This Policy Report is based on the conference “Russia as a Global Power: Contending Views from Russia,” convened at the George Washington University’s Elliott School of International Affairs on March 18, 2013. The conference was co-sponsored by the Sigur Center for Asian Studies’ Rising Powers Initiative and the Institute for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies’ PONARS Eurasia. The conference and Policy Report are supported by a generous grant from Carnegie Corporation of New York.

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Russia, like other rising powers, faces three broad options in its relations with the world: seek to integrate further with the world economy as China has done (globalist), insist on a great power relationship with the United States that highlights things like arms control negotiations and respect for the internal sovereignty of all nations (great power), or revive Russian nationalism and self-confidence and reassert its hegemonic role in the former Soviet space (nationalist).

These options are not exclusive. But they do tilt in different directions. Russia as a stakeholder in the global economy will become more entangled with foreign markets including the U.S. market. Russia as a great power partner will focus on nuclear and military issues and insist on operating through the United Nations Security Council and similar great power forums. And Russia as a revitalized imperial aspirant will inevitably rival and potentially clash with the United States and other Western powers as well as with China and Japan.

Which way is Russia going? The Rising Powers Initiative (RPI) at the Elliott School of International Affairs asked this question, initially in a volume published by Oxford University Press in September 2012, and then at a follow-up conference on March 18, 2013 sponsored jointly by two projects at the Elliott School, the RPI Project on Worldviews of Aspiring Powers in the Sigur Center for Asian Studies and the Program on New Approaches to Research and Security in Eurasia (PONARS Eurasia) in the Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies.

Which way Russia goes, of course, is up to Russia. In a keynote address to the conference, former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union from 1987-1991, Jack Matlock, stressed the importance of what goes on inside countries rather than outside them. The Soviet Union ended the Cold War for internal reasons not because the United States forced it to break up. Today, he pointed out, Russia makes too much of Western interference or encirclement. What happens in places like Georgia, Central Asia, or Ukraine will tend to reflect more what Russia does than what the United States does. Thus, as the Worldviews and PONARS Eurasia projects highlight, the debate inside Russia remains key.

The conference brought to Washington three proponents of the different points of view on Russia’s future. While wearing no specific labels, Vladimir Inozemtsev, Director, Centre for Post-Industrial Studies, Andranik Migranyan, Director, Institute for Democracy and Cooperation, and Fyodor Lukyanov, Presidium Chairman, Council on Foreign and Defense Policy, and Editor-in-Chief, Russia in Global Affairs, laid out globalist, nationalist and realist (great power) perspectives on Russia’s relations with the United States and the world. An American panel then responded to these Russian views. Again, without specific labels, Leon Aron at the American Enterprise Institute, Paul Saunders at Center for the National Interest, Samuel Charap at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, and E. Wayne Merry at the American Foreign Policy Council spelled out nationalist, realist and globalist (both liberal and conservative) views on the American side. In this brief report, we set out and elaborate these views on the range of issues Russia confronts as a rising power. Attached to this report are the agenda and full list of speakers at the conference on Russian worldviews.

Security Issues

Reset and Relations with the United States

- **Great Power:** Reset was a success and is a template for future U.S.-Russian relations but it needs a new agenda.
- **Nationalist:** Reset was Medvedev’s idea, not Putin’s; Russia needed reset less than the United States, and Russia can be patient in relations with the United States. The United States is declining; time is on Moscow’s side.
- **Globalist:** Reset didn’t amount to much. Real problems are domestic. Putin uses relations with the United States to create a sense of emergency for reestablishing Moscow’s control.

Arms Control and Non-proliferation

- **Globalist:** There is room for cooperation to prevent proliferation, but Russia does not have a lot of influence over countries like Iran and North Korea.
- **Nationalist:** Nuclear power is central to Russia’s self-image. Rebuilding its defenses is priority. Deterrence with offensive weapons worked. Missile defense only increases the need for offensive systems. No one believes that NATO missile defense is against Iran. Russia would gladly switch neighbors with the United States. Russia has influence with other powers and needs to be respected by the United States.
- **Great Power:** Russia is happy with New START but future arms issues need to be multilateral. China has to be involved. The United States will probably not stop missile defense. So Russia has to build up in response. New arms agreements in this situation are unlikely.

Syria

- **Great Power:** No one has the right to interfere in another state’s conflicts. Medvedev made the Libyan decision; it’s not clear why, but it is not a precedent. These situations are chaotic. It is not clear whom you are supporting. Removing Assad might be acceptable but must come out of internal strife not external intervention.
- **Globalist:** Domestic policy is the problem in these situations. Russia has an energy stake in Syria. If Sunni fighters backed by Saudi Arabia and Qatar control Syria, new pipelines will be built to supply Europe and undercut Russian exports.
- **Nationalist:** Principle, not energy, is Russia’s concern in Syria. Intervention ends in chaos. Look at Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Mali. We have to know who will follow Assad. Either you know that or you don’t intervene at all. In these situations Russia helps the United States to be more cautious. Washington may be ready to accept Assad if the opposition reaches an agreement with him.
China

• Nationalist: China is both challenge and opportunity. It is no threat at the moment, and the two countries have a common interest in a more multipolar world. India adds another power. Russia should maintain independent relations with both China and India.

• Globalist: China is a big challenge. It is much bigger economically than Russia, and trade is unbalanced. Russia exports mostly commodities while China exports mostly manufactured goods. Russia needs better economic relations with India. But it is likely to compete with China there too.

• Great Power: Russia is not focused on Asia. It needs to pay more attention to China but risks becoming a junior partner. Large European and U.S. companies invest in Russia, but Chinese investment is suspect.

Economic Issues

Russia is still a largely resource-driven economy. Oil and gas account for roughly one-quarter of GDP, one-half of export revenues, and perhaps three-quarters of government revenues. The price of oil has gone up 50-100 percent since 2006 but Russian growth has gone down from around 8 to roughly 3 percent per year. That's still pretty good compared to most countries, but Russia may have gotten as much as it can out of its resource endowments. In 2012 it joined the World Trade Organization (WTO). Does that decision suggest a decisive shift toward industrial development? The discussion on Russian economic prospects took place against this uncertain backdrop.

Modernization

• Globalist: Modernization is the shift from a resource-based to an industrial economy. Russia faces both material and ideological challenges to modernize. The Soviet legacy left the country with high costs and poor infrastructure. It is losing ground compared to Central Asian states even in the resource sector. So it should modernize first in energy. Unfortunately, the country's elites have little interest in modernization.

• Great Power: Russia is a unique country. It cannot simply borrow solutions from other countries. First liberalism failed, and then Medvedev's focus on modernization failed. Russia's future lies with Europe. The European Union is struggling. It needs cheap and safe supplies of energy. Russia needs oil and gas exports. The EU-Russian relationship is bound to grow.

• Nationalist: Russia is modernizing. Foreign companies such as BP and Exxon-Mobil are now investing in the energy sector. Small companies are thriving and are competitive in the local market. Putin is waging a campaign against corruption and to create stable laws and support for small scale industry.

International Economic Institutions

• Great Power: The most novel and important economic organization is the Eurasian Union – Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan. This was Putin's idea, and it is his way of reconstructing markets in the old Soviet space on the basis of national interests, not central planning. A key participant for the future is Ukraine, not as a substitute for membership in the European Union or WTO but as a way of building up mutual strength to deal with and benefit from wider economic markets.

• Nationalist: The Eurasian Union involves countries at a lower level of development. They are complementary but not exclusive. Russia seeks a free trade area from Portugal to Vladivostok and negotiated hard to get good terms in the WTO protecting Russian industry and agriculture. Development does not require abandoning your roots.

• Globalist: Russia is unlikely to get many benefits from smaller economic groups such as the Eurasian Union. The three member countries are all heavily resource dependent. So they cannot become the basis of participation in the wider world economy. Some Russian investors may seek tax advantages in Kazakhstan, but the Eurasian Union is largely a political project. It as well as other investment ideas such as the North Sea project in the Arctic are utopian.

American Perspectives

American views of Russia also break down into various schools of thought. Nationalist views generally assume the two countries should take care of themselves and not interfere in their respective core interests. Great Power views envision a partnership focused on arms control and other great power responsibilities. Conservative globalists anticipate greater conflict due to differences in domestic regime types, while liberal globalists expect that global economic and environmental interdependence will soften both domestic and strategic rivalries.

Does Diversity of Russian Worldviews Matter?

• Conservative Globalist: No, there is ultimately one decision-maker in Russia.

• Nationalist: Yes, there are differing fundamental schools of thought within Russia about Russia's external relations.

• Realist: Yes, but the most influential school of thought, that of Vladimir Putin, is shared by broad segments of Russian society and is, therefore, somewhat constraining.

• Liberal Globalist: To an extent, but nondemocratic leaders have autonomy to reach beyond worldviews or to challenge them. You also have to account for the fact that over time leaders might voice inconsistent worldviews, raising the question of their significance.

What is the Way Forward for U.S.-Russian Relations?

• Nationalist: We need a “normal relationship,” absorb some of the big-ticket items that have been achieved in the last decade, and appreciate the things that are
We should elaborate a new agenda that is not centered on problems of the Cold War but on economic reform and modernization. The Pacific region is another area that holds potential for cooperation. The real politics of the 21st century are predominantly economic.

Russian Reactions

Where does the US-Russia relationship stand, and what does the future hold?

Globalist:

- We should elaborate a new agenda that is not centered on problems of the Cold War but on economic reform and modernization. The Pacific region is another area that holds potential for cooperation. The real politics of the 21st century are predominantly economic.

Nationalist:

- U.S.-Russian relations are fine. We're moving toward each other from different directions. The United States is moving away from a position of unilateral domination, of a world in which they have no partners, just clients and dependencies. Russia is moving away from poverty and from not even being a fully sovereign state. The United States has to adjust itself to the creation of a balance of power in different regions, Russia to acting itself as an independent actor. In terms of assistance, Russia should be treated like a real independent sovereign state; the United States can save its money or spend it in Third World countries. One can be optimistic that an absolutely realistic approach in U.S.-Russian relations will prevail.

- Political realism dominates in the political thought of Russia's leaders and mainstream commentators. Anti-Americanism is not an imperative of Russian domestic politics; it is a response to perceived anti-Russianism in the United States. Russia is not moving backward on human rights and democracy.

Great Power:

- Russia has sought cooperation with the United States, but its leaders are irritated that the United States doesn't listen to its concerns and ignores Russia. Putin intends to make Washington listen and to accept his view that U.S. policies are increasing instability. His agenda is to try and separate Russia from all these negative trends, because he's aware of how vulnerable Russia is.

- It's impossible to separate domestic and foreign policy. It's also unrealistic to expect a stable U.S.-Russian relationship based on deep mutual economic interest in the foreseeable future.

- Society is changing, and a number of different views on Russian domestic and foreign policy are emerging. Society and the political class are trying to come up with new values to fill the post-Soviet vacuum. The conservative ideas that are gaining prominence are not sustainable, but the attempt to find new values is good. I am sure we will find some kind of middle way between libertarianism and traditionalism to shape Russia's new identity.
Conclusion: The Long View Across Domestic Debates

In both the United States and Russia, nationalist and great power views are becoming more significant. Globalist perspectives are weakening. If these trends continue, what does the future portend?

Nationalist Views Prevail:

- **Russian View:** The international role of the United States is shrinking. Emerging powers are becoming more important. The United States will seek a kind of splendid isolation, creating balances and putting down countries who try to change those balances in ways that are not beneficial to the United States. Russia will have a wider role in its own efforts to be a part of these balances, or to create its own. Permanent military organizations and alliances will be obsolete and will give way to ad hoc coalitions. This will give Russia an opportunity to increase its leverage. Russia has a strategy to do so. In order for Russia to become part of the West, it must be strong, in which case it will be invited and welcome. Nobody wants to integrate and partner with a weak Russia.

- **U.S. View:** Almost all of the United States’ partners are countries which benefit in tangible ways from the security that the United States provides in various parts of the world. Russia is not prepared for that kind of relationship. We can find important issues on which to partner, but it is probably premature to think of being partners across the board.

Great Power Views Prevail:

- **Russian View:** The world is unpredictable, and it is not possible to develop strategic approaches to alliances. Even U.S. policy is more reactive than a function of strategic planning. One priority is to economically consolidate the area around Russia. Russia also sees that the greatest privilege in international affairs is to not have one’s hands tied.

- **U.S. View:** Many Americans find it difficult to trust leaders of the kind of system in place in Russia, and Russian leaders feel this mistrust. But we have partnerships with many countries that have such leaderships. The main distinction is the American perception that they need us more than we need them. This doesn’t really exist in the case of Russia.

- **U.S. View:** Russia’s authoritarian consolidation leads to a situation whereby the United States’ “liberal agenda” is depicted as a threat, which negatively impacts relations. I don’t think we can move much closer than we have already.

Globalist Views Prevail:

- **Russian View:** Russia’s resurgence is accidental. The leadership did nothing to promote stable economic growth. It is hard to see how current policy will make Russia economically successful. Russia should somehow fit itself into the Western agenda and to become part of Western civilization if it wants to be successful in coming decades. Russia now is at the apex of its power and might, and so the time to negotiate the conditions of Russian-Western cooperation is also now, not later, because Russian influence will decrease relative to U.S. and European power. If we find ways for cooperation, we will all succeed. If we stay alone, we will fail.

- **Russian View:** The world will be more unpredictable than today, just as today’s world is so much more globalized and interactive than before. A society characterized by growing unpredictability is a society on the verge of great change. We should find out how to behave in this new world. Mr. Putin is not right to seek a stable system of international affairs as if this were the 19th century. It is also not right to blame one country for everyone’s woes, whether it be the United States or someone else. Many are responsible, and sometimes one’s negative policies can lead to positive gains for others.

- **U.S. View:** The U.S. doesn’t have a choice. Given the way we conceive of our national interests, we’re going to have to find ways to partner with Russia, whether we like it or not. The real question is whether the relationship can be transformed – it’s unlikely but not impossible. One major reason why the relationship with Russia is different than those with other problematic governments is the expectations created by the transition paradigm and the obligations Russia itself took on in the 1990s to join institutions like the Council of Europe and the G-7/8.

These different views could also line up being skewed away from one another. Globalists might prevail in the United States and nationalists in Russia. That might provoke the sharpest conflicts because Russia would feel more heavily America’s continued preeminence. The reverse is more unlikely. But if globalist views prevailed in Russia and nationalist ones in the United States, Russia might try to enter a global system that no longer has a leader or might align more with China and the BRICS to shape a more statist global economy. Divergences between great power views in one country and globalist or nationalist views in the other may be less significant. To some extent, that is happening today. Russia has become more nationalist while the United States remains a global but more realist or great power leader. The relationship is sustained but there is no activist great power or globalist agenda. Russia counts on a continued American decline while the United States cuts its losses and hopes that other countries step up as it relatively recedes from world leadership.
CONFERENCE AGENDA

9:00 AM - 9:30 AM  Registration and Continental Breakfast

9:30 AM - 9:45 AM  Welcome and Introductory Remarks
  Speaker: Henry R. Nau (GW)

9:45 AM - 10:45 AM  Session I: Russian Views on National Security and Defense
  Chair: Cory Welt (GW)
  • Vladislav Inozemtsev – Director, Centre for Post-Industrial Studies
  • Fyodor Lukyanov – Editor-in-Chief, Russia in Global Affairs and Chairman, Presidium of the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy
  • Andranik Migranyan – Director, Institute for Democracy and Cooperation

10:45 AM - 11:00 AM  Coffee/Tea Break

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM  Session II: Russian Views on Economics, International Institutions, and Transnational Issues
  Chair: Andrew Kuchins (CSIS)
  • Vladislav Inozemtsev – Director, Centre for Post-Industrial Studies
  • Fyodor Lukyanov – Editor-in-Chief, Russia in Global Affairs and Chairman, Presidium of the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy
  • Andranik Migranyan – Director, Institute for Democracy and Cooperation

12:15 PM - 1:00 PM  Luncheon

1:00 PM - 1:45 PM  Keynote Address
  Introduction: Henry Hale (GW)
  • Jack Matlock - U.S. Ambassador to the USSR (1987 - 1991)

2:00 PM - 3:15 PM  Session III: American Views on U.S.-Russia Relations
  Chair: Igor Zevelev (MacArthur Foundation, Moscow)
  • Leon Aron – Director of Russian Studies, American Enterprise Institute
  • Samuel Charap – Senior Fellow, International Institute for Strategic Studies
  • E. Wayne Merry – Senior Fellow, American Foreign Policy Council
  • Paul Saunders – Executive Director, Center for the National Interest

3:15 PM - 3:30 PM  Coffee/Tea Break

3:30 PM - 4:30 PM  Session IV: Russian Reactions to American Views on U.S.-Russia Relations
  Chair: Jim Hoagland (Washington Post)
  • Vladislav Inozemtsev – Director, Centre for Post-Industrial Studies
  • Fyodor Lukyanov – Editor-in-Chief, Russia in Global Affairs and Chairman, Presidium of the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy
  • Andranik Migranyan – Director, Institute for Democracy and Cooperation

4:30 PM - 4:45 PM  Closing Remarks
  Speaker: Deepa Ollapally (GW)
Since its founding in 1961, the Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies (IERES) has focused on its primary mission of serving as a field-defining leader in scholarship, education, and advice for policy-makers addressing relations between the United States, Europe, Russia, and Eurasia.

The Institute's hallmarks are combining academic rigor with policy engagement, promoting interdisciplinary perspectives, and recognizing that Europe, Russia, and Eurasia cannot be understood in isolation from each other or from global trends.

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PONARS Eurasia

The Program on New Approaches to Research and Security in Eurasia (PONARS Eurasia) is a network of over 80 academics, mainly from North America and post-Soviet Eurasia, who advance new policy approaches to research and security in Russia and Eurasia. Its core missions are to connect scholarship to policy on and in Russia and Eurasia and to foster a community, especially of mid-career and rising scholars, committed to developing policy-relevant and collaborative research.

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The program’s annual conference brings over 30 leading scholars together with nearly 200 members of the DC policy, NGO, and academic community at the Elliott School. The program’s signature overseas workshops and conferences produce innovative discussions and widely-distributed publications on contemporary political, economic, and social topics.

From 2007-2009, PONARS Eurasia was based at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. Between 2001-2007, the Program on New Approaches to Russian Security (PONARS, the precursor to PONARS Eurasia) was part of the Russia and Eurasia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). The program was housed at the Council on Foreign Relations from 2000-2001 after being launched and managed from Harvard University in the late 1990s by Celeste A. Wallander, who directed the program until 2009.

Today, PONARS Eurasia is located at the Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies (IERES) at GW’s Elliott School of International Affairs and is co-directed by Henry E. Hale and Cory Welt.

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The promise and the perils of nuclear energy come together most graphically in Asia. Led by China and India, others such as Thailand and Vietnam, are joining Japan, Pakistan, South Korea and Taiwan in driving the global demand for nuclear energy. Most are at a key transition point and are making important choices on nuclear energy and future defense strategies. Nuclear energy helps meet rising energy demands, but it compounds Asia’s nonproliferation concerns.

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