating in the special protocol agreement

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<sup>19</sup> Lynch, p. 17.

<sup>20</sup> Lynch, p. 14.

<sup>21</sup> Bogomolov, p. 31.

granted to Russia by NATO.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, the Partnership initiative can be seen not as a measure to enhance security, but as a political compromise aimed at appeasing those that wanted to expand NATO, without upsetting those that are opposed, namely Russia.<sup>23</sup> Russia eventually accepted membership in the program to fulfill its interests in the region, that of preventing further expansion of NATO.<sup>24</sup> Russia's objective in entering Partnership for Peace was to ensure an "active involvement in the formulation of a new collective security system based on equal rights and responsibilities for all members."<sup>25</sup> By examining the case of NATO expansion, Russian involvement in European security arrangements, especially pertaining to ECE, is a situation that the international community must accept and consider when conducting foreign relations.<sup>26</sup>

A second substantive issue for the study of Russian foreign policy in ECE involves the possible expansion of the European Union (EU) to include countries of ECE. On 16 December 1991, Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic and Slovakia), Hungary, and Poland signed agreements of association with the EU that provided for unilateral trade

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<sup>22</sup> Lepingwell, p. 6.

<sup>23</sup> Brusstar, p. 617.

<sup>24</sup> Mihalka, p. 34.

<sup>25</sup> Mihalka, p. 41.

<sup>26</sup> Bogomolov, p. 32.

concessions and for possible future admission into the EU. Bulgaria, Romania, and the Baltic states were also seeking to become associate members.<sup>27</sup> EU expansion without special consideration or arrangements for Russian involvement would contribute to growing concerns by Russia of finding themselves economically isolated from the more prosperous countries of Europe. This isolation, as in the case of NATO expansion, would possibly result in domestic political repercussions in Russia. Perhaps equally important, this economic isolation might complicate relations between Russia and the U.S. and Russia and the EU nations, unless compromise solutions are made based on "balance of interests."<sup>28</sup>

Russia's economic interest in the expansion of the EU centers on the country's need for access to the world economy through involvement in international trade.<sup>29</sup> Such involvement is key in repairing the domestic economic problems that Russia is faced with. Russia's best chance for international incorporation is through the countries of ECE. Moscow would like for these nations to become a bridge between East and West. Expansion of the European trading

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<sup>27</sup> Zagorsky, Andrei. Jan 1993. "Russia and Europe." *International Affairs* (Russia), No. 1, p. 46.

<sup>28</sup> Bogomolov, p. 30.

<sup>29</sup> Zagorsky, p. 50.

bloc to include those nations of ECE, thereby excluding Russia, would isolate Russia and feed domestic discontent.

Another substantive issue involving Russian interests in ECE is the Bosnian Civil War. In February 1994 Russia successfully intervened on behalf of the Bosnian Serbs following a NATO ultimatum, using diplomatic means to precipitate the withdrawal of heavy artillery from the area of Sarejevo. Soon thereafter Russia sent Russian peace-keeping forces to Sarejevo to show its support for peace in the region. Russia's successful intervention led to a renewed level of influence in the former Yugoslavia. Any settlement to the "Wars of Yugoslavian Succession" cannot be achieved without Russian agreement on the issue.<sup>30</sup>

Russian diplomacy in the former Yugoslavia had been consistent since the middle of 1992 with the intention of finding a non-military settlement to the crisis. Russian diplomatic moves included: shuttle diplomacy aimed at reaching an agreement that would facilitate the lifting of sanctions against Serbia; a request to sell natural gas to Serbia for "humanitarian reasons" despite economic sanctions; support for the extension of U.N. peace-keeping operations in the region; support for guarantees of human and minority rights for Serbs in Krajina; opposition to NATO

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<sup>30</sup> Lynch, p. 10.



airstrikes against Serbia; and the threat to veto any proposed measures to lift the arms embargo against Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>31</sup>

These measures appear to be part of a larger effort to lay claim to the former Soviet spheres of influence in ECE and along the borders of Russia.<sup>32</sup> Bosnia has given Russia a chance to "reaffirm its role as a great power."<sup>33</sup> Russian interests in the Bosnian Civil War and its diplomatic successes are evidence of the attitude put forth in a recent article: "Without Russia's participation, security in Europe is impossible." The functional, albeit precarious, working relationship between NATO and Russia in Yugoslavia supports this point of view.<sup>34</sup>

The most important political interest for Russia in the Bosnian Civil War is the call for "Slavic brotherhood" sounded by Russian nationalists. The Yeltsin government has had to contend with political appeasement of this extremely vocal group while at the same time trying to maneuver through a diplomatic minefield to reach meaningful solutions to address the violence in the former Yugoslavia. Nationalists call for support of the Serbs in the face of

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<sup>31</sup> Lynch, p. 10.

<sup>32</sup> Lynch, p. 11.

<sup>33</sup> Mihalka, p. 39.

<sup>34</sup> Mihalka, p. 35.

U.N. Security Council measures aimed to penalize the Serbs for their aggression.

A forth substantive area that might directly involve Russia in the affairs of ECE is the possibility of Russian neo-imperialist policies. Russian neo-imperialism is the most pronounced in the near-abroad, where Russia is concerned over the 25 million ethnic Russians living in the other former republics of the Soviet Union. This evidenced imperialism raises many important questions for the future of Russian foreign policy: (1) "Can a liberal Russian state be built if Russia is to retain imperial responsibilities outside its borders?"; (2) "Can an effective foreign policy be constructed in the absence of Russia's hinterland?"<sup>35</sup>; and, (3) Can Russia claim the Soviet Union's superpower status without also accepting some of the imperial ambitions that were inherent in it?<sup>36</sup>

The major issue regarding Russian neo-imperialism is the resurgence of Russian nationalism. Extreme nationalist forces, exemplified by the election of Zhirinovskiy, demonstrate the possibility that Russia could again allow an ideological mission into its foreign policy and security decisions.<sup>37</sup> Ultra-nationalists in Russia maintain that

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<sup>35</sup> Lynch, p. 12.

<sup>36</sup> Lepingwell, p. 1.

<sup>37</sup> Brusstar, p. 611.

their nation has the right to annex foreign territories because of its historic domination over them. This same policy justifies the support of particular groups in a foreign conflict on the basis of "Slavic brotherhood," as in the Serbs in Bosnia. These nationalists are outwardly expansionist and perceive other nations to be anti-Russian, rejecting Kozyrev's stance of Russian involvement in international organizations dominated by the West.<sup>38</sup>

TABLE 1: SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AND  
RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS IN ECE

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES	RUSSIAN INTERESTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NATO Expansion into ECE: or other forms of European collective security, with or without Russian involvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Military/security</li> <li>• Political</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU expansion into ECE: or other forms of economic integration, with or without Russian involvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic</li> <li>• Security</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bosnian Civil War: or other peacekeeping operations in ECE, esp. those involving nationalist/ethnic conflict.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security</li> <li>• Political</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Russian neo-imperialism: attempt to restore the vestiges of the Soviet Empire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic</li> <li>• Political</li> <li>• Military/security</li> </ul>

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<sup>38</sup> Brusstar, p. 612.

This paper will attempt to provide a detailed study of Russian foreign policy characteristics. The following chapter will summarize an extensive survey of Soviet foreignpolicy models and studies, indicating their advantages and weaknesses. In chapter three of this paper, I will provide a guideline for my research design. I will be re-examining a study done by Morton Schwartz using a foreign policy theory by David Wilkinson. In this chapter, I will also analyze the data pertaining to the model found in today's Russia.

CHAPTER 2  
SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY MODELS

As a brief introduction to the following Soviet foreign policy models, several factors that influenced Soviet foreign policy should be discussed. These factors were rooted in both internal and external sources. The internal factors that were inherently found in the Soviet system that affected foreign policy include: the nature of the political and economic system, the presence of domestic interests and individuals seeking advancement in the Soviet system, and the impact of ideological preconceptions and perceptions on the political elite. The external factors affecting Soviet foreign policy from outside the system included: the international structure, the prevailing balance of power, and specific threats posed by other nations or alliances.<sup>39</sup>

GEOPOLITICAL DETERMINISM

Richard Rosser defines geopolitics as the opportunities and limitations on the capabilities of a nation that are caused by: the geographic layout and configuration of

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<sup>39</sup> Nogee, Joseph L. and Robert H. Donaldson. 1992. *Soviet Foreign Policy Since WWII*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., p. 3.

the earth and bodies of water, climate, or natural resources; and, the distribution of people or social institutions or other behavioral patterns. This theory has often been applied to Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union to explain its foreign policy behavior and objectives. The Russian (or Soviet) state expanded in a certain direction or attempted to attain or defend a vital geographic objective.

The most common use of this theory applies to the objective of the Russian state to attain a warm water seaport. Robert J. Kerner in *The Urge to the Sea* explains that Russia's overriding geographic objective was to obtain and maintain routes to the open seas, such was the motive for numerous wars with the Swedes and with the Ottoman Turks. George Cressey also address this motivation in *The Basis of Soviet Strength*: "[t]he history of Russia may be written in terms of its search for ocean ports." Yet he also acknowledges ideological, economic, and strategic considerations involved in Soviet foreign policy.

Absence of geographic boundaries on the Eurasian land mass has also been pointed to in explaining Russian and Soviet foreign policy. George Vernadsky describes Russian history and policies in terms of its lack of defensible boundaries in the East. Robert Strausz-Hupe refutes

this Eastward expansion hypothesis, preferring to explain the central aim of Soviet foreign policy in terms of the defense of the entire country with special emphasis on the geographically vulnerable Western boundaries.

An important limitation to this theory is that the geography of a nation may change over time and with it so do certain opportunities and limitations. These theories therefore cannot serve as fixed determinants of Soviet or Russian foreign policies. The effect of geopolitics on a nation's foreign policy is therefore time dependent and subject to change.<sup>40</sup>

#### IDEOLOGICAL DETERMINISM

One of the more popular and yet controversial theories of Soviet foreign policy is the ideological determinism model. This theory is built around the assumption that Marxism-Leninism was the driving force behind Soviet foreign policy. The Soviet ideology of Marxism-Leninism included: the philosophy of dialectic materialism, historical materialism, the economic doctrine of the political economy, and the political thought of scientific communism.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Rosser, Richard F. 1969. *An Introduction to Soviet Foreign Policy*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall Inc., pp. 17-19.

<sup>41</sup> Adomeit, Hannes. 1982. "Soviet Ideology, Risk-Taking, and Behavior." Reprinted in *Soviet Foreign Policy in a*

Hannes Adomeit describes the several functions of Soviet ideology in the Soviet political system and in its foreign policy. Ideology served an analytical function of shaping the Soviet leadership's perceptions of the international environment. The operational function of ideology lies in the impact of perception, doctrine, and experience on the behavior of the political elite. The third utility of ideology can be described as utopian, revolutionary, or missionary. Ideology provided a justification for the expansion of Soviet power. Marxism-Leninism also performed a legitimizing function in both the domestic and international arenas. The final function that Adomeit describes is the socializing function which involves the impact of ideology on education, experience, and career patterns of the Soviet leadership.<sup>42</sup>

The effects of Marxism-Leninism on Soviet foreign policy are quite numerous and important. Soviet ideology established long-range goals for Soviet behavior in foreign policy. Communist ideology viewed the historic mission of the USSR to be threefold: to build socialism and ultimately Communism in the Soviet Union, to provide assistance to

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*Changing World.* Edited by Robbin F. Laird and Erik P. Hoffman. New York: Aldine Publishing Co., p. 100.

<sup>42</sup> Adomeit, p. 100.



other nations to follow this example, and to encourage and support the struggle for social progress in all other countries. The Soviet leadership was provided with the educational knowledge on which to build their world views<sup>43</sup>; a total distrust of the Western capitalist nations was instilled in Soviet leaders to the point that war between the capitalist and socialist nations was viewed to be inevitable.<sup>44</sup> Marxism-Leninism supplied a method for analyzing foreign policy situations and furnished the strategy and tactics to obtain its ultimate goals. The ideology continually justified the maintenance of power by the Communist Party. Marxism-Leninism allowed the Soviet Communist Party a unique method of control to unify and coordinate the directions of world Communism. Finally, Soviet ideology detailed the technique for the expansion of Soviet influence in international affairs, that of world revolution and insurrection.<sup>45</sup>

The ideological determinism model has also received much criticism. The noted erosion of the role of ideology in the Soviet political system over time has cast doubt upon the strict adherence to the Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

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<sup>43</sup> Rosser, p.35.

<sup>44</sup> Ulam, Adam. 1981. "Russian Nationalities." Reprinted in *The Domestic Context of Soviet Foreign Policy*. Edited by Seweryn Bailer. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, pp 3-16.

<sup>45</sup> Rosser, p. 35.

Communist doctrine became increasingly flexible to meet the policy requirements as the leaders saw fit.<sup>46</sup> Another important aspect of ideology that one must understand is that actions by the Soviet leadership consistent with ideology were not necessarily derived from ideological consideration.<sup>47</sup>

#### MAINTENANCE OF POWER BY THE ELITE OR STATISM

The maintenance of power by the elite or the statism model explains Russian and Soviet foreign policies in terms of the self-interest of the ruling elite. Autocratic Russia and the Soviet Union had both been administered by a separate service class and ruling elite with the use of privileges as rewards. The statism model describes foreign policy not as a tool for improving the nation, but as a means of safeguarding and expanding the privileges of its service class.<sup>48</sup> Soviet foreign policy behavior was therefore motivated by neither the interests of the "Russian nation," nor by the interests of "International Communism,"

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<sup>46</sup> Ulam, pp. 3-16.

<sup>47</sup> Shulman, Marshall D. 1984. "What the Russians Really Want: A Rational Response to the Soviet Challenge." Reprinted in *Soviet Foreign Policy in a Changing World*. Edited by Robbin F. Laird and Erik P. Hoffman. New York: Aldine Publishing Co., p. 939.

<sup>48</sup> Pipes, Richard. 1981. *US-Soviet Relations in the Era of Detente*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, p. 10.

but by the self-interest of the Soviet bureaucracy.<sup>49</sup>

Rosser describes the formula for this model in the form of a simple question that the Soviet elite must answer: "Will such an action increase my political power?"<sup>50</sup>

In *The Dynamics of Soviet Society*, W.W. Rostow maintains that the one consistency in Soviet foreign policy was the priority given by leaders to maintaining and increasing their own political power. The source of this behavior may have been due to the love of personal power or due to the allegiance to and support for the Communist Party as the instrument of foreign policy. A significant effect of this behavior was that the expansion of Soviet power beyond the USSR was subordinated to its own internal regime stability. The rise and fall of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe significantly support this theory.

Kremlinologists noted a permanent struggle for power among the members of the Soviet ruling elite which affected foreign policy decisions.<sup>51</sup> Soviet leaders were strengthened by foreign policy successes and weakened by foreign policy failures.<sup>52</sup> The conduct of foreign policy

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<sup>49</sup> Meyer, Peter. 1959. "The Driving Force Behind Soviet Imperialism." Reprinted in *Readings in Russian Foreign Policy*. Edited by Robert Goldwin. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 678.

<sup>50</sup> Rosser, p. 28.

<sup>51</sup> Rosser, pp. 28-31.

<sup>52</sup> Shulman, p. 940.

therefore was used as an instrument in the political power struggle among the elite. Robert Conquest in *Policy and Power in the USSR* addresses the source of this power struggle. The force of ideology on the minds of Party officials and the differences in their interpretations of that ideology led to disputes among the elite as to the proper ideological course of action.<sup>53</sup>

#### TOTALITARIANISM

The totalitarian model was represented by the total control of all phases of Soviet life by the Soviet regime and ultimately the Communist Party. The effects of totalitarianism on Soviet foreign policy were inherently expansionist and aggressive tendencies, according to the theory. Carl Freidrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski in *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Authoritarianism* attributed to the Soviet Union "the will to conquer the world which is intimately linked to their ideological preoccupations." Hannah Arendt attempts to explain the effect of the totalitarian system in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. A totalitarian leader attempting to gain control over the individual can never allow a normal society with stable laws and institutions to develop. A fictitious world is created

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<sup>53</sup> Rosser, pp. 28-31.

which must be insulated from the outside world. Leaks can only be eliminated by control of the entire world, otherwise the leader and the regime will lose power.

Richard Rosser criticizes this model for several reasons. External aggression of a totalitarian regime does not necessarily stem from totalitarianism. The creation of a fictitious world by the Soviet regime comes from ideology not totalitarianism. Finally, totalitarianism in the USSR became increasingly irrelevant because Soviet leaders lost more and more control over time.<sup>54</sup>

#### RUSSIAN HERITAGE

The influence of Russian heritage on Soviet foreign policy was believed to involve two closely related influences: the historical influences of the Russian state and the distinct characteristics of Russian nationalism. The first of these theories maintains that the history of Russia helped to determine the general social and political structure of the Russian and Soviet state, including the attitudes and motivation in foreign policy.<sup>55</sup> Nicholas Berdyaev in *The Origins of Russian Communism* believes that Bolshevism was the third appearance of Russian autocratic

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<sup>54</sup> Rosser, pp. 26-27.

<sup>55</sup> Rosser, p. 21.

imperialism (the first was under Muscovite Tsardom and the second was under Peter the Great). The system was characterized by a strong, centralized, and militarized state with a dictator at the top. Throughout its history as a nation-state, Russian regimes have displayed an unusual reliance on and fascination with force as an important element in Russian political culture.<sup>56</sup> Edward Crankshaw also believes that Russian heritage had a specific effect on Soviet foreign policy. The Soviet inherited an empire not a country. They continued the autocratic Russian dictum of domination of the weak by the strong in the self-interest of the strong. Motivation in foreign policy continued with the same three drives: strategic security, economic prosperity, and messianic expansionism.<sup>57</sup>

Alvin Rubenstein lists five influences from autocratic Russia which influenced the Soviet foreign policy concept. First, geographic characteristics of the traditional Russian state facilitated expansion due to the necessity of strategic boundaries and access to the open sea. Second, the Russian political elite never questioned the insight of expansionism. Third, The Russian empire survived because of

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<sup>56</sup> Simes, Dimitri K. "The Politics of Defense in Brezhnev's Era." Reprinted in *Soviet Decisionmaking and National Security*. London: George Allen and Unwin, p. 82.

<sup>57</sup> Rosser, pp. 21-23.

its cohesion into one large geographic entity, incapable of being conquered by other powers. Fourth, strategic considerations traditionally took precedent over economic influences. Finally, foreign policy decisions of the old Russian empire involved only a few, powerful individuals; public opinion and moral considerations were far removed from the process.<sup>58</sup>

Closely related to the historical experience theory regarding Soviet foreign policy is the Russian nationalism theory. Rosser explains that theories of national character assert that "members of a given culture share certain common ways of managing their emotional drives and meeting the tensions or frustrations generated by their society."<sup>59</sup> Russian national character or nationalism, often labeled the "Great Russian" character, is believed to have been the driving force behind Soviet foreign policy.

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<sup>58</sup> Rubenstein, Alvin Z. 1992. *Soviet Foreign Policy Since WWII: Imperial and Global*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, p. 9-11.

<sup>59</sup> Rosser, p. 23.

Geoffrey Gorer points out that the Great Russian tendency to swing violently from submissiveness to violence generated certain political maxims:

1. The elite and masses were highly suspicious of the outside world.
2. The elite and masses felt the need to expand continually until meet by a superior force.
3. When force was met, strategic retreat was highly acceptable.
4. The admission of error by the Russians in ideological matters was impossible.

Pre-revolutionary Russian nationalism was typical of the psychology of underprivileged nations which had to struggle for independence or national survival. The Russian national consciousness possessed a feeling of vulnerability and constant threat which accompanied Russia's almost continuous expansion. National security was thought to be obtained through expansion of state powers and borders. Nationalism was the strongest element of Russian political culture throughout its history. The ultimate ambition of the Russian nationalist movement was to unite within their state all territories inhabited by Eastern Slavs.<sup>60</sup> The influence of Russian nationalism in the Soviet era is quite evident in the 1930s. Soviet nationalism contained a

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<sup>60</sup> Ulam, p. 4.



distinct Russian character: the Soviet state was regarded as the highest stage of Russia's historical development.<sup>61</sup>

Zbigniew Brzezinski believes that Russian history and its nationalism produced an imperial consciousness among the "Great Russian national core." The territorial insecurity felt by the Russian people created expansionist tendencies in the Soviet imperial system. The Soviet Union in many ways is the political expression of Russian nationalism. Russian history is one of sustained territorial expansion, the consequence of which is the emergence of an imperial consciousness among the Great Russian people. Before the Bolshevik revolution, this consciousness was accounted for by religious messianism and national survival. During the Soviet period, ideological designs were the evidence of imperial aspiration and drive. Traits of this imperial expansionism in Soviet policy include the suppression of national self-assertion by non-Russians, the readiness to use military force to protect Russian or Soviet territorial gains, the co-optation of cultures of acquired territories, and the inherent paranoia by the Russian people of possible attack or invasion.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Ulam, p. 8.

<sup>62</sup> Brzezinski, Zbigniew. 1984. "The Soviet Union: Her Aims, Problems, and Challenges to the West." Reprinted in *Soviet Foreign Policy in a Changing World*. Edited by Robbin F. Laird and Erik P. Hoffman. New York: Aldine Publishing

Other scholars disagree with these explanations of Soviet foreign policy. Rosser is quick to explain that these theories of national character imply that the Soviets were incapable of independent, rational behavior and that subconscious impulses drove all their actions.<sup>63</sup> Karpovich attempts to dispel the notion of Russian character as a source of external expansion. He draws parallels to other empires to support his position. He also maintains that autocratic and Bolshevik aims in expansion were quite different--no historical continuity between the two can be explained.<sup>64</sup>

#### BALANCE OF POWER OR *REALPOLITIK*

According to the balance of power model of foreign policy, Russian and Soviet foreign policies reacted to the realities of international politics and their own national security. Balance of power reflects the tendency of countries to create alliances to increase their own military or political security. The ultimate objective of balance of power politics is to match power against power to

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Co., pp. 3-6.

<sup>63</sup> Rosser, p. 26.

<sup>64</sup> Karpovich, Michael. 1959. "Russian Imperialism or Communist Aggression." Reprinted in *Readings in Russian Foreign Policy*. Edited by Robert Goldwin. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 657-66.

deliberately deprive a nation or another alliance from securing international or regional dominance.

Several rules and assumptions are involved in balance of power. The first rule is that nations must be willing to utilize power against any other state seeking regional, continental, or global hegemony. States must also be capable of ascertaining fluctuations in the relative distribution of power. Third, nations must be willing to enter into alliances with any state sharing a common enemy, regardless of their other differences. The balance of power model assumes that states do not underestimate or overestimate the power of their adversaries or misinterpret the intentions of other governments. The model also implies that political leaders nations that are responsible for foreign policy formulation and implementation act in a rational manner.<sup>65</sup>

Therefore according to this model, the Soviet state conducted foreign policy just as any other nation in the international system, with emphasis on security issues. Frederick L. Schuman in *Government in the Soviet Union* believes that like all rulers, Soviet leaders wanted to achieve security against the "hostile designs" of other nations: they merely reacted to circumstances beyond their control. Ideology was only important in so far as it

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<sup>65</sup> Noguee and Donaldson, pp. 9-12.

control. Ideology was only important in so far as it justified the distrust and hatred of Western nations. Barrington Moore in *Soviet Politics-The Dilemma of Power* explains that the USSR showed typical reactions to changes in the distribution of international political power. No basic difference existed between the USSR and other nations in that balance of power politics are mandatory for survival. Ideology only affected the way and the timing of Soviet reactions.<sup>66</sup>

#### NATIONAL INTEREST

Another model used in explaining Soviet foreign policy is the national interest model. According to this model, the national interests of a country drive its foreign policy. These national interests are imprecise and malleable, and can be used to justify any neutrality, use of force, war, or alliance. Foreign policy decisions are therefore responses to concrete situations where national leaders act vis-a-vis constraints placed upon them by domestic and international pressures. This model assumes rational behavior by national elites: leaders undertake a detailed examination of the nature of the situation, the range of options, and their consequences and arrive at a

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<sup>66</sup> Rosser, pp. 19-21.

probable reason for their choice. It should be noted that, in the national interest model, foreign policy announcements or actions are not always consistent with what the leadership would like to do. Soviet national interests were dominant over ideology as the primary foreign policy motivation. Also, Soviet actions were more compatible with the pursuit of national interests than with any expansionist tendencies created by the structure of the Soviet system.<sup>67</sup> This model therefore exposes and incorporates the political, economic, and military limitations that must be considered in evaluating Soviet foreign policy.

The Soviet Union did have national interests even though their ideology claimed to transcend these interests in the name of international Communism; the Soviet system could not avoid distinct Russian concerns. This problem led to many conflicts between Soviet national interests and Communist internationalist interests, including the policy of "socialism in one country," the signing of the Nazi-Soviet defense pact on the eve of W.W.II, and the splits in the Communist bloc from Soviet influence due to nationalism (Yugoslavia and China). But perhaps the most convincing example of the overriding importance of national interests involves the activities of world Communists; the

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<sup>67</sup> Shulman, p. 938-40.

national interest of the Soviet Union, not the desire to spread socialism, dominated these activities. The primary task of foreign Communists was to defend and support the USSR, rather than advance the cause of world revolution.<sup>68</sup>

The Soviet national interests were those of any Russian regime, the most immediate being national survival. Cyril Black describes Russian security objectives as comprising four areas. The first objective was the stabilization of borders by defeating neighboring powers, by extending control over uninhabited areas, and by utilizing natural boundaries for defense. The second goal of the Russian or Soviet regime was the security and preservation of favorable conditions for economic growth. Third, Russian or Soviet national interests included the unification of territories considered Russian (through dynastic claims, religious affinity, or national claims) if they could add to Russian or Soviet strength. Finally, participation in alliances and in international organizations to promote international security was a part of Russian or Soviet national interests.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Ulam, p. 6.

<sup>69</sup> Rosser, pp. 31-35.

## OVERVIEW OF SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY MODELS AND BEHAVIOR

These foreign policy models all claim to explain the underlying motivations and characteristics of Soviet foreign policy. However, many scholars believe that a single one of these theories are sufficient to explain Soviet behavior over the entire course of its history. Richard Rosser claims that three of the models do fairly well in explaining the foreign policy of the Soviet state at any given time: the maintenance of power by the elite, the preservation of the national interest and the impact of Marxism-Leninism.<sup>70</sup>

Perhaps the most significant reason for the necessity of multiple explanations for Soviet foreign policy is the fact that many changes in the internal Soviet system and the external international environment occurred over the course of its history. Noguee and Donaldson outline many of these internal and external changes that affected Soviet foreign policy up through the 1980s. The internal changes within the Soviet system included:

1. the political transition from totalitarianism to oligarchy to fragmented polity;
2. the failure of the command economy; and,
3. the differences in leader personalities.

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<sup>70</sup> Rosser, p. 28.

The external changes in the international system included:

1. the changes in the international system from a bipolar to a multipolar dimension;
2. the growth of polycentrism in the international Communist movement;
3. the development of military technology of mass destruction; and,
4. the achievement of military parity between the US and the USSR and the collapse of the USSR as a superpower.<sup>71</sup>

Because of the changing nature of the international system and the internal dynamics of the Soviet regime, a flexible theory of foreign policy is necessary which would provide a clearer picture of Soviet foreign policy. Also, due to the downfall of the Soviet regime and the emergence of a seemingly democratic state in its place, a theory for analyzing post-Soviet Russian foreign policy which accounts for such an important change is also necessary. In the next chapter, I will describe such a theory in comparative foreign policy analysis and discuss how it was applied to the Soviet Union in the past.

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<sup>71</sup> Noguee and Donaldson, p. 3.



CHAPTER 3  
METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

In surveying the literature on Soviet foreign policy, one study in particular stood out for its combination of multiple factors in explaining foreign policy motivation and behavior. Morton Schwartz's *The "Motive Forces" of Soviet Foreign Policy, A Reappraisal* is a study, based on David Wilkinson's theory for comparative foreign policy analysis, of the explanation of Soviet foreign policy over the course of its development.

WILKINSON'S FRAMEWORK FOR FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS

David Wilkinson explains that the foreign policy of any nation can be best explained in terms of three distinct indicators:

1. its "power" or capabilities;
2. the cognizant, policy-making will of its political leaders; and,
3. certain residual factors like political culture, political institutions, and political processes.

Of these factors, Wilkinson describes power as the most important. "Strength in capability resources makes ambitious projects feasible and increases their chances of success; weakness constrains, restrains, and limits choices

and independence." Political "will" or leadership he ranks second in importance. The presence of a dynamic, aggressive leadership better explains the overall theme of policy and abrupt changes in certain policies. In the absence of a strong and assertive leadership, residual factors such as historical traditions and domestic political factors become more decisive.<sup>72</sup>

#### SCHWARTZ'S APPLICATION OF WILKINSON'S MODEL TO USSR

Morton Schwartz utilized Wilkinson's theory in his analysis of Soviet foreign policy, breaking the model down into its three components. In the first chapter, Schwartz analyzed the power, or capability, of the Soviet Union and its impact on the nation's foreign policy. The Soviet Union in 1968 possessed a great military-industrial complex with nuclear parity with the United States, a strong gross national product (GNP), a large military budget, and advanced military technology. But Schwartz notes that this position of military and economic strength was relatively new to the USSR. He examines the historical power of Russia just before the Bolshevik revolution and Soviet power before, during, and after World War II. Schwartz finds that

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<sup>72</sup> Schwartz, Morton. 1970-71. *The "Motive Forces" of Soviet Foreign Policy*. Monograph Series in World Affairs, University of Denver, Volume 8, Monograph # 2, p. 1.

for most its history the "policy choices of Soviet leaders have [had] been shaped by the absence of world power than by its presence."<sup>73</sup>

In examining the impact of Soviet political leadership, Schwartz observes that the Soviet political system made it possible for a strong political leader to exert a decisive influence on Soviet foreign policy. But after examining the leadership and behavior of the USSR's first three dictators, Schwartz finds that political will or personality had rarely, but with few notable exceptions, been a crucial factor in Soviet foreign policy behavior.<sup>74</sup>

Schwartz emphasizes that power and will together are inadequate measures of Soviet foreign policy motivation. He believes that two residual factors are necessary components of Soviet foreign policy: the political personality or psychology of the Party leadership and the needs of the Soviet political system. Schwartz describes the former as the operational code of the Soviet leaders, better explained as one's image of the outside world. The operational code created and supported preconceptions and perceptions in foreign policy.

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<sup>73</sup> Schwartz, pp. 2-12.

<sup>74</sup> Schwartz, pp. 13-24.

The Soviet operational code included the impact of Russian heritage and the impact of Soviet ideology, incorporating two of the models mentioned in the previous chapter. Schwartz explains the influence of Russian heritage by the important impact of numerous invasions of Russia. Society had to be organized for continuous military defense, meaning that the government had to be in control of every aspect of society. This societal necessity influences Russian attitudes and expectations, creating a sense of national insecurity and fear of the external world. Schwartz explains that Marxism-Leninism was important because the Soviet concept of security shifted to being ideological, rather than the territorial approach of the Russian state. Security for the Soviet Union became dependent upon the destruction of capitalism as a world system and the spread of world Communism. According to Schwartz, this operational code, or belief system, was imposed by Russian experience and reinforced by Soviet ideology; this included the Soviet insecurity and fear regarding Western nations. In turn the operational code significantly influenced the way in which the Soviet political system ("will") saw and utilized Soviet capabilities ("power").

The second residual factor that Schwartz finds important in fully understanding Soviet foreign policy is the internal needs of the Soviet system. Within this area, he finds the overriding concern for the Soviet elites was to protect their own domestic authority by eliminating instability which complicated the protection of their national security.<sup>75</sup>

In the conclusions of his study, Schwartz explains that the minimal interest of the Soviet government was the survival and protection of Soviet interests. The basic problem is how to define the Soviet concept of security. The major elements of Soviet foreign policy during its existence up to the time of the study were found to be:

1. the USSR's relative power superiority in Europe;
2. a historically and ideologically-rooted sense of insecurity;
3. the impulses and personal psychology of Joseph Stalin during his reign and their lasting effects after his death; and,
4. the domestic requirements of a weakened and insecure dictatorship in maintaining control.

Schwartz also explains that the increased power and capabilities of the Soviet Union during the 1960s assuaged the levels of hostility and fear in the nation.

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<sup>75</sup> Schwartz, pp. 25-37.

Schwartz concludes that Soviet foreign policy leaned toward caution and restraint, revealing a strong element of *Realpolitik*, or opportunism. But he also finds a strong revolutionary perspective of events, an anti-capitalist antipathy, and a continued progressive overtone. Schwartz explains that this ideological element has been weakened by certain developments. The dangers of nuclear weaponry made necessary agreements with Western enemies, compromising ideological dictum. The realization that revolutionary activity could provoke a major war, threatening Soviet interests, led to the withdrawal of overt support of such activities by the Soviet Union. The divisions within the world Communist movement largely due to nationalism damaged the CPSU's domination of the Communist world and its ideological legitimacy.<sup>76</sup>

#### WILKINSON'S THEORY APPLIED TO TODAY'S RUSSIA

The Communist system in Russia is no more; the ideology of Marxism-Leninism has no place in foreign policy formulation today. A newly emerging democratic state is taking form along with a distinctly Russian foreign policy. This change in the political landscape of Russia necessitates reexamination of Schwartz's study. By

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<sup>76</sup> Schwartz, pp. 38-41.

analyzing the power, will, and residual factors of Wilkinson's theory along with their interaction with one another, a better understanding of the seemingly ambiguous and incoherent foreign policy that Russia has been pursuing can be achieved.

#### Power

The power and capability component of the foreign policy model involves two areas of measurement. The power of a nation can be measured by its economic strength and military might, two areas in which today's Russia is severely lacking. Russia's economic performance from 1991 to 1994 has been one of severe decline and full of instability, removing it from any sort of internationally competitive markets. Real gross domestic product (RGDP) fell dramatically in those years. A U.S. State Department report highlights this economic data:

TABLE 2\*

Economic indicator	1992	1993	1994
Real GDP (1990 prices)	459 <sup>1</sup>	409	344
Real GDP growth	-12 %	-11 %	-16 %
Real per capita GDP (1990 prices)	3,095	2,763	2,332

<sup>1</sup> All figures are in billions of rubles unless otherwise noted.

From 1990 to 1994, Russia's RGNP fell by a cumulative 47 percent--greater than that experienced by the United States during the Great Depression.<sup>77</sup> From 1991 to 1994, Russia's level of industrial production had declined by nearly 50 percent as well.<sup>78</sup> Russia therefore has become highly dependent on international aid in attempting to stabilize the nation's economy. From 1990 to 1993, the United States committed \$13 billion to Russia. Between 1988 and 1993, commitments from other nations measured \$115 billion.<sup>79</sup>

Military operations in Chechnya beginning in December 1994 have added significant strain on Russia's economy. Estimates from February 1995 claim that the current expenditures for the Chechnya operation were around \$5 billion, or two and a half percent of Russia's GNP. In December 1994, Russia's total defense expenditures jumped from 4.1 percent to 6.6 percent of GNP.<sup>80</sup>

The Russian military since the dissolution of the Soviet empire in 1991 has plummeted from one the most

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<sup>77</sup> "Russia: 1994 Country Report on Economic Policy and Trade Practices, " Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, U.S. Department of State. Available Telnet:

"gopher://dosfan.lib.uic.edu:70/0f-1%3a22759%3aRussia"

<sup>78</sup> *FBIS-Central Eurasia*, 8 March 1995, p. 22.

<sup>79</sup> "Russia." 1994. In *CIA World Factbook* [Online] Available Telnet:

"http://www.ic.gov/94fact/country/200.html."

<sup>80</sup> *FBIS-Central Eurasia*, 20 Feb 1995, p. 36.



respected military establishments to one the most decimated armed forces among industrial nations. Strategically, Russia's inherited forces from the Soviet Union were inadequately configured and deployed for Russia's new security needs. Because the Soviet Union was strategically opposed to the West, most of its front line military equipment was deployed west of the Russian Federation. Russia lost much of its prime fighting equipment to its neighbors in Ukraine and Belorus when the union collapsed. For example, just above half of the former Soviet air force remained within the post-Cold War Russian territory. Russia also lost four of every five repair facilities for armored fighting vehicles. As a result, by early 1994 only 20 percent of Russia's inherited tanks remained serviceable.<sup>81</sup>

Internally, the economic downfall of the Russian Federation has reduced military spending and impoverished the armed services. As a result, Russia's force development has come to a winding halt. In the mid-1980s, the Soviet military consistently added around 450 aircraft a year. In 1993 and 1994 combined the Russian air force procured 23 total aircraft. Force modernization has become economically impossible as well. Therefore, Russian is now

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<sup>81</sup> Lambeth, Benjamin S. March/April 1994. "Russia's Wounded Military." *Foreign Affairs*. Volume 74, Number 2, p. 88.

falling behind in military technology, unable to keep up with the new generation of American weaponry. Russian military readiness and training has also been hit hard by economic privation. Since 1992, the Russian Finance ministry has failed to allot the necessary funds for minimum fuel quotas needed for training exercises. Therefore, pilot proficiency is down and aircraft accidents are drastically high. A divisional level ground force exercise has not been performed since 1992 and the navy's surface fleet rarely leaves port. The conscription system in Russia, the historically strong resource of the nation because of its ability to utilize the nation's manpower, has collapsed with 75 percent of young service-aged men evading the draft.<sup>82</sup> Defense Minister Pavel Grachev himself admits that Russia cannot maintain a professional army under the present economic conditions.<sup>83</sup>

This extensive decline in the former Red Army has left the Russian Federation with very little conventional military strength. Benjamin Lambeth seriously believes, "Today it is unlikely that Russia, with its decimated and poorly supported conventional forces, could mount a large-scale cross-border operation against a well-equipped

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<sup>82</sup> Lambeth, pp. 89-90.

<sup>83</sup> *FBIS-Central Eurasia*, 1 March 1995, p. 26.

opponent." In recent months the world has witnessed the deficiencies of the Russian military in its attempt to suppress the Chechen move for autonomy. Lambeth excellently characterizes Russian military forces involved there as "a ragtag band of hastily assembled conscripts who were not resourceful enough to evade the draft, led by underequipped, undertrained, and demoralized officers who freely admitted that they did not understand why they were there."<sup>84</sup> The only remaining vestige of superpower status is the thousands of nuclear weapons that are under close watch by those inside and outside of Russia.

The evidence makes it quite apparent that Russia since 1991 has lacked any significant power, economic or military, in world affairs. Prospects for the immediate future are quite dim for that power to be rebuilt sometime soon. The transition to a market economy is one that will severely strain and test the nation's economic viability; this transition will take several years if not some decades to complete. Because military reform and rebuilding is dependent on the nation's economy, the Russian military too will need significant time to bring itself back to the standards of an international superpower. This lack of

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<sup>84</sup> Lambeth, pp. 90-91.

power later becomes important in examining Russia's involvement in the key issues facing it in ECE.

#### Political will and leadership

In examining the role of political will and leadership in the foreign policy process of the new Russian Federation, a brief account of the transition of the foreign policy institutions from the Soviet Union to the Russian Federation should be undertaken. In November 1990, Andrei Kozyrev was appointed the new Russian Foreign Minister with the task of developing new approaches to the international environment, but Boris Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation, still maintained control over policy. Richard Sakwa believes that this is the point where "Soviet and Russian foreign policies began to diverge."<sup>85</sup> Institutional and policy conflicts emerged between the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation. Russia's increasing influence over Soviet foreign policy decisions signaled that "Russia intended to be reckoned with as a great power with its own distinct foreign policy."<sup>86</sup> During the disintegration of the Soviet system during the latter months of 1991, Yeltsin

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<sup>85</sup> Sakwa, Richard. 1993. *Russian Politics and Society*. New York: Routledge, p. 286.

<sup>86</sup> Sakwa, p. 287.

extended Russian control over Soviet institutions and placed himself in direct control of the new foreign ministry.

Structural changes were implemented in foreign policy formulation to fit the new democratic pluralism in Russia itself. The Communist Party was no longer in control of foreign policy; the task was transferred to the state. Conflict and debate characterized the Russian foreign policy establishment, reflecting the new pluralism in Russian politics. Several bureaucratic bodies and personnel became involved in the formulation of foreign policy. With the creation of the Russian Ministry of Defense in May 1992, a bureaucratic pattern of conflict emerged between the foreign and defense ministries over the control of foreign policy. The Russian parliament, beginning in 1992, became an increasingly important player with an increasingly assertive line in foreign policy matters. Yet, while various interests sought to stake their claim in the foreign policy process, policy development remained firmly in the hands of President Yeltsin and his ministers.<sup>87</sup>

The challenge that faced the new Russian leadership, and perhaps still does today, is to redefine Russian national interests in the new international and geopolitical post-Cold War world. To define its national interest,

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<sup>87</sup> Sakwa, pp. 290-91.

Russia must first define its own nation<sup>88</sup>: will Russia become an aspiring member of the democratic nations of the world, or return to the imperialist state-tendencies of its past? Each case involves distinctly different national interest objectives. Richard Sakwa suggests that the Russian Federation has been following the track toward democracy, but one must caution against a reversal of fortune and a neo-imperial regression.

This debate over the direction of Russian foreign policy has produced two different camps that have battled over influencing Yeltsin's final say in foreign policy matters. The first of these groups can be described as the liberal-democrats, headed by Andrei Kozyrev. This group held dominance over foreign policy direction in 1992, the first year of post-Communist foreign policy in Russia. The liberal-democrats call for the full reintegration of Russia into the world economy and the system of international institutions. They advocate good relations with the other newly independent republics within the context of Russia's own national security interests. This group, firmly oriented toward the West, has been characterized by:

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<sup>88</sup> Sakwa, p. 292.

[E]conomic recovery, human and civic rights, democracy, reintegration into the world economy, and Russia as a new model great power concerned with global economic, environmental, and nuclear security in a community of democratic states.<sup>89</sup>

The line of the liberal-democrats has been strongly attacked by the national-patriots, who in recent years have gained increasing influence over foreign policy due strongly to the continued economic depression and victories in the legislative elections in December 1993. The national-patriot line in the debate emphasizes the "great power interests of the Russian state." These advocates maintain that institutions of power within Russia should be strengthened to ensure the viability and irreversibility of the democratic reforms. National-patriots attack the liberal-democrat platform of "universal human values" as an extremely weak position for the basis of foreign policy. They believe that Russian foreign policy should "combine elements of democracy, patriotism, great power interests, and national consensus while avoiding narrow nationalism and xenophobia." Also involved in the movement are elements of Pan-Slavism and the belief that Russia must maintain its military power.

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<sup>89</sup> Sakwa, p. 294.

By examining the political debate over foreign policy, including the ability of these groups to persuade Yeltsin's foreign policy direction, one can better understand the role of the political leadership in Russian foreign policy. Given the diminished power and capabilities of the Russian state, political will becomes a more important factor in foreign policy motivation and formulation.

#### Residual Factors

As Morton Schwartz states in his analysis of Soviet foreign policy, the components of power and will are insufficient to fully understand the foreign policy of a nation. One must examine certain "residual factors" which play an important role in the way the political leadership views its power and position in the world around it. The first of these factors involves the framing of international and domestic events in the context of a nation's own unique historical experiences. Under the Soviet system, Russian heritage and Marxist-Leninist ideology were influential in shaping the preconceptions and perceptions of the Soviet elite. In today's Russia, Russian heritage remains an important factor. But one must also understand the impact of the collapse of the Soviet empire and the loss of great power status on the conduct of foreign policy.



The influence of Russian heritage on foreign policy are becoming more evident and increasingly disturbing for the future of democracy in the new Russian Federation. Many of these themes are discussed in the previous chapter under the Russian heritage model of Soviet foreign policy. Dimitri Simes, in an article in *Foreign Affairs*, describes the certain evidence of reemerging familiar themes in Russian history. He claims that throughout its history, the Russian population has been unable to develop a political culture of compromise necessary in the development of democracy. This lack of compromise became quite clear following the independence of Russia with the adversarial relationship between President Yeltsin and the Supreme Soviet, dominated by the former Communists. For almost two years the two political institutions battled over policy and power. In the end, Yeltsin resorted to the use of military force to enforce the dissolution of the legislative body. This highlights another theme from Russia's past, the readiness to use force to solve political problems and enforce a solution.

For a period of several months, Yeltsin ruled by presidential decree, taking full advantage of his monopoly of state power by attempting to eradicate all vestiges of the Soviet and Communist system. One could easily see the

historical theme of authoritarian rule, albeit temporarily, reemerging on the political scene. The Russian people have always looked to charismatic and decisive leaders for leadership, especially during difficult times.<sup>90</sup> Yeltsin proved himself to be one of these leaders during his battle for the independence of the Russian Federation and the dismantling of the Soviet Union. One cannot forget his stalwart stand atop a Soviet tank in the midst of an unsuccessful reactionary coup in August of 1991.

This short period of rule by decree ended in December 1993 with a new round of elections to the new Russian legislature. Nationalists found their way into a strong position of power in the new congress. Much debate has taken place over these elections. Some view them as an indication of Russian neo-imperialism within the Russian society. This certainly feeds into Zbigniew Brzezinski's idea of the "Great Russian" consciousness. Others view the election as a protest against the quick pace of reforms, especially its difficult impact on the Russian population.

Also involved is the second element of historical experience, the impact of the fall of the Soviet Union on the collective psychology of the Russian nation. The end of

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<sup>90</sup> Simes, Dimitri. Jan/Feb 1994. "The Return of Russian History." *Foreign Affairs*. Volume 73, Number 1, pp. 67-82.

the Cold War and the disintegration of the USSR resulted in the destruction of the military, the loss of an alliance system, the end of superpower status, the loss of an empire, and the movement of Western borders closer to Moscow.<sup>91</sup>

This sudden loss of power and national security has severely affected the foreign policy of the Russian elite. Russia has been desperately claiming that she is still a "Great Power" in the world, even though almost all elements of her power have been lost; the absence of military and economic power has made it quite difficult for the political leaders to assert the "Great Power" status of the nation.

The other residual factor necessary for the understanding of Russian foreign policy is the effect of domestic constraints upon the political leadership. The Russian Federation is proceeding down the road of democratic development, but has a long, difficult path to travel. Therefore, the domestic constraints that Russian politicians confront involve those faced in other democracies, as well as the dangerous elements found in unstable political systems. In an article for *Foreign Affairs*, Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev comments on the role of public opinion in Russia's emerging democracy:

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<sup>91</sup> Lambeth, p. 88.

For the first time, the policies of Russian reformers and their friends abroad must be pursued taking into account how these policies are perceived inside Russia.<sup>92</sup>

Besides having to account for domestic opinion in foreign policy decisions, dangers of nationalism and a weakened military pose important domestic constraints to foreign policy formulation. With the election of a very nationalist legislature in December 1993, Russia's foreign policy has become more assertive and independent shifting away from its previous pro-Western slant. President Yeltsin and Foreign Minister Kozyrev had to take a stronger stand and distance themselves from Western interests in the new political climate. Kozyrev has been quite adamant in cautioning Western nations to consider the impact of their actions on the domestic political situation within Russia. The West should recognize Russia's role as a "Great Power" and player in European affairs, including its right to assert an independent foreign policy.<sup>93</sup>

Another domestic threat besides nationalism is affecting Russian foreign policy--the growing military discontent. Lambeth observes, "Continued deterioration within the ranks has added further humiliation to the bitter

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<sup>92</sup> Kozyrev, Andrei. May/June 1994. "The Lagging Partnership." *Foreign Affairs*. Volume 73, Number 3, p. 61.

<sup>93</sup> Kozyrev, pp. 61-62.

memory of the USSR's loss of empire, raising hard questions about whether the resultant disaffection might lead to a military backlash."<sup>94</sup> So far the military has attempted to stay out of politics, but growing dissatisfaction could change that. A poll conducted involving 615 officers, 60 of whom were generals, illustrates the military's disappointment with its place in Russian society and with Russia's place in the world. A strong majority displayed a preference for a national leader with a "firm hand," believing that little short of authoritarian rule could bring an end to the chaos in Russia. They agree that the nation's main foreign policy goal should be to reestablish Russia as an internationally respected great power.<sup>95</sup>

Russia's military and economy are in shambles: with the downfall of the Soviet Union, the only element of military or economic power left in Russia is their inherited nuclear forces. The political will of the Yeltsin administration began with a pro-Western orientation as the liberal-democrats were dominant in the foreign policy scene. With the slow pace of economic stabilization and conversion and the loss of domestic popularity for the liberal-democrats, a more assertive and independent foreign

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<sup>94</sup> Lambeth, p. 86.

<sup>95</sup> Lambeth, p. 92.

policy line is being taken to accommodate the growing domestic support for the national-partriot line. Therefore, Russian political leaders have been conducting their foreign policy from a position of weakness, relying mostly upon Russia's historical legacy as a "Great Power" and upon the threat to democratic development including nationalist extremism and military backlash.

## CONCLUSION

In examining Russian foreign policy toward ECE, I noticed that Russia seems to have incorporated its policy toward this region into its overall European policy. Moscow has renounced its historical claims of domination in this region and has sought to renew relations with the East European nation on a new footing of partnership and bilateral agreements. The substantive issues of NATO expansion, EU expansion, the Bosnian civil war, and Russian neo-imperialism, all necessarily involve West European, as well as, East European nations. Wilkinson's model provides an understanding of the relationship between power, political will, and residual factors, such as historical experience and domestic constraints, in the development of Russian foreign policy to address these substantive issues.