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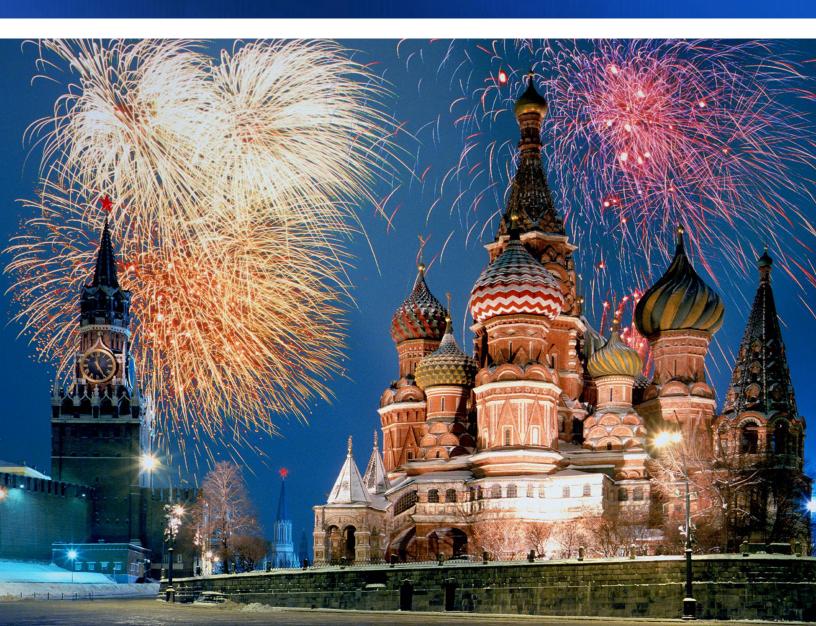
Institute for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies

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# How Russia Sees the World: Domestic Foreign Policy Debates

**May 2013** 

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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 cosponsored 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, Vladislav 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 selfimage. 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 Eurasia 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 Eurasia 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

taking place out of sight. We need to deal with the legacies of a Cold War mentality, including a serious Russophobic force in Washington. We need to promote greater commercial and business activity, as ballast for a relationship when other problems arise.

- Conservative Globalist: The reset is dead because the United States and Russia have gone as far as they can without compromising some key mainstays of their foreign policy. Their geostrategic agendas eventually came into conflict. A pause does not mean the absence of dialogue, but each side now has to think about how much the other country's goodwill and cooperation are worth.
- Realist: Russia is not one of the United States' top problems, but it can contribute to solutions of some of our top problems if we can find a way to work together. However, there is a great asymmetry now in the U.S.-Russian relationship. Russia spends way more time thinking about the United States than vice-versa, so a Cold War frame gets activated on every issue. It's also unwise to think about the U.S.-Russia relationship totally separately from the other rising powers (China, first and foremost).
- Liberal Globalist: Change in U.S. policy toward Russia paid dividends for both sides. But it didn't change the underlying disagreements and lack of trust in the bilateral relationship. Still, government-to-government engagement does not undermine our interest in Russia's democratic development and the protection of human rights. Reduced engagement gives us far less leverage and opportunity to influence things in a positive direction. There is, however, an asymmetry in the relationship: for the U.S., relations with Russia are about dealing with global problems that the U.S. faces. That's not as true for Russia, where relations with the United States are a considerable factor in domestic politics.

#### The China Factor in U.S.-Russia Relations

- Conservative Globalist: China likely plays a role in Russia's reluctance to enter into negotiations on tactical (nonstrategic) nuclear weapons.
- Nationalist: Russia and the United States don't talk about China. For China, the relationship with Russia is problem-free and productive but a second-tier relationship. Russia should avoid trying to "play the China card."
- Realist: The best thing for the United States is for China and Russia not to find too much common cause on the basis of their concern about an American-led international system. We should look for ways to shape our policy accordingly.
- Liberal Globalist: The China issue does not rule out work on nonstrategic nuclear weapons with the United States, because the weapons that are of concern to the United States are the ones located in Europe.

#### **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.
- Its 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 Zeveley (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)

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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.

PONARS Eurasia offers analysis and influences policy debates through its Policy Memo and Policy Perspectives series, blogs, and working papers. Policy Memos are widely used in university classrooms.

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.

PONARS Eurasia is generously supported by Carnegie Corporation of New York, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and The George Washington University and IERES.

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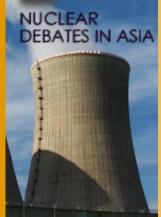
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#### NUCLEAR DEBATES IN ASIA: BALANCING RISKS AND REWARDS

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The Nuclear Debates in Asia project tracks domestic debates on nuclear power, national security, and nonproliferation – topics closely linked at the domestic political and societal level – in eight countries in Asia at varying stages of nuclear power planning and acquisition: China, India, Japan, Pakistan, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam.

This research effort will produce regular Policy Alerts and an edited book volume on the domestic nuclear debates in Asia, along with posts on the RPI blog and policy briefings. The project is sponsored by the MacArthur Foundation.

#### **PROJECT CO-DIRECTORS**

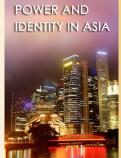
Mike Mochizuki & Deepa Ollapally

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The Rising Powers Initiative, established in 2009, is a research effort that studies the role of domestic identities and foreign policy debates of aspiring powers. RPI is housed at the Sigur Center for Asian Studies, an international research center of the Elliott School of International Affairs at The George Washington University, whose mission is to increase the quality and broaden the scope of scholarly research and publication on Asian affairs, promote U.S.-Asia scholarly interaction, and serve as the nexus for education a new generation of students, scholars, analysts, and policymakers.

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