

Sharing the Near Abroad: Conceptualizing the Sino-Russian Security Dynamic

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Abstract:

Since the end of the Cold War, the bilateral relations of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China (PRC) have seen improvement on the military, economic, and diplomatic fronts. Western analysts have generally interpreted these developments through the two dominant perspectives of international relations theory – realism and liberalism – and consequently have provided two divergent explanations of the Sino-Russian rapprochement. Liberal scholars have focused on the purported liberalization of the Russian, and to some extent the Chinese, policy communities, pointing to a growing emphasis on economic and financial matters. By contrast, realists attribute improved relations to shifts in the strategic situations of both actors – comparable to those that occurred during the Cold War – particularly vis-à-vis the United States, NATO, and Japan, and view increased cooperation as evidence of a nascent Sino-Russian alliance.

The paper examines the history of Sino-Soviet relations from the Chinese civil wars and the establishment of the PRC, to the Sino-Soviet split of the 1960s and 1970s, and the gradual reconciliation of the 1980s, with an emphasis on the strategic dimension of the relationship. It then reviews post-Soviet developments, and outlines the two distinct spectra of interpretation surrounding these developments. Based on the previous sections, the paper argues that the Sino-Russian relationship is characterized by an attempt to cooperatively manage a new security environment, and identifies a number of possible obstacles to future collaboration.

Introduction

Efforts by Western scholars to evaluate the pattern of Sino-Russian relations since the end of the Cold War have predominantly been arrayed around two distinct approaches.¹ The first of these, derived from an essentially liberal understanding of international politics, portrays the relationship between the Russian Federation (RF) and the People's Republic of China (PRC) as increasingly positive and cooperative – which is to say increasingly “liberal” – citing as evidence the near-complete settlement in 1994 of their long-standing border dispute, the positive statements and agreements emerging from both the 1997 Yeltsin-Jiang summits and the 2000-1 Putin-Jiang summits, the mutual shift to less aggressive military deployments in the border region, and the growth of bilateral trade. The second approach is recognizably realist, and emphasizes the continuity of the present Sino-Russian relationship with the former Sino-Soviet relationship. By this view, the two parties continue to view their bilateral relations in terms of realpolitik or strategic balance, with a confluence of concern between both China and Russia to maintain (or expand) their respective “spheres of influence,” and to effect favourable shifts in the familiar Sino-Russian-American “strategic triangle.” Proponents of this position point to improved diplomatic and economic relations, Russian arms transfers to China, and the preoccupation with multipolarity common to both the Chinese and Russian foreign policy and international relations discourses, claiming that these factors constitute the firm foundation for a potential revival of the Sino-Russian strategic partnership, prompted by shared security concerns with respect to the United States, an expanding NATO, and Japanese regional dominance.

These analyses provide different interpretations of the same developments. Whereas the liberal assessment associates improved relations with a more fundamental perceptual shift, the realist appraisal assumes that improved relations are a function of a constant or persistent worldview. What we are in fact examining are two distinct axes of change: on the one hand the movement from antagonism to cooperation (the amelioration of relations), and on the other the opposition of realpolitik to liberal or cooperative paradigms of international politics (the re-conceptualization of relations). This paper will attempt to distinguish between the two axes and to examine the movements that have occurred along each of them in the Sino-Russian case. It is argued that both of the approaches outlined above extrapolate the improvement of Sino-Russian relations into the future, based on a body of evidence that is in fact ambiguous. Moreover, it is suggested that while there have been some indications of a “paradigm shift” within the Russian foreign policy discourse, and to a lesser extent within its Chinese counterpart, such as shift is by no means as unqualified or as permanent as the liberal school of thought would indicate. Although there is both ample scope and incentive for Sino-Russian cooperation, the impetus for collaboration has, to this point, been linked to each party's perceptions of their security interests, as opposed to strictly strategic interests. Should these interests change, should the perceived value of cooperation diminish, or should one party begin to perceive the other as posing a tangible threat, then the cooperation that has been the basis for both the liberal and realist perspectives on the Sino-Russian relationship may well disappear, and older patterns may reassert themselves in ways that neither school of thought predicts.

Sino-Soviet Relations and the Strategic Legacy (1927-79)

The lessons that can be drawn from the Sino-Soviet relationship and the degree of their relevance and applicability to the study of the present Sino-Russian relationship have been

widely disputed, and it is this dispute that lurks under the broader debate outlined above. The next two sections are an attempt to delineate, in profile, the evolution of the relationship between the Soviet Union and China. This provides the essential historical context for the third section, which maps Sino-Russian relations from the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

First, it should be noted that the initial alignment of the PRC with the USSR was never as unproblematic as American fears made it out to be. Soviet involvement in the first and second Chinese civil wars (1927-37 and 1946-9 respectively) had not been unambiguously pro-Communist.² The Soviets offered no support to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in the initial decade of their struggle with the Kuomintang (Nationalist Party).³ Following the Japanese invasion of China in 1937, the Soviets encouraged the rival Chinese factions to cooperate with one another, advice which was taken, albeit uneasily; the result was not full-fledged military cooperation, but a temporary truce where both parties focused on their common enemy.⁴ However, Soviet diplomatic and military support went disproportionately to the Kuomintang, while the CCP were sent leaflets instead of weapons.⁵ Indeed, the Soviets attempted to dissuade the CCP from pursuing complete victory against the Nationalists. Anastas Mikoyan advised Mao to halt his advance at the Yangtze River in 1948, which is roughly concurrent with Stalin's well-documented "admission of error on China to the Yugoslavs."⁶ Instead, the Soviet Union advocated a "two China" model, similar to the post-World War II settlement in Korea.⁷ While the Soviets did provide assistance in the form of Japanese weapons captured during the occupation of Manchuria, they did so after having carted most of that region's industrial base into Siberia for their own purposes.⁸

Whether Stalin was actively discouraging the CCP due to his fear of American intervention, or simply endeavouring to "cover his tracks," as Douglas Macdonald suggests, is immaterial here.⁹ The point is that ideological solidarity was a necessary but insufficient condition for partnership. The formation of the Sino-Soviet alliance, whereby "Mao completely accepted Soviet bloc leadership of the Cold War" and Moscow's preeminence in the Communist world, followed instead from a shared strategic concern vis-à-vis the United States, the Chinese desire to rebuild and develop China's industrial economy, and Mao's need to control pro-Soviet factions within the CCP.¹⁰

China's ruling elite was willing to forgive the Soviet Union's less than unequivocal record of support in return for aid in the form of credit, arms, technical assistance in industrial development, and a security guarantee against Japan and her allies.¹¹ They did not, however, forget, and the Chinese leadership – Mao in particular – found their lingering reservations about the intentions of their Northern ally confirmed by the poor quality of Soviet industrial aid and Stalin's failure to meet his commitments to China during the Korean conflict.¹² The death of Stalin and ascent to power of Nikita Khrushchev could not prevent the further deterioration of the Sino-Soviet relationship. This was ostensibly because of Khrushchev's "ideological revisionism," but was most likely due to the cessation of Soviet assistance to Chinese efforts to develop nuclear weapons and delivery systems in 1959.¹³ Into the early 1960s, Moscow and Beijing fought a "war" of ideological rhetoric, and by mid-decade, China was estranged from both the USSR and the United States, a situation that did not improve with the 1964 Chinese nuclear test.¹⁴ Indeed, there were ruminations in Washington, and later in Moscow, about the possibility of coordinated Soviet-American strikes on the Chinese nuclear facilities at Lop Nor in the Gobi desert.¹⁵ Although nothing came of these schemes, they are indicative of the degree to which the increasingly radical rhetoric and policies of the PRC disturbed the leaders of both superpowers.

The rift between China and Russia deepened through the 1960s, culminating in the Sino-Soviet border conflict of 1969. Although this confrontation was ultimately settled diplomatically, it marked the beginning of a fifteen-year “Cold War” between the former allies, with both sides conducting extensive military buildups along their shared border and supporting different factions in various Third World conflicts.¹⁶ The United States – particularly under the Nixon administration – seeking to balance increasing Soviet military strength, reinforce the process of détente, and exploit the perceived advantages of a more multipolar international system, began to provide the CCP leadership with public reassurance and private enticements.¹⁷ The Chinese were receptive, convinced that the Soviets were now “China’s primary enemy and the most aggressive of the two superpowers,” and that perhaps, in Mao’s words to Henry Kissinger, China and America could “work together to deal commonly with a bastard.”¹⁸

Although the vagaries of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution effectively postponed the normalization of relations with the United States until after the death of Mao and the accession of Deng Xiaoping to a position of effective leadership within the PRC, Sino-American relations showed a definite pattern of improvement through the 1970s and 1980s, in spite of the often complicated nature of the US-PRC relationship. For their part, the Soviets viewed China’s new course as an exceptionally dangerous challenge, both to Soviet leadership in the Communist world, and to the Soviet Union directly through rapprochement with the United States (dubbed the “alliance between the Chinese leadership and world imperialism” in the Soviet press).¹⁹ Consequently, as Wishnick writes, the Soviet Union “overreacted to Chinese policies and relied on a political and military containment strategy to bolster Soviet positions.”²⁰ In short, relations within the US-USSR-PRC “strategic triangle” were beholden to the primacy of strategic considerations into the 1980s.

The Strategic Thaw (1979-89)

Sino-Soviet relations were not impervious to the change of leadership in Beijing. Deng was less inclined toward ideological fervor than his predecessors, and there was some moderation of the hostile timbre that had characterized the rhetorical front of the Sino-Soviet conflict. From 1979 onward it was official Chinese policy to acknowledge the Soviet Union as a truly socialist country; although the USSR was still deemed “hegemonic,” at least it was no longer considered “revisionist.”²¹ However, the military strength and strategic reach that made the Soviet Union so impressive internationally – impressive enough to push the second largest Communist country in the world into the welcoming arms of the American imperialists – persisted, as did the policies that had been associated with it. Too many reputations within the change-averse coalition that supported Leonid Brezhnev’s regime – which became more powerful as the leader’s health failed – had been staked upon the fear of China and the policy of containment.²² The PRC was still viewed an implacable threat to the Soviet Union, particularly given the heretical nature of the new developments in Chinese “socialism” initiated by Deng Xiaoping; Brezhnev and his successors even went so far as to “[blame] the Soviet Union’s mounting domestic and international problems on a U.S.-Chinese cabal.”²³ In spite of increasingly insistent demands for rapprochement from Soviet officials in the Chinese border regions, in the eyes of the aging leadership in the Kremlin, China had not changed and so the China policy would not change either.²⁴ The refusal of senior CPSU cadres to consider evidence to the contrary was strikingly similar to the willful ignorance of the Sino-Soviet split evident in the United States during the 1960s.²⁵

Arresting the inertia of the China policy would have to wait until after Brezhnev's death and the uncertain interregnum under Yuri Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko. The new General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev's was determined to reassess the Sino-Soviet relationship as part of his broader reconsideration of the Soviet Union's place in the world. For Gorbachev, the burden of the superpower status quo and the immense domestic economic and political expenses it carried with it were unsustainable, and the logical response to the mounting crisis of the Soviet system – the amelioration of international tensions in order to allow the expenditure of greater resources and attention on domestic issues – was unavoidable. Leszek Buszynski writes:

The process of withdrawal from peripheral areas began with Gorbachev who attempted to revise Soviet policy towards the Asia-Pacific region by distinguishing between vital and minor interests. As a consequence of Gorbachev's reassessment of strategic interests, relations with major Asian actors such as China and Japan, the economic need to develop the Soviet Far East, and multilateral security were given first place on the Soviet Asia-Pacific agenda.²⁶

While strategic considerations were still preeminent, there could be no international strategy without domestic survival. The new leadership bowed to the reality of Soviet strategic overstretch, and realized that maximalist conceptions of strategic imperatives were no longer viable or practicable.

The effort to normalize Sino-Soviet relations formally began in 1987 with the resumption of border talks, suspended since 1978, and with Soviet pressure on their Vietnamese allies to withdraw from Cambodia, one of the major sticking points for China.²⁷ Simultaneously, the precipitous increase in the volume of bilateral economic transactions – particularly the thriving border trade, but also “nontraditional” arrangements such as the substantial Soviet loan for the construction of the Urumqi–Alma Ata rail line and Soviet use of some 20,000 migrant workers paid in Soviet manufactured goods – encouraged closer relations in other areas.²⁸ Gorbachev's visit to Beijing in 1989 marked the end of the conflict between the USSR and the PRC. However, his Chinese hosts were quick to point out that normalization of Sino-Soviet relations would not adversely affect Sino-American relations.²⁹ Bernstein and Munro describe this reiteration of the PRC's commitment to the maintenance of an independent foreign policy vis-à-vis both superpowers as a manifestation of Deng's “strategy of equidistance,” whereby China could take advantage of its place at the “pivot” of the strategic triangle.³⁰

Les événements de quatre-vingt-neuf, which included international condemnation of the Tiananmen massacre, the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, and the dissolution of the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe, could well have inhibited further progress in Sino-Soviet relations. As Rosemary Foot describes, these events “[generated] a siege mentality in Beijing, and a sense outside of the country that China should not be regarded as reformist at all.”³¹ This was paralleled by what Elizabeth Wishnick has described as an “increasingly raucous debate about reform in Moscow.”³² However, neither Gorbachev's arrival in Beijing in the midst of the student protests of 1989, which he refused to explicitly support, nor the Tiananmen massacre one month later, which he refused to explicitly condemn, derailed the normalization process.³³

This was perhaps unsurprising, as the USSR and the PRC were once again fellow travelers; both were preoccupied with domestic reform and progress, and both needed an international strategic environment conducive to this pursuit. Gaye Christoffersen notes that the “Sino-Soviet rapprochement during the 1980s ... coincided with China's need to confront the

gap between status and capability in the Asia-Pacific.”³⁴ China viewed the Soviet Union as a potential collaborator in the “Northeast Asian subregional regime ... to counter American and Japanese grand strategies,” and ultimately to aid China’s integration into the Asia-Pacific region not as a developing country but in a leadership role.³⁵ Similarly, as Buszynski observes, “Gorbachev’s efforts were directed towards the preservation of the Soviet Union as a superpower and towards recognition of its alliance relationships and spheres of influence.”³⁶ If strategy was no longer being conceived of strictly in military or confrontational terms, it was still the dominant paradigm of international relations for both Chinese and Russian decision makers, and it persisted as the foundation upon which a Sino-Soviet relationship was prosecuted.

Post-Cold War Developments (1989-present)

The collapse of the Communist system in the Soviet Union presented several problems for the further development of this relationship. Naturally, the period of transition between the “Declaration of RSFSR State Sovereignty” by the first Congress of the People’s Deputies of the RSFSR on 12 June 1990 and the dissolution of the USSR on 8 December 1991 focused attention inward, particularly during 1991 coup. The process of establishing Russia as an independent state – both domestically and internationally – commenced in this period as the fledgling Russian Federation attempted to both author a foreign policy and construct an apparatus for carrying it out, a daunting task when one considers that in October 1991 the Russian Ministry of Foreign affairs consisted of just over 100 diplomatic staff, few of whom were professionals with any relevant experience.³⁷ The triumph of Yeltsin and the liberal reformers shifted Russia into the Western camp, both ideologically and strategically. The newly minted Russian liberals, eager both to establish their credentials as democrats and Westernizers and to obtain Western investment and foreign aid, were not eager to be seen rubbing elbows with the Chinese leadership that had set the People’s Liberation Army on pro-democracy protesters.³⁸ Conversely, the Chinese leadership viewed the Russian example of rapid political and economic liberalization as precisely the state of affairs they wished to avoid, viewing it as representative of the state of luan (chaos) they had sought to forestall in Tiananmen Square.³⁹

Above all, where the previous rapprochement had been part of the redefinition of strategic interests by both China and Soviet Union, this strategic imperative had disappeared, in many ways, with the Soviet collapse. The new Russian leadership consisted of what Buszynski describes as “integrationists,” whose primary concern was with economic development, and whose international vision, particularly with respect to the Asia-Pacific region, consisted in “projections of domestic needs in a way which places economic aid and assistance in first place on the foreign policy agenda.”⁴⁰ In short, the paradigm of Russian foreign policy had changed from the strategic model that was dominant during the Cold War to what we may call, for lack of a better term, a “liberal” or economic model. Of course, the problems of strategic overextension and domestic stagnation that felled first the Soviet Empire and then the Soviet Union endured as the preeminent problems facing the leaders of the new Russian Federation, and the intertwined goals of demilitarization and domestic reform still needed to be reconciled with the maintenance of national security. In this respect, while the alleviation of international tensions and rivalries remained a central goal of the “new” Russian foreign policy, it was pursued within a different purposive framework.

Although the Western bias evinced by the champions of reform liberalism became dominant in the immediate aftermath of the dissolution of the USSR, by the end of 1992 there

was a political backlash within the Yeltsin camp and demands were made for a more balanced foreign policy. The resultant effort “to formulate a “Eurasian” alternative to Kozyrev’s “Atlanticist” foreign policy” precipitated a renewal of attention the Sino-Russian relationship.⁴¹ China, increasingly isolated internationally and cognizant of “the importance of maintaining good-neighborly relations with their Russian counterparts,” especially in light of the potential for turbulence in Central and Eastern Asia, was amenable.⁴² In 1992, the two nations ratified the border settlement that had been negotiated in the Gorbachev period. As well, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan sent a common delegation to Beijing, where they concluded agreements on confidence-building measures surrounding military deployments in the border zone, Russian assistance to the Chinese nuclear energy program, upgrades for Soviet-built arms industries in China, Chinese commitments to provide food to Russia, and most importantly, an agreement that Russia and China would “regard each other as friends,” abstaining from alliances against one another and from the pursuit of hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region.⁴³

High-level visits and agreements continued throughout the 1990s, notably supplementary agreements in 1994 on the border settlement and military confidence-building measures, and the Yeltsin-Jiang summits of 1997, which produced joint communiqués highlighting the “strategic cooperative partnership” between China and Russia in the context of the increasing “multipolarization of the world,” as well as further commitments to resolve border issues and cooperate in the energy, financial, scientific, transportation, communication, and military technology fields.⁴⁴ Similarly, the Putin-Jiang summits of 2000 and 2001 produced the aptly named “Treaty of Good-Neighborliness, Friendship and Cooperation,” which was substantively a reiteration of the 1997 agreements, though it still eschewed the language of alliance.⁴⁵

The Discursive Disjunction

In the development of the Sino-Russian relationship outlined above, there is after 1991 a perceptible shift away from the tension that characterized the Soviet-Russian transition period and toward a more relaxed state of affairs. Improved cooperation has been evident in several areas, as has a commitment to denser and more sustained economic and political ties. At the same time, cooperative agreements have frequently been framed in the grammar of strategic relations; as China and Russia have moved to reassure one another, they have also articulated their mutual concern to “[prevent] superpowers from manipulating and guiding international security,” even as they protest, in a thinly veiled reference to American security policies, that “expansionist” or “hegemonist” attitudes and behaviour were examples of retrogressive “Cold War thinking.”⁴⁶ How should the Sino-Russian relationship be interpreted? Two answers to this question have become predominant in the Western international relations discourse, centring on the importance of economic and strategic concerns respectively.

One interpretation, which is rooted in the liberal school of international relations theory, is premised on the view that Russia, and to a lesser extent China, have both become part of global security and economic structures. By normalizing relations and moving to settle outstanding grievances, both countries have cleared the way for improved bilateral, regional, and global economic interactions. For the Russians, China can serve as a valuable market for raw materials, otherwise unsaleable manufactured goods, and arms exports, and also as a source for much needed food and other cheap consumer goods.⁴⁷ For the Chinese, the demilitarization of the border region both decreases military expenses and creates economic opportunities. Moreover, improved relations with Russia provide access to “relatively cheap advanced

weapons, nuclear reactor technology, and other industrial products that might otherwise be much more costly for Beijing or unavailable for political reasons.”⁴⁸ In short, improved Sino-Russian relations have been pursued and fostered because they are desirable goals in and of themselves.

This interpretation has some broader explanatory value with respect to the new framework of Russian foreign policy, as it is consistent with efforts during Yeltsin’s presidency to use the prospect of a territorial settlement concerning the Kuril islands as leverage to improve Russo-Japanese relations, because “Japan ... was seen as an important regional power and a potential source of aid and investment.”⁴⁹ Although opposition from the local population and a variety of political leaders (some opportunists, others realists) at the local, regional, and national levels forced Yeltsin to scrap the plan, the formulation and promulgation of such a scheme indicates a previously unknown willingness by at least some part of the Russian leadership to sacrifice strategic values (the islands shield Russian SSBN operations in the Sea of Okhotsk) for economic ones.⁵⁰

The second account of the Sino-Russian relationship conceives of present developments not as a break with the past, but as a renewal or continuation of the strategic dynamic that predominated during the Cold War. Proponents of this view argue that closer ties between China and Russia after 1993 were related to the perceived failure of the earlier, Western-oriented Russian foreign policy to attract investment or support.⁵¹ Additionally, as academic commentary at the time suggested, “the fact that Yeltsin took the initiative in starting to restore relations with China to the level before the August coup indicates that the move was motivated by profound geopolitical, nonideological reasons” – namely, “the collapse of Russia’s geopolitical position in the West” – while the Chinese were motivated by their fear “that the exit of the Soviet Union as a superpower had left the United States as the lone hegemon without rival, a situation detrimental to China’s interests.”⁵²

Less ambitious variants of this theory suggest that Russia and China are manipulating the prospect of a strategic alliance in order to gain leverage vis-à-vis Japan and the United States. Ashok Kapur writes:

Russia wants China’s support against USA and China is telling USA that a new Sino-Russian bloc is an option. In other words, the two giants in the Eurasian landmass are using each other to pressurize America. The Great Game continues to be played on the Eurasian continental scale.⁵³

By this view, the warnings of Russian officials that “NATO enlargement could drive Russia into much closer cooperation, even a strategic alliance, with China,” are really efforts to protect what Russia views as its rightful sphere of influence from Western encroachment by raising the spectre of a Sino-Russian alliance.⁵⁴ With respect to China, Gaye Christoffersen argues, “Russia’s presence in the Asia-Pacific is useful for China in developing the Northeast Asian subregional regime and for balancing the U.S. and Japan in two of the regional triangular structures.”⁵⁵ In short, the Chinese are using Russia to balance the US in the Asia-Pacific region, while the Russians are using China to balance NATO in the Southern Tier and along the Western border.

Two substantive examples of Sino-Russian relations – bilateral trade and arms transfers – might be illustrative of just how difficult it is to separate these two approaches in practice. First, whatever the official policy, the actual levels of Sino-Russian economic interaction have displayed a considerable degree of unpredictability. After what can only be described as

spectacular growth from 300 million USD in 1985 to 5.86 billion USD in 1992, bilateral trade peaked at 7.68 billion USD in 1993; however, in 1994 this trade declined by approximately one third, and has fluctuated between 5.00 billion USD and 6.84 billion USD since.⁵⁶ It is worth noting that about one third of the total volume of trade consisted of local, cross-border transactions, conducted largely through barter; in fact, David Kerr observes that the collapse of the “barter boom” – which saw the “mutual dumping of sub-standard goods, effectively surplus production which could not be exported to more sophisticated markets” – of 1992-93, accounts for much of the downturn in trade after 1993.⁵⁷ Subsequent fluctuations are likely indicative of the problems associated with reestablishing trade and cross-border relations after a lengthy hiatus. However, it is possible to view continued efforts to promote bilateral trade and economic interaction as largely pro forma exercises in futility, the results of which are ultimately tangential to the all-important strategic relationship. Similarly, efforts by both Russia and China to develop regional economic links, such as Chinese support for Russia’s membership in the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), could either be a function of their desire to improve bilateral relations, or an example of Sino-Russian attempts at balancing U.S.-Japanese leadership in the Asia-Pacific region.⁵⁸ As a passage from the East Asian Strategic Review 2002 indicates, “Russia and China consider their relationship with the United States more important than their mutual relations,” and this affects their views of the significance of that mutual relationship.”⁵⁹

At the same time, a significant portion of Sino-Russian trade is in arms sales; in 1994, this figure was 2 billion USD, equivalent to fully 39.4 percent of total bilateral trade.⁶⁰ Whether this is a strategic or an economic phenomenon is a contentious question; perhaps the short answer is that it is both. Celeste Wallander writes:

Russian relations with China, India, and Iran are not merely about trading in arms for influence, but about sustaining and modernizing Russia’s defense industry as a component of building the post-Soviet economy.⁶¹

For the Russians, a dearth of hard currency and the painful conversion of state-dependent defence industries to the market economy have made foreign sales of arms a very attractive proposition. By the end of the 1990s, 37 percent of military defence industry output was for export, contrasted with 17 percent for the domestic market, with the remaining 46 percent consisting of civilian products.⁶² From a strategic perspective, these arms exports are not only about gaining influence, but also about ensuring that Russia will be able to sustain a defence industrial sector, and in that way, a degree of strategic autonomy.

For the Chinese, purchases of new arms and weapons technologies from Russia are an affordable alternative, and in some cases the only alternative, to domestic production or other international sources, as was noted above. However, it is difficult to argue that these acquisitions are not strategic, given that they are part of a longstanding program of military modernization. The equipment that the Chinese have purchased to date, including air defense systems, air superiority fighters and cruise missile technology, are alleged to “bespeak its ambition to field an integrated land / sea / air defense system using Russian air and missile systems.”⁶³ Moreover, it is difficult for the Russians to plead ignorance of Chinese intentions in purchasing Russian arms, particularly as “the Russian military knows and publicly discusses Chinese developments in doctrine and force planning.”⁶⁴ Once again, economic and strategic interests are too thoroughly intertwined to separate.

Regardless, there is one essential commonality to both the liberal and realist interpretations of the Sino-Russian relationship. Whether they are pursuing economic or strategic goals, China and Russia have every reason to pursue continued improvement of bilateral relations in the future: if Sino-Russian trade can only grow and both sides have a continuing interest in having it do so, or if each side needs the other to provide a strategic balance in their respective spheres of influence and added leverage in their individual relations with the United States, then in neither case is there a conceivable reason to deviate from the path of continued cooperation.

The Managerial Relationship

It is argued here that these two prevalent interpretations, identified as “liberal” and “realist,” are each partially correct in their analyses of why Sino-Russian relations have improved, but also simultaneously incorrect because of their parallel confusion of changes along two axes – concerning the quality of relations and the conceptualization of security, respectively – and their mutual misinterpretation of change and continuity on the second axis. With respect to the Russian conceptualization of the Sino-Russian relationship and of their foreign relations more generally, it is not altogether clear what has happened. While references to “strategic partnerships” and multipolarization may sound familiar to those versed in Cold War history, the overall impression one receives from the discourse surrounding Russia’s relationship with China is of neither a coherent strategic vision nor a rosy liberal belief in the virtues of economic cooperation, but rather of a confused and diffuse effort by the Russians (and also the Chinese) to ensure a mutually conducive “security environment.”

The transition from a strategic to a “security management” paradigm of international relations is a product of a twofold fragmentation, of the Russian political discourse, and of the threat structure facing Russian leaders. The first of these, the development of contending schools of thought surrounding foreign policy, has already been discussed in the section on the post-Cold War period. During the USSR-Russian Federation transition period, the Western-oriented liberal reformists, championed by Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, were dominant; however there was an “Eurasianist” backlash that led to redoubled efforts at cementing the Sino-Russian relationship.⁶⁵ At the same time, there has been some (admittedly ambiguous) evidence of a return to more familiar modes of geo-strategic thought on the part of Russian elites, such as the original conception the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which “aimed at preserving the former Soviet Union’s geopolitical space as a “special interest zone” for Russia.”⁶⁶

This debate between liberalism and geopolitika continues within the Russian foreign policy discourse, and the Sino-Russian relationship is one of its enduring focal points. As Wishnick observes:

Despite the rapid improvement of Sino-Russian political ties in the 1990s, the relationship has not been without its share of controversy. The debates in Moscow on Russia’s China policy reflect the emerging differentiation of the Russian political spectrum. At issue is not just the future of Sino-Russian relations but of Russia as a great power.⁶⁷

What is new is “the existence of a large number of centrists who advocate cooperation with both China and the West.”⁶⁸ This nascent consensus, which has included both communists and

democrats on an issue-by-issue basis, is what has anchored the debate and made a cogent China policy possible, as part of a “balanced foreign policy...[of] good relations with both the West and the East.”⁶⁹

The second fragmentary process is the disintegration and transformation of the threat structure to which Russian leaders must respond. During the Cold War, bilateral relations between China and Russia were animated by a dynamic of strategic threats, whether from one another or from the United States. By contrast, they are now characterized by “the absence of the idea of a common enemy in the concept of the Sino-Russian partnership.”⁷⁰ The demise of the central threat meant the demise of the central organizing principle for Russian foreign relations. Of course, the absence of an overarching threat is not a guarantee of safety, and post-Cold War Russia has been confronted by numerous localized and non-strategic threats, both internal and external. As Wishnick writes, “centrists tend to view the main challenge to Russia as internal,” and domestically the ongoing struggle with regional and ethnic separatist groups, the inefficacy of the central government, the rise of organized crime, and the risk of social upheaval due to economic dislocation all constitute direct threats to the existence of the Russian Federation.⁷¹ Externally, the 1990s witnessed several adverse developments in Russia’s near abroad, particularly following the retreat of the Soviet/Russian military presence. These include the risk of “local wars,” such as those that broke out among the Central Asian republics in the early 1990s or the NATO campaign in Kosovo, increasing terrorism and Islamic extremism, particularly in Central Asia, and the need to engage in “peacekeeping” in many parts of the former Soviet Union. It should be noted that a number of these concerns are transnational and that many of them require approaches more akin to cooperative law enforcement than to conventional military operations.

Together, the fragmentation of the Russian policy community to include more “liberalistic” points of view and the mounting diversity of threats facing Russia have forced upon Russia’s leaders a new conception of security and a new model for the pursuit of security. Buszynski summarizes this perceptual change:

In the broadest sense security embraces economics, and the Moscow leadership regards economic growth as the best way of ensuring Russia’s security in an environment where no major or direct external threats have been identified. In this scale of values, specific or narrow security concerns relating to Russia’s far eastern borders or contiguous zones have been subsumed beneath the more urgent economic priority.⁷²

In this view, foreign policy becomes the means to obtain an international environment that is favorable to domestic stability, economic growth, and foreign investment and aid. At the same time, the pursuit of national security becomes less susceptible to traditional strategy and more amenable to the cooperative management of transnational issues. This would seem to suggest that Russian efforts to improve Sino-Russian relations have less to do with strategic stability, although that is where the impetus for normalization began, and more to do with managing common concerns and transnational problems that would otherwise threaten the ongoing processes of domestic development. To state this somewhat differently, the approach adopted by China and Russia in forging bilateral ties makes sense not as an expression of the internal logic of improved Sino-Russian relations or of the external logic of geostrategic thinking, but as part of a more fundamental shift in Russian conceptualizations of international affairs and the contemporary security environment.

A similar development seems to have taken place in China as well. Alastair Iain Johnston points to the existence of a rich and increasingly variegated international relations discourse in China, and argues that, “the notion that multipolarity best describes the changing structure of world politics appears most recently to be on the wane relative to new concepts such as globalization.”⁷³ There has been a horizontal extension of the discourse as a whole to encompass more viewpoints, as well as a tendency for individual analyses to build bridges between these two viewpoints. For instance, several articles in the journal International Strategic Studies, published in Beijing, discuss strategic interests in the context of economic interaction, diplomatic cooperation, and regional security through bilateral and multilateral cooperation; strategy is still present, but it is not discussed as a purely military consideration.⁷⁴ This is not a universal development; for instance, Liu Xinghua’s article, “Military Adjustment in Central Asian Countries after 9.11,” considers the US presence in Central Asia, and the Russian response thereto, in terms of pure realpolitik.⁷⁵ As well, there is little in the material reviewed here to suggest “academic distance;” apart from some contributions that are little more than anti-American polemics,⁷⁶ all of the articles endeavour to provide concrete policy suggestions. However, this is not incompatible with the image of an expanding discourse, as opposed to that of a shifting consensus within that discourse.

Within the government itself, the post-Deng transition to a collective leadership model (as opposed to the personalized leadership of the past), with its inherent requirement for consensus building and consultation, militates against the undue influence of radical perspectives upon policy.⁷⁷ This new trend in leadership coupled with the ongoing Chinese preoccupation with domestic economic reform and development both downgrade the importance of strategic considerations and undergird the “efforts by the Chinese authorities to pursue [international relations] policies intended to minimize disruptions and to assist their domestic reform endeavors.”⁷⁸

For both Russia and China then, it appears as though the strategic paradigm of international relations has been supplanted, in various degrees, not by market liberalism but by a new conception of security and stability that will provide an advantageous international setting for more pressing domestic developments. In practice, this has resulted in the composition of a policy with four key elements: the settlement of border disputes, which is linked to a Russian preoccupation with managing Chinese immigration and a Chinese preoccupation with territorial unification; the maintenance of strategic stability in Central Asia and on the Korean peninsula; the development of economic relations in several vital sectors (notably arms and energy), often under government auspices; and joint opposition to any expanded American military presence in Central and Eastern Asia that would diminish either party’s perceived leadership role in their respective spheres of influences, including mutual support on Taiwan and NATO expansion in international fora.

Future Prospects Reconsidered

If the account given here is correct – if Sino-Russian collaboration is motivated not purely by international trade or geostrategy but by a mutual determination to effect the cooperative management of a set of common security interests – then we must reconsider the optimism toward future Sino-Russian cooperation that the liberal and realist interpretations both engender, for three reasons. First, while it may seem that the Russians have subordinated strategic or realpolitik considerations in favour of economic relations, this has only been the case

because improved economic ties between Russia and China produced both positive economic and positive security outcomes. Should these two goals cease to be complementary, that is, should bilateral economic ties begin to appear as a liability to either party, it is reasonable to expect that security concerns would trump economic ones.

Second, as the discussion above indicates, it would be a mistake to overemphasize the depth or durability of this new “non-strategic” take on foreign policy. As Andrei Tsygankov has written, “Russia’s identity crisis has made it difficult to formulate and pursue a clear and consistent policy toward the outside world,” and the present Russian position on China has depended in significant ways upon the ability of policymakers to attain a consensus among members of competing schools of thought.⁷⁹ Moreover, Ashok Kapur argues that there has been a change in the conceptual basis of Russian foreign policy in recent years:

With Russia, Western economic and political engagement got mired in corruption and the growth of xenophobic nationalism. Then came the ascendancy of Vladimir Putin as the new Russian President. This signaled the revival of Russian nationalism and a geopolitical approach to international affairs.⁸⁰

Although Kapur overstates his case, the developments he identifies seem to represent a readjustment in the ‘centre of gravity,’ so to speak, of the Russian foreign policy consensus. Similarly, Johnston qualifies his assessment of China as a status-quo power, cautioning that there is no assurance that “with the decline in the level and scope of revisionist interests in China’s overall diplomacy this trend will not reverse in the future,” particularly in the event of “domestic social and political upheavals, and a spiraling China-U.S. security dilemma.”⁸¹ Both sides of the Sino-Russian relationship have arrived at the present as a result of a complex consensus within their respective foreign policy discourses, and both of these discourses incorporate a wide variety of viewpoints, not all of which view Sino-Russian cooperation in a positive light.

Lastly, several recent developments and trends in the Sino-Russian relationship might be taken as portents of future obstacles to the managerial partnership. Without attempting to make any predictions, three such developments are highlighted here. First, there have been complications in the Sino-Russian economic relationship that go beyond innate structural problems. Trade has essentially stagnated since the early 1990s and it continues to be concentrated in a very limited pattern, whereby Russia exports primary products and high-technology goods in the arms and energy sectors, while China supplies the Russian Far east with “low-cost, and often low-quality” consumables, which have been progressively replaced by higher quality Korean and Japanese goods as these have become available.⁸² Indeed, the initial surge in border trade was in retrospect unsustainable, as it “stemmed from short-term factors in Russia such as the rapid liberalization of foreign trade and the effort to compensate for the collapse of production and the disruption of domestic economic links” by flooding the isolated Russian Far Eastern market with Chinese goods.⁸³ Moreover, as Kerr has observed, “Russia and China are engaged in a competitive relationship with regard to the benefits of interaction with the major economic powers,” particularly with respect to investment and capital flows in the Asia-Pacific region.⁸⁴ Taken together, anemic bilateral economic ties and a wider competition for international economic resources may spell trouble for the Sino-Russian economic relationship down the road.

Second, the Russian Far East is the subject of increasing trepidation among Russian policymakers, particularly surrounding the effects of increasing Chinese activity in the region.

The Soviet development of the Russian Far East was in many ways a strategic project, and the maintenance of significant populations and industrial facilities there has consequently been heavily dependent upon government subsidies. The Soviet collapse brought an end to many such supports, subjecting Far Eastern industries to ballooning costs and depriving them of potential markets, with industrial production in the region falling to perhaps as little as 50 percent of its 1991 level by 2000.⁸⁵ As Kerr has written, “Russian development of the Far East can only be pursued within the framework of the North-east Asian economy,” and especially with China.⁸⁶ The demilitarization of the Sino-Russian border and the promotion of cross-border economic interaction have been the most prominent examples of this integration to date. However, the 1990s saw a population loss of more than one million people from “northern regions” of Russia, with some districts losing up to 20 or even 50 percent of their populations to out-migration.⁸⁷ At the same time there has been a surge of legal and illegal immigration from China; there are no definitive numbers – unsurprising given that most Chinese newcomers are migrant workers who return home or move on to other countries after some period of time – however estimates range from a very conservative 200,000, to the official Chinese figure of roughly 300,000, up to wild claims of 2.5 million migrant Chinese made by some Russian analysts.⁸⁸

There have been widely divergent political interpretations of these developments. The influx of Chinese migrants does present one possible solution to the “manpower problem” that has plagued Far Eastern economic development since the 1950s (and arguably much longer than that), and this has been the approach taken by the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy.⁸⁹ On the other hand, there has also been a substantial political backlash toward the burgeoning Chinese contingent, with many Russians (especially in the border regions) taking the view that the increasing “sinification” of the Russian Far East constitutes a security threat; some of the more extreme rhetoric has gone so far as to paint the Chinese migration as a prelude to the full-fledged annexation of Siberia by the PRC.⁹⁰ In all cases, however, the migration of Chinese citizens to the Far East en masse is viewed as inevitable. The fact that such an unlikely outcome is viewed as unavoidable indicates that the approach taken by most Russian policymakers with respect to the Russian Far East is one of pure geopolitika. Indeed, suspicion of Chinese intentions has manifested itself in misgivings on the part of some Russians, especially within the military, about Russian arms sales to China. As Sutter notes, some members of Russia’s policy elite “see China’s renaissance and burgeoning power as a challenge and potential threat,” particularly in light of Russian weakness, and “question the wisdom of helping to modernize the military of a country that may well become a threat to Russian security in the future.”⁹¹

The third potential obstacle to future Sino-Russian cooperation is the problematic condition of centre-periphery relations within Russia. Many regional governments have established their own international relationships in the Asia-Pacific region, attempting to attract foreign investment.⁹² Moreover, many border-region governments and leaders have expressed their own very strong opinions against Moscow’s preferred policy on Russian relations with China, often as part of efforts to extract concessions from the central government on other matters, such as resource extraction contracts. Indeed, as Wishnick has observed, “since 1994 the tensest negotiations on Russian-Chinese relations have been taking place between the Russian government and its regional representatives.”⁹³ As was noted above, one of the major impediments to Yeltsin’s pursuit of a territorial settlement with Japan on the Kuril Islands was the strong opposition of regional leaders.⁹⁴ Similarly, competition among the different units of the Russian Federation can affect the development of foreign policy, both domestically and through the use of these internal divisions by other countries to support their own negotiating

positions. For instance, the ongoing dispute between Khabarovskiy Krai and Primorskiy Krai over the route of a proposed oil pipeline to the Pacific has complicated Russian relations with China and Japan, since both countries have come out in favour of different routes.⁹⁵ This connection between domestic and foreign disputes further undermines the central government's authority in the establishment foreign policy by subjecting that policy to the demands of regional governments, while at the same time undermining the credibility of the federal government in the eyes of its foreign negotiating partners.

Conclusion: Realpolitik Reascendant?

The movement toward a “managerial partnership” constitutes an effort to deal with security issues that are not susceptible to traditional strategic understandings or responses. Improved relations between the two countries follow from the emergence of policy consensus within the Russian and Chinese policy elites and the common understanding within these groupings of the benefits that follow from Sino-Russian collaboration. This does not correspond to the liberal or realist models of Sino-Russian cooperation, which both fail to consider the interaction of bilateral relations with the conceptualization of security. A passage in the East Asian Strategic Review 2002 reveals some of the assumptions that have become common wisdom concerning the Sino-Russian relationship:

If the strategic partnership between China and Russia was indeed strong, consultation on the terrorism issue would have been seen at an early stage. As it turned out, it did not happen.... the September 11 terrorist attacks have called into question China-Russian relations...⁹⁶

The conclusion drawn from this, that the Sino-Russian relationship somehow failed to meet its billing, is misleading because it is premised on an expectation that Sino-Russian cooperation has been a prelude to a more traditional strategic partnership. However, a coordinated response to 11 September would have entailed an effort by Russia and China to transform their relationship into something it is not: a mutual security arrangement.

The shape of contemporary Sino-Russian relations continues to be highly contingent upon its functionality within a given security environment. Because of this, the future of the Sino-Russian relationship is by no means clear, and several obstacles within the bilateral relationship and within the countries themselves may well inhibit future cooperation or even foster a reversion to older models of geostrategic behaviour. However, if this does happen, it seems unlikely that it would unfold in the way that many Western realists fear it would: as an alliance of China and Russia against the United States, Europe, and Japan. By contrast, China has already made clear that it does not want to construct a military alliance against the United States. Instead, Russia would find itself encircled: by NATO nations to the West and across the pole, by Japan and the American military in the East, and by American bases in Central Asia to the South. What then? As Strobe Talbott has commented, “there has never been anything more offensive than a Russian on the defensive.”⁹⁷ The return to prominence of realpolitik in Russian foreign policy in an environment perceived by Russian policymakers as extremely threatening – one characterized by a strategic encirclement reminiscent of the “capitalist encirclement” so feared by Stalin in the 1930s and 1950s – is perhaps the most unsettling prospect of all for the Sino-Russian relationship, and for Asian and global security in general.

Notes

¹ This should not be taken to include China and Russia area specialists, who tend to entertain far more nuanced understandings.

² Nor, for that matter, unambiguously pro-Mao Zedong.

³ Brian Crozier, The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Empire (Rocklin, CA: Forum, 1999), 142.

⁴ William A. Joseph, "China," The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World, 2nd ed., Joel Krieger, et al., eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 128-32.

⁵ Harrison E. Salisbury, The New Emperors: China in the Era of Mao and Deng (New York: Avon Books, 1992), 14.

⁶ Douglas Macdonald challenges this version of Anastas Mikoyan's visit, claiming that the Soviet delegation actually aided in developing the Chinese strategy for the southern campaign; evidently Chinese and Soviet diplomats recollect the event differently. I incline toward the version found in Crozier, as cited above, on the grounds that it is more consistent with Stalin's conservatism in international affairs. Incidentally, the best-known source of Stalin's admission to the Yugoslavs is, of course, Milovan Djilas' Conversations With Stalin (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1962). Douglas J. Macdonald, "Communist Bloc Expansion in the Early Cold War: Challenging Realism, Refuting Revisionism," International Security, 20:3 (Winter 1995/96), 152-88, 168.

⁷ Crozier, Rise and Fall, 142.

⁸ Crozier, Rise and Fall, 142.

⁹ Macdonald, "Communist Bloc," 169.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Salisbury, New Emperors, 99, 159.

¹² The Soviets provided the Chinese equipment for 60 army and 10 air-force divisions, as well as 80 percent of the ammunition used by the Chinese "volunteers" in the Korean conflict. However, they insisted that the Chinese pay for this assistance. Crozier, Rise and Fall, 199; Rosemary Foot, The Practice of Power: U.S. Relations with China since 1949 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 118-9.

¹³ Foot, Practice of Power, 128.

¹⁴ Ibid., 133, 135.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Notably in Southeast Asia. Elizabeth Wishnick, Mending Fences: The Evolution of Moscow's China Policy from Brezhnev to Yeltsin (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 7.

¹⁷ Foot, Practice of Power, 136.

¹⁸ Ibid., 136-7. Original source: Nixon Presidential Project, President's Personal Files, Box 6, 24 Feb. 1973, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

¹⁹ Wishnick, Mending Fences, 58

²⁰ Ibid., 9.

²¹ Ibid., 73-4.

²² Ibid., 73.

²³ Ibid., 84.

²⁴ Ibid., 15.

²⁵ Ibid.

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- ²⁶ Leszek Buszynski, "Russia and the Asia-Pacific Region," Pacific Affairs, 65:4 (Winter 1992/93), 486-509, 486.
- ²⁷ Wishnick, Mending Fences, 102.
- ²⁸ Ibid., 103.
- ²⁹ Ibid., 104.
- ³⁰ Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, The Coming Conflict with China (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), 39.
- ³¹ Foot, Practice of Power, 243.
- ³² Wishnick, Mending Fences, 117.
- ³³ Wishnick, Mending Fences, 106-7.
- ³⁴ Gaye Christoffersen, "China and the Asia-Pacific: Need for a Grand Strategy," Asian Survey, 36:11 (Nov. 1996), 1067-1085, 1073.
- ³⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁶ Buszynski, "Russia and the Asia-Pacific," 485.
- ³⁷ Dmitri Rurikov, "How It All Began: An Essay on New Russia's Foreign Policy," Russian Security After the Cold War: Seven Views from Moscow, CSIA Studies in International Security No. 3, Teresa Pelton Johnson and Steven E. Miller, eds. (Washington: Brassey's, 1994), 125-63, 156.
- ³⁸ Wishnick, Mending Fences, 121.
- ³⁹ Christoffersen, "China and the Asia-Pacific," 1076.
- ⁴⁰ Buszynski, "Russia and the Asia-Pacific," 492.
- ⁴¹ Wishnick, Mending Fences, 123.
- ⁴² Ibid., 122-3.
- ⁴³ Ibid., 123-4.
- ⁴⁴ Robert G. Sutter, Chinese Policy Priorities and Their Implications for the United States (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 65, 68-9; Tsuneo Akaha, "Russia and Asia in 1995: Bold Objectives and Limited Means," Asian Survey, 36:1 (Jan. 1996), 100-108, 106.
- ⁴⁵ National Institute for Defense Studies (NDIS - Japan), East Asian Strategic Review 2002 (Tokyo: National Institute for Defense Studies, 2002), 185.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid., 71.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid., 73.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid.
- ⁴⁹ Peggy Falkenheim Meyer, "Russia's Post-Cold War Security Policy in Northeast Asia," Pacific Affairs, 67:4 (Winter 1994/95), 495-512, 496.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid., 496-7.
- ⁵¹ Ibid., 500.
- ⁵² Hung P. Nguyen, "Russia and China: The Genesis of an Eastern Rapallo," Asian Survey, XXXIII:3 (March 1993), 285-301, 297-8.
- ⁵³ Ashok Kapur, Regional Security Structures in Asia (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 56.
- ⁵⁴ Sutter, Chinese Policy Priorities, 73.
- ⁵⁵ Christoffersen, "China and the Asia-Pacific," 1078.
- ⁵⁶ Wishnick, Mending Fences, 125.
- ⁵⁷ Sutter, Chinese Policy Priorities, 67; David Kerr, "Problems in Sino-Russian Economic Relations," Europe-Asia Studies, 50:7 (Nov. 1998), 1133-1156, 1138.

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- ⁵⁸ Christoffersen, "China and the Asia-Pacific," 1077-8.
- ⁵⁹ NDIS, East Asian Strategic Review 2002, 247.
- ⁶⁰ Sutter, Chinese Policy Priorities, 66.
- ⁶¹ Celeste A. Wallander, "The Multiple Dimensions of Russian Threat Assessment," PONARS Policy Memo 199, Council on Foreign Relations (April 2001), 1-3, 1.
- ⁶² Alexei Izyumov, Leonid Kosals, and Rosalina Ryvkina, "Russian Defense Enterprises in Transition to the Market," Russia in Transition: Volume 1, Frank Columbus, ed. (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2003), 139-53, 141.
- ⁶³ Stephen J. Blank, "Russia Looks at China," Imperial Decline: Russia's Changing Role in Asia, Stephen J. Blank, and Alvin Z. Rubinstein, eds. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 65-98, 78.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 79.
- ⁶⁵ Wishnick, Mending Fences, 123.
- ⁶⁶ Igor S. Ivanov, The New Russian Diplomacy (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2002), 84.
- ⁶⁷ Wishnick, Mending Fences, 151-2.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 152.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 153.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁷² Buszynski, "Russia and the Asia-Pacific," 492.
- ⁷³ Alastair Iain Johnston, "Is China a Status Quo Power?" International Security, Vol. 27, No. 4 (Spring 2003): 5-56, 34.
- ⁷⁴ See: Xue Gang and Liu Long, "The Russian Presidential Election and Putin's Policy Tendencies in His Second Term," International Strategic Studies, no. 2 (2004) (Beijing: China Institute for International Strategic Studies, 2004): 21-6; Zhang Wenwei and Cheng Ning, "Current Security Situation in Central Asia," International Strategic Studies, no. 2 (2004): 60-6.
- ⁷⁵ Liu Xinghua, "Military Adjustment in Central Asian Countries after 9.11," International Strategic Studies, no. 2 (2003): 49-55-(43), 51.
- ⁷⁶ See: Lin Huisheng and Yin Zhongliang, "The U.S. Strategic Considerations in Starting the Iraq War," no. 3 (2003): 36-40; Xu Xianzhong, "An Interpretation of the So-called 'New North Korea Nuclear Issue,'" no. 3 (2003): 53-62.
- ⁷⁷ Sutter, Chinese Policy Priorities, 18-9.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 19.
- ⁷⁹ Andrei P. Tsygankov, "From International Institutionalism to Revolutionary Expansionism: The Foreign Policy Discourse of Contemporary Russia," Mershon International Studies Review, 41:2 (Nov. 1997), 247-268, 248.
- ⁸⁰ Kapur, Regional Security Structures, 102.
- ⁸¹ Johnston, "Status Quo Power," 56.
- ⁸² Wishnick, Mending Fences, 165.
- ⁸³ *Ibid.*, 165-6.
- ⁸⁴ Kerr, "Problems" 1138.
- ⁸⁵ Sutter, "Chinese Policy Priorities," 74.

⁸⁶ David Kerr, "Opening and Closing the Sino-Russian Border: Trade, Regional Development and Political Interest in North-East Asia," Europe-Asia Studies, 48:6 (Sep. 1996), 931-57, 952.

⁸⁷ Fiona Hill, and Clifford Gaddy, The Siberian Curse: How Communist Planners Left Russia Out in the Cold (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2003), 119.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 180.

⁹⁰ Wishnick, Mending Fences, 166-7.

⁹¹ Sutter, "Chinese Policy Priorities," 74.

⁹² Marjorie Balzer, and Uliana Vinokurova, "Nationalism, Interethnic Relations and Federalism: The Case of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia)," Europe-Asia Studies, 48:1 (Jan. 1996), 101-20, 112.

⁹³ Balzer and Vinokurova, "Sakha Republic," 108; Wishnick, Mending Fences, 185.

⁹⁴ Buszynski, "Russia and the Asia-Pacific," 493.

⁹⁵ Vyacheslav Shirokov, "Khabarovsk Seeks to Reroute Planned Pipeline," Russian Regional Report, (Vol. 9, No. 18, 21 September 2004), International Relations and Security Network, Centre for Security Studies, Zurich. Available online: <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/researchpub/publihouse/rrr/>

⁹⁶ NDIS, East Asian Strategic Review 2002, 188.

⁹⁷ Cited in Derek Leebaert, "The Context of Soviet Military Thinking," Soviet Military Thinking, Derek Leebaert, ed. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), 22. Original source: Strobe Talbott, "Whatever happened to détente?" Time, 23 June 1980, 34.