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THE END OF HISTORY OR POLITICS AS USUAL?

UNITED STATES-RUSSIAN RELATIONS IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

By

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Abstract

The End of History or Politics as Usual?

United States-Russian Relation in the post-Cold War era

David T. Chamberlain

Throughout the period of the Cold War, the theory of realism was the dominant international relations theory used to explain the behavior of states on the world stage. However, in the period following the collapse of the Soviet Union, many began to call into question the ability of realist theory to account for these new developments in the international system, thus putting the once dominant theory on the defensive. In the mid-1990s as relations between the United States and the Russian Federation began to sour over issues such as NATO expansion, some began to wonder if they had been too hasty in discrediting realist theory and perhaps the realists had been correct after all. In this paper I analyze several key issues in United States-Russian relations which have arisen in the post-Cold War era as a means of testing the explanatory power of realist, liberal, and constructivist theories. It is my observation that while alternative theories are able to offer some insights into the relationship between the two states, it is the theory of realism which is best able to account for these developments. Russian action throughout this period could best be described as balancing behavior, very much in keeping with the predictions put forth by realist theory. Based on my empirical findings I offer some insights into the future the United States' relationship with the Russian Federation along with some thoughts on what policies would best serve the interests of the United States while also reducing the likelihood of conflict with our Russian counterparts.

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Chapter I

Introduction

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, much speculation emerged in regard to what the post-Cold War international order would entail. Many felt that a new era of history was unfolding and that the once prevalent international relations (IR) theory of realism, which viewed international politics as a perpetual struggle for power amongst state actors, was rapidly becoming irrelevant. The United States and the Russian Federation (RF) appeared to be cooperating, and many adherents to the theories of liberalism and constructivism began to call into question the ability of realist theory to account for these new developments in the international system. Realists subsequently rebuffed such claims, arguing that the United States at this time was merely acting in a manner characteristic of unchecked powers,¹ and that given time, other states would attempt to check the actions of the United States,² or as John Mearsheimer put it, “disorder” would once again be “restored.”³ Though realist scholars disagreed amongst themselves over when these attempts to restore equilibrium to the balance of power would take place, the consensus was that such attempts would inevitably occur.⁴

As relations between the United States and the Russian Federation began to sour in the mid-1990s over issues such as the eastward expansion of NATO, some began to

¹ Waltz, Kenneth N. "Structural Realism after the Cold War." *International Security* 25. No. 1 (Summer 2000): 5-41. http://www.columbia.edu/itc/sipa/U6800/readings-sm/Waltz_Structural%20Realism.pdf (Accessed December 27, 2012)

² See Waltz, "Structural Realism after the Cold War"; http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/international_security/v024/24.1.wohlforth.pdf (Accessed March 30, 2013)

³ Mearsheimer, John J. "Disorder Restored," In *Rethinking America's Security: Beyond Cold War to New World Order*. Edited by Graham T. Allison and Gregory F. Treverton. New York: Norton, 1992. 213-237

⁴ See again Waltz, "Structural Realism After the Cold War."

wonder if the realists had been correct after all, giving some legitimacy back to the theory that was coming to be widely discredited. It is my intent to analyze several key issues in United States-Russian relations which have arisen in the post-Cold War era in order to test the ability of realist theory to account for these developments in the relationship between the two states. Thus the question which I seek to answer through my research is, “Does the theory of realism adequately explain the cleavage between the United States and the Russian Federation in the post-Cold War era, or has the theory come to be irrelevant and alternative theories better explain the falling out between the two states?” In order to answer this question, I analyze several prominent issues in United States-Russian relations that have arisen during the post-Cold War era. Throughout the research process, I observe that the seemingly ever deepening chasm between the two states has stemmed in large part from each state’s desire to assert power and influence in former-Soviet space, and that it is the theory of realism that is best able to account for these developments.

With that preface, I shall now give an overview of the theoretical debate which raged throughout the 1990s over the ability of realist theory to account for the new developments in the international system. I will begin by providing an overview of the arguments put forth by adherents to liberal and constructivist theories who posited that the once prevalent IR theory was rapidly losing legitimacy and was inept in its ability to account for events in the post-Cold War order. After a synopsis of the criticisms leveled against realist theory during this time period has been provided, I will then move on to give the counterarguments put forth by realist scholars, who argued that the events which were unfolding in no way rebuffed the key tenets of realist theory and that given time,

other states would attempt to counterbalance the United States and multipolarity would emerge.

Review of the Theoretical Debate

Inspired by the events unfolding and the IR theory of liberalism, Francis Fukuyama wrote a very influential book titled The End of History in which he argued that the fall of the Soviet Union not only marked the end of the Cold War, but rather “the end point of mankind’s ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.”⁵ This piece was based upon liberal theory in International Relations (IR,) which at its most basic form argues that the regime type of a particular state will have a profound impact on the foreign policy pursued.⁶ This book greatly influenced both academics and public officials and expanded upon the liberal theory of the democratic peace which posits that states whose domestic political systems are constructed along liberal democratic principles will be less inclined to take up arms against one another.⁷

The claims put forth by Fukuyama in this piece stood in stark contrast to those put forth by adherents to the theory of realism, who argued that all states, regardless of their domestic political structure, are self-interested actors striving for power and security in an

⁵ Fukuyama, Francis. *The End of History and the Last Man*. New York: Free Press. 1992. 271

⁶ See Keohane, Robert, and Richard Nye. "Transnational Relations and World Politics: An Introduction." *International Organization* 25, No. 3 (Summer 1971) (0): 329-349. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2706043> (accessed February 26, 2013); Morasevik, Andrew. "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics." *International Organization* 51. No. 4 (Autumn 1997): 513-53. <http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/preferences.pdf> (Accessed February 11, 2013).

⁷ See Babst, Dean. "Elective Governments – A Force For Peace." *Wisconsin Sociologist* 3, no. 1 (1964): 9-14. <http://miles.oppidi.net/Babst1964.pdf> (accessed February 27, 2013); Maoz, Zeev and Nasrin Abdolali, "Regime Types and International Conflict, 1816-1976," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 33, No. 1, (March 1989): 3-35 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/174231> (Accessed March 13, 2013); Bremer, Stuart. "Dangerous Dyads: Conditions Affecting the Likelihood of Interstate War, 1816-1965." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 36 (1992): 309-341. <http://jcr.sagepub.com/content/36/2/309.abstract> (accessed February 19, 2013).

inherently conflictual and anarchical international system.⁸ While since the 1940s realism had been the dominant IR theory, in the years following the collapse of the Soviet Union many scholars, not just adherents to the theory of liberalism, began to call into question the relevance of realism in the post-Soviet world, arguing that the emerging international order did not much resemble that of the previous years and that realist theory could not account for these new developments within the international system.⁹ Further, many scholars argued that the events which unfolded in the late 1980s and early 1990s completely confounded the key assumptions of realist thought and that the theory was inept in its ability to account for these new developments in international politics.¹⁰

Liberal scholarship cited the resurgence of respect for international law and norms, the growing number of states adopting liberal political and economic systems, the relatively peaceful manner in which the Soviet Union dissolved, and the numerous interventions being undertaken under the pretense of protecting human rights as evidence that the days of *realpolitik* were over, and a world run on democratic principles and cooperation was emerging.¹¹ Liberal critics of realism also posited that the growth of

⁸ See Waltz, Kenneth Neal. *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1959.; Waltz, Kenneth Neal. *Theory of International Politics*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 1979.; Mearsheimer, John J. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: Norton, 2001.

⁹ See Schroeder, Paul. Historical Reality vs. Neo-Realist Theory. *International Security* 19, No. 1 (Summer, 1994), pp. 108-148 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2539150> (Accessed March 12, 2013)

¹⁰ See Lebow, Richard Ned. "The Long Peace, the End of the Cold War, and the Failure of Realism." *International Organization* 48, no. 2 (Spring 1994) (0): 249-277. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2706932> (accessed February 21, 2013); Legro, Jeffrey W., and Andrew Moravcsik. "Is Anybody Still a Realist?" *International Security* 24, no. 2 (Fall 1999): 5-55. <http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/anybody.pdf> (accessed February 13, 2013)

¹¹ See Moynihan, Daniel P. *On the Law of Nations*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990. books.google.com/books?isbn=0674635752 (Accessed March 1, 2013); Jones, D. V. *Code of Peace: Ethics and Security in the World of Warlord States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991. <http://books.google.com/books?id=kGH3mNmjVBoC&pg=PP4&lpg=PP4&dq=jones+code+of+peace+ethic+s+warlord&source=bl&ots=t2ZYGGnunq&sig=HalLOzieD8M4dAkpjn4ISsYsq6g&hl=en&sa=X&ei=bSNvUcrzAobT0gGu7YDwCg&ved=0CGIQ6AEwCA> (Accessed February 13, 2013); Sorensen, Theodore C. "Rethinking

liberal institutions acted as a mechanism by which states could cooperate with one another despite the anarchical nature of international politics.¹² This view was not only held by academics, but also many in public office held this view, and these ideas underpinned some of the policy approaches undertaken by the Clinton administration.¹³

This view of international institutions as a mechanism for cooperation, combined with the liberal view that they were once again gaining legitimacy led many to question the realist view that such institutions were purely a mechanism by which larger states bullied smaller ones and the institutions themselves were a manifestation of the balance of power.¹⁴ Some liberal scholarship emphasized the development of international institutions based upon liberal ideas, others emphasized the increased adoption of liberal economic ideas and the alleviation of poverty which they felt underpinned the international system,¹⁵ while others emphasized the soaring number of states throwing off totalitarian systems in favor of a more democratic approach.¹⁶ Still others pointed toward

National Security: Democracy and Economic Independence" in *The Future of American Foreign Policy*. Edited by Charles W. Kegley, Jr., and Eugene R. Wittkopf. New York: St. Martin's Press., 1992.; Kegley, Charles W. "The Neoidealist Moment in International Studies? Realist Myths and the New International Realities." *International Studies Quarterly* 37. No. 2 (Jun., 1993),: 131-146. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2600765> (accessed February 13, 2013); Legro and Morasevik, "Is Anybody Still a Realist?"

¹² Keohane, Robert. "Institutional Theory and the Realist Challenge After the Cold War." In *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate*. Edited by David A. Baldwin. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993. (Accessed February 23, 2013)

¹³ See Talbott, Strobe. "Democracy and the National Interest," *Foreign Affairs* 74, No. 6 (1996): 47-63. http://www.mtholyoke.edu/~jwestern/ir319/strobe_talbott.htm (Accessed April 1, 2013); Christopher, Warren. "Toward a More Integrated World: Statement at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Ministerial Meeting, Paris, June 8, 1994." In *In the Stream of History: Shaping Foreign Policy for a New Era*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998. 168-173.

¹⁴ See Morgenthau, Hans J. *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. 1947. Reprint, New York: Knopf, 1967.; Mearsheimer, John J. "The False Promise of International Institutions." *International Security* 19, No. 3 (Winter, 1994-1995): 5-49. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2539078> (Accessed January 29, 2013).

¹⁵ See Sorensen, "Rethinking National Security"

¹⁶ See Fukuyama, Francis. "The End of History?" *The National Interest*. (Summer 1989). <http://ps321.community.uaf.edu/files/2012/10/Fukuyama-End-of-history-article.pdf> (accessed February

the apparent resurgence of international institutions and adherence to international law in the aftermath of the Cold War.¹⁷ Despite the plurality of voices within liberal scholarship during this period, the consensus was these events demonstrated that realist theory could no longer provide an adequate understanding international politics and that a world run on liberal democratic principles was emerging, thus rendering the theory of realism obsolete.

While scholarship put forth by adherents to constructivism cited much of the same evidence in their case against realist theory, they did not necessarily argue that it was evidence that a world better explained by liberalism was emerging. Rather this was viewed as evidence that international politics was a product of social norms, both domestic and international, and that states choose the rules of the game which will differ from state to state and time to time. Thus constructivist theorists paid special attention to the role of individual actors representing each state and the views and opinions of the populace of each respective state at that particular time. Unlike liberal or realist theory, constructivism does not seek to make holistic systemic level claims regarding the international system, but rather posits that each situation should be viewed contextually in respect to time, place, and the actors involved.¹⁸

While constructivist scholars clearly did not share the liberal sentiment that this necessarily validated the holistic theory of liberalism, they were united with the liberals

4, 2013).; Fukuyama, Francis. *The End of History and the Last Man*. New York: Free Press, 1992.; Sorenson, "Rethinking National Security."

¹⁷ See Moynihan, *On the Law of Nations*; Jones, *Code of Peace*.

¹⁸ See Wendt, Alexander. "Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics." *International Organization* 46, No. 2 (Spring 1992): 391-425. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2706858> (accessed February 6, 2013); Wendt, Alexander. *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1999

in their position that the theory of realism could not adequately account for such new developments in the international system and that the paradigm was rapidly losing its relevance.¹⁹ The emerging view was that while realist theory may have been useful in explaining international phenomena in the past, these new developments completely confounded realist thinking, thus necessitating a new theoretical approach for explaining developments in international politics. Further, it is important to note that this criticism was primarily directed toward the sub-school of realism known as neo-realism, or structural realism.

As this mountain of scholarship critiquing the ability of realist theory to explain the events unfolding began to emerge, adherents to the once predominant theory went on the defensive, rebuffing the accusations leveled against them by critics of the theory. In 1990, John Mearsheimer wrote an article titled “Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War” in which he argued that the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact would not bring increased peace and stability, but rather more conflict. It was his view that throughout the Cold War, the system in Europe was bipolar in nature, with NATO and the Warsaw Pact acting to balance against each other. Now that these states were autonomous, no longer under the heel of Soviet power, he felt that a multipolar system was emerging in Europe, and with it would come increased instability.²⁰ In 1992 Mearsheimer wrote another piece entitled “Disorder Restored” in which he addressed the claims put forth by the critics of realist theory, arguing that “there have been no

¹⁹ See Lebow, “The Long Peace,”; Kratochwil, Friedrich. “The Embarrassment of Changes: Neo-Realism as the Science of Realpolitik without Politics”, *Review of International Studies*, 19 (1993), pp. 1–18.; Legro and Morasevik, “Is Anybody Still a Realist?”

²⁰ Mearsheimer, John. “Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War.” *International Security* 15, No 1. (Summer, 1990): 5-56. <http://mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/A0017.pdf> (Accessed March 3, 2013.)

fundamental changes in the nature of international politics since World War II,” that the “state system was alive and well,” and that “military competition between sovereign states will remain the distinguishing feature of international politics for the foreseeable future.”²¹ In a later article published in 1994, titled “The False Promise of International Institutions” Mearsheimer critiqued the idea put forth by liberals that international institutions allow states to cooperate together in the international system,²² arguing instead that international institutions were merely epiphenomenal to the balance of power; that is they arose from balance of power politics and that the balance of power was reflected within such institutions.²³

In 1994, neoclassical realist scholar William Wohlforth also addressed the claims leveled by the critics of realism in a piece entitled “Realism and the End of the Cold War.” Wohlforth argued that critics of realism are taking a very narrow view of what the theory entails, focusing their attacks on “the most parsimonious form of realism,” structural realism pioneered by Kenneth Waltz which tends to focus on the systemic level, external variables, maintaining that this was “not a fair or convincing approach to the evaluation of theories.”²⁴ The approach offered by Wohlforth takes into account both systemic and unit level variables, and it is his view that when such an approach is undertaken, realism is able to offer a very good explanation of how this

²¹ Mearsheimer, John J. "Disorder Restored," In *Rethinking America's Security: Beyond Cold War to New World Order*. Edited by Graham T. Allison and Gregory F. Treverton. New York: Norton, 1992. 214

²² See Keohane, Robert O. *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984. books.google.com/books?isbn=140082026X (Accessed January 13, 2013); Keohane, Robert O. and Martin, Lisa L. "The Promise of Institutional Theory," *International Security*, 20, No. 1 (Summer 1995): 39-51

²³ Mearsheimer, John J. "The False Promise of International Institutions." *International Security* 19, No. 3 (Winter, 1994-1995): 5-49. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2539078> (Accessed January 29, 2013).

²⁴ Wohlforth, William. "Realism and the End of the Cold War." *International Security* 19, no. No. 3 (Winter 1994/95): 92-129. www.jstor.org/stable/2539233 (accessed January 16, 2013).

peaceful transitional period came about. It was his view that the Soviet Union was not a geopolitical equal to the United States, and was a “challenger,” rather than a hegemon. He argues that challengers are far more likely to “to try to retrench and reform rather than opt for preventive war” than are hegemonic powers.²⁵

In a similar vein, Waltz in 2000 wrote a piece entitled “Structural Realism after the Cold War” in which he addressed the challenges to his theory of structural realism, wherein he argued that these recent changes in no way made his theory a thing of the past. Waltz argued that changes *within* the system do not matter (at least for the purpose of theory,) but changes *of* the system do matter. To Waltz, the end of the Cold War was simply a change within the system; a data point so to speak and in no way negated structural realism. On top of this, Waltz rebuffed the idea that Clinton’s pursuit of Wilsonian ideas was evidence that a more liberal world was emerging, arguing instead that the United States was acting in such a manner simply due to the fact that it lacked a geopolitical equal, or threat in the external environment to check such aims, thus allowing its “internal impulses” to prevail.²⁶ In a 1998 piece titled “The Balance of Power and NATO Expansion” in which he argued that the only reason that NATO was still in existence was because the United States was acting to preserve the alliance; very much in keeping with the realist idea that institutions and alliances are merely a tool used by great powers to further their national interests.

The ability of the United States to extend the life of a moribund institution nicely illustrates how international institutions are created and maintained by stronger states to serve their perceived or misperceived interests. The current balance of

²⁵ Wohlforth, William. “Realism and the End of the Cold War.” *International Security* 19, no. 3 Winter 1994-1995 (1995): 98. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2539080> . (accessed January 7, 2013).

²⁶ Waltz, “Structural Realism After the Cold War.” 24

power leaves an absence of external restraints on the United States and allows it to expand NATO.²⁷

To back up this claim, Waltz cites the lack of interest most members of the European Union had in preserving and/or expanding the alliance.²⁸

The general consensus amongst realists was that this period would be temporary and that given time, attempts by other state to check United States power would arise and these disrupted balances would eventually be restored. To the realist it was not a matter of if a counterbalance would form, but rather when. While realists certainly disagreed amongst themselves over when such a counterbalance would take place, the general consensus was that this it was inevitable.²⁹

The title of my work, “The End of History or Politics as Usual” is a reference to the theoretical debate which raged throughout the 1990s. The part titled “The End of History” is obviously a reference to the very influential piece written by Fukuyama which served as a rallying cry for liberal scholars who felt that a new era of history was unfolding which rendered realist theory obsolete. The realists by contrast were skeptical of the claims of Fukuyama and instead argued that while the fall of the Soviet Union was indeed an extraordinary event, it was more of a data point so to speak, and in no way negated realist power politics and balancing behavior amongst states would still be the norm into the foreseeable future; hence the portion titled “Politics as Usual.”

Now that a summation of the theoretical debate that occurred during the 1990s has been provided, I will conduct an extensive review of the current body of scholarship

²⁷ Waltz, Kenneth Neal. “The Balance of Power and NATO Expansion.” University of California, Berkley, *Center for German and European Studies*. Working Paper 5.66 (October, 1998): 1

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ See Waltz, “Structural Realism After the Cold War”

on United States-Russian relations. In doing so, I will better be able to identify which issues are deemed by scholars to be the most salient in the relationship between the two states and will select my case studies accordingly. These case studies will act as a means by which I test the ability of realist theory to account for key developments in United States-Russian relations. Testing the explanatory ability of realist theory vis-à-vis alternative theories will act as a way of telling if scholars in the 1990s were too hasty to dismiss the ability of realist theory to account for international phenomena in the post-Cold War era or if their criticisms were indeed justified.

Review of U.S.-Russian Relations Scholarship

Recognizing that an in-depth analysis of every event in United States-Russian relations which has arisen is not possible due to restrictions of time and space, I believe it is first necessary to narrow down the scope of my research and focus on those issues which are most important and representative of the relations between the two states. In order to do this, I conduct an extensive review of the current body of scholarship on United States-Russian relations so as to identify which issues are deemed to be the most salient in the relationship between the two states. This will also act as a means of preserving internal validity and methodological openness in that I am very clear in how I came to choose the case studies for my research and that no sort of selection bias was present. In order to assess the field of scholarship on the subject I have conducted an extensive review of both peer-reviewed journals and books both issue-specific and ones which focus on United States-Russian Relations as a whole. I believe this diverse analysis of literature on the subject will provide for a much more robust literature review.

The most reoccurring theme in all this literature on United States-Russian relations in the post-Cold War era was the issue of the eastward expansion of NATO to include former Warsaw states and Soviet republics, the tensions which it created, and the various issues which stemmed forth from it. This issue first arose in 1994, and has been a vexed issue in the relations between the two states ever since. In the book Power and Purpose, James M. Goldgeier and Michael McFaul, it is argued that the issue of the eastward expansion of the North Atlantic Alliance, and closely related, its 1999 intervention in Kosovo was the two biggest issues shaping relations between the two states during the 1990s.

But as the decade wore on, the two most significant American policies in Europe involving other U.S. interests—NATO enlargement and the war on Kosovo—highlighted the gaps that remained between U.S. and Russian visions of the world as well as the increasing capacity of the United States to take action regardless of Russian objections.³⁰

The general consensus I have observed here is that the cleavage between the two states arose over conflicting views over these two issues. This view was also held Russian State Duma member Aleksei Arbatov who when asked about the deterioration of relations between the two states Arbatov cited the United States' support for the eastward expansion of NATO and the 1999 bombing of Kosovo as key grievances, attributing the falling out between the two states to these issues.³¹ Further, virtually every text published since on United States-Russian relations and Russian politics as a whole discusses this issue at great length and recognizes the profound impact which it has had on shaping

³⁰ Goldgeier James M., and McFaul Michael. *Power and Purpose: U.S. Policy Toward Russia after the Cold War*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003. 355

³¹ *Ibid.*

relations between the two states.³² Andrei P. Tsygankov argues that much of the cleavage between the two states and Russia's more assertive approach to foreign policy has stemmed directly from this issue.

Much of Russia's reaction can be explained by a perception of a threat stemming from the expansion of NATO. The West's geopolitical advances into what Russia has traditionally viewed as its sphere of interests, and the desire expressed by the postrevolutionary Georgia and Ukraine to join NATO exacerbated Russia's sense of vulnerability and isolation.³³

J.L. Black took a similar view in his talk of "ripple effects" in the form of rising anti-Western sentiment in Russia which arose in the aftermath of the first wave of expansion and subsequent intervention in Kosovo. Similarly, in Marcel de Haas's comprehensive piece on Russian foreign policy which highlights the importance of the issue, argues that Russian security policy changed drastically in response to such issues.³⁴ J.L. Black also argues that Russia's adoption of a formal military doctrine in the late 1990s was a direct response to the possibility of the eastward expansion of the alliance,³⁵ and that while Russians were deeply divided during this period, the issue of NATO expansion was the one area in which "Russians were unified."³⁶ Furthermore, entire,

³² See Lucas, Edward. *The New Cold War: Putin's Russia and the Threat to the West*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.; LaFeber, Walter. *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-2006*. 10th ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2008.; Danks, Catherine J. *Politics Russia*. Harlow, England: Pearson Longman, 2009; Wegren, Stephen K., and Dale R. Herspring. *After Putin's Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*. 4th ed. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010.; Mankoff, Jeffrey. *Russian Foreign Policy: The Return of Great Power Politics*. 2nd ed. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2011.

³³ Tsygankov, Andrei P. "Russia's Foreign Policy" in *After Putin's Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*. Ed. Stephen K. Wegren and Dale R. Herspring. New York. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2008. 236

³⁴ deHaas, Marcel. *Russia's Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century: Putin, Medvedev and Beyond*. London and New York: Routledge, 2010. 6

³⁵ Black, *Russia Faces NATO Expansion*. 164-169

³⁶ *Ibid.* 39

compilations and anthologies have been devoted to the subject³⁷ as well as many journal articles.³⁸

What is more, many issues have stemmed from the issue of the eastward expansion of NATO and have been closely related. First of all there was NATO's 1999 bombing of Kosovo in which United States and NATO forces came dangerously close to exchanging fire with RF forces. Much scholarship has been devoted to this subject in particular as well.³⁹ This subject has been analyzed from both the perspective of its effects on international politics in the region and relations between the US and the Russian Federation as well as the profound impact which it has had on Russia's domestic politics. Similarly, the issue of the United States' withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in order to construct a missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic, which were recently integrated into NATO, has been a very divisive issue

³⁷ See Black, *Russia Faces NATO Expansion*; Braun, Aurel, *NATO-Russia Relations in the Twenty-First Century*. New York and London: Routledge. 2008;

³⁸ See Schimmelfennig, Frank. "NATO Enlargement: A Constructivist Explanation." *Security Studies* 8, No. 2-3 (1998): 198-234. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09636419808429378> (accessed December 26, 2012).; Waltz, Kenneth Neal. "The Balance of Power and NATO Expansion." University of California, Berkley, Center for German and European Studies. Working Paper 5.66 (October, 1998); Adomeit, Hannes. "Inside or Outside? Russia's Policies Toward NATO." Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik: German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Working Paper, Research Unit, Russia/CIS (2006): 1-33. http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/arbeitspapiere/NATO_Oslo_ks.pdf (accessed December 21, 2012).; Schvedova, Iana. "NATO's Relations with Russia in the Context of Euroatlantic Security EAPC." *NATO International Academic Research*. (2003): 3-48. <http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/01-03/schvedova.pdf> (Accessed October 23, 2012).

³⁹ See Tenbergen, Rasmus. "Bombs for Human Rights? Humanitarian intervention in Kosovo." Paper presented at the Human Rights Conference of the University of Bonn and the Institute for Leadership Development, June 2001, No. June 2001 (2001). <http://www.rasmus-tenbergen.de/publikationen/Bombs%20for%20Human%20Rights.pdf> (accessed February 13, 2012); Adomeit, "Inside or Outside?"; Tarta, Ancuta. "Independent Kosovo: An Attempt of Neorealist View." *Romanian Review of International Studies*. (1/2009): 1-22.

between the two states and is linked to the issue of NATO.⁴⁰ In a 2008 piece, CSIS scholar, Julianne Smith expressed this, stating the following:

For the Russians, NATO enlargement--from the first round in 1999 to the debate about Georgia and Ukraine in 2008--remains their chief complaint. U.S. plans to install a missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic is another sore point. For NATO and the West more broadly, Russia's behavior toward its neighbors, particularly Georgia and Ukraine, but also the Baltic States and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, has spurred a steady stream of heated accusations about Russian hegemony.⁴¹

In addition to the scholarship devoted to the subject, the issue has been repeatedly brought up by Russian officials when citing grievances toward the West. The issue of NATO expansion has been cited as a key threat to Russian security and the need to preserve Russian influence in former Soviet space has been seen as essential to Russia's national security. After the 1999 bombing of Kosovo, Russia was inspired by these events to revise its official military doctrine.⁴² This was a clear response to NATO's actions in Kosovo.⁴³ Further, more recent military doctrines, all the way up to the most recent one published in 2010 have reflected this as well.

The debate over Russia's new Military Doctrine, which was finally release in February 2010 after years of delay, is indicative of how the high command understands the world and the threats facing Russia. One notable aspect of the new doctrine is the emphasis it continues to place on state-based threats, and

⁴⁰ See Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*; Lucas, *New Cold War*.

⁴¹ Smith, Julianne, "The NATO-Russia Relationship: Defining Moment or Deja Vu?." *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (November 2008): 1

http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/081110_smith_natorussia_web.pdf (accessed April 2, 2013).

⁴² See Black, *Russia Faces NATO Expansion*; deHaas, *Russia's Foreign Security Policy*; "Russian Federation National Security Blueprint" Approved by Russian Federation presidential edict No. 1300. Federation of American Scientists. <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/doctrine/blueprint.html> (Accessed March 21, 2013); "Draft Russian Military Doctrine." Federation of American Scientists. http://www.fas.org/man/nato/congress/1998/98022407_tpo.html (accessed April 25, 2012).

⁴³ See Tooher, "US-Russia Relations"; Black, *Russia Faces NATO Expansion*; deHaas, *Russia's Foreign Security Policy*

particularly on the danger that continued NATO expansion poses to Russian security.⁴⁴

Another closely-related theme which has been reoccurring is Russia's relations with the former Soviet republics, which Russian officials deem to be vital to their security interests. Most scholarship maintains that this region is a key battleground for influence between Russia and the West.⁴⁵ In his book The New Cold War, Edward Lucas argues that Eastern Europe is the key battleground region of this "New Cold War," devoting an entire chapter to the subject titled "How Eastern Europe Sits on the Frontline."

Like the old Cold War, it (the new Cold War) is being fought chiefly in Europe, though this time the battleground has shifted east, to the once-captive nations that lie between Russia and the rich half of the continent. Russia makes no secret of its desire for a *droit de regard* in its former empire.⁴⁶

Similarly, in his book Russian Foreign Policy: The Return of Great Power Politics Jeffrey Mankoff highlights the importance of NATO expansion and issues pertaining to former-Soviet Space.⁴⁷ The Russian Federation is increasingly alarmed at the desire of many states in the former Soviet bloc to align with the West and seek NATO membership as a means of throwing off Russian influence. Of particular concern to the Russian Federation are the states of Georgia and Ukraine which since 2004 have been increasingly aligning themselves with the West and both have expressed their desire to

⁴⁴ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 57

⁴⁵ Lucas, *The New Cold War*; Braun, *NATO-Russia Relations*; Mankoff *Russian Foreign Policy*.

⁴⁶ Lucas, *The New Cold War*. 11

⁴⁷ See Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 112

join NATO, which other former Soviet and Warsaw states have supported in the hope that it could greater counter-act Russian influence in their own states.⁴⁸

The Russian Federation by contrast is becoming increasingly assertive in the affairs of its neighbors in hopes of maintaining its influence and control over the region which it deems to be vital to its security interests. This culminated when Russia intervened militarily in the South Ossetia conflict in neighboring Georgia, which brought tensions between Russia and the United States to levels unseen arguably since the Cold War.⁴⁹ Similarly, Russia conducted cyber-attacks on its neighbors who have been aligning themselves with the West and has repeatedly utilized its energy reserves as a geopolitical weapon and as a means of co-opting its neighbors.⁵⁰ These cyber-attacks and the wielding of its natural gas reserves over its neighbors have been seen by many as retaliation against Western influence in the region and have seemed to occur shortly after these states have expressed their desire to join NATO, thus making them very closely related to the issue of NATO expansion.⁵¹

⁴⁸ See Braun, Aurel, "Enlargement and the perils of containment," In *NATO-Russia Relations in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Aurel Braun. New York and London: Routledge. (2008): 55-71.

⁴⁹ See deHaas, *Russia's Foreign Security Policy*.

⁵⁰ See Elletson, Harold and Kevin Rosner (editors). *Baltic Independence and Russian Foreign Energy Policy*. London: GMB Pub., 2006.

http://books.google.com/books/about/Baltic_Independence_and_Russian_Foreign.html?id=UJtX6L63NAIC (Accessed February 21,

2013).http://books.google.com/books/about/Baltic_Independence_and_Russian_Foreign.html?id=UJtX6L63NAIC (Accessed February 21, 2013).; Lucas, *The New Cold War*.

⁵¹ See Krickus, Richard J. *Iron Troikas: The New Threat from the East*. Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2006. books.google.com/books?isbn=1428916172 (Accessed February 20, 2013); Ellitson, "Baltic Independence and Russian Foreign Energy Policy"; Lucas, *The New Cold War*; Grigas, Agnia. "Legacies, Coercion and Soft Power: Russian Influence in the Baltic States." *Russia and Eurasia Programme*, Chatham House Briefing Paper, no. (August, 2012) (2012). http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Russia%20and%20Eurasia/0812bp_gri_gas.pdf (accessed December 27, 2012).

I go into such detail not to comment on the merits or demerits of the eastward expansion of NATO; that is beyond the scope of what I seek to accomplish through my research. Rather I do so to demonstrate that the general consensus I've observed amongst scholars and public officials alike has been that NATO expansion and issues pertaining to former-Soviet space are the most salient in modern United States-Russian relations and representative of the overall relationship between the two states. Further, as discussed Russian military documents were revised as a direct response to the United States' proposal to admit former Warsaw and Soviet states into the alliance, and current security documents still reflect this. If Russia's actions are a direct reaction to NATO enlargement and the differing visions each state has regarding former-Soviet space, this demonstrates that the cleavage between the two states can largely be attributed to these issues. Further the fact that these issues have shaped Russian foreign policy and domestic politics in such a profound manner clearly demonstrates they are of the utmost importance in the relationship between the two states.

Moreover, due to the fact that this has been a source of much contention for such a long period of time, every American and Russian president since has had to deal with this issue; this allows me to look for any sort of differences in the approaches undertaken by foreign policy crafters of both states. Given that constructivist theory emphasizes the importance of the personalities and approaches of various statesmen, this shall allow me to contrast the approaches employed by foreign policy makers of both states in order to see where they converge and where they diverge; in doing so will better be equipped to see what sort of insights the theory of constructivism is able to shed on the subject. In a similar vein, many could point to the fact that NATO is composed of liberal democratic

states due to the fact that this is a prerequisite for membership. Given liberalism's strong emphasis on the role of regime type and international institutions, specifically ones underpinned by liberal ideas, I can see if the theory of liberalism is able to offer insights into these developments as well.

While other issues are indeed present, they have tended to be treated as second or third-tier whereas pervasive issues such as the eastward expansion of NATO and issues pertaining to former-Soviet space have been highlighted and far more time, space, effort, and research has been devoted to them. This would indicate to me that the eastward expansion of NATO and the battle for influence over former Soviet space is the biggest issue in United States-Russian relations. Given that this has been a pervasive, ongoing issue, I believe it is necessary to devote much time and space to it. That being said, I believe that other issues are still worth looking at simply to get a broader, more balanced look at relations between the two states. For example, an often overlooked fact is that in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks, the Russian Federation has cooperated quite a bit with the United States in its War on Terror.

The majority of scholarship tends to minimize the importance of this issue, arguing that it is a notable exception against the backdrop of the numerous points of contention. Other issues during that time period, including the second wave of NATO expansion, disagreement over the Iraq War, Russian arms sales in Latin America, and the United States' plans to deploy a missile defense system in Eastern Europe have been deemed far more important and representative of United States-Russian relations during

this period.⁵² Mankoff maintains that “the post-9/11 rapprochement, like its early 1990s predecessor did not last,” arguing that issues such as the second wave of NATO expansion, the United States invasion of Iraq, conflicts over former Soviet space, and the 2008 South Ossetia reopened divisions between the two states.⁵³ An article by Andrei P. Tsygankov expressed similar sentiment arguing, “Despite these positive developments, tensions between the two countries grew dramatically and encompasses issues such as Iran, arms sales abroad, energy resources, and the expansion of U.S. military infrastructure toward Russia’s borders.”⁵⁴

Similarly, Russian in statements regarding their new and updated military, national security, and foreign policy documents in 2007 expressed their frustration with what they felt to be the futility of cooperating with Washington, thus necessitating a new approach.⁵⁵ In a 2007 conference on the subject, Yury Baluyevsky stated that cooperation in security matters with Washington had not reduced the number of military threats to Russia, but rather that Washington’s “global leadership” and “desire to get a foothold in regions where Russia traditionally is present” were the main threats to Russia’s security.⁵⁶ Again, this is very much in keeping with the general consensus that the eastward expansion of NATO and the battle for influence in the former Soviet region are the most divisive issues in United States-Russian relations in the post-Cold War era.

While I recognize that this issue tends to pale in comparison to the aforementioned issues pertaining to former-Soviet space, I believe it is still worth looking

⁵² Danks, *Politics Russia*; Wegren and Herspring, *After Putin’s Russia*; Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*.

⁵³ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 106-107

⁵⁴ Tsygankov, “Russia’s Foreign Policy” 230

⁵⁵ See deHaas, *Russia’s Foreign Security Policy*.; Tsygankov, “Russia’s Foreign Policy”.

⁵⁶ deHaas, *Russia’s Foreign Security Policy*. 31

into briefly. Even if we were to presuppose that the issues in which the two states are cooperating were indeed third tier issues, standing out as notable exceptions against the backdrop of numerous points of contention, the fact is that there is indeed cooperation going on between the two states and this is something which needs to be looked at. Similarly, some tension did arise between the two states over Russia's refusal to support the United States' invasion of Iraq, and this created some tension between the two states as well.⁵⁷

Another issue which I have seen as a reoccurring theme is the issue of Russian arms sales to those states in Latin America which are very critical of the United States, specifically Chavez's Venezuela and Castro's Cuba.⁵⁸ As shown in the quote from Tsygankov, this is a very important development between the two states, though not as important as issues pertaining to NATO and the former-Soviet region. Further, many have viewed this to be a reaction to moves undertaken by the United States and NATO in the former Soviet region which Moscow has long deemed to be its sphere of influence. The idea is that Russia is reacting to Washington's encroachments into its sphere of influence by beginning to assert itself into Washington's sphere of influence, thus making directly linked to the larger issues regarding NATO expansion and former-Soviet space.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ See Baker, Peter, and Susan Glasser. *Kremlin Rising: Vladimir Putin's Russia and the End of Revolution*. New York: Scribner, 2005; LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-2006*; Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*.

⁵⁸ See Katz, Mark N. "The Putin-Chavez Partnership." *Problems of Post-Communism* 53, no. 4 (July/August 2006) (2006): 3-9. <http://digilib.gmu.edu:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1920/3022/Putin%20Chavez%20POPC%20article.pdf?..> (accessed October 29, 2012).; Sanders, Roland. "Venezuela in the Caribbean: Expanding its Sphere of Influence." *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs* 96, no. 391 (2007): 465-476.; Lucas, *The New Cold War*; Kucera, Joshua. "What Is Hugo Chávez Up To?." *Wilson Quarterly* Spring 2011 Issue (2011): 22-30. <http://www.wilsonquarterly.com/article.cfm?AID=1807> (accessed January 6, 2013).

⁵⁹ See Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*.

Further, Chavez and RF officials have both spoken of the need to craft a multipolar world, as opposed to the current unipolar world with the United States on top and Chavez has actively sought to remove United States' influence from the Latin American region.⁶⁰ Similarly, Russia in recent years has been actively attempting to forge coalitions of her own, and many have viewed this to be a direct response to what it views to be threatening action on the part of the United States and her NATO allies. For these reasons, I believe that these issues are worth looking into as well.

Given the general consensus that the eastward expansion of NATO and the battleground for influence in former-Soviet space are the key points of contention between the two states, the bulk of my research will be devoted to the subject. While analyzing the issue, I intend to do so chronologically, simply because it has been a vexed issue between the two states for such a long period of time and each development appears to build upon the previous one, adding fuel to the fire so to speak. During this time, attention is also given to the brief period of cooperation between the two states after the September 11th attacks. Though many have deemed this to be a third-tier issue, I believe it is at least worth looking at, if nothing else to demonstrate that there has indeed been some cooperation between the two states and to paint the relationship as entirely conflictual would be misleading. In addition, I also look at tensions which arose due to the tensions which arose due to issues in Georgia and Ukraine which culminated in the 2008 Russo-Georgian War along with the coalitions which Russia has been building which are seen by many as attempts to counterbalance NATO.

⁶⁰ Katz, "The Putin-Chavez Partnership."

These case studies will serve as a means of testing the ability of realist, liberal, and constructivist theories to offer explanations into the behavior of each state. My primary inquiry is into state behavior, and my intent is not to argue what I believe to be prudent policy, whether I believe each leader acted in a proper manner, etc. I certainly do not aim to cast judgment on the actions undertaken by various leaders at given times. The actions of each state merely serve as a unit of analysis; a means of testing the ability of each theory to account for these developments. For this reason, I look at these case studies as an objective observer, seeking to uncover the nature of the relationship between the two states and thus refrain from casting any sort of judgment.

Outline

In following chapter, I establish the theoretical basis for my research and give an overview of the key tenets of realist, constructivist, and liberal theories. While the purpose of my research is to test the ability of realism to explain the cleavage between the United States and the Russian Federation in the post-Soviet era, an overview of theories aside from realism will allow me to see if other theories are able to explain the chasm between the two states, or if they are able to offer any insights in areas in which realism cannot. Providing an overview of the three theories and how they tend to explain events on the world stage will allow me to better be on the lookout for other plausible alternative explanations for the events in question. This will help to establish external validity in that it demonstrates that since alternative theories of understanding international politics do indeed exist, my hypotheses are indeed falsifiable and able to be empirically tested. After all, if no plausible alternatives exist, then I would be better off focusing my efforts elsewhere.

After establishing the theoretical basis for my research, I move on to the third chapter in which I analyze the issue of NATO expansion and the issues which have stemmed forth from it and see how well the theories of realism, liberalism and constructivism are able to account for these developments. In the fourth and final chapter, I analyze Russia's relations with her neighbors as they relate to the West, and its various attempts to build coalitions, testing the ability of each theory to account for the events. Throughout the process I observe that while other theories are certainly able to offer insights into the actions undertaken by each state during throughout the course of these events, it is the theory of realism which is best able to account for these developments. After demonstrating that it is realist theory which is best capable of accounting for these developments, I give my thoughts in regard to what the future holds for relations between the two states and offer some policy implications based upon my findings aimed at both maintaining United States' power and reducing the likelihood of conflict with our Russian counterparts.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

As stated previously, the purpose of my research is to test the ability of realist theory to explain key issues in modern United States-Russian relations. In order to test a theory, it is first necessary to have a thorough understanding of the key tenets of the theory, along with the major competing theories which provide alternative explanations. Doing so will give me a far better idea of what to look for in the following chapter in which I assess the ability of each theory to account for these developments in the relationship between the two states in the post-Cold War era. Further, an understanding of alternative theories will also act as a means of preserving external validity in that I will demonstrate that alternative explanations have been taken into account. I will begin by providing an overview of the key tenets of realist theory. After doing so I will discuss the two main alternative IR theories of liberalism and constructivism and see where they diverge from realist thought.

Realism

Realism argues that the anarchical nature of the nation-state system has created systemic pressures resulting in a continual struggle for power between self-interested state actors who continually seek to maximize their power relative to other states. To the realist, state behavior can best be understood by the fact that states in the international

system operate in the absence of “a common power to keep them all in awe,” as Thomas Hobbes put it.⁶¹ As Waltz stated:

With many sovereign states, with no system of law enforceable among them, with each state judging its grievances and ambitions according to the dictates of its own reason or desire - conflict, sometimes leading to war, is bound to occur. To achieve a favorable outcome from such a conflict, a state has to rely on its own devices, the relative efficiency of which must be its constant concern.⁶²

This lack of a “night watchman” in the international system has created a sense of vulnerability and insecurity in which states can never be certain as to the aims of other states, resulting in what realists call a “self-help system” in which states must take it upon themselves to provide for their own security and this is best done by seeking to maximize their power relative to others.⁶³ Realist theory argues that these systemic pressures arising from this self-help system incentivize the struggle for power and a prudent policy-maker will act in accordance with such pressures or otherwise risk being dominated by other powers which are more inclined to use violent means. As Waltz stated:

Structures shape and shove; they encourage states to do some things and refrain from doing others. Because states coexist in a self-help system, they are free to do any fool thing they care to, but they are likely to be rewarded for behavior that is responsive to structural pressures and punished for behavior that is not.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Thomas Hobbes, “Chapter 13: Of the Natural Condition of Mankind as concerning their felicity and misery” In *Leviathan: Or the Matter, Forme and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiasticall and Civil*, Part I. Edited by Michael Oakeshott, New York: Touchstone, 2008. 93

<http://books.google.com/books?id=352aLj6cCkAC&printsec=frontcover>

⁶² Waltz, Kenneth Neal. “The Third Image: International Conflict and International Anarchy” In *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1959. 159

⁶³ See for example: Waltz, Kenneth Neal. *Theory of International Politics*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 1979.; Mearsheimer, John J. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: Norton, 2001.

⁶⁴ Waltz, Kenneth N. “Evaluating Theories.” *American Political Science Review*, 91, No. 4 (December 1997): 915. <http://pluto.fss.buffalo.edu/classes/psc/fczagare/PSC%20504/WaltzEvaluatingTheories.pdf> (Accessed March 20, 2013)

For this reason, the “state among states” is viewed as a state of perpetual war and conflict.⁶⁵ This obviously is not to say that violence is a constant, but rather as Waltz stated, “with each state deciding for itself whether or not to use force, war may at any time break out;” and “because some states may at any time use force, all states must be prepared to do so—or live at the expense of their militarily more vigorous neighbors.”⁶⁶

Realist scholarship posits that it is the great powers of the world which are decisive in world politics and that it is the natural desire of every state to grow in power and to attempt to dominate the international political system. Thus as a state gains in power, it is only natural that they adopt a more expansionist approach, actively seeking out regions in which to assert power beyond their own borders, and keep other states out of.⁶⁷ As Randall Schweller stated, “Whether motivated by exploration, commerce, investment, or conquest, lateral pressure establishes extraterritorial national interests among great powers.”⁶⁸ This is a concept known as spheres of influence, which all great powers seek. For the purposes of my research, spheres of influence shall be defined as a geographical region outside of a state’s own borders in which a state projects its power and influence, whether it be culturally, militarily, or economically. Generally speaking, these regions in which great powers attempt to assert extraterritorial power are in very close proximity to their own borders, and the great power asserting influence in the

⁶⁵ Waltz. *Theory of International Politics*. 102

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ For further work on state assertions of power beyond their own borders, and under what circumstances a state will adopt an expansionist approach see: Zakaria, Fareed. *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998; Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*; Mearsheimer, John. "Better to Be Godzilla than Bambi." *Foreign Policy* 146, (Jan. - Feb., 2005): 47-48. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30048171> (accessed March 2, 2013).; Schweller, Randall L.. *Unanswered Threats: Political Constraints on the Balance of Power*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006.

⁶⁸ Schweller, *Unanswered Threats*. 25

region will attempt to influence events going on in the region and dictate what is and is not acceptable. Further, these great powers will react very harshly should another power attempt to act militarily or assert its power in said region.⁶⁹ When a state has achieved this aim and is the only power dominating said region, this is referred to as regional hegemony.⁷⁰ Upon achieving regional hegemony, a state will often times attempt to influence events outside of its sphere of influence as well, seeking to become the sole hegemonic power in the international system.⁷¹

Given the fact that the concept of spheres of influence is dealing with finite geographical locations, if one state is pursuing expansionist policies, regardless of it will inevitably come into conflict with the security interests of another state, thus creating significant tension between the two states, and from time to time, total war;⁷² as Schweller stated, “depending on type, extent, and intensity, lateral pressure generally leads to major power conflict when the foreign activities and interests of two or more major powers collide.”⁷³ While often times, one states extraterritorial activities may not actively be attempting to hurt the interests of another state in the region, realism argues that intent is irrelevant and another state which has a vested interest in the region will see this as an attempt on the part of the other to drive their influence from the region.⁷⁴ For example, the United States probably did not intent to harm Russian interests in the former Soviet region by pushing for the eastward expansion of NATO; however, as will be

⁶⁹ Mearsheimer, Better to be Godzilla than Bambi. 48

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² See: Mearsheimer, Better to be Godzilla than Bambi; Schweller, *Unanswered Threats*; Walt, Stephen. "More Support for Offshore Balancing." *Foreign Policy*. (December 1, 2011). http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/12/01/a_bandwagon_for_offshore_balancing (accessed March 5, 2013).

⁷³ Schweller, *Unanswered Threats*. 25

⁷⁴ See Mearsheimer, “Better to be Godzilla than Bambi”; Schweller, *Unanswered Threats*.

shown, to the Russians intent was largely irrelevant. Randall Schweller summarized this by stating that “national growth, by generating new resource demands in excess of the state’s domestic endowments, exacerbates competition for scarce resources, regardless of the rising state’s intentions.”⁷⁵

Since all states are continually attempting to maximize their power relative to other states, a configuration of sorts arises which is referred to as the balance of power. As Hans Morgenthau stated, “the aspiration for power on the part of several nations, each trying either to maintain or overthrow the status quo, leads of necessity to a configuration that is called the balance of power and to policies that aim at preserving it.”⁷⁶ Realism argues that states are continually attempting to either maintain the current distribution of power or shift the balance of power in their own favor. Should a security vacuum arise in a region, powerful states will seek to fill this vacuum with their own influence, or as Arnold Wolfers stated in regard to systemic incentives, “Since nations, like nature, are said to abhor a vacuum, one could predict that the powerful nation would feel compelled to fill the vacuum with its own power.”⁷⁷ All of this has a very zero-sum mentality, and if one state is to gain in power, it must come at the expense of another, thus incentivizing the other to react accordingly. For example, if state A is to gain a stronghold at the expense of state B, systemic pressures will force state B to take action against state A in hopes of either limiting state A’s gain or swinging the balance of power back in its own direction, provided that state B has the capacity to do so. This reaction to threatening

⁷⁵ Schweller, *Unanswered Threats*. 27

⁷⁶ Morgenthau, Hans J. *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. 1947. Reprint, New York: Knopf, 1967. 163

⁷⁷ Wolfers, Arnold. *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1962. 15

actions of another state is referred to as “balancing” and realism argues that should a state have the ability to do so, it will actively balance against threats occurring in the external environment. As Christopher Layne argues, states, specifically great powers, behave in such a manner simply “because structural constraints impel them to do so.”⁷⁸

Realism refers to a state which is seeking great power status, or to transform the international order as a revisionist state, or a challenger.⁷⁹ Obviously this rising power’s aims will come into conflict with the interests of those states which are already on top and enjoy their position of power relative to others. For example, as will be shown, Russia is attempting to create a multipolar world, as opposed to the current unipolar order with the United States on top. Obviously in attempting to do so, Russian aims are coming into conflict with those of the United States who wants to maintain the status quo and its position of power.

This obviously is not to say that states will always properly balance against threats to their security. Sometimes domestic variables will preclude this from happening. In his research on underbalancing behavior amongst states, Randall Schweller identified four domestic level variables which determine if a state will adequately respond to systemic pressures and balance against a threat: elite consensus, elite cohesion, social cohesion, and regime/government vulnerability. The idea here is that external pressures are “filtered through” internal pressures and this will ultimately determine the route of action a state will take on the world stage.⁸⁰ Should a state be

⁷⁸ Layne, Christopher. “From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America’s Future Grand Strategy” *International Security*, 22, No. 1 (Summer 1997): 117

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2539331> (Accessed February 25, 2013.)

⁷⁹ See Schweller, *Unanswered Threats*. 27-41

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 6

facing a threat so disproportionately large to its own balancing capacity, an underbalancing tactic known as “bandwagoning” is often employed. Bandwagoning is when a state realizes that the cost of actively balancing against an external threat is either not feasible or too costly, and instead chooses to align itself with the threatening actor in hopes of reaping some of the benefits of being aligned with the stronger state.⁸¹

This continual struggle for power, realists argue, manifests itself in all areas of the international system and trade is no exception. While adherents to liberalism argue that states are more concerned with the absolute gain, realism posits that the international system makes states more concerned with relative gain, simply because one state will naturally be worried over what the other intends to do with their spoils;⁸² of particular concern is that “the other might convert its gain to military strength, and then use this strength to win by coercion in later rounds” as Mearsheimer stated.⁸³ Realists argue that interdependencies only create more vulnerability, thus furthering the sense of mistrust already so prevalent in the international system, and has the potential to lead to attempts to “extend political control to the source of supply, giving rise to conflict with the source or other customers.”⁸⁴ Because of this mistrust and potential for cheating, realism argues that states will inevitably seek autonomy over interdependence, simply because no state

⁸¹ See Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*; Walt, Stephen M. *The Origins of Alliances*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987; Schweller, Randall. “Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In,” *International Security* 19, No. 1, (Summer, 1994): 72-107. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2539149> (accessed April 21, 2013).

⁸² See: Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*; Mearsheimer, John J. “Why We Will Soon Miss The Cold War.” *The Atlantic Monthly* 266, No. 2. (August, 1990): 46. <http://mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/A0014.pdf> (Accessed March 13, 2013); Mearsheimer, John J. “The False Promise of International Institutions.” *International Security* 19, No. 3 (Winter, 1994-1995): 5-49. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2539078> (Accessed January 29, 2013).

⁸³ Mearsheimer, “Why We Will Soon Miss The Cold War,” 46.

⁸⁴ Mearsheimer, John J. “Disorder Restored,” In *Rethinking America's Security: Beyond Cold War to New World Order*. Edited by Graham T. Allison and Gregory F. Treverton. New York: Norton, 1992. 222-223

wants their security interests tied to another in an inherently dangerous and unstable world.⁸⁵

While realism does not deny that cooperation amongst states would indeed be very beneficial, or that a world run on liberal-democratic principles would be desirable, it is their view that systemic pressures will more often than not preclude it from happening and as Waltz stated, “What one might do in the absence of structural constraints is different from what one is encouraged to do in their presence” and “in a self-help system, considerations of security subordinate economic gain to political interest.”⁸⁶ Thus, this idea that *relative* gains are what ultimately matter to states manifests itself even in matters of commerce, and states will engage in economic transactions provided that such transactions will either put them in a stronger position, or not disrupt the current balance of power.⁸⁷

Perhaps most important to realist thought is the idea that this unquenchable thirst for power is characteristic of *all* states who are forced to act in such a manner due to systemic pressures. To the realist, the interest of *any* state is defined in terms of power and security,⁸⁸ and their interests being defined as such is simply due to pressures exogenous to the state.⁸⁹ Further, realists argue that many times, particularly in democratic states, policy makers will mask their true aims of power and security in rosy rhetoric, appealing to the normative ideology which the particular state is based upon in

⁸⁵ See Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*; Mearsheimer, *The False Promise of International Institutions*; Waltz, Kenneth N. "Structural Realism after the Cold War." *International Security* 25. No. 1 (Summer 2000): 5-41. http://www.columbia.edu/itc/sipa/U6800/readings-sm/Waltz_Structural%20Realism.pdf (Accessed December 27, 2012)

⁸⁶ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. 107

⁸⁷ Mearsheimer, "Why We Will Soon Miss the Cold War," 46

⁸⁸ Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*.

⁸⁹ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*.

hopes of selling it to the public simply because the foreign policy maker is more in touch with the workings of the international system the systemic pressures arising from it.⁹⁰ Similarly, whether leaders desire more cordial relations with another state can often times be irrelevant simply because conflicts of interest are an inevitable byproduct of the self-help system in which states operate.

In short, realism argues that the anarchical nature of the nation-state system has resulted in a self-help system which incentivizes states to act in pursuit of power and security so as to protect themselves from other states. As states continually seek to maximize their power vis-à-vis other states, conflicts of interests will inevitably arise. States act in such a manner not because they necessarily desire to, but rather because objective forces, exogenous to the state encourage them to adopt such policies. Neither regime type nor domestic discourses will exempt a state from these “laws” of the international system. Now that I have provided an overview of the theory of realism, I shall look at the theory of liberalism, which like realism makes systemic level claims regarding the international system, but comes to somewhat different conclusions.

Liberalism

While realist theory argues that the anarchical nature of the nation-state system has resulted in a self-help system, pitting states against one another, liberalism adopts a less bleak view of international politics. While liberals do not deny that states are indeed self-interest actors with security interests operating in an anarchical system, liberal theorists rebuff the realist idea that conflict is inevitable due to the anarchical nature

⁹⁰ Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*

international politics, arguing instead that the condition of anarchy does not preclude cooperation between states. While realism argues that all states are continually seeking to maximize their power relative to other states and any sort of ideologically-based rhetoric surrounding its actions is merely an aim to cloak its true aims of power and security, liberalism argues that a state's domestic ideology will inevitably manifest itself in its foreign policy. Andrew Moravcsik summarized this idea very nicely in a 1997 article:

Liberal IR theory elaborates the insight that state-society relations—the relationship of states to the domestic and transnational social context in which they are embedded—have a fundamental impact on state behavior in world politics. Societal ideas, interests, and institutions influence state behavior by shaping state preferences, that is, the fundamental social purposes underlying the strategic calculations of governments.⁹¹

Specifically, liberalism argues that democratic states will opt for cooperation and pursue aims in keeping with the liberal ideas which their states are based upon. Perhaps this idea is best exemplified in the liberal theory of the democratic peace which posits that states based upon liberal democratic values will not go to war with one another. This theory originated in the writings of Immanuel Kant who argued that democratic states are unlikely to engage in conflict simply because both normative and domestic structural factors act to constrain the use of force.⁹² Later scholarship has elaborated on Kant's claims, evolving into what is called the democratic peace theory, which refines Kant's claims to argue that democratic states are unlikely to go to war with other democratic

⁹¹ Moravcsik, Andrew. "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics." *International Organization*. 51. no. 4 (Autumn 1997): 513.
<http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/preferences.pdf> (Accessed February 11, 2013).

⁹² See Kant, Immanuel, *To Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*. Translated by Ted Humphrey. Indianapolis, IN.: Hackett Pub., 2003. books.google.com/books?isbn=0872206912 (Accessed April 21, 2013); Oneal, John R., Frances Oneal, Zeev Maoz, and Bruce Russett. "The Liberal Peace: Interdependence, Democracy, and International Conflict, 1950-85." *Journal of Peace Research* 33. no. 1 (Feb. 1996): 11-28. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/425131> (accessed March 1, 2013).

states. Some theorists attribute this lack of violence to the normative bonds which arise between states based upon similar normative principles.⁹³

Other scholarship argues that this common identity of liberalism is very effective, however, only insofar as one state perceives the other to be liberal.⁹⁴ Normative explanations for this lack of violence argue that the democratic norms of “compromise and cooperation prevent their conflicts of interest from escalating into violent clashes.”⁹⁵ Similarly, many theorists also argue that democratic regimes face “complex political mobilization processes” which “impose institutional constraints on the leaders of two democracies confronting each other;”⁹⁶ thus it is argued that institutional factors constrain violence between democratic states. Some scholarship has also maintained that institutional factors, specifically the idea that leaders can be replaced should they lose a war effort, has made democracies far less likely to engage in violent behavior, unless of course they know for sure they can win.⁹⁷ Further, much scholarship also argues that both structural and normative factors play a part in this phenomenon, and the two are certainly not mutually exclusive.⁹⁸ While two democratic states may have conflicting national

⁹³ Henderson, Errol A. “The Democratic Peace Through the Lens of Culture, 1820-1989.” *International Studies Quarterly* 42, No. 3 (Sep., 1998): 461-484. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2600747> (Accessed March 5, 2013)

⁹⁴ See Owen, John M., “How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace,” *International Security* 19, No. 2 (Autumn, 1994): 87-125. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2539197> (Accessed March 1, 2013).

⁹⁵ Maoz, Zeev and Bruce Russett. “Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946-1986.” *The American Political Science Review* 87, No. 3 (Sep., 1993): 624. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2938740> (Accessed March 3, 2013); See also Doyle, Michael W. “Liberalism and World Politics.” *The American Political Science Review* 80, No. 4 (Dec., 1986): 1151-1169. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1960861> (Accessed March 9, 2013)

⁹⁶ Maoz and Russett, “Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946-1986,” 624

⁹⁷ See deMesquita, Bruce Bueno, James D. Morrow, Randolph M. Siverson and Alastair Smith “An Institutional Explanation of the Democratic Peace,” *The American Political Science Review* 93, No. 4 (Dec., 1999): 791-807. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2586113> (Accessed March 16, 2013)

⁹⁸ See Maoz and Russett, “Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946-1986.”

interests, liberalism posits that these normative and structural factors greatly reduce the likelihood of these conflicting interests resulting in armed conflict.

To the liberal, the spread of democracy also acts to further the national interests of democratic states in that as more states adopt liberal democratic regime types the likelihood of armed conflict is greatly reduced due to the aforementioned normative and structural constraints associated with democratic government. This acts to boost the mutual security of all democratic states. Tony Smith summarized this view very well in his book *America's Mission*, stating that in as the United States was promoting its own national security as it encouraged "likeminded democratic states to come into existence throughout the world."⁹⁹

Closely related to the liberal idea of the democratic peace, is the idea of the capitalist peace which argues that states that actively trade with one another are unlikely to engage in armed conflict as well. Liberalism argues that commerce is another area in which states can cooperate with one another, benefiting both parties involved. Unlike realism, liberalism tends to emphasize interdependencies which come about because of trade, arguing that it is absolute gains, not relative gains that matter; that is whether one party benefits more from a transaction than the other is largely irrelevant as long as both parties are benefiting in some way. Further, liberalism argues that interdependencies will bring about peace simply because nobody would want to go to war with a business partner.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Smith, Tony. "The Struggle for Democracy" In *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994. 8

¹⁰⁰ See Oneal, Oneal, Maoz, and Russett. "The Liberal Peace: Interdependence, Democracy, and International Conflict, 1950-85."

Some liberal scholarship also argues that open capital markets will further cooperation and decrease the likelihood of violence. The idea here is that if a state has a high degree of openness in their capital market, the more dependent they are upon investors from other countries who are likely to withdraw their investments should the state come to be involved in an armed conflict.¹⁰¹ This idea of states with shared economic interests is also used to explain the apparent lack of violence between states with democratic regimes; as Gartzke stated “this ‘capitalist peace’ also accounts for the effect commonly attributed to regime type in standard statistical tests of the democratic peace.”¹⁰² This position that the interdependencies resulting from trade are a strong force in the international system and acts to restrain violence obviously stands in stark contrast with the realist view that interdependencies are a very “weak” force in international politics and that the international system incentivizes autonomy, not interdependence.¹⁰³

While liberalism certainly agrees that all states seek to ensure their own survival, unlike realism, liberalism does not believe that this desire for self-preservation inevitably results in a perpetual struggle for power amongst states who view power as their best hope of survival in an anarchical system. While liberalism does not deny that conflict will occur from time to time, its adherents tend to emphasize states coming together and cooperating for a common good, and liberals argue that international institutions can serve as a mechanism for cooperation between states in spite of the lack of a hierarchical

¹⁰¹ Gartzke, Erik. “The Capitalist Peace,” *American Journal of Political Science* 51, No. 1 (Jan., 2007):166-191. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4122913> (Accessed March 15, 2013)

¹⁰² *Ibid.* 166

¹⁰³ Waltz, Theory of International Politics; Waltz, “Structural Realism After the Cold War.”

power capable ensuring that all states act in an acceptable manner.¹⁰⁴ In 1984, Robert Keohane wrote a book entitled After Hegemony which sought to answer the questions of “under what conditions can independent countries cooperate in the world economy?” and “can cooperation take place without hegemony, and if so, how?”¹⁰⁵ It was Keohane’s argument that rational state actors can and often do come together and cooperate through international institutions based upon shared interests, and rebuffed the idea that a hegemonic power was a necessary prerequisite for the functioning of international institutions, or regimes, stating that “cooperation does not necessarily require the existence of a hegemonic leader after international regimes have been established. Post-hegemonic cooperation is also possible.”¹⁰⁶

Similarly, John Ikenberry argues that the institutional framework which arose in the aftermath of the Second World War also acted as a means of restraining state-power, in that the hegemonic powers agreed to show restraint while the secondary powers provided that the smaller states agree to operate within said institutions.¹⁰⁷ It is his view that institutions reduce the incentive of states to balance and provide a sense of stability in spite of a power capable of putting them all at awe. As he put it:

International institutions do not simply serve the functional purposes of states, reducing transaction costs and solving collective action problems, but they can also be "sticky"-locking states into ongoing and predictable courses of action. It is this lock-in effect of institutions that allows them to play a role in restraining the exercise of state power. In effect, institutions create constraints on state action that

¹⁰⁴ Keohane, Robert O.. *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984. books.google.com/books?isbn=140082026X (Accessed January 13, 2013)

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.* 9

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* 32

¹⁰⁷ Ikenberry, John. “Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Persistence of American Postwar Order.” *International Security* 23, No. 3. (Winter 1998-1999): 43-78. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2539338> (Accessed March 20, 2013).

serve to reduce the returns to power- that is, they reduce the long-term implications of asymmetries of power.¹⁰⁸

Clearly the views put forth by Ikenberry and Keohane stand in stark contrast to the claims of realists who argue that international institutions are merely a mechanism by which great powers further their power aims and in no way act to restrain the ambitions of great powers who can gleefully ignore said institutions should they come in conflict with their national interest.¹⁰⁹ Further, liberals argue that in facilitating cooperation, institutions also provide for collective security. For example, the liberal could point to the numerous former-Soviet and Warsaw states which have joined NATO. While these states were former enemies of the United States and the West, in joining the alliance they have been institutionalized with the West and have embraced liberal democratic values. The liberal would argue that the eastward expansion of NATO acted to expand the liberal zone of peace and in doing states which were formerly rivals are now our allies.

While realism is a theory primarily concerned with the behavior of states, liberalism adopts a somewhat different approach. Liberalism argues that while the state is certainly the most important actor in the international system, other groups can be very important as well such as international institutions, multinational corporations, non-governmental organizations, etc.¹¹⁰

In short, unlike realism which views the international system as a Hobbesian war of all against all, liberalism takes a far less bleak approach, arguing that cooperation is indeed possible despite the anarchical nature of the international system. Specifically,

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 45-46

¹⁰⁹ See Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*; Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions."

¹¹⁰ Morasevik, "Taking Preferences Seriously."

liberalism argues that the degree to which liberal institutions are involved in the international system will largely determine the degree of cooperation amongst states in spite of the lack of a night watchman. Further, unlike realism, liberalism argues that different regime types will act in different manners; specifically, liberalism argues that states based upon democratic principles which emphasize free debate and discussion will be far less likely to take up arms against one another. In a similar vein, liberalism argues that international trade can help to facilitate cooperation and disincentivize conflict amongst states leading to peace.

Constructivism

While realism and liberalism are both holistic theories which seek to make systemic-level claims regarding international politics and state behavior, constructivist theory rejects any sort of holistic approach, arguing instead the need for events on the world stage to be viewed contextually in respect to the time period in which the events take place and the parties involved. Unlike realism which attributes a state's actions to objective forces external to the state, constructivism argues that the nature of international politics is largely a reflection of the social values and norms of a particular time and is thus bound to change over time.¹¹¹ The idea here is that the nature of international politics is constantly changing with social norms, and states are continually changing the rules of the game so to speak, or as Alexander Wendt put it, "anarchy is what states make of it."¹¹² For example, one state could have zero-sum, Hobbesian

¹¹¹ See Wendt, Alexander. "Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46, No. 2 (Spring 1992): 391-425. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2706858> (accessed February 6, 2013); Wendt, Alexander. *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

¹¹² Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It."

relations with one state while having cordial and cooperative relations with another. In the case of the Hobbesian, zero sum type relations, unlike realists, constructivists would argue that this came about not due to objective forces pressuring states to act in a particular manner, but rather social factors arising from the states involved have created such a situation. Further, simply because the relations between two states are very conflictual during one period of time does not necessarily mean that this will continue indefinitely; as attitudes and social norms change, so too will policy. Thus, to constructivism, anarchy has very little bearing on state behavior simply because how states conceptualize anarchy is contingent upon the social and international norms of a particular time.¹¹³ Further, it is worth noting that constructivism also argues that different actors and groups will have greater influence in changing the norms and agreed upon practices in the international system. For example, Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink argue that non-governmental organizations play a profound role in shaping state behavior and international norms through rhetoric, and appeals to normative ideas.¹¹⁴

While realism and liberalism are behavioral theories, attributing the actions of states to objective systemic level factors, constructivism argues that the identities and discourses present within a particular state at a given time will have great bearing on the way in which states will behave on the world stage. Constructivism critiques this purely behavioral approach employed by realism and liberalism, arguing that such an approach does not give the entire picture, specifically their emphasis on systemic level pressures

¹¹³ See Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It; Wendt, Alexander. "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20, No. 1 (Summer, 1995): 71-81 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2539217> (Accessed March 9, 2013); Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*.

¹¹⁴ Keck, Margaret E., and Kathryn Sikkink. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998. <http://books.google.com/books?id=y-YH95YHliwC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false> (Accessed March 17, 2013.)

without taking into account domestic politics, which constructivism argues greatly shape the actions of particular states at a given time. Constructivism argues that the way in which a state views itself and the prevalent ideas in the domestic realm will be manifested in the foreign policy arena and have great bearing on its interactions with other states.¹¹⁵

Similarly, constructivism rejects the essentialist arguments put forth by realism which treat states as black boxes so to speak, all of which define interest in terms of power. To the constructivist, a particular state's interest at a given time is largely contingent upon how it views itself; its identity in comparison to other states so to speak. Constructivism argues that the identities and interests of a particular state are socially constructed, and just as societies change over time, these identities and interests are bound to change over time as well.¹¹⁶ Given that constructivism believes these unit-level variables will play a pivotal role in how a particular state views international politics and thus determining its foreign policy approach, if each state's identities and interests are continually changing, then by *de facto*, the international system is one characterized by continual change, simply because the units which compose the system are continually undergoing change domestically. Similarly, the constructivist would argue that culture has a great bearing on the way in which a particular state views international politics and the actions of others. This is due in large to the fact that each state has faced different challenges and circumstances over history; constructivists argue that these unique experiences will inevitably shape a state's foreign policy.

¹¹⁵ See Hopf, Ted, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002.

¹¹⁶ See Wend, *Social Theory of International Politics*.

For example, the constructivist could argue that Russia's behavior can largely be attributed to the way in which it has long viewed international politics and conceptualized security. Perhaps Russia's long having been subject to foreign invasion has shaped its attitudes toward other states. If Russia perceives the need to maintain a buffer zone of friendly states to ward off foreign invaders, then they will act in a manner consistent with this perception. While Russia could be acting in a manner congruent with realist predictions, the constructivist would argue that this is due not to systemic level pressures as the realist would argue, but rather these actions are a byproduct of the way in which Russia has long perceived the international system.

Thus, as ideas and discourses change, both on the domestic level and in the international realm, so too will the international structure. So while during one period of time international institutions can act as a mechanism for facilitating cooperation amongst states, at another time, these same institutions can merely be a tool utilized by great powers who are seeking to further their agenda. Constructivists argue that whether these international institutions serve as a means of cooperation or an instrument of power is not a product of permanent systemic-level factors, but rather the ideas agreed upon at a particular time and the social meanings associated with such institutions. Similarly, this need to view things in terms of social context transfers over to areas such as military capacity, nuclear weapons, etc.¹¹⁷

Further, these domestic identities will have great bearing on a particular state's interest at a given time. Unlike realism's essentialist approach which argues that all states seek similar aims simply because external, exogenous variables create interests

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

which are defined in terms of power, forcing them to act in a particular manner, constructivism argues that interests are formed endogenously and are in large part derived from the way in which a particular state views itself at a given time. As Ted Hopf stated, “a constructivist account of identity at the domestic level promises to endogenize the formation of interests by connecting them theoretically and empirically to identity and its associated discursive practices.” It is his view that “interests should be derivable from identity in the sense that an individual’s identity implies his interests.”¹¹⁸

In short, as the name “constructivism” would imply, the theory views international politics as a social construct of sorts which is continually changing due to attitudes of state actors, norms, and the way in which the populace of a particular state views themselves at a given time. Constructivism posits that internal factors such as the domestic identities and discourses of a particular state, the international norms, and the decisions of policy makers matter far more in shaping the actions of states on the world stage than do structural, external factors. Similarly, constructivism also argues that international norms, structures, and institutions are social constructs as well, whose meanings are bound to differ over time. No holistic claims are possible for constructivists, and the relations between two states are contingent upon domestic discourses, the norms at a given time, and the approaches of particular policy makers; the anarchical nature of the nation-state system has very little bearing on actions of states on the world stage simply because international politics varies from the actors involved, ideas and norms, and domestic discourses.

¹¹⁸ Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics*. 16

Implications

Now that an overview has been given of what each theory entails, I have a better idea of what variables to look for in my analysis of the case studies in the next chapter. While this is primarily a test of realist theory, attention to alternative explanations must be given in that doing so will provide for a measure of external validity, showing that alternative explanations are taken into account; i.e. testing the ability of realist theory to account for these developments as opposed to other theories. Obviously of specific importance to realist theory are issues of power, security, the ability of a state to assert power beyond its own borders, and perpetual conflict arising from competing interests. Liberalism by contrast would focus on international institutions and their ability to act as a mechanism by which states can cooperate in spite of the anarchical nature of international politics, and states engaging in trade focusing on absolute benefit as opposed to ways in which they utilize trade to coerce other states into acting in accordance with their desires.

Given that the purpose of this paper is to test realist theory, whose primary unit of analysis is the actions undertaken by the state, it is necessary to adopt a realist, behavior-type research model as opposed to the constructivist approach whose unit of analysis is discursive formation. That being said, I believe it is important to recognize that constructivism is a very prominent alternative theory and efforts must be taken in order to account for it. For this reason, I intend at least to acknowledge domestic political developments in each state, the different policy-makers involved, and quotations from key figures from each state regarding the events. Further, the fact that these issues have been taking place over the span of a very long time, thus involving numerous leaders

from both states will allow me to attempt to identify variances in the approaches undertaken by these various statesmen in dealing with the issues. Each statesman will undoubtedly have different ideological leanings and views on how world politics should be constructed; in taking this into account I could at least attempt to see if and to what extent these normative ideas helped to shape the actions of each state. Should I observe that statesmen acted in a similar manner to the issues over time, regardless of the differing aims and ambitions, perhaps this could lead me to conclude that systemic pressures, not ideas and domestic discourses were the driving force behind their policy. By contrast, should an observable difference be observed during different presidencies, this could point to ideas, not systemic pressures being responsible for the actions undertaken by each state. While this certainly would not fully capture the entirety of the discourses going on in each state at a given time, as stated before, the primary purpose of this paper is to test realist theory whose units of analysis and methodological approaches differ greatly from those of constructivism. At the very least it will demonstrate that I have taken into account constructivism.

Lastly, it is also important to point out that in international relations theory, very rarely are things cut and dry with one theory right and the other wrong. More often than not each theory is able to offer an explanation and the objective is to see which theory is *best* equipped to explain the events. This has certainly proven to be the case with my research. Further, very rarely are international phenomena monocausal in nature; rather more often than not a multitude of factors and variables influence state action and the goal is to identify which factor had the *most* impact.

Chapter III

NATO Enlargement and Related Issues

“Russia, just like other countries in the world, has regions where it has its privileged interests. In those regions, there are countries with which we have traditionally had friendly cordial relations, historically special regions. Certainly the bordering regions. But not only that.”

-Dmitry Medvedev, 2008¹¹⁹

As stated in the introductory chapter, the general consensus which I have observed is that NATO expansion and the issues stemming forth from it are deemed to be the most important and representative of United States-Russian relations in the post-Cold War era. For this reason, I have decided to devote this entire chapter to analyzing the developments in this area which have taken place since the fall of the Soviet Union. Throughout the process I will analyze the ability of the theories of realism, constructivism and liberalism to explain the actions undertaken by each state. It is worth noting that very rarely can theoretical explanations be viewed as right or wrong; more often, each theory is able to provide some sort of explanation and it is more of a matter of seeing which theory is *best* able to explain the developments.

As discussed in the previous chapter, realism posits that the state among states is one of continual conflict in which states are continually trying to either preserve the current power distribution or shift the balance of power in their own favor; to the realist, balancing behavior is the norm. Liberalism, while not denying that conflicts do take place, argue that states have numerous mechanisms at their disposal to facilitate cooperation in spite of the lack of a sovereign, and that a state's regime type, specifically

¹¹⁹ Reynolds, Paul. "New Russian world order: the five principles." *BBC News* (London), September 1, 2008. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7591610.stm> (accessed April 25, 2012).

if it is democratic in nature, will have a great bearing on its foreign policy. While liberalism and realism both make holistic, systemic-level claims regarding the international system and state interests, constructivism posits that domestic variables such as identities, along with domestic and international norms, play a far greater role in determining a particular state's actions on the world stage.

The issue of NATO expansion and closely related issues regarding former-Soviet space have been vexed issues in United States-Russian relations since the mid-1990s and have spanned the presidencies of William J. Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama. Given the fact that both constructivism and liberalism argue that regime type has a great bearing on the actions of a particular state at a given time, I have chosen to divide these developments up by what has occurred during each presidency. After giving an overview of the events which occurred under each presidency, I then assess the ability of each theory to account for these developments. I first offer the liberal and constructivist explanations; after doing so I then give the realist explanation. Conducting my analysis in such a manner allows alternative theories to first stand on their own, offering their insights, before giving the realist explanation. Doing so demonstrates that I have fully taken into account the insights of liberalism and constructivism before offering the realist explanation. Before discussing the first wave of post-Soviet NATO enlargement, I believe it is necessary to first give a brief background of the events which occurred from the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 until the time the issue was seriously being considered in 1995 so as to provide for a context in which to see the events.

Background: A Brief Period of Cooperation

On December 25, 1991, then-Soviet Premier Gorbachev formally declared the Soviet Union (USSR) to be dissolved, ceding all his executive power, placing them in the hands of Boris Yeltsin who was to be the President of the newly formed Russian Federation. The fifteen former-Soviet republics were declared to be autonomous, sovereign within their own borders, no longer bound to act in accordance with promulgations from Moscow.¹²⁰ Throughout the negotiations over the dissolution of the Soviet Union, a supermajority of the Soviet populace were staunchly opposed to the dissolution of the Soviet state, and this would prove to be a major sore point in Russian politics in years to come. In the region which would come to be known as the Russian Federation, 71.3% opposed the possibility, and throughout the USSR as a whole, 76.4% of citizens opposed the possibility.¹²¹ A poll of the Russian populace conducted in late 2007 demonstrates that roughly 56% of Russian citizens still hold this sentiment, regretting the dissolution of the Soviet State.¹²²

In the place of the Soviet Union arose an organization known as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS,) consisting of the Russian Federation and the newly autonomous former-Soviet republics. Initially Moscow had visions that the CIS would function in a manner similar to that of the Soviet Union, with Moscow at the forefront of the organization. However, in the following years it came to be abundantly clear that these newly autonomous republics proved to have very little interest in being

¹²⁰ *New York Times*. "END OF THE SOVIET UNION; Soviet U.N. Seat Taken by Russia." *New York Times*, December 25, 1991. <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/12/25/world/end-of-the-soviet-union-soviet-un-seat-taken-by-russia.html> (accessed March 31, 2013).

¹²¹ *RIA Novosti*. "Referendum on the preservation of the USSR." *RIA Novosti* (Moscow), March 17, 1991, sec. INFOGgraphics. <http://en.rian.ru/infographics/20110313/162959645.html> (accessed April 1, 2013).

¹²² *Russia Today*. "Russians' nostalgia for USSR is dwindling - poll ." *Russia Today* (Moscow), April 1, 2013. <http://rt.com/politics/soviet-collapse-ussr-poll-059/> (accessed April 1, 2013).

under the umbrella of Russian influence and would instead actively seek to escape the heel of Moscow, much to the dismay of Russian leaders. Given Russia's long history of having been subject to invasion, they have classically linked their security with the presence of an area of surrounding states, friendly to Moscow so as to act as a buffer zone against foreign invasion and influence.¹²³ Throughout the Cold War Moscow had enjoyed such a buffer zone, both in the form of Soviet Republics, and the surrounding Warsaw states. In 1991, with the stroke of a pen, Russia lost this buffer zone of friendly states, thus heightening Moscow's sense of vulnerability overnight. As will be shown in the following pages, much of Russian foreign policy in the post-Soviet era, specifically after observing the lack of interest of the former-Soviet republics in maintaining their close ties to Moscow, has been fueled by a desire to restore its influence in former-Soviet space, and thus its security. The creation of the CIS can be seen as an attempt by Moscow to maintain its influence in the surrounding region, and by *de facto*, its security. Clearly this attitude has quite a bit in common with the realist idea of spheres of influence and extraterritorial assertions of power.

The United Nations formally recognized the newly formed Russian Federation as the legitimate successor to the Soviet Union, granting it the same prestige within the institution enjoyed by the Soviet Union. While within the United Nations, the Russian Federation wielded quite a bit of power, and it still boasted a substantial nuclear arsenal, throughout the early 1990s the new Russian state was plagued with domestic political divisions and economic turmoil and was thus very weak. These internal cleavages

¹²³ Mankoff, Jeffrey. "Contours of Russian Foreign Policy" in *Russian Foreign Policy: The Return of Great Power Politics*. New York. Rowman & Littlefield, 2012. 11-52; deHaas, Russia's Foreign Security Policy. 12-13

ultimately culminated in the 1993 Constitutional Crisis during which Boris Yeltsin ordered that tanks surround the Russian legislature, blackmailing them into adopting a super-presidential system. While ultimately the Russian legislature bowed to the pressure of the Kremlin, internal cleavages persisted, and the privatization process was a source of much bitterness to the Russian people. Given this instability many Russians developed nostalgia for the Soviet Union.¹²⁴ Because of this, the Communist Party throughout the 1990s remained the dominant party in Russia, and one of the biggest concerns of the Yeltsin administration was the possibility of a return to Communism, a goal also shared by Washington.¹²⁵

These internal cleavages would persist throughout the 1990s and in 1994, the first Chechen War erupted. For these reasons, for the first half of the decade, the key priority of the Kremlin was to maintain its legitimacy, and the strongest threats to the security of the Russian state were deemed to be internal.¹²⁶ As historian J.L. Black stated “local wars, ethnic conflict and even organized crime represented greater danger to Russia than any foreign power at that time.”¹²⁷ Further, during this time the Russian Federation lacked a clear, coherent foreign policy, and many within Yeltsin’s cabinet favored different approaches; some seeking to actively align with the West, others favoring an

¹²⁴ See deHaas, Marcel. “Introduction” In *Russia's Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century: Putin, Medvedev and beyond*. London and New York: Routledge, 2010. 1-14

¹²⁵ Goldgeier James M., and McFaul Michael. “Our Man in Moscow” In *Power and Purpose: U.S. Policy toward Russia after the Cold War*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003. 120-156

¹²⁶ deHaas. *Russia's Foreign Security Policy*. 1-14.

¹²⁷ Black, J.L. “NATO and Russian National Security Questions” In *Russia Faces NATO Expansion: Bearing Gifts of Bearing Arms?* New York. Rowman & Littlefield, 2000. 157

approach which emphasized actively checking the aims of the West; or as the realist would put it, bandwagoning or balancing behavior.¹²⁸

The United States during this period was in an unprecedented position of power in international politics, enjoying its position as the sole superpower in the unipolar world which had arisen in the aftermath of the dissolution of the USSR. George H.W. Bush oversaw the dissolution of the Soviet Union, working with Russian leaders in order to ensure that it took place in a peaceful manner and that all nuclear weapons held by the former Soviet Union were accounted for and saw their way back to Moscow.¹²⁹ It was during this time that the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) was established for the purpose of facilitating cooperation between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the former Soviet Union, including Russia, on issues of mutual security

In 1993, William J. Clinton took office, and from the very beginning held strong Wilsonian aims, seeking to craft a world run on democratic principles and strong emphasis on international institutions, which he felt could serve as a mechanism for facilitating cooperation and peace. Much of Clinton's cabinet also held strong Wilsonian sentiment, including Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, and Deputy Secretary, Strobe Talbott.¹³⁰ In 1993, shortly after taking office, Clinton unveiled a program called the Partnership for Peace (PfP), which sought to expand upon the NACC, and facilitate

¹²⁸ Kuchins, Andrew C., and Igor A. Zevlev. "Russian Foreign Policy: Continuity in Change." *The Washington Quarterly* 35, no. 1, (Winter, 2012): 147-161.

<http://csis.org/files/publication/twq12winterkuchinszelev.pdf> (accessed February 23, 2013).

¹²⁹ Goldgeier and McFaul. *Power and Purpose*. 41-58.

¹³⁰ Talbott, Strobe. "Democracy and the National Interest," *Foreign Affairs*, 74, No. 6 (1996): 47-63.

http://www.mtholyoke.edu/~jwestern/ir319/strobe_talbott.htm (Accessed April 1, 2013); Christopher, Warren. "Toward a More Integrated World: Statement at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Ministerial Meeting, Paris, June 8, 1994." In *In the Stream of History: Shaping Foreign Policy for a New Era*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998. 168-173.

trust and cooperation between NATO and Russia, while also furthering the spread of democracy. It was during this time that the United States provided Russia with economic aid, along with advisors which sought to help Russia in its privatization process.

Given the internal divisions plaguing Moscow during this time, the lack of a coherent foreign policy, domestic upheaval, and the aid coming to Russia from Washington, Yeltsin's primary goal at this time was to keep his enemies, the Communists from regaining power, a goal which Washington also shared, and during this time Yeltsin and Clinton forged a very strong personal relationship. During this period Russia and the United States did not have any sort of colliding interests and relations were thus very cordial. Perhaps this stemmed from the fact that Russia's extraterritorial ambitions were limited due to its weakened state and the internal problems which plagued it.

Around 1993, a decided shift in Russian foreign policy took place, and the desire to restore Russia as a great power on the world stage, and the forging of a multipolar world came to be key pillars in Russian foreign policy.¹³¹ At this time, Russia adopted a very pragmatic foreign policy in which sought to balance the two seemingly antithetical aims of restoring its status as a great power, and not upsetting the G-7 powers, "on whom it was financially dependent, and without whom, most Russian foreign policy elites agree Russia's most vital national interests cannot be secured."¹³² This sense of pragmatism is still very characteristic of Russian foreign policy even to this day. Given Russia's dependence upon the West and limited extraterritorial ambitions at the time, relations

¹³¹ See Lynch, Allen C. "The Realism of Russia's Foreign Policy," *Europe-Asia Studies* 53, No. 1 (Jan., 2001): 7-31 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/826237> (Accessed December 23, 2012.); Mankoff, Russian Foreign Policy. 11-52; deHaas, *Russia's Foreign Security Policy*. 1-14; Kuchins, and A. Zevlev. "Russian Foreign Policy: Continuity in Change." 147-161.

¹³² *Ibid.* 7

between the two states remained largely cordial. This however changed when the issue of the eastward expansion of NATO arose, at which point the relationship between the two states began to rapidly deteriorate.

The Clinton Years

As stated previously, during the early 1990s the key threats to Russian security were deemed to be internal ones, and its funds, resources and political capital were allocated as such. This all changed when the United States began to push the idea of NATO expansion. As J.L. Black stated:

When in 1993-1994, American statesmen, advisers and pundits began to speak of NATO as the most handy means to avert conflict in East and East Central Europe as the Soviet withdrawal laid bare traditional ethnic and territorial disputes, the attention of Russia's military policymakers was drawn back to Europe.¹³³

Also as shown in the previous quotes, Russia has long deemed a buffer zone of states friendly to Russia to be essential to her security, and upon the dissolution of the USSR, Russian borders were left bare, thus resulting in a strong sense of insecurity, or as Black put it, "from the point of view of Russian strategists their borders were left more naked than they had been since the late eighteenth century, making the attitude of NATO a central issue for Moscow during the entire decade."¹³⁴

Because of this sense of vulnerability, when the possibility of the eastward expansion of the alliance was brought up the proposal was met by staunch Russian resistance. The possibility of the expansion of the alliance was first raised in late 1993 and early 1994 and Yeltsin deemed this to be unacceptable and threatening; so much so

¹³³ Black, *Russia Faces NATO Expansion*. 157

¹³⁴ *Ibid.* 7

that he voiced his opposition to the possibility during his address to the Russian legislature, and later reiterated this sentiment on Russian television, addressing the nation as a whole.¹³⁵ During this time, however, the possibility was raised more as a hypothetical scenario, and the alliance did not have any formal plans to accept new members. Many Russians held hopes that the Partnership for Peace program would act as an alternative to NATO expansion, though this proved not to be the case.¹³⁶ In 1995 the West made it clear that it was preparing to accept new states into the alliance and subsequently conducted an enlargement study. Upon hearing the news, Yeltsin was irate, and tensions between the United States and the Russian Federation would mount for the following years.¹³⁷

The vast majority of the public was opposed to the proposal, and an even greater portion of the Russian foreign policy elite was opposed the idea of the eastward expansion of the alliance.¹³⁸ Surveys of Russian foreign policy elites during the time demonstrated that there was a strong consensus that the eastward expansion of the alliance was very threatening to the security of the Russian state.¹³⁹ Thus Russian leaders, regardless of political ideology or partisan loyalty, immediately voiced their unabashed opposition to the proposal. As J.L. Black stated, “by early 1996 NATO expansion was being decried as the ‘most substantial negative factor’ influencing the

¹³⁵ *Ibid.* 9

¹³⁶ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*. 186-187

¹³⁷ *Ibid.* 183-185

¹³⁸ Zimmerman, William, “NATO Expansion Past and Future: A Closer Look” In *The Russian People and Foreign Policy: Russian Elite and Mass Perspectives. 1993-2000*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. 2002.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.* 158

security of the CIS, or so Russian defense minister Grachev told a CIS Defense Ministers' Council meeting.”¹⁴⁰

Throughout this time Clinton and the members of his cabinet repeatedly sought to assure the Russians that this was not directed against Russia, but rather was intended to be for the collective security of all of Europe. These attempts by the Clinton administration proved to be of very little avail; on the contrary, there was strong belief on the part of Russian leaders, across ideological lines, that this move was directed at Russia and demonstrated a lack of trust on the part of the West. In 1997, before the first wave of expansion even took place, Anatoly Chubais who was known for being one of the most pro-Western oriented statesmen in the Russian Federation at the time and who had played a critical role in the privatization process, expressed his opposition toward the eastward expansion of the alliance. “Frankly, the politicians who support this decision (to enlarge NATO) believe that Russia is a country that should be put aside, a country that should not be included in the civilized world—ever. That is a major mistake.”¹⁴¹

Similar sentiment was espoused by Yeltsin, Chernomyrdin and others in the Kremlin. This sentiment that the eastward expansion of NATO exemplified a sense of mistrust toward Russia and was unequivocally directed toward Russia persists into the present time. At the 43rd Munich Conference on Security Policy in 2007, President Vladimir Putin reiterated this idea, espousing skepticism toward the assurances of the West, saying, “it is evident that the process of NATO expansion has nothing to do with modernizing the alliance or with ensuring security in Europe. On the contrary, it is

¹⁴⁰ Black, *Russia Faces NATO Expansion*. 157

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.* 183

seriously eroding mutual trust.”¹⁴² Expanding upon these thoughts, he asked “Why do they have to move their military infrastructure closer to our borders?” and “Is this connected with overcoming global threats today?”¹⁴³

Further, during the late 1980s when Gorbachev agreed to the reunification of Germany, it was under the condition that NATO would not expand “within a thumb’s width further to the East.”¹⁴⁴ Many Russians felt that in pushing the alliance closer to Russia’s borders, the West was going back on its promise; that they were being taken advantage of and blindsided given their weakened position.¹⁴⁵ In complete fairness, however, this provision not to expand NATO was not included in the final document regarding the reunification of Germany.¹⁴⁶ Whether such a promise was made and if so what it entailed is disputable; that being said, the general attitude of those in Russia was that the West had reneged on its word, though the West clearly did not feel the same.¹⁴⁷ This sentiment persists to this day, and in a 2007 interview with al Jazeera, Putin reiterated this commonly stated Russian view. “And what happened to the assurances that our western partners made after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact? Where are those declarations today? No one even remembers them.”¹⁴⁸ Similar sentiment was espoused by Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov in a 2010 interview.

¹⁴² *RIA Novosti*. “NATO Expansion Erodes International Trust--Putin.” *RIA Novosti* (Moscow), October 2, 2007. <http://en.rian.ru/world/20070210/60512299.html> (accessed April 15, 2012).

¹⁴³ *Ibid*.

¹⁴⁴ Klussman, Uwe, Matthias Schepp, and Klauss Wiegrefe. “NATO's Eastward Expansion: Did the West Break Its Promise to Moscow?.” *Der Spiegel* (Spiegel Online) (Hamburg), November 26, 2009.

¹⁴⁵ Black, *Russia Faces NATO Expansion*. 18

¹⁴⁶ Goldgeier and McFaul. *Power and Purpose*. 185

¹⁴⁷ Goldgeier and McFaul. *Power and Purpose*. 184-185

¹⁴⁸ Babbitt, Jed L. “Putin’s Russia” In *In the Words of our Enemies*. Washington, DC: Regnery Pub., 2007.

It is difficult to ignore the fact that the commitments taken by heads of leading NATO countries in the early 1990s regarding the limits of further enlargement were not fulfilled. Now we hear the logic that the commitments were made by other leaders and in a different historical context. But that does not change the whole thing—the obligations were not fulfilled. In the future, a new generation of NATO leaders will come, and they may also question the necessity of fulfilling “old” commitments.¹⁴⁹

While the legitimacy of such views can be debated, it is difficult to deny that Russians during the 1990s felt that the West had gone back on its word, and this view is still strongly adhered to by Russians. As J.L. Black argued, “all political groups in Russia claimed that their country had been stabbed in the back, or kicked when it was down, by a NATO that had promised not to do precisely what it was now doing.”¹⁵⁰ Amidst these tensions, the NACC was replaced by another multilateral institution, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), which was to work alongside the PFP as a means for facilitating discourse and cooperation between NATO and non-NATO states in Europe.¹⁵¹

Though Clinton and Yeltsin maintained a very close relationship, the issue of NATO expansion proved to be a very divisive. Despite Clinton’s attempts at reassuring Yeltsin of his aims, Yeltsin maintained his staunch stance against the eastward expansion of the alliance to include former Warsaw and Soviet states. Throughout the process, Yeltsin felt as though he was being undercut by his Western counterparts every step of

¹⁴⁹ Ryabkov, Sergey. “The view from Moscow—An Interview with Sergey Ryabkov.” *Columbia University Journal of International Affairs* 63, No. 2 (2010): 207-216. <http://jia.sipa.columbia.edu/view-moscow-interview-sergey-ryabkov> (Accessed May 2, 2012)

¹⁵⁰ Black. *Russia Faces NATO Expansion*. 14

¹⁵¹ Simmons, Robert F. . “Ten years of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council: A Personal Reflection .” *NATO Review* (Summer 2007). <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2007/issue2/english/art5.html> (accessed April 2, 2013).

the way.¹⁵² Throughout these debates, a common term employed by Russian officials was the idea of a “redline” which they demanded not be crossed. What is more, “that ‘line of demarcation’ coincided with the borders of the former USSR.”¹⁵³ In October of 1998, prior to the implementation of the first round of enlargement, then-Deputy Director of the Federal Security Service (FSB) Sergei Ivanov issued a stern warning stating

There is a red line which we regard as a cardinal change directly related to our security. This line goes along the border of the former Soviet Union, including the Baltic States. If matters come to this, we will have to fully revise our political relations with the North Atlantic Alliance, which we do not want to do, because we favor the continuation of cooperation.¹⁵⁴

Similar sentiment was also espoused by then-Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov, stating “there already was a redline which Russia could not allow NATO to cross, and it encloses the Baltic Republics.”¹⁵⁵

During this period, Yeltsin maintained his hardline stance against the eastward expansion of the alliance. In his personal memoirs, he recalled the events leading up to the admission of former Warsaw and Soviet states into the alliance, arguing that it was an attempt by the West to remove Russian power and influence from the region and replace it with their own. It was his belief that “the position of the former Soviet republics is a major stumbling block. NATO and others are trying to cut the republics off from Russia

¹⁵² Talbott, Strobe. “The Big Nyet.” In *The Russia Hand: A Memoir of Presidential Diplomacy*. New York: Random House, 2002. 136.

¹⁵³ Black. *Russia Faces NATO Expansion*. 38-39

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.* 101

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 216

and its influence by establishing a system of special relationships with NATO, among others.¹⁵⁶

Clearly Russian opposition to this round of NATO expansion stemmed from a strongly held belief that this region was their privileged sphere of influence, and thus any attempts by NATO to exercise power in the region were threatening. It is abundantly clear that it was the view of the Russian state that such an action on the part of NATO would be a direct threat to Russian security. While internal cleavages and economic turmoil precluded the country from taking the West head on, they reacted to this perceived threat in the external environment in a variety of ways.

First of all, while Russia had long been in need of military reform and an official national security doctrine and framework, the threat of NATO expansion served as a catalyst, which brought about such reform. In June of 1997, at a ceremony honoring the current graduating class of Russia's military academies, Chernomyrdin spoke on the need for military reform. It was his argument that such reform was necessary due to NATO's expansion "to the borders of our country." Later during the speech, he referred to the "smoldering coals of military conflicts near Russia's borders" and NATO's infrastructure rapidly approaching Russian borders, arguing that due to this, the delay of any sort of military reform was simply "inadmissible."¹⁵⁷ Similar sentiment was echoed in July of 1997 by Deputy Chairman of the State Duma's Defense Committee, Aleksei Arbatov in a statement to the press in Washington, in which he stated that "NATO expansion will

¹⁵⁶ Yeltsin, Boris, "The Last Summit," In *Midnight Diaries*, Translated by Catherine A. Fitzpatrick. New York: Public Affairs, 2000. 349-350.

¹⁵⁷ Black, *Russia Faces NATO Expansion*. 164

figure into every discussion and paper written on the military reform question.”¹⁵⁸ In later statements, Arbatov cited a “widespread feeling of betrayal” amongst Russian democrats, and argued that these events marked a fundamental shift in Russian security thinking in that there is now a consensus that the West poses a long-term threat to Russian security.¹⁵⁹ It is also worth noting that Arbatov was a very prominent member of the Yabloko Party, which at the time was the most pro-Western party operating in the Russian political system, and Arbatov himself was very much a liberal.¹⁶⁰

On August 2, 1997, Yeltsin approved the military reform measures. By October, a draft of the National Security Concept of the Russian Federation was published. This draft was written by Deputy Secretary of the Security Council, Col Gen. Lenoid S. Maierov, who made official the Russian position that the eastward expansion of NATO was indeed a security threat.

In particular, NATO’s eastward expansion of NATO and the turning of the bloc into a dominant military-political force is creating a realistic threat splitting up Europe and the possibility of a new standoff spiral. This radically contravenes Russia’s national interests and its policy in the world scene.¹⁶¹

This essay “left no doubt that there was a direct link between the formulation of a new security concept in Russia and the movement of NATO eastward.”¹⁶² On December 17, this draft was officially adopted by Yeltsin through a presidential edict and was published

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 164

¹⁵⁹ Friedman, Thomas L.. "Russian Resentment of NATO Decision Runs Deep." *Milwaukee Journal Sentential*, August 13, 1997. <http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1683&dat=19970813&id=FrwaAAAAIBAJ&sjid=JToEAAAAIBAJ&pg=2367,7397538> (accessed April 2, 2013).

¹⁶⁰ Paul, Tooher. "U.S.-Russia Relations: A New Chill-- Russian Liberal Blames U.S. for Growing Split." *Global Beat* (New York University), 02 03, 2000. <http://www.russialist.org/4090.html> (accessed April 2, 2013).

¹⁶¹ Black, *Russia Faces NATO Expansion*. 169

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

a week later. Included in the published version of the draft was a clear statement on Russia's stance toward NATO expansion stating that "the prospect of NATO expansion to the East is unacceptable to Russia because it represents a threat to its national security."¹⁶³ By this time, it was clear that Russian Federation officials were taking the possibility of NATO expansion very seriously, and these reforms and the new doctrine were a direct, calculated reaction to NATO's ambitions.

In 1998, further action was taken on the subject. On October 2, amidst rising tensions in Yugoslavia with the prospect of a NATO intervention in the conflict, and the inevitability of NATO expansion, Russia ratified two agreements with Belarus, aimed at boosting military ties between the two states. As J.L. Black argued, this was done "precisely because of NATO expansion and the threat of military action against Yugoslavia."¹⁶⁴

While these actions undertaken during the talks over NATO expansion may not sound like a whole lot, and clearly they did not present a strong enough deterrent to the alliance to make it rethink expansion, domestic divisions and Russia's economic situation precluded it from taking a stronger stance. Further, these actions at the very least demonstrated to the rest of the world, specifically the United States that Russia deemed such a move on the part of NATO to be a direct threat to her security and was very serious in its opposition to such measures.

¹⁶³ "Russian Federation National Security Blueprint" Approved by Russian Federation presidential edict No. 1300. *Federation of American Scientists*.
<http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/doctrine/blueprint.html> (Accessed March 21, 2013)

¹⁶⁴ Black. *Russia Faces NATO Expansion*. 101

Ultimately Yeltsin conceded that he was not in a position to halt the eastward expansion of the alliance, and in May of 1997, he signed the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security, which was a document which sought to facilitate trust and cooperation between Russia and NATO. Yeltsin was very clear that he acting to make the best out of a bad situation, attempting to dampen the negative effects of NATO expansion. During the ceremony while being interviewed by the press, Yeltsin stated the following on the subject:

We're not running away from the position which has been that we are against NATO expanding eastward. We believe this is a blunder, a big mistake, and one day this will be a historic error. Therefore at this point in time, what we necessarily would like to do is improve relations so that there will be no confrontation. Therefore, we have signed an agreement between Russia and NATO.¹⁶⁵

Yeltsin maintained that he still favored “being cautious with regards to NATO” and that should NATO violate its part of the agreement it would be held accountable.¹⁶⁶ It is also important to note that this act did not agree to the inclusion of new states into NATO, but rather was to serve as a blueprint for cooperation between Russia and the alliance. Russia over the years maintained that its signing of the Founding Act in no way acted as a “trade-off for the introduction of former Warsaw Pact members into the alliance.”¹⁶⁷ On the contrary, it has formally been “considered a threat to Russia’s national security” for quite some time.¹⁶⁸ Included in the Founding Act was an institution called the Permanent Joint Council (PJC), which to quote Clinton, was designed to guarantee facilitate

¹⁶⁵ Clinton, William and Boris Yeltsin. “Yeltsin and Clinton on Russian Economic Crisis.” In *Historic Documents of 1998*. Washington DC: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1999. 612-613.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ deHaas, *Russia’s Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century*. 53

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

cooperation between Russia and NATO. As Clinton stated, “From now on NATO and Russia will consult and work together.”¹⁶⁹

Despite Russian concerns, the West decided to go forth with the eastward expansion of the alliance, while still attempting to reassure Yeltsin that this was in no way directed at Russia. At a conference in Budapest, Clinton verbalized these aims as follows: “We must not allow the Iron Curtain to be replaced with a veil of indifference... We must not consign new democracies to a gray zone... NATO will not automatically exclude any nation from joining. At the same time, no country outside will be allowed to veto expansion.”¹⁷⁰ Obviously the outside country which Clinton was referring to in these statements was Russia. In a 1998 statement shortly before the new states were formally admitted into the alliance, then-Defense Secretary William Cohen reiterated the sentiment that Russia did not hold veto power over the actions of the alliance, stating that the United States “new relationship with Russia” “does not allow Russian participation in internal NATO issues; it does not give Russia a voice or veto over NATO’s decisions; and it does not give Russia a *de facto* membership in NATO or a role in determining who will gain admission to NATO.”¹⁷¹

Despite this rhetoric coming from the West, Russian opposition toward the possibility of NATO expanding closer to its borders remained strong. In February of 1999, a month before the formal admission of the new NATO states, Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov reiterated this sentiment at a press conference, sternly warning that Russia

¹⁶⁹ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*. 253

¹⁷⁰ Talbott. *The Russia Hand*. 141

¹⁷¹ Cohen, William. Statement of Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen before the Senate Committee on Appropriations on the topic of NATO Enlargement 21 October 1997.
<http://www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=1465> (Accessed April 25, 2012)

would take “any steps it finds necessary to guarantee its national security” should the Alliance expand to include former Soviet and Warsaw states in its ranks.¹⁷² Such warnings and the aforementioned actions undertaken by Russia demonstrating their seriousness on the subject proved to be of very little avail, and in March of 1999, the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary were formally admitted into the alliance.¹⁷³

Kosovo

In the following months, relations between the two states were further strained due to the tensions mounting in Kosovo, and NATO’s subsequent bombing campaign, which brought the two states dangerously close to the brink of war. Yugoslavian leader, Slobodan Milosevic was committing heinous crimes against ethnic Albanians within his state and creating mass instability in the region. Throughout this time, the United States was pushing for a NATO intervention, arguing that they were best equipped to deal with the crisis, much to the dismay of the Russians who were horrified at this idea. During the talks leading up to the 1997 Founding Act, Clinton had repeatedly tried to convince Yeltsin that the alliance was no longer military in nature, but was rather political, though Russian leadership remained skeptical of this; this skepticism seemed to be validated when the proposal to intervene militarily came up. In the events leading up to the NATO intervention, Yeltsin stated the following to Clinton on the possibility of the intervention:

Our people will think very little of America and NATO if this bombing proceeds. I remember how hard it was to change the attitude of ordinary people and

¹⁷² Black, *Russia Faces NATO Expansion*. 107

¹⁷³ Kozaryn, Linda D.. "Poles, Hungarians, Czechs Join NATO Fold." *American Foreign Press Service*. March 16, 1999. <http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=42006> (accessed April 2, 2013).

politicians here in Russia toward the U.S. and the West. It was very hard, and yet we managed to do it. And now we're going to lose all that?¹⁷⁴

Similar opposition was stated by Chernomyrdin in his talks with Talbott, also arguing that such an act on the part of NATO had the potential to derail the liberal domestic reforms which they had worked so hard to achieve.¹⁷⁵

Many Russian leaders saw the possible intervention in Yugoslavia through the lens of their actions in Chechnya which were being condemned by the West. This had been a festering issue for quite some time. In mid-1998, the United Nations (U.N) Security Council passed resolution 1160 which condemned the violence being committed against the Albanians in Kosovo, and excessive force committed by the Serbs. Later that year, the U.N. passed Security Council Resolution 1199, which called for a "ceasefire and the withdrawal of Yugoslav security forces" from the region, as well as "access to Kosovo for nongovernmental and humanitarian organizations."¹⁷⁶ While Russia, a permanent member of the Security Council, supported the measure, they also made clear their staunch opposition to the use of force. On October 5, 1998, Yeltsin called Clinton, telling him that the use of force in Yugoslavia was "inadmissible and forbidden."¹⁷⁷ Strobe Talbott, later recalling these events, stated that during this conversation Yeltsin did not even allow Clinton to speak, but rather hung up on him after stating his demands.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁴ Yeltsin. *Midnight Diaries*. 349-350

¹⁷⁵ Norris, John. "An Empty Chair, Nothing off the table." In *Collision Course: NATO, Russia, and Kosovo*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Pub., 2005. 125. books.google.com/books?isbn=0275987531 (Accessed April 1, 2013)

¹⁷⁶ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*. 250

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ Talbott. *The Russia Hand*. 300

Throughout this time, Milosevic proved to be very uncooperative with the demands placed on him by the United Nations, and the growing consensus in Washington was that a military intervention was absolutely necessary, and NATO was the best qualified force to conduct such an intervention, much to the horror of Russian leaders. The big question to Russian leaders was if NATO would intervene in Yugoslavia's conflict in Kosovo without first going through the United Nations, would they also intervene in Russia's conflict in Chechnya?¹⁷⁹ As Ted Hopf stated, "Russia's identity was being read through Chechnya in 1999. Kosovo was Chechnya; Belgrade was Moscow. The only thing differentiating Russia from Yugoslavia in the minds of NATO was Russia's nuclear status."¹⁸⁰

Throughout the talks in Washington regarding the possibility of the bombing campaign, they recognized the staunch opposition of Russia to such an operation. That being said, they did not want to be held hostage to Russian demands, and as stated before, they had no intention of allowing Russia veto power or influence over NATO actions. As James Goldgeier and Michael McFaul argued, "if Russia was allowed to access NATO decision-making to disrupt NATO war plans, or if Russia used information gained from contacts with NATO to provide valuable intelligence to the Serbs, then NATO would be shooting itself in the foot."¹⁸¹ As Deputy National Security Advisor Steinberg later recalled:

For those of us who wanted to do something, the worst outcome would be not to do something because Russia didn't want us to. It would have been bad for us,

¹⁷⁹ Hopf, Ted. "The Unipolar World." In *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities & Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002. 211-258.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 253.

¹⁸¹ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*. 251

bad for the Balkans, and bad for Russia. It would have been catastrophic. The whole security of Europe would be thrown into question if Russia's sense of interest precluded the international community addressing this serious question.¹⁸²

National security advisor to Vice President Al Gore, Leon Fuerth expressed similar sentiment, arguing that "a conscious decision was made" and that "we would have to proceed whether the Russians liked it, bought it or rejected it, whatever," however he also maintained that they would attempt to explain themselves to the Russians every step of the way.¹⁸³ In short, while the United States was going to conduct the operation, regardless of Russian sentiment, they also wanted to maintain good relations with Russia. Throughout this time, Yeltsin and other Russian officials maintained their strong stance against the proposed intervention.

One thing which American and NATO leaders struggled with was the PJC which was established in the Founding Act which as stated above was designed to facilitate cooperation between Russia and NATO.¹⁸⁴ Ultimately, they deemed that they would continue in spite of Russian opposition. As NATO spokesman Jamie Shea said, "You could suggest the PJC was a place to give Russia a major role, in line with the Founding Act, but all of the analysis being done here was that it would make the situation more complicated rather than better."¹⁸⁵

Thus, despite staunch Russian opposition to the possibility of a NATO intervention, NATO forces began a bombing campaign, starting the 23rd of March, which would continue until the 10th of June. This was conducted unilaterally by NATO who did not first seek authorization from the U.N. which acted to horrify Russian leaders,

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 253

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

especially given the close proximity of these events to Russia's borders. Yeltsin deemed this action to be "nothing more than open aggression."¹⁸⁶ Russians during this time felt that "the United States and NATO were using their military power to extend their sphere of influence into the Balkans, a region they considered Russia's turf."¹⁸⁷ Further, this demonstrated to Russia their "international impotence" in that NATO conducted this action without first consulting the United Nations, the one institution in which Russia still held real power.¹⁸⁸ It was during this time that Russia's commitment to absolute sovereignty emerged, arguing that any state had the right to do in their borders as they so choose, along with its ostensible commitment to the primacy of the United Nations in determining whether a conflict was justified. This premium placed upon sovereignty and the U.N. was seen as a way of dampening the effects of United States hegemony,¹⁸⁹ and given that the United Nations Security Council was the one arena in which Russia was an equal to the United States is it really any wonder that such a high priority is placed on the primacy of this institution? Numerous polls conducted during this time demonstrated that the Russian people, and especially Russian foreign policy elites, across all partisan lines, deemed this action to be very threatening to Russian interests and security.¹⁹⁰

There were numerous factors influencing the decision of NATO to intervene in Kosovo, and the reasoning would of course differ somewhat from state to state. Clearly

¹⁸⁶ BBC News. "NATO air strikes--the world reacts." *BBC News* (London), March 25, 1999. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/303446.stm> (accessed April 3, 2013).

¹⁸⁷ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*. 249

¹⁸⁸ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*. 249

¹⁸⁹ Hopf, Ted. "The Unipolar World." In *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities & Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002. 211-258.

¹⁹⁰ See Kosals, Lenoid. "Russia's Elite Attitudes to the NATO Enlargement: Sociological Analysis." NATO-EAPC Research Fellowship, Final Report (2001): Table 7. <http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/99-01/kosals.pdf> (accessed October 22, 2012); Zimmerman, William. "Elite Political-Economic Orientations and Foreign Policy" In *The Russian People and Foreign Policy: Russian Elite and mass Perspectives, 1993-2000*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000. 157-160, Table 5.3

the slaughter of Albanian civilians at the hands of Milosevic struck a nerve with many in the West. Also important was the need to maintain stability in the region, and different NATO states had strong interests in the region. Further, civil wars and failed states can act as a breeding ground for extremism and terrorism, which could have the potential to seep into neighboring states. For example, Belgium, Portugal, and Spain had concerns that the conflict had the potential to increase the outward flow of refugees from the region, thus acting to undermine regional stability.¹⁹¹ No state wants a civil war raging in such close proximity to their borders. While the United States certainly had interests at stake in the region as well, it was far more insulated in that it had the Atlantic Ocean separating it from Europe. But the fact is that the American military had a strong presence in the region, which increased its stakes in the conflict. Further, the United States wanted to preserve NATO and this could also act as a means of doing so, while also protecting the rights of the Albanians in Kosovo.

On March 24, Clinton addressed the American people, identifying his four goals in the conflict: “first protection of the Kosovo Albanians, second the stability of the region, third the prevention of a broader war, and fourth, the preservation of NATO.”¹⁹² Thus, the intervention by NATO was motivated both by a sense of altruism and a need to protect human rights and security-related concerns such as containing the spread of violence and maintaining security in the region.

¹⁹¹ Yoshida, Yuki. "A Theoretical Assessment of Humanitarian Intervention and R2P." e-International Relations. January 16, 2013. <http://www.e-ir.info/2013/01/16/from-kosovo-to-libya-theoretical-assessment-of-humanitarian-intervention-and-the-responsibility-to-protect/> (accessed March 12, 2013).

¹⁹² Tenbergen, Rasmus. "Bombs for Human Rights? Humanitarian Intervention in Kosovo." Paper presented at the Human Rights Conference of the University of Bonn and the Institute for Leadership Development, (June, 2001): 9. <http://www.rasmus-tenbergen.de/publikationen/Bombs%20for%20Human%20Rights.pdf> (accessed February 21, 2013).

While the Russians obviously did not support the atrocious actions undertaken by Milosevic, they were horrified that NATO was conducting a military operation outside of its jurisdiction, in such close proximity to its own borders. To Russians, this marked the turn of the alliance from a defensive one to an offensive one, thus increasing Russia's sense of vulnerability. As stated previously, another concern espoused by Russian officials was the idea that they could be the next target of NATO in that they were involved in a similar conflict in Chechnya. To Westerners, such claims seemed to be unfounded, however the fact that it was so widely believed by Russian officials "underscored how weak many in Russia perceived their country to be" and just the extent of this sense of vulnerability.¹⁹³ Throughout this time, the sentiment among Russians that they were being taken advantage of by the West due to their weak position was raised greatly, a sentiment which persists to the present day. Russians remained very skeptical over the intents of the United States and her allies, viewing it as an attempt to increase their sphere of influence in a region which they had classically deemed to be their own. Goldgeier and McFaul summarized this sentiment as follows:

Most Russians did not perceive the NATO bombing campaign as a humanitarian effort to stop genocide and promote democracy. Instead, it was perceived as a power grab by the United States and its Allies. To the Russians, the American sphere of influence was moving into the Balkans because American power and Russian weakness made this expansion possible.¹⁹⁴

Throughout the course of the bombing campaign, a key concern of the United States was that Russia would actively attempt to undermine NATO efforts by providing the Serbs "with intelligence about the American-led air campaign."¹⁹⁵ A few days after

¹⁹³ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*. 249

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.* 254

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

the campaign began, in addition to the “hysterical rhetoric,” Russian officials stated their intent of deploying “war fighting vessels in the Mediterranean.”¹⁹⁶ Americans were concerned not that this would lead to a head on confrontation between Russian and NATO forces, but rather that they would attempt to gather intelligence about NATO’s plans and relay it to the Serbs. Supreme Allied Commander Clark was quoted as saying, “we’re not going to let them come into the Adriatic, or through the Straits if I can help it. We’re going to get this stopped, or pull in the forces to block them.”¹⁹⁷ Further, during this time, many Russian political figures proposed a direct military response against NATO actions. Though no such action ended up being undertaken, this made NATO forces very uneasy. Further, during this time, the State Duma voted to “form a new Slavic nation by uniting Yugoslavia with Russia and Belarus,” though no later actions were undertaken to pursue the formation of such a state, and the Russian movement of ships turned out to be merely a bluff to demonstrate to the West their strong opposition to the bombing campaign.¹⁹⁸

Within a few weeks, Russia realized that it could do nothing to stop the bombing campaign and felt compelled to get involved, not because they supported the action, but rather because they “feared a solution to the conflict that did not involve Russia.”¹⁹⁹ After all, given Yugoslavia’s close proximity to Russia’s borders and the fact that it had long been a part of their sphere of influence, they had a vested influence in the region, and it would only make sense that they would want a part in the settlement process. On April 25th, Yeltsin called Clinton and raised the proposal of Russian involvement in the

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.* 254-255

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.* 255

settlement process, stressing the need to reach an end to the conflict and his desire for at least some Serbian forces to stay behind in Kosovo.²⁰⁰ Open communication and negotiations between Chernomyrdin and Talbott began to take place, though the aims of Moscow and Washington clashed every step of the way. Russia's main priority was that this conflict reach an end as soon as possible. Finally in early June, Milosevic reluctantly accepted NATO's conditions.

Upon reaching a resolution, Talbott and Chernomyrdin toasted with a bottle of champagne. However, while in Moscow, Talbott got word of Russian troops being "put on alert for redeployment."²⁰¹ Obviously, deeply concerned over the issue, Talbott spoke with his Russian counterparts, who assured him that the "military guys did not represent the government's official views and would be reigned in."²⁰² Upon gaining reassurances from Russian officials, including Putin (who was then head of the FSB,) Ivanov, and Chernomyrdin, Talbott left Moscow. While the plane carrying Talbott and his team was flying back to Moscow, 200 Russian troops had crossed the Bosnian border, headed toward Kosovo. Under the impression that Russia would have an independent sector of Kosovo, Russian forces seized the airport in Pristina without first informing NATO forces. A member of Talbott's team on the plane was speaking on the phone with White House officials, informing them of the assurances they had received from their Russian counterparts, when the White House official informed him of the development. Upon hearing the news, he ran to the front of the plane and informed Talbott of this new

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.* 256

²⁰¹ *Ibid.* 262

²⁰² *Ibid.*

development. Subsequently the plane was turned around, and Talbott was headed back to Moscow.²⁰³

Upon returning, Talbott met with Ivanov, informing him of the matter and put him on the phone with Secretary of State Madeline Albright. According to Talbott and others, Russian officials appeared to be baffled. Ivanov stated that he would look into it, but was under the impression that Russian forces were merely “in a position of readiness to enter Kosovo as part of a synchronized operation.”²⁰⁴ Albright didn’t buy what Ivanov was telling her. At this time the Russians were asking Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria for permission to use their airspace in order to fly in reinforcements. In response to these actions undertaken by Russia, Romanian forces were scrambling together fighter jets. Upon hearing the news, Supreme Allied Commander Clark ordered General Jackson, in charge of the forces on the ground, to deploy Apache helicopters to the airport so as to block the runways. This order Jackson refused because he feared it would start “World War III.”²⁰⁵ In the end, British forces sealed off the roads which led to the Pristina airport, and Jackson wrote a letter to the Russians stating that NATO “did not accept Russia’s claim to be control in the airfield.”²⁰⁶ Without roads to send supplies to Pristina, Russian forces at the airfield were “reduced to begging the British for food and water.”²⁰⁷ Ultimately the situation was defused peacefully, however had General Jackson followed Clark’s orders to deploy Apaches to the airfield, things could have turned out very differently.

²⁰³ Talbott. *The Russia Hand*. 332-341

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 337

²⁰⁵ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*. 263

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.* 263-265

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.* 264

Though direct confrontation between Russian and NATO forces was ultimately avoided, the Kosovo situation had very lasting consequences for United States-Russian relations. To the Russians, this demonstrated that NATO was still very much a military organization, despite Clinton's previous statements to the contrary. Further, the Russians felt that this marked NATO's transformation from a defensive alliance to an offensive one; this sentiment persists to this day. In a 2010 interview, Ryabkov espoused this sentiment saying, "when Russia was very weak, and barely existed as a state, NATO which had been a defensive alliance throughout the Cold War, transformed itself into an offensive alliance. It attacked Yugoslavia in 1995 and again in 1999. The organization's leader, the United States, attacked Iraq."²⁰⁸ This sentiment is very common amongst Russian leaders, and numerous other leaders have expressed such disdain for the actions of the alliance in Kosovo. Further, any sort of hopes that the Permanent Joint Council could facilitate cooperation between Russia and NATO seemed to have been dashed.²⁰⁹

In response to these events, the Russian Federation adopted a new military doctrine, which stated that the only legitimate intervention was that which was approved by the United Nations, and it upheld the right of a state to do within their borders as they so choose. In a 2007 interview, Putin reiterated this sentiment stating that "the use of force can only be considered legitimate if the decision is sanctioned by the UN. And we do not substitute NATO or the EU for the UN."²¹⁰ United States and NATO officials by

²⁰⁸ The View From Moscow—An Interview with Sergey Ryabkov

²⁰⁹ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*. 265

²¹⁰ Babbitt. *In the Words of Our Enemies*. 188

contrast were baffled that Yeltsin, a so-called democrat could sit idly by as innocent Albanians were slaughtered at the hands of the Serbs.²¹¹

It could be asked why Russia did not do more to combat this perceived threat to its security. The fact is that during this time, domestic cleavages still persisted and Russia still lacked a coherent foreign policy. Further, Russia's economic situation had gone from bad to worse in the previous months due to the infamous "Ruble Crisis" during which time the Russian government greatly inflated its currency and ultimately defaulted on its debt.²¹² Russia was in a very weak position all around, and by getting involved part way through the process, it hoped to at least dampen the negative effects of the Kosovo war. It did not take a more assertive approach simply because it lacked the internal capacity to do so.

United States-Russian relations were now at an all-time low. In an interview, Arbatov, the democratically-inclined Duma official, summarized this sentiment, stating, "Before, Russia had no enemies. Now, it is clearly stated that one of the primary threats to Russian security is the policies of the United States, which is keen on establishing its position as the world's sole superpower and expanding its interests around the world."²¹³ The Russian official then elaborated on these claims, specifically citing the eastward expansion of NATO and the alliance's 1999 war with Kosovo as key threats to Russia's security.

²¹¹ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*. 247-248

²¹² Danks, Catherine J.. "The economy and economic policy." In *Politics Russia*. Harlow, England: Pearson Longman, 2009. 384-385 .

²¹³ Paul, Tooher. "U.S.-Russia Relations: A New Chill-- Russian Liberal Blames U.S. for Growing Split." *Global Beat* (New York University), 02 03, 2000. <http://www.russialist.org/4090.html> (accessed April 2, 2013).

NATO expansion and its use of force in Yugoslavia are seen as primary threats to Russian security. NATO's coming closer to Russia's border is seen as a definite threat. And its use of force in Yugoslavia, in clear violation of the United Nations' charter as well as various bilateral agreement with Russia, shows the new face of NATO.²¹⁴

Relations between the two states had thoroughly soured by this point and the “early pattern of security cooperation was a distant memory.”²¹⁵ Not even Clinton and Yeltsin's personal relationship could help to ease the tension between the two states. In late 1999, when Russia refused to cut off arms sales to Iran, it became abundantly clear that any sort of “security partnership between the two countries belonged to an idealism of the past.”²¹⁶ In 2000, Kenneth Waltz wrote an essay in which he argued that the pursuit of NATO expansion would cause Russian resentment, and incentivize them to align with powers such as China.²¹⁷ Indeed, in 2001, Russia did exactly this, signing a “twenty-year friendship treaty between the two Asian giants;” as James Goldgeier and Michael McFaul stated on the subject, “in elite circles in Moscow, getting on the U.S. bandwagon was out; balancing against the United States was back in.”²¹⁸ Now that an overview of the key developments in United States-Russian relations which occurred during the Clinton years has been provided, I will now assess the ability of each theory to explain these developments, beginning with liberalism.

IR Theory and the Clinton Years

Adherents to liberalism could first of all point to the fact that the Clinton administration had many ideological aims and strongly favored the spread of democracy,

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*. 287

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ Waltz, *Structural Realism After the Cold War*. 22

²¹⁸ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*. 266

setting up institutions for this purpose, along with programs aimed at facilitating cooperation between NATO and non-NATO states. Indeed, these programs stemmed from a clear liberal logic and many in the Clinton administration vocalized this when setting up these institutions.²¹⁹ The eastward expansion of NATO, to Clinton, served as a vehicle for spreading democracy and obviously a prerequisite to membership in the alliance is a democratic regime, and the states which have joined the alliance in the aftermath of the Cold War have indeed adopted democratic regime types, thus the liberal could argue that the objective of spreading democratic ideals has indeed been successful, and those states which have adopted democratic governments through this process have had very cordial relations with the United States.

Secondly, EAPC and the NACC both stemmed from a clear liberal logic and were designed to be a vehicle by which NATO and non-NATO states could cooperate for a common good. Similarly, the PJC established in the Founding Act was to serve a similar purpose. While the two states came very close to armed conflict during the Kosovo crisis, certainly the liberal could argue that the existence of such forums to facilitate trust and cooperation helped to prevent this from happening. Thirdly, the liberal could argue that during the situation in Kosovo, NATO served as a means by which a multitude of states were able to come together for a common good: the protection of human rights and halting Milosevic's slaughter of the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.

Lastly, it is worth noting that to the liberal, the mere presence of institutions alone is not enough to facilitate cooperation; rather, states must actively utilize them for this

²¹⁹ See for example: Talbott, "Democracy and the National Interest,"; Christopher. "Toward a More Integrated World." 168-173.

purpose. Institutions don't force states to cooperate; they merely facilitate it should this be something each state desires. The liberal argue that the inability of the NACC or the PJC to offer a mutually acceptable solution to both states merely stemmed from one or more state's lack of faith in the ability of the institution to fulfill its designed purpose.

Constructivism by contrast could point toward issues of identity and domestic pressures determining the action of each state. For example, Ted Hopf wrote a book titled The Social Construction of International Politics in which he identified the four prominent discourses in Moscow in 1999 and the way in which they related to foreign policy approaches. Though the general consensus amongst Russians regarding the eastward expansion of the alliance and the bombing of Kosovo, it was Hopf's view that the opposition stemmed from the various identities present in Russia at the time; the way in which they viewed themselves would ultimately determine the favored foreign policy approach. Similarly, one could argue that Russians were so opposed to the eastward expansion of the alliance, simply because of what it represented to them and the legacy of their Soviet past; after all, the alliance was originally created to contain the Soviet Union, and the anti-NATO sentiment from the Soviet past would not simply dissolve overnight with the fall of the USSR. Adherents to constructivism could argue that Russian opposition to NATO expansion stemmed not from objective, systemic forces, but rather its Soviet past, the way in which it had classically viewed NATO and international politics.

Further, a constructivist could argue that American officials in pursuing their policies were acting in reaction to domestic pressures and in accordance with the way in which they viewed themselves. For example, if Americans at the time viewed

themselves as the purveyors of democracy and liberal values, this would be reflected in the favored foreign policy approach. One could argue that the actions of the Clinton administration were a product of the prevalent norms in the United States, or were a reaction to domestic pressures and imperatives to do so.

While liberalism and constructivism are certainly able to offer some explanations for the events which took place during the Clinton years, I believe that it is realist theory which is best capable of explaining these developments. First of all, there is no denying that the Clinton administration sought a world run on liberal lines and was working very closely with the Yeltsin government to achieve a more democratic Russia. That being said, as stated in the introductory chapter, the realists offered an explanation for that: the lack of a geopolitical equal allowed them to pursue such policies. As Kenneth Waltz stated, "The winner of the Cold War and the sole remaining great power has behaved as unchecked powers have usually done. In the absence of counterweights, a country's internal impulses prevail, whether fueled by liberal or other urges."²²⁰ In previous years, the United States would not have been able to bring new members into the alliance simply because such an action would be checked by a similar action on the part of the Soviet Union and would have increased the likelihood of armed conflict. Now that the Soviet Union was no longer in existence to check such aims, the United States could expand its presence in the region. The realist would argue that a power vacuum arose with the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the United States sought to fill it with its own influence. While the Clinton administration certainly had liberal Wilsonian aims in

²²⁰ Waltz, Kenneth N. "Structural Realism after the Cold War," *International Security* 25. No. 1 (Summer 2000): 24. http://www.columbia.edu/itc/sipa/U6800/readings-sm/Waltz_Structural%20Realism.pdf (Accessed December 27, 2012)

its policy toward former-Soviet space, the fact is that security issues played a key part in shaping the administration's policies at the time. Expanding United States military influence throughout the region in the form of NATO, and could provide for stability in that the strong military presence could disincentivize armed conflict and instability. This is very much in keeping with John Mearsheimer's argument that a lack of a European hegemon could provide for a very unstable environment in Europe.²²¹ Similarly, as stated previously, security-related issues played a part in NATO's decision to intervene in Kosovo. The realist would argue that civil wars, such as that occurring in Kosovo, have a destabilizing effect and could drastically alter the balance of power in the region. In intervening, the United States through NATO could mitigate this and ensure that its interests in the region were not harmed and in doing so of course protect the Albanian minority in the region.

Further, the fact is that the forums set up did not offer Russia any sort of sway over the actions of the alliance, simply because if NATO were to allow them veto power they would be shooting themselves in the foot. This is very in keeping with the realist view that such institutions arise from the balance of power and the balance of power is reflected within them. Further, the Russians were very much opposed to the actions of Milosevic and sought to act through the multilateral institution of the United Nations, rather than an alliance which they felt was hostile toward them, to solve the situation. Indeed, after the Kosovo situation, Yeltsin told Clinton that he strongly felt that should they have worked through the United Nations, they would have been able to have

²²¹ Mearsheimer, John J..= "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War." *International Security* 15, No. 1 (1990): 6. <http://mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/A0017.pdf> (accessed February 21, 2013).

achieved the same result. This leads me to believe that both states had similar goals in mind, but just disagreed on the means to achieve said goal.

Perhaps most importantly is the concept of spheres of influence. As stated in the previous chapter, great powers, provided that they have the internal capacity to do so, will actively seek out regions in which to assert extraterritorial power and influence, and will actively seek to prevent other states attempt to do the same in said region, regardless of the intent of the other state. It is abundantly clear that Russian officials deemed former-Soviet space to be Russia's privileged sphere of influence, and thus reacted very hostilely when the United States and NATO sought to act in the region. The fact that NATO and the United States did not actively intend to harm Russian interests in the region did not matter to the Russians. They had classically enjoyed acting with impunity in this region and thus reacted hostilely when the United States attempted to extend her military bloc into the region.

Throughout my research, I observed a consensus amongst Russian officials, across party lines, that the eastward expansion of NATO was very threatening to Russian security. This sentiment was espoused by even the most pro-Western liberals in Russia, including Chubais and Arbatov. While Yeltsin was certainly not a perfect liberal, the fact is that he genuinely desired a more democratic Russia and he himself played a critical part in the fall of the Soviet Union. Could not the fact that so many Russian liberals so vehemently resented NATO expansion add credence to the realist view that systemic pressures, not normative ideals held by a particular leader will determine a state's action? While one could certainly argue that Yeltsin, though he desired a more liberal Russia, was merely bowing to domestic pressures, his personal memoirs, published after having

left office, make it abundantly clear that he genuinely resented the eastward expansion of the alliance and felt it to be an encroachment on the region Russia had classically deemed to be its sphere of influence. This leads me to believe that Yeltsin, Arbatov, Chubais, and the other liberals genuinely felt this and were not merely framing their rhetoric in a way, aimed at appealing to popular sentiment. William Zimmerman conducted a series of surveys of Russian foreign policy elites and the populace at large, and found that after the issue of NATO expansion arose, so too did the perception amongst liberals and non-liberals alike in Russia that the United States was a threat to Russian security.²²²

In 1999 far more elites, liberal democratic or otherwise, were disposed than in 1993 to agree that the United States was a threat to Russian security, to regard the growth of American military might as a great danger (4) or the greatest (5) danger, to respond that it was a very important goal of Russian foreign policy ‘to balance against Western military might,’ and to keep or increase military spending.²²³

While anti-NATO and anti-Western sentiment was certainly stronger amongst those who were less liberally inclined, the fact is that by 1999 a substantial majority of both liberals and non-liberals alike viewed the United States and NATO as threatening forces to Russian security.²²⁴ Further, one could attribute these outliers in the liberal camp who were less inclined to favor actively balancing against the United States to foreign policy preferences rather than identity issues; that is, one could argue that some liberals preferred bandwagoning because it better benefited Russia’s security interests to align with the West. In short, while divergences were indeed present here, the fact is a

²²² Zimmerman, *The Russian People and Foreign Policy*. 157-158; 187-214

²²³ *Ibid.* 157

²²⁴ *Ibid.* 158, Table 5.3

substantial majority of both sides favored a balancing approach and felt threatened by NATO expansion.²²⁵

While the Clinton administration had very clear Wilsonian ambitions, these were all viewed very skeptically by the Russians who felt that it was a case of geopolitical opportunism. Indeed, many observers in Moscow “saw the PfP as a NATO vehicle for undermining the CIS.”²²⁶ What is more, the Russians adopted various “soft-balancing” measures during this period, and did not take a more assertive stance simply because of domestic divisions, and they lacked the capacity to do so. Randall Schweller identified four variables which determine if a state will actively balance against a threat in the external environment: elite consensus, elite cohesion, social cohesion, and regime/government vulnerability. Throughout the 1990s, all of these factors were working against the Russian state, and thus they did not actively balance against the perceived threat of NATO approaching its borders. Throughout this period, Russia was behaving in a manner very consistent with realist principles, and the United States, being the sole hegemonic power in the world could act with impunity and even attempt to shape the world in her own image, given the lack of a counterweight in the region.

The Bush Years

In late 1999, Yeltsin and his cabinet came under increased scrutiny from the Russian populace and the international community due to the corruption which was so rampant in his administration. On December 31, 1999, Yeltsin stepped down as

²²⁵ *Ibid.* 158, table 5.3. See also pgs. 187-215. While non-liberals may have been more inclined to oppose NATO expansion and the West to begin with, as the issue gained salience, the opposition from both sides grew immensely.

²²⁶ Black, *Russia Faces NATO Expansion*. 10

president, handing the reins of power over to Vladimir Putin who would serve out the rest of Yeltsin's term and ultimately win the next election.²²⁷ Upon taking power, Putin asserted his control over the media, the political system and electoral process, and ensured that the oligarchs would no longer attempt to wield influence in Russian politics.²²⁸ This was done through a process which he referred to as "strengthening the powers vertical."²²⁹ In the United States, after Clinton completed his second term in office, George W. Bush was elected President in late 2000, taking power in early 2001.

During this time, there were relatively few new developments in the relationship between the two states. However, this changed after the September 11th attacks. In the aftermath of these attacks, Putin was the first foreign leader to call Bush and express his condolences, stating that as another leader of a state which had experienced trouble with terrorism he could relate. Many saw this as a pragmatic attempt on the part of Putin, who hoped to gain from better relations with the United States, given the fact that during this time, their national interests coincided to a large degree. During this time, there was a brief lull in tensions between the two states as they cooperated for the common aim of fighting terrorism.

Further, during this time fixing the Russian economy which had suffered so greatly throughout the 1990s was deemed to be an essential prerequisite to its resurgence to great power status. Much like the 1990s, the primary threats to Russian security were deemed to be internal and many argue that his alignment with the West in its War on

²²⁷ Danks, *Politics Russia*. 120-123

²²⁸ The oligarchs were a group of businessmen who benefited greatly during Russia's privatization process and during the Yeltsin years wielded great influence in political matters.

²²⁹ Danks, *Politics Russia*. 118

Terror was simply an instance of geopolitical opportunism and characteristic of the Kremlin's pragmatic approach to foreign policy. That being said, cooperation between the two states did indeed take place. Though the issues of NATO expansion and the 1999 bombing of Kosovo caused Russian foreign policy elites to take into account external threats to their security as well, they recognized their weak position on the world stage. For these reasons, dealing with Russia's economic woes and internal problems were the top priorities of the Putin administration during its early years. William Wohlforth summarized this as follows:

Russia's foreign policy is shaped by the monumental scale of the modernization challenge it faces as well as the powerful external constraint of U.S. unipolarity. Vladimir Putin's approach to both challenges has been marked by pragmatism. He has consistently stressed that Russia's number one task is economic growth, which requires integration into the world economy and domestic institutional rebuilding. The quest to retain great power status that is so dear to the hearts of Russia's military and foreign policy elites, he insists, is inseparable from this modernization imperative.²³⁰

Shortly after the attacks, Bush felt as though he had found a strategic partner in Putin, and formally requested that he could use air bases in former Soviet republics in Central Asia, which was vital to gaining access to Afghanistan. The Bush administration recognized that this was a touchy subject in Russia, and sent this formal request so as to avoid sabotaging what they viewed to be the new budding United States-Russian relationship. This was a source of much debate within the Putin regime, with many hardliners under Ivanov taking a strong stance against the subject. Throughout the next few weeks, the Kremlin debated the issue, and it appeared as if no sort of progress was being made on the subject. During this time as it appeared that things were going

²³⁰ Wohlforth, William C. Russia's Soft Balancing Act. *Strategic Asia* (2003-2004): 165-180. kms1.isn.ethz.ch/.../Files/.../Russia_Soft+_Balancing_Act.pdf (Accessed December 24, 2012)

nowhere, the Bush Administration sent John Bolton to meet secretly with Uzbek officials on the possibility of deploying troops in Uzbekistan without Russia's permission. The Uzbek government seemed very open to the idea, was not concerned over Russian opposition to the proposal. During this time, the debate in the Kremlin still raged on; Ivanov leading the opposition, and Sergei Prikhodko leading those in favor of the proposal. It is worth noting that Prikhodko was not in favor of the measure due to a genuine love for the West, but rather because he felt it was the pragmatic thing to do and "saw this as the signal opportunity to firmly anchor Russia in the world community."²³¹ Further, he and the others who favored granting the United States access to these bases recognized that doing so and "allowing the United States to topple the Taliban and oust al Qaeda from Afghanistan" would also greatly benefit Russia in that it "could eliminate the threat of Islamic radicalism on Russia's southern frontier."²³² As he put it, "What was done in Afghanistan was not only in the interests of America, but also in the interests of Russia."²³³ Clearly his motivations behind helping the West were strategic in nature.

Ultimately it was Prikhodko who prevailed, and on September 22nd, Putin told Bush that he would help and support the United States in its effort in Afghanistan, short of putting boots on the ground given Russia's previous experience in the region. Putin told Bush that he would be able to provide help in "search and rescue" missions in the case of "downed pilots in Northern Afghanistan."²³⁴ He stated that he was "prepared to tell the heads of governments of the Central Asian states that we have good relations with

²³¹ Baker, Peter, and Susan Glasser. "Soul Mates." In *Kremlin Rising: Vladimir Putin's Russia and the End of Revolution*. New York: Scribner, 2005. 132.

²³² *Ibid.*

²³³ *Ibid.*

²³⁴ *Ibid.* 133

and have no objection to a U.S. role in Central Asia as long as it has the object of fighting the war on terror and is temporary.”²³⁵ It was also clear that during this time, Putin also expected something in return from the United States. While Putin faced much criticism at home for these decisions, he hoped that it would pay off in the long run and assist Russia in its aspiration for great power status. Putin “calculated that in the wake of September 11, Europe and the United States would feel more compelled than ever to integrate Russia into a new post-Cold War order.”²³⁶ Further, it was his hope that by identifying with the West’s struggle against terrorism, Russia might receive less criticism from the West over its own fight against Chechnya.²³⁷ Lastly, Putin felt that pursuing such a policy could potentially lead to more considerations of Moscow’s interests in post-Soviet space.²³⁸ As Edward Lucas put it, “After the attacks on America on September 11, 2001, Putin hurried to offer cooperation, which the West gratefully accepted with little regard for the cost: A free ride for the Kremlin as it tightened the screw at home and bullied its neighbors abroad. Russia gained again in another way too: The war on terror weakened the Atlantic alliance.”²³⁹

To the Russians, this was an alliance of pure pragmatism, and Ivanov even went as far as to compare Russian cooperation with the West “to the alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union during World War II.”²⁴⁰ For a time, Russia also provided the United States with very valuable intelligence which it had obtained

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

²³⁶ Smith, Julianne. “The NATO-Russia Relationship: Defining Moment or Deja Vu?.” Center for Strategic and International Studies, no. (November 2008): 6.
http://csis.org/files/media/isis/pubs/081110_smith_natorussia_web.pdf (accessed April 2, 2013).

²³⁷ *Ibid.* 5-7

²³⁸ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 111

²³⁹ Lucas, Edward. “Introduction.” In *The New Cold War: Putin’s Russia and the Threat to the West*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. 13.

²⁴⁰ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*. 314

throughout its years in the region.²⁴¹ Thus, for a brief while, it seemed as though the divide between the two states was beginning to shrink as their interests coincided. This would change with the Bush administration's decision to withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. In December of 2001, the Administration gave Russia a formal notice of its plans to do so, and in early 2002 began expressing its desire to set up a missile defense system in Eastern Europe so as to protect itself from missiles fired from the Middle East. A similar site which the United States has in Alaska would not be able to perform such a function against missiles fired from that region of the world.²⁴² Clearly Putin was not happy about this, viewing it as a threat to Russia, however, at the time he still had high hopes that this new era of cooperation could prevail, benefiting Russia. For these reasons, he chose not to make a big issue of it.²⁴³ However, as time went on, this came to be a key point of contention between the two states, and a source of much resentment.²⁴⁴

Shortly after expressing his intent to withdraw from the ABM Treaty, Bush also formally declared his desire to go through with another wave of post-Cold War NATO expansion. In late 2002, he gave a speech in Prague expressing these ambitions. "This NATO summit that convenes tomorrow will be the first ever held at the capital of a Warsaw Pact (country.) The days of the Warsaw Pact seem distant...tomorrow we will invite new members into our alliance."²⁴⁵ Clearly proposing this new wave of expansion in a former Warsaw state which had just recently joined NATO was a rather provocative

²⁴¹ Baker and Glasser, *Kremlin Rising*. 129-134

²⁴² deHaas, *Russia's Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century*. 65

²⁴³ Baker and Glasser, *Kremlin Rising*. 136

²⁴⁴ 134-138

²⁴⁵ Bush, George W.. "Historic NATO Summit." In *The George W. Bush Foreign Policy Reader: Presidential Speeches and Commentary*. Edited by John W. Dietrich. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2005. 203.

move, whether intentional or not. Bush went on to state the reasons why he felt that the enlargement of the alliance should not be viewed as a threat to Russia, but rather that it would benefit Russia as well as the United States. “A larger NATO is good for Russia, as well. Later this week I will visit St. Petersburg. I will tell my friend, Vladimir Putin, and the Russian people that they, too, will gain from the security and stability of nations to Russia’s west. Russia does not require a buffer zone for protection; it needs peaceful and prosperous neighbors who are also friends.”²⁴⁶

This talk of a buffer zone no longer being necessary clearly ignores classical Russian conceptions of security, which stem not from Marxist-Leninist ideology, but rather its long history of invasion and its geographic position. However, Putin said very little on the subject. Given Putin’s cooperative stance in regard to the War on Terror, and the fact that he raised little fuss in regard to the United States’ withdrawal from the ABM Treaty and proposal to admit seven more states into NATO, Bush felt that Russia genuinely wanted to be a part of the West. Russian foreign policy expert, Jeffrey Mankoff summarized this very nicely when stating the following:

Yet the U.S. took advantage of Russia’s more accommodating stance to take steps, such as pulling out of the ABM Treaty and conducting another round of NATO expansion, which Russia had long opposed. The Bush administration assumed that a Russia truly inclined to the West would not object to these actions, since the whole idea of a conflict between Russia and the West was outdated—if NATO had no intention of attacking Russia, why should Russia care which of its neighbors joined?²⁴⁷

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁷ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 25

Putin again understood that he was in no position to actively oppose such measures, and felt that “blustering about something he could not stop (as Yeltsin did) only made him look weaker.”²⁴⁸ Thus, Putin reluctantly accepted the proposed expansion.

In May of 2002, at the request of Tony Blair, Bush set up a new forum to facilitate cooperation between the United States and the Russian Federation on issues of mutual concern such as that of international terrorism.²⁴⁹ This took the form of the NATO-Russia Council. This council was intended to “improve on its predecessor, the 1997 Permanent Joint Council” in that it “allowed Russia a seat at the table for joint decision making on issues like terrorism.”²⁵⁰ It is, however, important to note that this did not make Russia a *de facto* member of the alliance, and since each member of the alliance “reserves the right to pull an issue out of that forum to a members-only discussion.”²⁵¹

The relationship between the two states was further strained by Russian reluctance to back the United States in its war with Iraq. Russia had long had vested strategic and economic interests at stake in the region and was reluctant to see these interests sabotaged.²⁵² That being said, they also felt that a good relationship with the United States was beneficial to Moscow given that its primary goals during this time were internal. Thus, throughout the process, Russia was very pragmatic, playing its cards very close to their chest.²⁵³ Further, when Russia would not succumb to United States

²⁴⁸ Goldgeier and McFaul. *Power and Purpose*. 323

²⁴⁹ Smith, The NATO-Russia Relationship. 7-8

²⁵⁰ Goldgeier and McFaul. *Power and Purpose*. 324

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

²⁵² Baker and Glasser, *Kremlin Rising*. 217-227

²⁵³ See Wohlforth, Russia’s Soft Balancing Act. 165-180 ; Baker and Glasser, *Kremlin Rising*. 214-230

pressures to cease its arms sales to Iran, this only seemed to further the previously existing tension between the two states.²⁵⁴

Throughout this time the Russian economy was improving by leaps and bounds, and rising hydrocarbon prices only added to this. Further, during this period, Putin was passing his political reforms, increasing the Kremlin's stranglehold over the Russian political system; a system he referred to as "managed democracy."²⁵⁵ The pragmatic foreign policy employed by Russia which allowed them to ride on the coattails of other states allowed them to focus their efforts on fixing Russia's economy and institutional structure. With the Russian economy booming, and its need for the West was starting to diminish and the Kremlin began to pursue a more independent foreign policy. Thus, upon entering his second term in March of 2004, Putin was far more confident and his foreign policy approach reflected this.

Putin was growing increasingly skeptical of the West, viewing their rhetoric of "democracy" and "human rights" to be merely a cloaking mechanism, aimed at disguising their true aims of domination and asserting power and influence abroad; "overthrowing governments that challenged its interests."²⁵⁶ In his view, Washington "selectively employed" such rhetoric pertaining to human rights and democracy as a means of furthering its agenda.²⁵⁷ The Iraq War seemed to illustrate this to them, and given their increasing skepticism over the aims of the United States, Russia was truly horrified when the Rose and Orange Revolutions occurred in Georgia and Ukraine.

²⁵⁴ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*. 325-326

²⁵⁵ Danks, *Politics Russia*. 77-78

²⁵⁶ Mankoff. *Russian Foreign Policy*. 110

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

During these revolutions, the populace of each nation rose up against their government, demanding a more democratic regime. Obviously the United States applauded such efforts, and given its history was sympathetic to their cause. The Russians however were skeptical of these revolutions, viewing them instead as a “U.S.-led campaign to surround, contain, and weaken Russia.”²⁵⁸ Though these claims were largely unfounded, the Kremlin genuinely believed them and thus came to be increasingly hostile toward the West, particularly the United States.²⁵⁹ Russian fears stemmed not from an opposition to democratic governance in other states; after all Russia’s pragmatic foreign policy allows them to align with any state which they feel serves their interest, democratic or not. Rather, their opposition stemmed from the fact that these revolutions were taking place in such close proximity to Russia’s borders, which they felt could breed instability and were an attempt by the West to further remove Russian influence from the CIS region and replace it with their own. Mankoff summarized this view as follows:

If Russia’s calculation in the aftermath of 9/11 was that signing up to be a privileged partner of the United States was the surest path to enhanced international influence and deference to its interest in the post-Soviet space, by the time of the colored revolutions a few years later, it seemed that deferring to U.S. leadership had led Washington to take Moscow for granted at the global level and to encourage the rise of hostile governments around Russia’s periphery.²⁶⁰

In March of 2004, NATO formally accepted the seven new members which it had proposed in 2002. First Deputy Chief of the Russian General Staff, Yury Baluyevsky promised that “Russia would make an ‘adequate response to NATO expansion’ and the

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁹ The Color Revolutions will be discussed at greater length in Chapter IV

²⁶⁰ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 111

Foreign Ministry announced that the nation was “considering the possibility of taking action against ‘NATO air bases in the Baltics.’”

Further tensions between the two states arose in 2005 when the United States began to arrange plans to deploy forces in Bulgaria and Romania, both of whom became full-fledged NATO members in the 2004 round of expansions.²⁶¹ This was part of a strategy being employed by the Pentagon to “shift US military bases eastwards.”²⁶² Throughout this process, the United States attempted to ease the concerns of Russian leaders, however, these attempts proved to be of very little avail.²⁶³ In early 2006, the agreements were reached between the parties involved, and the forces came to be known as the “Joint Task Force East.”²⁶⁴ While the establishment of these bases may not have been intended to provoke Russia, many Russian leaders deemed this to be threatening to Russian security. In February of 2008 during a televised address, Putin cited the establishment of these bases “as an example of the U.S. and NATO ‘muscle flexing’ in Eastern Europe that had put Russia ‘in a situation where we have to react.’”²⁶⁵ Given the relatively small American troop presence, I would have to believe that Russian opposition to this action stemmed from the fact that it was taking place in a region which they had classically deemed to be their sphere of influence.

²⁶¹ Radio Free Europe. "5,000 U.S. Troops To Be Deployed In Bulgaria, Romania ." *Radio Free Europe* (Prague), October 25, 2005. <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1062393.html> (accessed April 2, 2013).

²⁶² deHaas, Russia's Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century. 53

²⁶³ Sofia News Agency. "US Troops Move to Bulgaria, Romania in 2005, Russia Concerned." *Novinite.com/Sofia News Agency* (Bulgaria), January 14, 2005. http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=43591 (accessed April 2, 2013).

²⁶⁴ Moldovan, Dorniel, Plamen Pantev, and Matthew Rhodes. "Joint Task Force East and Shared Military Basing in Romania and Bulgaria." *George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, Occasional Paper Series*, No. 21 (August, 2009): 7-21. http://www.marshallcenter.org/mcpublicweb/MCDocs/files/College/F_Publications/occPapers/occ-paper_21-en.pdf (accessed April 4, 2013).

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.* 20

In February of 2007, relations between the two states went from bad to worse when the United States made a formal proposal to Poland and the Czech Republic to deploy an anti-ballistic missile shield in their countries. While talks of setting up such a shield had been going on since 2002, this was the first formal proposal issued. From the very beginning, Russia was staunchly opposed to the measure, despite American attempts at reassuring them that the shield was not directed at them. In January of 2007, the Russian Commander of the Space Forces argued that such a system would be detrimental to Russian security simply because “it would make strategic nuclear forces visible,” and cast doubt upon the United States’ assurances that this shield was not directed toward them, but rather Iran.²⁶⁶

Though these states were both included in the previous rounds of NATO enlargement and were full-fledged members, this action was not affiliated with NATO, but was rather a “bilateral arrangement between the aforementioned states.”²⁶⁷ That being said, the Kremlin has long portrayed the shield to be a NATO operation. From this point forward, the proposed missile shield would be a key point of contention between the United States and the Russian Federation in years to come. In November of 2011, then-President Dmitry Medvedev threatened to withdraw from the new START treaty with the United States and “deploy missiles aimed toward U.S. defense installations in Europe” after hearing of new developments taking place regarding the missile defense system.²⁶⁸ In mid-2012, a top Russian General even proposed a preemptive strike on the

²⁶⁶ deHaas, *Russia's Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century*. 65

²⁶⁷ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 111

²⁶⁸ Loiko, Sergei L.. "Russia says preemptive strike on NATO missile system is possible." *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA) May 3, 2012. <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/may/03/world/la-fg-russia-missile-defense-20120504> (accessed April 4, 2013).

site should a deal not be struck between the two states. These comments were made shortly after similar sentiment was espoused by Defense Minister, Anatoly Serdyukov who was quoted as saying, “Now our countries are faced with a dilemma: We will either pass a cooperation test and jointly react to new missile challenges and threats or will be obligated to take up military-technical measures given the realization of anti-missile plans.”²⁶⁹

During this period another new development in United States-Russian relations occurred when in December of 2007, Russia formally withdrew from the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, which had long been considered the pinnacle of Cold War security. Russia’s reasoning behind this action was multifaceted, but was largely a retaliation against the proposed missile shield in Poland and the Czech Republic.²⁷⁰ The West had maintained that the CFE was contingent upon a Russian withdrawal of its armed forces from the region. In July of 2004, Russia, along with several other states ratified an updated version of the treaty, however, they had yet to meet the required withdrawal levels, thus Western leaders refused to sign the agreement. In January of 2006, Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov “threatened to withdraw from the treaty” in response.²⁷¹ In April of 2007 in a speech to the Russian parliament, Putin called for a “moratorium” on “implementing the CFE Treaty,” and blamed the West for neglecting to sign the agreement, and demanded that the “new NATO members,” namely the Baltic States which had joined in the 2004 round of expansions, sign the treaty as well.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁰ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 113

²⁷¹ deHaas, *Russian Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century*. 64

Further, during this speech, he stated that “Russia’s compliance with the treaty” was inextricably linked with NATO expansion and the proposed missile defense systems in Poland and the Czech Republic.²⁷² In July, Putin signed legislation calling for Russia’s withdrawal from the agreement as of December of 2007. In response to these actions undertaken by Putin, NATO states offered a “parallel action package.” This package proposed that Russia begin “resolving the remaining commitments in Georgia and Moldova” while NATO states begin to ratify the “Adapted CFE.” This however, proved to be of little avail, and Russia withdrew from the CFE December 12, 2007 as planned, while also keeping its forces in Moldova and Georgia.²⁷³

Over the next few months, United States-Russian relations would further sour, ultimately culminating in the Russo-Georgian War in August of 2008, during which Russia asserted itself into an internal conflict in neighboring Georgia, taking the side of the South Ossetian rebels. This action on the part of Russia brought tensions between the United States and the Russian Federation to levels unseen since the Cold War, especially given Georgia’s increased alignment with the United States and NATO. While ostensibly this action was undertaken for the protection of human rights, as will be demonstrated later in this chapter, there was a strong power motive behind Russian actions in this situation; namely it was a reaction to the increased alignment of Georgia and Ukraine with NATO and was a way of demonstrating that they would not stand idly by as the alliance expanded closer to Russian borders. In the aftermath of this conflict, Medvedev gave a speech in which he expressed Russia’s desire to have cordial relations

²⁷² *Ibid.* 65

²⁷³ *Ibid.* 64-65

with all states, including the United States, but that a prerequisite for that was recognition of Russia as a “major power” and “its special role in the CIS.”²⁷⁴

Also during this time, a third wave of post-Cold War NATO expansion was being discussed. In 2008, prior to when the actual expansion took place, Putin stated that “The appearance on our borders of a powerful military bloc will be considered by Russia as a direct threat to our country's security.”²⁷⁵ Similar sentiment was espoused by Russian Ambassador to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, who stated that NATO was expanding at such a rapid rate that “they need to go on a diet” and that “their mechanical Eastward expansion disturbs the balance of forces on the European continent.”²⁷⁶ He elaborated on these claims warning that “if they think we’re the Russian bear, and choose to use that terminology, I can tell you as a hunter—that approaching a bear’s den is dangerous.”²⁷⁷

Nonetheless, in early 2009, NATO went through with its planned expansion, bringing Croatia and Albania into its ranks, though the plans to admit Georgia and Ukraine into the alliance have not been pursued. In response to this expansion, then-President Medvedev called for a rearming of the Russian military and a boosting of its nuclear arms stating that “attempts to expand the military infrastructure of NATO near the borders of our country are continuing.”²⁷⁸ This was an effort on the part of Moscow

²⁷⁴ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 130

²⁷⁵ RIA Novosti. “Putin warns NATO against further expansion to Russia's borders.” RIA Novosti (Moscow), April 4, 2008. <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080404/103749979.html> (accessed May 1, 2012).

²⁷⁶ Rogozin, Dmitry. “Dmitry Rogozin: ‘It’s Time for NATO to ‘Go on a Diet’.” The Permanent Mission of Russia to NATO. <http://natiomission.ru/en/society/article/society/artnews/11/> (Accessed April 25, 2012)

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁸ Solovyov, Dmitry. “Medvedev says Russia to rearm as NATO Expands.” Reuters (London) March 17, 2009. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/03/17/us-russia-medvedev-army-idUSTRE52G2VX20090317> (Accessed April 16, 2012)

to “stem rising U.S. influence in ex-Soviet states.”²⁷⁹ Now that I have discussed the developments in United States-Russian relations which occurred throughout the presidency of George W. Bush, I will now assess the ability of each theory to account for these developments, beginning with liberalism.

IR Theory and the Bush Administration

As stated above, during this period, Russia became increasingly authoritarian and less democratic. Liberals could certainly point to this as a source of tension between the two states, arguing that if Russia was a mature democracy, less tension would be present in the relationship as posited in the democratic peace theory. Similarly, liberals could point to the fact that the states who joined NATO during the second wave of post-Cold War expansion have adopted democratic regime types, have cordial relations with the United States, and tense relations with Moscow.

Liberals could also point to the fact that a period of cooperation did indeed take place and that the NATO-Russia Council was established with the hope of increasing cooperation between Russia and the alliance and expanding upon the PJC outlined in the Founding Act. Again, while liberals argue that such forums can serve as a means for facilitating cooperation, all parties must be on board for them to work. Perhaps the liberal could argue that such forums are not being utilized to their fullest extent and/or the fact that such forums are in place to facilitate discourse is the reason why relations between the two states are worse and while things are bad, armed conflict has not erupted. Certainly one could ask how much worse these tensions would be if these

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

institutions had not been put in place. Similarly, liberals could argue that the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty was a very good thing which stemmed from liberal logic, and had the Bush administration decided to stand by the treaty relations would be better; i.e. the Bush administration was not interested in increased cooperation during this instance.

Constructivists by contrast would focus on the role of identities, norms, and classical Russian conceptions of international politics. The constructivist could argue that Russia's increased aggression stems from domestic pressure for the leaders to act in such a manner, and the way in which they have classically viewed NATO. If the Russians are still viewing things with a Cold War-type mentality, then is it any surprise that they are acting in such a manner? More broadly, if a state has long viewed international relations as a zero-sum game, is it any wonder that they react aggressively when other states attempt to operate in a region which they have classically enjoyed free reign over? To the constructivist, Russia is acting aggressively because it has classically viewed international politics in such a manner and because domestic pressures compel them to do so; not because of objective systemic level forces. They could argue that Russia's zero-sum mentality regarding the region surrounding her has arisen from social constructs and is not necessarily indicative of the behavior of all great powers. In a very similar vein, the constructivist could point to the fact that Russia behaved far more aggressively under Putin and Medvedev than it did under Yeltsin and attribute this to the way in which different leaders saw the world, and the prevalent attitudes in Russia at the time.

Similarly, constructivists could point to the fact that after the September 11th attacks, the United States felt very vulnerable and strongly desired increased security

from possible missile attacks and that this shift in mentality was the driving force behind the decision to withdraw from the anti-ballistic missile treaty. Further, constructivists cite that the Bush administration actively sought to spread democracy and largely equated it with security. It could be argued that this mentality, combining security and the spread of democratic ideals, was largely the reason for the Bush administration's support for the 2002 wave of NATO expansion.

Once again, while liberalism and constructivism are both able to offer some insights, to me the behavior engaged in by the two states appears to be very much in keeping with the principles put forth by realism. Russian action during this period could best be described as calculated reactions to what it felt to be aggressive activities undertaken by the West in a region which it had long deemed to be its sphere of influence; i.e. balancing behavior. While other theories can certainly bring insights, I believe that it is realist balancing behavior which is best capable of explaining the actions undertaken by Russia at this time. Much of Russia's assertiveness is a direct reaction to actions undertaken by the West; its threats at a preemptive strike on the missile base in Poland, its meddling in the affairs of its neighbors, its attempts at undermining the United States' position in the Western hemisphere, and especially the 2008 war with neighboring Georgia, were all direct reactions to what it felt were attempts by the United States and her allies to encroach in an area in which they had vested interests.²⁸⁰

Much like the limited position Yeltsin was put in during the 1999 wave of NATO expansion, so too was Vladimir Putin in a very limited position to react against this

²⁸⁰ Russian activities in Latin America, coalition-building, and issues with Ukraine and Georgia will be discussed at greater length during the next chapter.

perceived threat to Russian security. Putin recognized that domestic divisions and Russia's relative weakness precluded Russia from adopting a more assertive foreign policy, aimed at achieving the great power status which was so dear to Russians. Thus, throughout his first term, he temporarily focused his political capital and efforts on internal cleavages while bandwagoning with the West in hopes of benefiting in the long run. Putin's cooperation with the West was driven by a sense of pragmatism and a desire to gain in power and security as a result. Russia would cooperate with the West provided that it benefited them, while also cooperating with the Iranians, Iraqis and North Koreans; Russia's end goal was power. While he clearly did not like the eastward expansion of NATO, he understood that there was nothing he could do about it and adopted a bandwagoning approach.

Upon fixing the Russian economy and the steep rise in gas prices, Russia was then able to adopt a foreign policy independent of the West and has continually clashed with the United States; thus Russia's bandwagoning approach was replaced with one which sought to actively balance against the United States. While one could certainly point to the different personalities of Yeltsin and Putin and the different political climate in which they were operating, it is my view that the change in internal capabilities better explains the shift to a more assertive foreign policy. The foreign policy employed by Putin during his first term was very similar to that of his predecessor. By Yeltsin's own admission, he felt that the eastward expansion NATO was an attempt by the United States to remove Russian influence from the region and replace it with their own. During this period, Yeltsin bandwagoned with the United States, while also undertaking many symbolic steps to demonstrate his opposition to the measure and utilized Russian veto

power in the U.N. Security Council as a way of soft-balancing against the United States.²⁸¹ Putin's foreign policy during his first term was far more humble simply because he recognized that Russia was indeed weak and could not achieve great power status until it had secured legitimacy domestically and fixed its economic woes; this more assertive foreign policy was not adopted until Russia had the internal capacity to do so.

Certainly one could cite the fact that the majority of Russians oppose NATO expansion and thus Putin's assertive policy is more than likely popular with the populace at large the fact is that elections in Russia are heavily orchestrated by the Kremlin and Putin is in very little danger of losing his position as president. Perhaps it is merely the case that the predominant discourse happens to align with the actions being undertaken by the Kremlin; domestic discourses and the pursuit of the national interest are not always mutually exclusive.²⁸² Further, one could point to the numerous instances in which leaders, in pursuit of the national interest, pursue policies inherently antithetical to the prevalent discourses and normative ideas which their state is founded upon.

In regard to the anti-ballistic missile system in Poland, while it was certainly driven by a sense of vulnerability in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks, I would argue that the United States was *able* to do this at the time simply because of the lack of a counterweight in the region. Had the Soviet Union still been in existence, it is doubtful

²⁸¹ See for example: Wohlforth, William, "Russia's Soft Balancing Act," *Strategic Asia* 2003-2004: Fragility and Crisis (Sep. 2003): 165-179. <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~govt/docs/09-Russia-press.pdf> (Accessed January 12, 2013); Paul, T.V., "Soft Balancing in the Age of U.S. Primacy," *International Security* 30, No. 1 (Summer, 2005): 45-71

²⁸² As stated in the previous chapter, to the realist, domestic identities and ideologies have very little bearing on the foreign policy pursued by a particular state; rather, leaders will cloak their true aims of power and security in rhetoric which appeals to these norms in hopes of convincing the population of their respective state to support their action.

that this policy would have been pursued by Bush. While one could argue that this “spheres of influence” mentality on the part of Russia stems not from structural incentives, but rather how Russians have classically seen the world, the realist would retort that all great powers seek regional hegemony.²⁸³ The United States, a liberal democracy, has long sought to control events in the Western hemisphere, given its close proximity to her borders, and even in the modern era when other great powers attempt to exercise power and influence in the region, it is met with great hostility by the United States.²⁸⁴ For these reasons, I would argue that this desire to control events in close proximity to one’s borders is characteristic of all states, not just Russia, very much in keeping with realist principles.

Certainly the states which were formally admitted into NATO in 2004 did indeed adopt democratic regimes; thus one could argue that they were already on the path to democratization to begin with. One could argue that had NATO not been in existence, these states would have adopted democratic regimes anyways. Further, many former-Warsaw and Soviet states are actively aligning with the West and aspiring for NATO membership as a way of escaping Russian domination.²⁸⁵ This leads me to believe that the reasoning of these states for joining NATO lies in security-based logic, not regime type.

While liberalism certainly concedes that institutions will only work insofar as states are willing to use them and desire cooperation, I would argue that both states had

²⁸³ Mearsheimer, John. "Better to Be Godzilla than Bambi," *Foreign Policy* 146 (Jan. - Feb., 2005): 47-48. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30048171> (accessed March 2, 2013).

²⁸⁴ I am specifically referring to the United States’ staunch opposition to Russian military activities in Latin America which shall be discussed in the following chapter.

²⁸⁵ See Braun, Aurel, "Enlargement and the perils of containment," *In NATO-Russia Relations in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Aurel Braun. New York and London: Routledge. (2008): 55-71.

high hopes for the NATO-Russia Council. After all, representatives both of NATO and the Russian Federation have continually lamented the inability of such forums to provide actual substantive solutions to the most divisive issues in United States-Russian relations.²⁸⁶ This leads me to believe that the failure of these institutions to facilitate cooperation lies not in a lack of a commitment by either party, but rather the way in which they were structured: reflecting the balance of power and not having given Russia any substantive power in the negotiation process.²⁸⁷

Similarly, while liberalism and constructivism could certainly point to the fact that Putin rolled back much of the democratic progress which took place during the 1990s and the nation has been taking an increasingly authoritarian direction, I believe that the effects of this on the United States-Russia relationship are often overstated. For example, the Clinton administration remained quiet during the 1993 Constitutional Crisis when Yeltsin ordered tanks to surround and shell the Kremlin.²⁸⁸ Similarly, the 1996 elections were heavily manipulated, though certainly not to the same degree as what would come under Putin, and the Clinton administration remained quiet. It was not until the two states began to clash over the issue of NATO expansion that the Clinton administration began to level criticisms at Russia over its handling of the Chechnya situation. Similarly, the Bush administration did not criticize Putin over its less than liberal reforms during the period in which the interests of the two states were aligned; it was not until the falling out which occurred in late 2003 and early 2004 that the Bush administration began to critique

²⁸⁶ Smith, Julianne, "The NATO-Russia Relationship: Defining Moment or Deja Vu?." *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (November 2008): 9-10
http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/081110_smith_natorussia_web.pdf (accessed April 2, 2013).

²⁸⁷ The realist would argue that systemic incentives precluded NATO from giving Russia any real say in matters.

²⁸⁸ Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*. 349

Russian domestic politics and the Russians began leveling criticisms of their own back at the United States. Further, the United States maintains very cordial relations with many states whose domestic political systems are inherently repugnant to our own, but who serve our national interest. All of this leads me to believe that the ideologically-based rhetorical attacks exchanged were purely symptomatic of the souring of relations between the two states over their colliding interests in former-Soviet space. In short, I believe that the behavior engaged in by each state during this period could best be described as balancing, issues of identity are over-stated, and the role of ideological differences in the relationship are often overstated.

Obama and Russia

In January of 2009, Barack Obama, who had campaigned upon a reset of relations with the Russia, took office in the United States. While this is a goal that leaders of both states share, issues such as the anti-ballistic missile shield and Russian resentment over NATO expansion have remained unsolved. While in 2010, the two states were able to sign START III which was to replace the expired START II Treaty. Also in 2010, joint military exercises were conducted. This was about the extent of their cooperation, and no substantive deals were reached in regard to the key issues of NATO expansion and the proposed missile defense system. While I certainly do not deny that Obama did, and still does, desire more cordial relations with Moscow, if achieving such an end requires acting in a manner contrary to the United States' national interest, the national interest will inevitably take precedent over such desires. This is largely the reason that no substantive agreements have been reached, and issues such as NATO expansion and the proposed anti-ballistic missile shield still plague relations between the two states.

Russian leaders still lament their frustration with the “United States hegemony,” and pursue their aims at creating a multipolar world, as opposed to a unipolar one with the United States on top. Further, Russia has repeatedly used its veto power in the U.N. Security Council as a means of blocking, or at least dampening the effects of the actions of the United States, and the two states have repeatedly clashed over the best solution for dealing with situations such as Iran and Syria. Further, many of the quotes from Russian officials shown previously regarding NATO expansion and the anti-ballistic missile system were from 2009 and onward, thus demonstrating that these issues are still very much festering in the relationship between the two states.²⁸⁹ As will be shown in the following chapter, during this time Russia has continued its attempts to undermine the United States, and to craft a multipolar international order. Throughout the course of writing this, I observed a further deterioration of relations between the United States and the Russian Federation; each state issuing rhetorical jabs at the other, passing legislation condemning the other, and as will be shown in the following chapter, further attempts by Russian officials to create a counterbalance to the United States.

IR Theory and the Obama Administration

Adherents to liberal theory could certainly point to the fact that Barack Obama campaigned on a reset of relations with Russia and was more inclined to value international institutions, laws and norms. Liberals could cite the renewal of the START Treaty which had expired and the joint exercises which the two states engaged in as validation that Obama’s desire for a reset and faith in international institutions created

²⁸⁹ The quote regarding a preemptive strike on the proposed anti-ballistic missile shield was from 2012, long after Obama had been elected President.

substantive reforms. Similarly, liberals could point to the fact that after Albania and Croatia were formally admitted into NATO in 2009, no attempts at further enlargement have been made. The liberal could certainly argue that the decision not to admit Georgia and Ukraine into the alliance is a result of the United States' recognition that this is a sore point for Russia and its genuine desire for cooperation.

In regard to the fact that despite these instances of cooperation, tensions remain high, liberals could certainly argue that while the Obama administration may be more inclined to utilize international institutions as a means of cooperation, institutions will only function if both parties are willing to utilize them to their fullest extent. Thus the liberal could argue that Russian officials are unwilling to utilize international institutions to their fullest extent, and the persistence of tensions is simply a byproduct of this unwillingness. Again, to the liberal simply because these outlets for cooperation are indeed available is not enough to bring about cooperation; rather both sides must have faith in their abilities, have a shared commitment to cooperation and be willing to utilize such institutions for this desired aim.

Constructivists, much like liberals, could cite the instances of cooperation arguing that they are a manifestation of each state's desire to cooperate in this arena; much in keeping with Wendt's idea that "anarchy is what states make of it,"²⁹⁰ arguing that in this case the two states made the best of the situation. Further, constructivists could argue that the areas in which tension still persists is simply the byproduct of domestic political constraints which preclude the leaders from pursuing a more cooperative policy. For

²⁹⁰ Wendt, Alexander. "Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics." *International Organization* 46, No. 2 (Spring 1992): 391-425. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2706858> (accessed February 6, 2013).

example, it could be argued that no compromise was sought on the proposed anti-ballistic missile system because should Obama flex on this, he would come under severe scrutiny from Republicans in Congress. The fact that Obama stated something similar in a 2012 meeting with Medvedev would certainly be seen as validation of this view.²⁹¹

Much like during the previous waves of expansion, the constructivist could argue that Russian opposition to NATO expansion does not stem from objective forces, but rather what they view NATO to be: threatening to Russia. The constructivist could argue that Russia is still caught up in their Cold War view of the alliance, and should it have been a different alliance extending closer to their borders, their reaction to its expansion would have been drastically different. Similarly, constructivists could argue that this Cold War paradigm largely shapes Russian attitudes toward things such as the proposed missile defense system; after all during the Cold War the two superpowers used the globe as a geopolitical chessboard, placing missiles at one another and setting up defense systems against the missiles of their rival.

Once again, while liberal and constructivist explanations are able to provide some very valid points on the subject, I would argue that once again, it is realist theory which is better equipped to explain these events. First of all, while these instances of cooperation did indeed take place, it is my belief that they stand out as notable exceptions against the broader backdrop of conflicting aims; Russia is continually utilizing its veto power in the United Nations to undermine the aims of the United States and the two states have

²⁹¹ President Obama told the Russian leader that after the elections he would have more flexibility in negotiations with Russian officials. See Spetalnick, Matt, and Steve Holland. "Obama tells Russia's Medvedev more flexibility after election." Reuters (London), March 26, 2012. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/26/us-nuclear-summit-obama-medvedev-idUSBRE82P0JI20120326> (accessed January 15, 2013).

continually clashed over issues such as Iran, Syria and Russia condemned NATO's 2011 intervention in Libya. Much of this can be attributed to Russian skepticism regarding the aims of the United States, and its view that rhetoric regarding human rights is employed by the United States simply as a ploy for it to assert extraterritorial power.²⁹² Russia has continued its attempts at restructuring the international order from a unipolar one, run on United States hegemony, to a multipolar one. Clearly this aim creates a strong conflict of interest with the United States who currently enjoys being the only hegemonic power in the world. Further, Russia has undertaken many actions to undermine the United States' position in the Western hemisphere, asserting its own military power in Latin America and arming leaders in the region who are hostile toward the United States. This is seen by many as a retaliation to Washington's military activities in Russia's own backyard and this was met with much hostility by the United States. Issues in Eastern Europe still plague the relationship between the two states and are a source of much contention and it was during this supposed "reset" period that Russian officials proposed a preemptive strike on the anti-ballistic missile system in Poland. As will be discussed in the next chapter, Russia is actively attempting to build coalitions to undermine the position of the United States on the world stage and continues to seek to remove Western influence from the CIS region. Further, Russia's increased military assertiveness and rearmament of nuclear forces in 2009 was a direct reaction to the United States' support for the eastward expansion of NATO. While other theories can certainly offer insights into all of this, the actions undertaken by each state look quite a bit like balancing behavior.

²⁹² See Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 110

While the two states did indeed renew an agreement and engaged in these symbolic joint exercises, to me it is evident that cooperation is the exception, not the norm. Further, realism in no way denies that cooperation, even amongst rivals, can indeed take place, but rather maintains that this is the exception, not the norm and can be difficult to sustain; or as Mearsheimer put it “the bottom line, however, is that cooperation in a world that is competitive at its core.”²⁹³ Indeed, the agreement was merely a renewal of a previously existing one, which while easing tensions between the two states, in no way altered the balance of power. In regard to the anti-ballistic missile system, while one could certainly argue that the threat of losing office in 2012 precluded President Obama from seeking a middle ground on the issue, the fact is that it has been some time since the elections have been over with and no compromise has been reached. What is more, Obama had met with Putin on several occasions since his reelection and no middle ground on the issue has been found and tensions between the two states remain high; keep in mind, this was after the Russians had raised the possibility of a preemptive strike on the facility.²⁹⁴ Perhaps this illustrates that if either side were to give in to the other, they would be harming their own security interests, which take precedence over more cordial relations with the other. What is more, realists are concerned with state actions, not rhetoric employed, so these comments would be largely irrelevant to the realist. Obviously this is not to say that a realist would argue that a deal on the issue is impossible or some solution could be found which is mutually beneficial and does not alter the balance of power.

²⁹³ Mearsheimer, John J. “The False Promise of International Institutions.” *International Security* 19, No. 3 (Winter, 1994-1995): 13. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2539078> (Accessed January 29, 2013).

²⁹⁴ Loiko, Sergei L.. “Russia says preemptive strike on NATO missile system is possible.” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles) May 3, 2012. <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/may/03/world/la-fg-russia-missile-defense-20120504> (accessed April 4, 2013).

While it is certainly true that Ukraine and Georgia have not been admitted into the alliance, I don't believe that the explanation for this lies in the Obama administration's desire for better relations. As will be shown in the next chapter, Russia's 2008 invasion of Georgia was a display of power; a reaction to increasing Western influence in the region, aimed at showing the West that Russia was to be taken seriously and would not stand idly by as NATO's military hardware advanced closer to her borders. As Mankoff argued, Russian leadership "depicted the invasion of Georgia and recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as a response to the West's recognition of Kosovo and support for Georgian and Ukrainian NATO membership."²⁹⁵ I would argue that while in previous years Russia did not pose an adequate counterweight to such aims, and thus NATO was more inclined to expand in spite of Russian opposition; by 2008, however, Russia had fixed its internal problems and provided a significant enough deterrent to such policies. I would attribute NATO's decision not to admit Ukraine and Georgia into her ranks to NATO's acknowledgement of Russia's position in Eastern Europe and ability to offer substantial resistance.

Trends Observed

While other theories are certainly able to offer very valid explanations in regard to the behavior of each state during this period, it is my view that the behavior undertaken appears to be balancing, very much in keeping with the tenets of realist theory. Russian action is driven by its deep desire to restore itself to great power status, and is a direct reaction to the West's actions in what it has long deemed to be its sphere of influence. While the United States in pursuing these policies did not intend to harm Russian security

²⁹⁵ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 131-132

interests, the Russians nonetheless felt threatened. In reaction, Russia has been adopting an increasingly assertive foreign policy, aimed at forming counterbalances to the United States, while clutching dearly to what influence it still maintains in the CIS region. Clearly Russian actions throughout this period have been attempts to balance against what it views to be an encroachment by the West into a region which it has long deemed to be its sphere of influence.

Throughout this process I have noticed striking similarities in the policies employed by each leader, regardless of party lines and the ideology to which they subscribe. Russian leaders across party lines, have maintained their stance that the eastward expansion of NATO is an encroachment into what they view to be their privileged sphere of influence. Yeltsin, Putin and Medvedev all held this stance, as did the numerous other officials quoted, including many Western-inclined liberals. With each wave of expansion, Russia has taken actions to counter its effects; while under Yeltsin some balancing behavior was engaged in though, given Russia's weakened state at the time, bandwagoning was more commonly employed. Putin during his first term recognized Russia's weak position and opted for a bandwagoning approach, though upon developing the internal capacity to do so, it began to actively balance against the United States.

In the United States, while Clinton certainly had strong Wilsonian aims and structured numerous programs in accordance with these ideals, as was shown in the intervention in Kosovo, even he was willing to bypass the United Nations and the PJC in the Founding Act which he designed. Further, Clinton was fully aware that the eastward expansion of NATO had the potential to hurt Russian democratic reforms, though he

expanded the alliance in spite of this. Clearly the realist would argue that this was an instance of a great power filling the vacuum which had emerged upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union with its own influence simply because the structure of the international system impels them to adopt such an approach. While Clinton strongly desired a more democratic Russia and was more inclusive in his policies, the fact is that despite these strong desires he was willing to expand the alliance and act in Kosovo in spite of Russian opposition. Similarly, Bush further expanded the alliance in 2002, withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, increased the United States' presence in Eastern Europe and initiated the plans to establish the anti-ballistic missile system in Poland and the Czech Republic.

Much like Clinton, Obama also had a strong desire for more cordial relations with Russia, relations between the two states appear to still be characterized by balancing behavior and the Obama administration has not abandoned the Bush administration's plans of placing an anti-ballistic missile system in Eastern Europe. Further, throughout this time, the various institutions designed to facilitate cooperation between NATO and Russia have proven to be of very little avail. While a liberal could certainly point to the fact that though tensions are indeed high, all-out war has not broken out between NATO and Russian forces. While obviously this is a very good thing that shots have not been exchanged between the forces of each bloc, I don't believe that the absence of conflict in any way serves as validation of the effectiveness of such forums.²⁹⁶ Indeed, both sides have lamented the inability of such outlets to achieve their designed purpose of decreasing tensions.

²⁹⁶ As any social scientist knows, the absence of a particular phenomenon in no way proves the effectiveness of preventative measures.

Further, each state has acted militarily without prior approval from the United Nations. Further, each state holds veto power in the United Nations and uses it to curb the ambitions of the other. Each state has sought to manipulate the United Nations to act in accordance with its own interests, and given the nuclear status of both states, and the fact that they each wield veto power, the United Nations has not acted as a restraining force on the actions of either state. Given the inability of the United Nations or the various programs designed to facilitate cooperation between Russia and NATO to achieve their desired aim, I would argue that the skeptical view of international institutions undertaken by realists is best able to account for this as well.

Lastly, it is my belief that the constructivist explanation of Russian opposition to NATO expansion as a product of how they have classically viewed the alliance to be somewhat flawed. If it were merely the Communists in Russia, or the anti-Western oriented persons who viewed NATO's actions as threatening, then this would certainly add credence to the constructivist explanation. However, this is definitely not the case. My research has made it abundantly clear that this sentiment was not simply limited to the Communists and anti-Western inclined officials in Russia. Rather, during the Yeltsin years, *numerous* officials who strongly desired liberalization and the removal of the remnants of the Soviet past held the view that the CIS region was Russia's privileged sphere of influence and the West's involvement in the region was threatening to Russian security.

As stated previously, Yeltsin himself played a pivotal role in the dissolution of the Soviet Union and while he was not a perfect liberal himself, he strongly desired to move away from the Soviet past and adopt a more Western-style regime. For these reasons, it

is my belief that the view that Russian opposition stems from remnants of the Soviet identity and perceptions of the alliance is exaggerated; perhaps this view makes their opposition more severe, however, I would argue that even if the alliance extending its reach into the region was not NATO, they still would have adopted a similar stance. Further, in 2008, Medvedev made it clear to all states, not just NATO states, that cordial relations with Russia are contingent upon their recognition of “Russia’s place as a great power and its special role in the CIS.”²⁹⁷ Clearly this seems to back up my view that Russia would react hostilely to *any* great power attempting to assert influence in the region, in keeping with the predictions of realism.

The constructivist could certainly retort that Russia’s desire for a sphere of influence stems not from objective systemic-level forces, but rather deep-seated cultural factors which run far deeper than partisan divisions, ideologies, or even Cold War sentiment; that Russian action is a product of worldview, not systemic pressures. In order to fully account for this view, a fully constructivist approach to the research process would be necessary and this was not the approach undertaken in this piece simply because I am testing realist theory; at the very least we can show that Russia is acting in a manner very similar to the predictions of realism and this view of NATO was present in leaders across the entire ideological spectrum, even those who in other areas were far more friendly to the West.

While it is clear that the developments discussed in this chapter are deemed to be the most important and representative of the relationship between the two states, I believe that several other issues are very important such as coalition building attempts on the part

²⁹⁷ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*.130

of Russia, and the differing visions each state has for states in the CIS region. These issues will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter IV

Other Issues and Implications for the Future

While it is abundantly clear that the issue of NATO Expansion and the closely related issues discussed in the previous chapter are the most salient in the relationship between the United States and the Russian Federation, there are also several other key developments which have taken place in the American-Russian relationship in the post-Cold War era. The continual alignment of Georgia and Ukraine with NATO and the United States has been a continual sore point in the relationship between the two states, and Russia has been doing quite a bit to counter the aims of the United States in other ways. In this chapter I discuss the issues pertaining to Georgia and Ukraine which ultimately culminated in the 2008 Russo-Georgian War, along with the various ways in which Russia has sought to counter the aims of the United States. After providing an overview of these developments I will assess the ability of liberal, constructivist and realist theories to account for these developments. After doing so I will offer some concluding thoughts regarding IR theory and the future of the relationship between the two states.

Georgia, Ukraine, and the Russo-Georgian War

After its loss of the Baltic States, who joined NATO in 2004 in large part to escape the heel of Russian influence, the sights of the Russian Federation were set on two new states that were increasingly aligning with NATO: Georgia and Ukraine. After the Color Revolutions which took place in these two states in 2003 and 2004, Georgia and Ukraine both began actively aligning themselves with NATO and the West, as an attempt

to escape the umbrella of Russian influence. Russian officials were deeply disturbed by the revolutions going on in each state, and blamed the United States and her NATO allies, arguing that it was an attempt by the United States to weaken Russia's position in the region.²⁹⁸ This was very much in keeping with Russia's increased cynicism over United States' foreign policy, arguing that this was yet another "example of how the Bush administration used democracy promotion as a cynical cover for efforts to spread U.S. influence around Russia's borders."²⁹⁹ Of further concern to Russian officials was the possibility of "routing the Baku-Tbilisi-Cheyhan pipeline through Georgia" which they viewed as an attempt to reduce Russian influence and economic power over Georgia.³⁰⁰ As will be demonstrated, one of Russia's key assets is its energy pipelines, which it often wields as a weapon for co-opting her neighbors into acting in accordance with Moscow's demands. While the United States did applaud the efforts of Ukrainian and Georgian rebels in their pursuit of democracy, there is very little evidence to suggest that the United States and NATO were directly responsible for these developments, the United States viewing them as "a manifestation of the democratic spirit which the Bush administration argued lurked within all peoples."³⁰¹ That being said, US backing of the movement and support for the proposed pipeline were seen as evidence of United States' involvement to Russian officials.

Shortly after the color revolutions, Ukraine and Georgia spearheaded the formation of the Community of Democratic Choice (CDC) consisting of Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Romania, and Macedonia. This

²⁹⁸ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 110

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.* 236

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁰¹ *Ibid.* 110

was seen by many as an attempt for states in the former-Soviet region to throw off Russian influence. Conflicting quotations from the leaders of various states regarding the nature of the Community have been given. For example, Ukrainian leaders, stressed that the community was intended to promote and celebrate democratic institutions, and their intent was “not to befriend anyone against someone else.”³⁰² Georgian president Grigori Arveladze on the other hand expressed very different sentiment regarding the nature of the community stating that it was to be “an axis of democratic countries that do not wish to remain in Russia's orbit.”³⁰³ Russia viewed this as a sort of “democratic holy alliance” which aimed “to spread colored revolutions throughout the post-Soviet space” and thus threatening to her security.³⁰⁴ However, it is very important to note that attempts by former-Soviet republics to escape Russian influence have taken place as far back as 1997 with the formation of GUAM, an “organization of ex-Soviet republics seeking to distance from Moscow” consisting of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova, and formerly Uzbekistan.³⁰⁵

To add to Russian uneasiness, in 2004, both Georgia and Ukraine expressed their desire to join NATO, a move supported by the United States. This only added to Moscow’s uneasiness. In 2006, the Georgian Parliament voted in favor of joining the alliance. In 2007, a series of cyber-attacks were launched against NATO member, Estonia. Estonia blamed their Russian neighbors for such attacks, as did many in the

³⁰² Radio Free Europe, “East: Leaders Meet In Ukraine to Create New Regional Alliance.” *Radio Free Europe* (Prague), December 1, 2005. <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1063423.htm> (Accessed March 20, 2013)

³⁰³ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁴ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 237

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.* 224

West.³⁰⁶ Throughout this process, Poland, Latvia and other former Soviet and Warsaw states strongly supported the inclusion of Georgia and Ukraine into the alliance, simply because they felt it would help to further insulate their states from Russian influence. As NATO-Russia relations expert Aurel Braun stated, “the Eastern Europeans have sought to make certain that NATO could help them contain the threats that might arise from Russian instability or possible attempts by Moscow to undermine their security.”³⁰⁷

Things went from bad to worse in April of 2008 at the Bucharest summit, in which the United States proposed that Georgia and Ukraine be put on the Membership Action Plan (MAP.) However, Germany and France opposed such a measure, fearing blowback from Russia. Instead, the alliance promised that the two states would eventually come to be full-fledged NATO members.³⁰⁸

Throughout this time, Russia was actively attempting to tamper with the elections in Ukraine and Georgia,³⁰⁹ and perhaps most importantly, threatened to support separatist groups in the region.³¹⁰ As Jeffrey Mankoff stated on the subject, “Russia’s strongest lever for influencing Tbilisi and Kyiv was the potential for separatism, with the breakaway provinces of South Ossetia and Abkhazai in Georgia and the Russian

³⁰⁶ BBC News. “Estonia hit by ‘Moscow cyber war’,” BBC News (London), May 17, 2007. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6665145.stm> (Accessed March 25, 2013); Lucas, *The New Cold War*. 154-155

³⁰⁷ Braun, Aurel, “Enlargement and the Perils of Containment,” In *NATO-Russia Relations in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Aurel Braun. London and New York: Routledge, 2008. 62-63

³⁰⁸ Civil Georgia (Press Release). “What NATO Summit Declaration Says on Georgia.” *Civil Georgia* (Tbilisi), April 4, 2008. <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=17521> (accessed March 29, 2013); Ellemann-Jensen, Uffe. “Beacon falters in fight for freedom.” *The Australian* (Surry Hills, NSW), April 7, 2008. <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/beacon-falters-in-fight-for-freedom/story-e6frg6zo-111115989622> (accessed April 1, 2013).

³⁰⁹ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 226-229

³¹⁰ *Ibid.* 113

community in Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula potentially threatening the integrity of the Georgian and Ukrainian states.”³¹¹

Further, during this time, Russia maintained its military presence in the region. Upon hearing of Georgia and Ukraine's petitioning of NATO for membership despite Russian opposition, Moscow “stepped up its campaign to weaken” both the regimes of Georgia and Ukraine “through economic pressure, including energy cutoffs to Ukraine and an embargo on Georgian exports,”³¹² all the while espousing a strong warning to both states not to join the alliance. When these measures proved to be ineffective, Russia began to “play the separatist card more openly” whereas in the past it had been reluctant to do so.³¹³ In early 2008, Putin had stated to Bush that “Ukraine is not even a state” which many felt was his way of saying that if the West pushed too hard, Moscow “would seek to undermine Ukraine's territorial integrity.”³¹⁴

Throughout these talks, Russia quietly began increasing its assistance to rebel groups in South Ossetia, staging “a series of provocations” which were “apparently designed to goad the mercurial Saakashvili into overreacting” thus providing justification for an intervention by Moscow who would come to the aid of the separatist groups.³¹⁵ Further, during this time, Russian fighter jets were regularly violating Georgian air space, which was most strikingly illustrated in the video footage of a Georgian drone which was shot down by a Russian fighter plane while operating in Georgian airspace.³¹⁶ In May and June, Russia ordered that its troops repair the railroad tracks in Abkhazia, which

³¹¹ *Ibid.*

³¹² *Ibid.* 113

³¹³ *Ibid.*

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*

³¹⁶ deHaas, *Russia's Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century*. 147

during the War in August were “used to transport reinforcements from Russia to the battlefield in Georgia.”³¹⁷ These months also saw a buildup of Russian forces near the Georgian border.³¹⁸ During this increase of Russian activity in Georgia, the United States was aware of what was going on, and warned Russian leaders that Russia was “risking its relationship with the West.”³¹⁹ Russian officials rebuffed such warnings and continued its attempts at inciting violence in their neighbor to the South. It is apparent that Russian officials during this time “regarded its influence and security in post-Soviet space as a more crucial interest than cooperation with the United States.”³²⁰ Finally on August 7, Saakashvili took the bait, ordering Georgian forces into South Ossetia to crush the revolt. On August 8, Russian troops swooped in, crossing the border to South Ossetia. On August 11, Russian troops went from South Ossetia into Georgia proper. By August 12, troops agreed to a cease-fire. Despite this ceasefire, and the “six point peace plan” adopted on the 12th, “Russian forces continued military operations to further destroy Georgian power” and it wasn’t until the 22nd that Russia completely withdrew its forces from Georgia proper, though it still maintained a strong military presence in South Ossetia and Abkhazia.³²¹

Russia’s actions during this conflict spawned much criticism from the United States and relations between the two states were brought to a new low. Throughout the course of the conflict, Kremlin officials made clear their intentions: to “prevent Georgian authority over the separatist regions of Abkhazai and South Ossetia;” “to achieve regime

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*

³¹⁹ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 113

³²⁰ *Ibid.*

³²¹ deHaas, *Russia’s Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century*. 151-152

change by removing Saakashvili from office;” “to prevent Georgia and Ukraine from joining NATO; and “to destroy Georgia’s military power.”³²² Some Russian officials went as far as to argue that their intervention was a “response to the West’s recognition of Kosovo and support for Georgian and Ukrainian NATO membership.”³²³

These actions undertaken by Russia in Georgia and Ukraine speak volumes about Russia’s ostensible commitment to absolute sovereignty. While they will continually bemoan any sort of actions undertaken by the West in the affairs of other states, employing rhetoric that appeals to the Westphalian norm of state sovereignty, it is abundantly clear that Russian officials have no qualms trampling the sovereignty of their own neighbors when it is beneficial to them. This illustrates that Russian officials are interested in the preservation of the norm of sovereignty insofar as it acts as a check on the impulses of the West, specifically the United States, and benefits Moscow. Russia lamented NATO’s 1999 intervention in Kosovo ostensibly because it went against the norm of absolute state sovereignty, however, they are more than willing to manipulate the regimes of their neighbors and even use military force to prove a point to the West. This leads me to believe that Russians will selectively employ such rhetoric as it benefits them and checks the aims of the West but is more than willing to abandon these principles in their relations with other CIS states. Russian rhetoric about sovereignty is merely a ploy for its desire to check the aims of the West and the key distinction in their mind is who it is that is intervening in the CIS region. Russian officials have long deemed this area to be their sphere of influence and thus feel justified in doing so, however, should other great powers attempt to do the same it is met with much resentment from Moscow.

³²² deHaas, *Russia’s Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century*.149

³²³ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 132

Theoretical Explanations

First of all, liberalism could point to the ideological underpinnings of groups such as CDC and GUAM, arguing that they were a means by which these members could cooperate in order to ensure the permanence of the democratic reforms undertaken in each state in previous years. After all, CDC does stand for Community of Democratic Choice, and the Ukrainian president emphasized the ideological aims of the organization. Similarly, liberals could point toward the economic cooperation taking place amongst member states in each of these organizations, attributing their cordial relations with one another to interdependencies. Further, liberals could attribute the mounting tensions between Russia and these organizations to the fact that Russia has abandoned its attempts at democratization and had this not been the case, they probably would not have intervened in 2008, nor would they have felt threatened by the formation of such alliances.

Similarly, the constructivist could attribute Russia's view of these events as threatening to classical Russian conceptions of international politics and cultural factors endogenous to the Russian state. Constructivists could posit that Russia acts in a zero-sum manner simply because that is the way in which it has classically viewed the world and Moscow is still stuck in its old Cold War paradigm.

Much like the explanations for NATO expansion, while liberalism and constructivism are able to offer explanations, once again, I believe that realist balancing theory is best able to capture the nature of these events. While certainly there is an ideological element to these formations, clearly a strategic element exists as well.

Georgia and Ukraine have continually sought to align with the West, and as shown, Georgian officials were open about their aim in the CDC: to escape Russian influence. While it is true that Ukrainian leaders spoke of their alliance in a somewhat different tone, perhaps the realist could argue that this was simply an instance of leaders masking their true aims of power and security in rosy rhetoric which appeals to prevalent ideologies. After all, it would not be in the best interests of Ukraine to make clear that they are attempting to escape Russian influence and align with the West, simply because this would have the potential to further incentivize their Russian neighbors to undermine their sovereignty and increase their stranglehold over their budding democratic government.

Further, one must ask the question of why the formation of an alliance aimed at preserving the democratic reforms achieved in each state was even necessary unless of course they felt that their internal regimes were being threatened by outside forces. I would argue that these states recognized that their Russian neighbors were actively undermining their sovereignty and attempting to influence events going on domestically, thus necessitating the formation of such an alliance. Perhaps the more cordial relations between member states stem not from a common identity, but rather the fact that they are faced with a common threat? After all, Russia has continually sought to undermine the sovereignty of their neighbors by wielding its massive gas reserves over them, utilizing it as a means of blackmail. In 2007, GUAM leaders sought to create their own pipelines which bypassed Russia; should they have been able to have gone through with this, then the Russians would no longer be able to wield its energy reserves over their neighbors as

a means of coopting them into adopting policies favorable to Moscow.³²⁴ Clearly this economic cooperation had a strong strategic element in their pursuit of such aims; namely to escape Russian influence and domination. So while Ukrainian leaders may say that their involvement in CDC and GUAM is not meant to escape Russian influence, the actions undertaken by each alliance would state otherwise; and after all, realist theory argues that it is primarily the actions undertaken by a particular state that matter most.

Further, even if these alliances were purely ideologically based, it is abundantly clear that Russian opposition stems from the fact that these alliances are being formed in their own backyard; a region which they deem to be their sphere of influence. I do not believe that it is the democratic regimes adopted by each government that bother the Russians. After all, as shown, Russia will cooperate with any state which it feels would serve its own national interests, and regime type is largely irrelevant to them; rather their opposition to the color revolutions and subsequent alliance formation stems from the fact that these states were formerly a part of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact, and classically they have enjoyed being able to control what went on in the region. It was their view that this was a further attempt by the West to encroach upon the region which it has long deemed to be its sphere of influence. Again, Russian opposition to any other great power exercising influence in the CIS region is very much in keeping with the

³²⁴ This proposal was seen to have a strong geopolitical motive behind it, and Russian leaders strongly opposed such measures, deeming them threatening to Russian security. See Blagov , Sergei. "Russia suspicious of GUAM motives." *ISN Security Watch* (Moscow), June 20, 2007. <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Articles/Detail/?ots783=4888caa0-b3db-1461-98b9-e20e7b9c13d4&lng=en&id=53439> (accessed April 24, 2013); Kyiv Post (Press Release). "Leaders of 4 ex-Soviet nations discuss ways to counterbalance Russia's clout." *Kyiv Post*, June 20, 2007. <http://www.kyivpost.com/content/world/leaders-of-4-ex-soviet-nations-discuss-ways-to-cou.html?flavour=mobile> (accessed April 24, 2013).

realist view regarding extraterritorial assertions of power, and the desire of great powers to prevent other great powers from asserting their influence in their sphere of influence.

Much like the United States did not mean to undermine Japan's hemispheric position upon obtaining territory in the Pacific, I do not believe that the West is actively seeking to harm Russia's position in Eastern Europe; however, much like the situation in the Pacific which occurred well over 100 years ago, intent is irrelevant, and Russia feels incredibly threatened, much like Japan did in the early 1900s.³²⁵ Perhaps most importantly, Russia's 2008 invasion of Georgia was a carefully planned and calculated power move, aimed at reasserting its influence in the region, and showing the West that the Russian state now offered strong resistance and it would not stand idly by as other great powers sought to assert their influence on Russia's turf. This was classic, textbook balancing behavior on the part of Russia.

Russian Attempts at Countering U.S. Influence

The Kremlin has been reacting to the eastward expansion of NATO closer and closer to Russia's western borders, and attempting to reassert its primacy in the former-Soviet region in a variety of ways. First of all, as stated above, Russia through its state-run energy company Gazprom, is able to wield immense influence through its natural gas pipelines, and continually uses the dependency of other states on Russian energy as a means of blackmailing them into pursuing policies favorable to the Kremlin. Putin

³²⁵ Theodore Roosevelt recognized that an unintended consequence of the United States' acquisition of the Philippines and Guam in the aftermath of the Spanish-American War was increased tensions with Japan.

See Wertheim, Stephen, "Reluctant Liberator: Theodore Roosevelt's Philosophy of Self-Help Government and Preparation for Philippine Independence. *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 39, No. 3 (2009): 494-518. <http://www.columbia.edu/~saw2156/ReluctantLiberator.pdf> (Accessed March 10, 2013); Schweller, *Unanswered Threats*. 25-27

described Gazprom as “a powerful political and economic lever of influence over the rest of the world” and “Russian attempts to gain control of downstream assets in Europe and the former Soviet states attest to the reach of this and similar levers.”³²⁶ Russia’s energy monopoly is used as a means of undercutting Eastern European neighbor members. For example, between 1997 and 2000, “Russia cut off oil deliveries to Lithuania’s key oil refinery at Mazeikia at least nine times” in hopes of putting pressure on the government to act in a manner favorable to Moscow.³²⁷

Similarly in late 2005 and early 2006, Russia cut off Ukrainian gas supplies during the Ukrainian gas dispute. This was again repeated in 2008 and 2009. Many in the West suspected that “Russia was punishing its southern neighbor for the Orange Revolution,” saying “if you don’t vote for our candidates (and allow them to rig elections) then don’t expect us to sell you cheap gas.”³²⁸ Similarly, Russia later proposed building another pipeline which would “supply Germany and Western Europe under the Baltic Sea, thereby bypassing Lithuania and Poland,” which is seen by many as an attempt to undermine and splinter the alliance by “leapfrogging” these European states.³²⁹ In 2006, Minister of Defense Sergei Ivanov argued that Russia needed to consider both diplomatic and forceful means to “safeguard its economic interests.”³³⁰

Further, many speculate that the Russian FSB and foreign intelligence service (SVR) is acting clandestinely in its neighboring countries, infiltrating their governments and critical infrastructure facilities as a means of maintaining Russian influence in the

³²⁶ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 46

³²⁷ Braun, *Enlargement and the Perils of Containment*, 58-59

³²⁸ Lucas. *The New Cold War*. 168

³²⁹ Braun, "Enlargement and the perils of containment ." 58

³³⁰ deHaas, *Russia’s Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century*. 66

region. For example, Poland has made “claims that the Russian secret services have been involved in the energy sector and that Russia has used spies within oil companies to try to damage Polish interests.”³³¹ Similar claims have been made by Latvian officials, speaking ominously of “Russians coming in by bus and rail with large suitcases.”³³² As Edward Lucas stated in his book The New Cold War:

As well as promoting disinformation and manipulating public life, these two agencies and the GRU all try to penetrate the central institutions of state in the ex-Soviet countries. Counter-intelligence officers note with alarm their success in recruiting and placing agents and informants in the criminal justice system, the armed forces, the security and intelligence services, the foreign, defense and interior ministries, and elsewhere.³³³

Similarly, many accusations have been made that the Kremlin has been actively influencing the elections of its neighbors. The most striking example of this was the Kremlin’s support for Yanukovich in the Ukrainian runoff elections of 2004.³³⁴

Russia has also been attempting to forge various new alliances as a hope of counterbalancing the United States and NATO, especially after observing that attempts to do so through the CIS were largely ineffective. The first of such alliances is the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) which was originally formed in 1992 as a CIS Collective Security Treaty (CST) as a Moscow-led mutual security organization. From its inception, the CSTO forbade member states from joining other military alliances. Much like NATO, the CSTO also “has a military assistance provision” provided in Article 4 of the treaty, stating that aggression toward “one party will be

³³¹ *Ibid.* 63

³³² *Ibid.*

³³³ Lucas, *The New Cold War*. 155

³³⁴ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 226

considered as an attack on all parties.”³³⁵ The treaty took effect in 1994 and was to last for the next five years at which point it would face renewal. In 1999, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Uzbekistan refused to sign the new treaty and formally withdrew from the alliance; Georgia expressing its desire to join NATO instead, Uzbekistan expressing its desire to join GUAM, from which it later also withdrew. In 2006, Uzbekistan rejoined the alliance; however in 2012 it once again left.³³⁶ Russian leaders attributed this to United States influence, predicting that the US would attempt to bring the former CSTO state into its bloc, though no efforts by the United States or NATO to do so have taken place.³³⁷

In 2009, the organization got further militarized with the creation of the Collective Rapid Reaction Force, which was deployed to the Central Asia region. This increased militarization of the alliance was seen “as a step to counterbalance NATO’s further eastward expansion and to keep CIS countries under Russia’s military protection.”³³⁸ Due to the fact that Russia is without a doubt the dominant member of the CSTO, it by de facto wields the most influence in the alliance, which is largely seen as a tool of Moscow for achieving its aims, which in recent years has been to halt the spread of “color revolutions” in the CIS region. Protection against such revolutions was also the main factor behind Uzbek President Karimov’s decision to rejoin the alliance. In 2007, the CSTO issued a formal invitation to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to join

³³⁵ deHaas, *Russia’s Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century*. 40

³³⁶ Radio Free Europe, . "Uzbekistan Suspends Membership In CSTO." *Radio Free Europe* (Prague), 06 28, 2012. <http://www.rferl.org/content/uzbekistan-csto-suspends-membership/24629244.html> (accessed April 7, 2013).

³³⁷ The Gazette of Central Asia, . "Uzbekistan Suspends Its Membership in CSTO." *The Gazette of Central Asia*, 06 29, 20102. <http://www.satrapia.com/news/article/uzbekistan-suspends-its-membership-in-csto/> (accessed April 2, 2013).

³³⁸ deHaas, *Russia’s Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century*. 41

the alliance. While Iran has yet to do so, this act sent a clear signal to the United States and her allies.³³⁹

Another attempt at alliance crafting by Russia took the form of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (CSO) which was originally formed in the 1990s, including China, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and obviously Russia “as member states,” and Mongolia, Iran, Pakistan and India as observer states.”³⁴⁰ While the organization was originally founded as a security organization, member states have frequently posited that the organization was “primarily meant for political and economic cooperation” and that “military cooperation played a minor role.”³⁴¹ Despite these denials, the SCO has taken on an increasingly military-esque character, and in 2005 and 2007, the organization engaged in military exercises “with an emphasis not only on counterterrorism, but also a demonstration of force, to show others (the West) who is in control of the region.”³⁴² Further, in recent years, especially after Russia’s 2005 rapprochement with China, the SCO and CSTO have been cooperating far more. Russia has also been actively courting China, increasing military cooperation between the two states, while the United States has been shoring up ties with its own allies across the

³³⁹ Window on Heartland, . "Syria, Iran And The Future Of The CSTO – Analysis." *Eurasia Review*, 12 14, 2012. <http://www.eurasiareview.com/14122012-syria-iran-and-the-future-of-the-csto-analysis/>

³⁴⁰ deHaas, *Russia’s Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century*. 42

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*

³⁴² *Ibid.* 44

Asia-Pacific region.”³⁴³ This is largely seen as an attempt to “counterbalance what they see as American military dominance.”³⁴⁴

Lastly, Russia since the mid-2000s has been getting increasingly assertive in the United States’ own backyard, selling weapons to and conducting joint-military exercises with Venezuela under its former President, Hugo Chavez who was extremely critical of the United States. Many have viewed this to be a direct reaction to the United States’ assertiveness in Russia’s own backyard. Columbian political scientist, Arelene Tickner said that she felt that increased Russian activity in Latin America was “a gauged response to irk the US government following its meddling in Georgia, as well as an attempt to play along with Chavez’s desire to involve Russia in regional dynamics.”³⁴⁵

Similarly, Russia has been conducting similar arms deals with its old Cold War ally, Cuba. In 2008 visit, Castro and Putin spoke of reestablishing former Soviet Air bases so as to patrol the region, and to gather intelligence. Ironically enough, this visit with Castro took place shortly after Russian officials discussed a possible retaliation against the United States’ plans for missile defense systems in Europe.³⁴⁶ This was viewed by many as a “Russian response to the Bush administration’s plans to deploy an

³⁴³ Herszenhorn, David M., and Chris Buckley. "China's New Leader, Visiting Russia, Promotes Nations' Economic and Military Ties." *New York Times* (New York) March 22, 2013.

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/23/world/asia/xi-jinping-visits-russia-on-first-trip-abroad.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 (accessed April 7, 2013).

³⁴⁴ BBC News. "China 'buys fighter jets and submarines from Russia'." *BBC News* (London), March 25, 2013. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-21930280> (accessed March 30, 2013).

³⁴⁵ (Petersen, Freya. "Medvedev's Venezuela, Cuba Trips may Provoke US Ire." *France 24*. November 27, 2008. <http://www.france24.com/en/20081126-medvedevs-venezuela-cuba-trips-may-provoke-us-ire-russia> (Accessed May 6, 2012)

³⁴⁶ Suchlicki, Jamie. "The Cuba-Venezuela Challenge to Hemispheric Security: Implications for the United States," *Center for Hemispheric Policy*, (October-December, 2009): 1-12

anti-ballistic missile system in Europe.”³⁴⁷ While ultimately Castro rejected Moscow’s proposal, Chavez was happy to engage in arms deals with Russia.

Theoretical Explanations

Once again, liberalism could attribute Russian actions to its unwillingness to its increasingly authoritarian regime, which is causing tensions with its democratic neighbors. The liberal could argue that much of this tension could be alleviated should Russia adopt a more democratic regime. The liberal could argue that should Russia abandon its authoritarian regime type in favor of a more democratic one, it would no longer attribute the energy trade with its security and embrace the interdependencies brought about by trade. Further, in regard to the international organizations which Russia has crafted, the liberal could focus on the economic cooperation amongst member states and attribute Russia’s good relations with China, and the members of CSTO and the SCO to these interdependencies and the cooperative capabilities brought forth by these alliances. Much like the previous constructivist explanation, adherents to the theory would focus on the way in which Russia has classically viewed international politics and attribute its assertiveness, concept of spheres of influence, and perceived need to control events in neighboring states to world view and leftover identities from its Soviet past.

Again, I would argue that while the theories of constructivism and liberalism can certainly offer explanations, it is the theory of realism which is best capable of explaining Russian coalition building and its energy trade. While one could certainly point to issues of world view and multilateral cooperation brought forth by these alliances, I would

³⁴⁷ Russia Today, “Russian Arms in US Backyard: Back in Cuba. *Russia Today* (Moscow), November 30, 2011. <http://rt.com/news/russian-arms-cuba-deal-567/> (Accessed April 22, 2012))

argue that all of these had clear strategic aims behind them and it is hard to deny that Russian behavior here looks eerily similar to balancing behavior. Clearly Russia resents the actions of the West in her backyard, and is it any coincidence that it is now asserting itself in the backyard of the United States? Certainly Russia is benefiting economically from its arms sales to Venezuela and Cuba, however, one must ask what is it that attracted Russia to these states to begin with? After all, they are located in a region which the United States enjoys regional hegemony over, these states are vehement critics of the United States, and share Russia's goal at creating a multipolar world. Further, Chavez has been very open about his aims at removing United States' influence from Latin America. To me, Russian arms sales to Cuba and Venezuela are an attempt to balance against the United States for acting militarily in Russia's backyard.

Similarly, it is my view that Russia's aim with the CSTO and the SCO is to use these alliances as a means of counterbalancing NATO, and reassert Russian influence in the region. When asked of the possibility of Russia pursuing membership in NATO, Russian diplomat and ambassador to NATO Dmitry Rogozin replied by stating, "great powers don't join coalitions, they create coalitions. Russia considers itself a great power," though they did not necessarily rule out membership at some point in the future.³⁴⁸ Clearly Russia is not joining the alliance because they would wield very little influence in it, given the substantial influence wielded by the United States, and it is thus attempting to craft alliances of its own which it can control, much like the United States does NATO; the purpose of these alliances to me appears to be to counterbalance NATO. Certainly, however, should Russia join NATO it could attempt to soft-balance against the

³⁴⁸ Pop, Valentina. "Russia does not rule out future NATO membership." *EU Observer*, January 4, 2009. <http://euobserver.com/defence/27890> (accessed January 3, 2013).

United States through its position in the alliance so if they were to opt to join the alliance at some point in the future, I would predict their reasoning would be as such.

Again, I do not believe that this perceived need to control events in close proximity to one's borders is unique to Russia, but rather is something which all great powers seek. The United States has continually deemed the events in the Western hemisphere to be critical to her security and has thus sought to influence events in the region. To me the idea that this is a product of Russian worldview is simply flawed; rather, I believe that the uncertainty and vulnerability by the anarchical structure of the international system incentivizes such behavior and states will inevitably react negatively should another great power attempt to do the same in said region. Similarly, I do not believe that this view of economic interests as critical to security is in any way unique to Russia either. Rather, I believe that all states recognize that prosperity is a necessary prerequisite to one's ability to defend oneself from other states and thus the two are inextricably tied.³⁴⁹ Similarly, realist explanations of trade explain the way the way in which Russia wields its energy resources over its neighbors as a means of influencing policy, and the strong desire of these states to find alternative sources to escape Russian influence. Any time an alternative to energy supplied by Gazprom has been proposed, Russia has deemed it to be detrimental to her security.

³⁴⁹ For example, the United States has intervened on numerous occasions when we have felt our economic interests to be at risk. The United States is obviously a democratic state and adopts such a view, thus I do not believe that equating economic interests with security interests is in any way unique to Russia or states with certain regime types. To me, the realist view that the uncertainty associated with international anarchy is what incentivizes such behavior and states act accordingly.

Implications for Further Research

The behavior engaged in by the Russian Federation throughout this period has been very in keeping with the principles put forth by realist theory. Clearly these actions are calculated responses to what it deems to be threatening actions by the West in a region which it had classically enjoyed as its privileged sphere of influence. Clearly this is very much in keeping with the realist idea that great powers will seek out regions to assert extraterritorial power and influence and will react hostilely should another great power attempt to do the same. Russian action throughout this period is by the book realist balancing behavior. Similarly, when Russia has attempted to assert itself in Latin American which the United States has long enjoyed regional hegemony over, the United States was very unhappy about this as well.

Further, realist theory is able to offer some very valuable explanations in regard to the actions undertaken by the United States during this period as well; namely, it was able to act in such a manner, expand NATO eastward, etc. simply because of the lack of a geopolitical equal in the region. I don't believe that in doing so the United States was intending to actively harm Russian interests in the region, however to the Russians intent was irrelevant and its increasingly assertive position toward the United States is a direct response to the differing visions the two states have in regard to former-Soviet space. As Jeffrey Mankoff Stated, "Moscow has typically portrayed actions with anti-U.S. overtones as a reaction to Washington's own policy choices, making clear that it was willing to seek close ties with Washington as long as the United States did not actively

undermine what Moscow saw as its own vital interests--above all in the post-Soviet space.”³⁵⁰

Upon embarking on this research process I largely expected that realist theory would best be capable of explaining these developments in the relationship between the two states, if nothing else because realist theory has the most to say on spheres of influence and balancing behavior. However, throughout the research process, the ability of realist theory to explain these events exceeded even my own expectations. Realist theory is also able to shed some very valuable insights in regard to the structure and functioning of international institutions and coalitions during this time along with trade relationships in Eastern Europe in which Russia is attempting to use its energy monopoly to further its geopolitical ambitions.

Certainly the constructivist could argue that Russia throughout this period was acting not in accordance with objective systemic-level forces driving it to do so, but rather her action stemmed from Russian culture and classical conceptions of international politics. Given the very fluid nature of constructivism, it is a very difficult theory to disprove. That being said, whether due to systemic-level forces exogenous to the state or cultural and social factors endogenous to the state, Russia's actions throughout this time are very much in keeping with the principles put forth by realist theory. It is very hard to deny that Russian action throughout this period was anything other than balancing behavior directed against the United States. While constructivism may be able to offer a possible alternative explanation, I have established that realist theory is still very capable of explaining international phenomena in the post-Soviet world.

³⁵⁰ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*. 131

As stated previously, I certainly acknowledge that I am in a rather limited in my ability to account for constructivist theory simply because my research design is focused upon the actions of each state, rather than the prevalent identities and discourses, and the most prominent piece on the subject, Ted Hopf's work on identities in Russia, though monumental and groundbreaking is rather dated by this point. In order to fully account for the role of identities in these events, I would propose an in-depth, discursive analysis, similar to that conducted by Hopf. If nothing else, this could show another dimension to the nature of the relationship between the two states.

Secondly, the issues discussed here are on-going, and as new developments take place, new light will inevitably be shed on the subject. Perhaps unforeseen developments will take place in the future which will act to alter the relationship of the two states. As it currently stands, realist theory is able to account for the relationship between the two states very well, however, as relations between the two states progress, so too will our understanding.

Thirdly, as stated in the introductory chapter, restrictions in time and space necessitated that I narrow my scope to the issues which are deemed to be the *most* important and representative of relations between the two states, (though I also briefly looked at the short period of cooperation in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks.) While NATO expansion and issues pertaining to former-Soviet space are deemed the most important in the relationship between the two states, other issues are also important in the relationship such as disagreement over the handling of the Assad regime in Syria, and the Ahmadinejad in Iran. Similarly, while Russian attempts at building coalitions to counter the United States, and its activities in Latin America were certainly analyzed,

they were not discussed in-depth simply due to issues of time and space. Further analysis of each of these issues would undoubtedly yield more insights into the nature relationship between the two states.

Lastly, given that realist theory tends to focus on the actions of great powers, my focus here was on United States-Russian relations. While other actors were indeed involved throughout this period such as the smaller states which desired to align with NATO and escape Russian influence, due to the focus of my research, I analyzed them insofar as they impacted the relations between the United States and the Russian Federation. Further research could be conducted which focuses more on the smaller states involved throughout this period who actively sought to join NATO and escape Russian influence. These states matter greatly as well, and I believe that analyzing these events from their perspective would certainly yield some very valuable insights. Perhaps looking at these events from their perspective and understanding their motivations could yield some very valuable insights into the nature of NATO and the effectiveness of the various programs implemented such as the PfP.

Implications for United States Foreign Policy and Future Relations with Russia

Up until this point in the research process, I have purely sought to make an empirical inquiry into the nature of the relationship between the United States and the Russian Federation and the behavior of each state, so as to see if realist theory is able to offer an adequate explanation. Until this point, I have refrained from making any sort of comments into what policies I believe would be advantageous for the United States to

pursue when dealing with her Russian counterpart, simply because that was outside the scope of what I sought to uncover; this is a paper on international relations, not foreign policy.

I have now established that relations between the two states are very Hobbesian in nature and it is my view that realist theory is best equipped to account for these developments. Now that this has been shown, I believe it would be negligent if I were to not at least give my thoughts into what I believe the future holds for United States-Russian relations, and provide some insights based on the conceptual framework provided in the previous pages in regard to what policies would be prudent for the United States to undertake in its relations with the Russian Federation. In this final section, I will give some brief insights, based upon the trends and norms which I have uncovered in the previous pages, into what sort of policies would best serve the interests of the United States in the future. I focus my efforts on what would be advantageous to the United States, simply because as an American, I obviously desire what is best for my own state, and I am obviously in no position to judge what would be prudent policy for the Russian Federation to undertake. These recommendations are based upon the conceptual framework provided by realist theory.

As Russia continually seeks to pursue its national interests, and create a multipolar world, it is inevitable that this will at some point come into conflict with the interests of the United States. As Russia's internal capacity develops, I believe that its foreign policy will continue to be more assertive. Conflicts of interest are an inevitable byproduct of this. The realist would argue that these tensions are simply a fact of the international system, and we should recognize this and take it into account as we craft

policies. In doing so we will be able to both secure the United States' position in the world, while also being mindful of these tensions and taking measures to ensure that they do not escalate to the point of armed conflict, which nobody wants. First of all, I believe that we should maintain our presence in Eastern Europe, which I feel acts as a stabilizing force in the region. If we were to withdraw our presence, a power vacuum would arise, and Russia would undoubtedly fill this with its influence. This would not be good for us, and it certainly would not be good for our Eastern European allies who would more than likely come under the heel of the Kremlin.

Secondly, I don't believe that we should abandon our plans for an anti-ballistic missile system in Eastern Europe, simply because I think such a facility would be very useful in the event of a missile attack from a region which we currently cannot defend against. While I certainly desire better relations with the Russians, if in the pursuit of such an aim, our own state is left less secure, to me the security of our state should take precedent. Obviously this is not to say that no sort of compromise can or should be struck between the two states in which tensions could at least be reduced.

Thirdly, in regard to Georgia and Ukraine, I believe that their admission into the alliance would certainly be very beneficial to us, our NATO allies, and obviously the states of Georgia and Ukraine. That being said, the fact is that Russia, though not a superpower, could now be considered a great power and they are vehemently opposed to the possibility; so much so that as shown in 2008, they are willing to use force to prevent their admission into the alliance. While in previous years it could have been possible to admit them into the alliance without risking armed conflict with Russia, the fact is that Russia has been gaining in strength in recent years, rapidly recovering the power lost in

the 1990s. If in admitting Georgia and Ukraine into the alliance, we would risk armed conflict with Russia, then the drawbacks in my view would outweigh the benefits associated with their admission.

Instead, I believe that we should focus our efforts at building relationships with our neighbors in Latin America, especially given Russia's increased attempts at asserting itself in our own backyard. The potential for Russian arms to leak beyond Venezuela's borders, going to extremist groups in neighboring countries is a very real possibility which has the potential to destabilize the hemisphere which we currently enjoy hegemony over. I believe that we should work together and provide assistance to our neighbors in Latin America in order to prevent this from happening, hopefully in the process containing this threat from Venezuela.³⁵¹ To me, this is far more critical to our national interests. Similarly, with Russia's rapprochement with China, I believe it would be greatly beneficial if we were to build relationships with our allies in Asia while also decreasing their dependency on United States military hardware. While I do see conflicts of interests between the United States and Russia as inevitable, there is certainly a possibility that the threat of a third party could bring the interests of the two states into alignment, facilitating cooperation in the face of a common threat.

Lastly I have clearly observed that the evidence points toward a realist explanation, and that the ideological jabs exchanged by the states have been largely symptomatic of the souring of relations over colliding national interests; if anything,

³⁵¹ A key concern of United States officials has been that these arms could end up in the hands of various insurgent groups in neighboring states, which the Chavez regime supported. See Scarborough, Rowan. "Russian arms sale to Chavez irks U.S." *Washington Times* (Washington DC), February 10, 2005. <http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/Inacademic/> (Accessed April 26, 2012).

ideological differences have simply made it far easier for the two states to justify their policies toward one another. For this reason, I would argue that should Russia adopt a more democratic regime this would have very little bearing on relations between the two states. Though I personally believe that representative government is a truly wonderful thing, and would very much like to see Russia transform in a more democratic direction for the sake of the Russian people, based on my observations I would reject the liberal premise that this would facilitate peace and cooperation between the two states. Thus, I believe that any attempts to pressure Russia into adopting a more democratic regime would do very little to decrease the tensions between the two states. Further, should they adopt such a government, all democratic states are going to be structured differently, and if two states dislike one another over competing security aims, it is very likely that they would still paint the other to be unjust, or not the “right kind” of democracy. If two states are fundamentally at odds with one another, is it likely that they would perceive the other’s regime to be “just?” Or as Waltz stated, “a liberal democracy at war with another country is unlikely to call it a liberal democracy.”³⁵²

Thus I don’t believe any attempts should be made to pressure Russia to make changes in its governmental structure simply because when done in the past it has been of very little avail and has only acted to further upset the Kremlin. Obviously should they seek such reforms on their own, I would be incredibly happy to see this for the sake of the Russian people, though I don’t believe it would act to alleviate tension over issues such as NATO expansion, and I believe any attempts to pressure them into reform would be met with much resentment and would not act to reduce tensions between the two

³⁵² Waltz, “Structural Realism After the Cold War.” 10

states. If they would be ineffective in achieving their desired aim, then is it truly prudent to further upset a geopolitical rival unnecessarily?

While this prescribed solution may sound cold and cynical, I believe this approach is most in touch with the nature of the international system, and is thus most likely to both preserve the security and well-being of the United States, and decrease the likelihood of conflict with our Russian counterparts. If it is realist theory which is best capable of explaining these events, I believe it is only appropriate that the policies adopted should be in accordance with the nature of the international system. I believe a prudent policy maker should know the nature of, and the limitations associated with, the international system and craft policies recognizing this in hopes of achieving the best possible outcome in an inherently imperfect world. To quote John Mearsheimer, "It is hardly cynical to base U.S. strategy on a realistic appraisal of American interests and a clear-eyed sense of what U.S. power can and cannot accomplish."³⁵³

³⁵³ Mearsheimer, John. "Middle East: Know the Limits of U.S. Power." The Daily Beast November 28, 2008. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2008/11/28/middle-east-know-the-limits-of-u-s-power.html> (accessed March 26, 2013).

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