BRICS IN RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY BEFORE AND AFTER THE ONSET OF THE CRISIS IN UKRAINE

by

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Abstract

The focus of this dissertation is the evolution of BRICS in Russian foreign policy. It tells this overarching story through the lens of three overlapping narratives. The first is the evolution of Russian elite rhetoric about the West, and the increasing antagonism of that rhetoric, since the turn of the millennium. The second is how Russian leaders have framed the idea of the BRICS group in the narrative they created about Russian relations with the West and Russia's role in the international system. The third is the story of BRICS itself: its development as a group in the international arena, its past achievements and future prospects, and its broader impact on global governance.

The main argument is as follows: BRICS has become more important to Russia as a result of the rupture in relations with the West following the onset of the crisis in Ukraine in February 2014. Simultaneously, BRICS itself has begun to constitute an important part of a changing world order, primarily because the imbalances in global economic governance it originally sought to address remain unresolved. These two phenomena, combined with the silence of the BRICS countries in the face of Russian violations of international norms during the Ukraine crisis, are evidence of an accelerating fragmentation of the current international order.

The dissertation uses rhetorical analysis as the primary methodology. Political rhetoric is an indication of what leaders would have the public understand to be true, even if it is not. When the rhetoric changes, it gives insight into a shift in how leaders wish their

positions to be perceived. When that shift is precipitated by dramatic changes in a country's internal or external environment, an adjustment in rhetoric can be indication of where policy may be headed even before those concrete changes are visible. Rhetoric, therefore, is an integral part of the policy process. In focusing on this area of policy creation, this dissertation provides a window into the role of rhetoric in the conceptualization of Russian foreign policy, and the extent to which that rhetoric becomes manifested in reality.

Dissertation Committee Members

- 1. Bruce Parrott, Ph.D. (SAIS/Johns Hopkins University) first reader
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A Note on Transliteration and Sources

I use the Library of Congress system of transliteration without diacritics, and except in instances of proper names with English equivalents, such as Alexander, or where there is an accepted English spelling of a name, such as Yeltsin. "Ы" is rendered as "y." Both "Й" and "И" are written as "i." "Я" is "ia."

The Kremlin and the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs often provide English translations of speeches and documents. If these were available, I cite the English version, since it is the translation of record. In places where the English translation may have missed some of the nuance in the Russian original or need clarification, I provide the Russian in brackets, and cite both versions.

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List of Abbreviations

ABM – Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty

BMD - Ballistic Missile Defense

BRIC - Brazil Russia India China

BRICS - Brazil Russia India China South Africa

CRA – Contingency Reserve Arrangement

CSCE – Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe

CSTO – Collective Security Treaty Organization

EAU – Eurasian Union

EurAsEC – Eurasian Economic Community

IBSA – India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum

IMEMO – Institute for World Economy and International Relations

IMF – International Monetary Fund

ILA – Institute for Latin America

MID – Ministerstvo innostranykh del (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

MGIMO - Moscow State Institute of International Affairs

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NDB – New Development Bank

NKI BRIKS – National Committee on BRICS Research (Russia)

OSCE - Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

PA – Presidential Administration (Russian)

RAN – Russian Academy of Sciences

RIC – Russia-India-China

SCO – Shanghai Cooperation Organization

WTO – World Trade Organization

Introduction: Russia, the West, and the BRICS

This dissertation tells three overlapping and intersecting stories. The first is the evolution of Russian elite rhetoric about the West, and the increasing antagonism of that rhetoric, since the turn of the millennium. The second is how Russian leaders have framed the idea of the BRICS group (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) in the narrative they created about Russian relations with the West and Russia's role in the international system. The third is the story of BRICS itself: its development as a group in the international arena, its past achievements and future prospects, and its broader impact on global governance.

These stories are not only overlapping and intersecting, but also mutually reinforcing. Increasing strain between Russia and its Western partners since 2004 has dramatically influenced how Russian leaders speak publicly about Russia's national identity and international relationships. BRICS, with its membership of fast-growing, non-Western economies, provided a useful rhetorical counterpoint for Russian leaders to emphasize over continuing to cooperate within Western-dominated institutions. The development of BRICS from an investment strategy to an informal political grouping to an association building its own international institutions has lent credence to Russia's claim that BRICS constitutes an alternative institutional option to those led by the West.

An interrogation of how Russian leaders conceptualize their relations with the West and the non-West is especially important in the wake of the biggest rupture in relations between Russia and the rest of the Euro-Atlantic community since the end of the Cold War. There is no shortage of analysis about how the outbreak of the crisis in Eastern Ukraine in February 2014 has altered Russia's relationship with Europe and the United States. Authors have also examined how the crisis changes the balance in Russia's relations with countries in the non-West, especially China. Less studied, however, is the impact of the crisis on how Russia conceives of its global institutional alignments. Chief among these is BRICS. This study fills that gap. Taking a long-term perspective, this dissertation answers the question of how the Russian foreign policy elite has framed Russia's approach to BRICS over time, and how that framing has been altered as a consequence of the Ukrainian crisis.

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¹ See for example: Robert Hunter, "The West Has Failed to Find a Constructive Role for Moscow," *Financial Times*, February 17, 2015, http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/528d1dcc-b6a3-11e4-95dc-00144feab7de.html?siteedition=intl#axzz3S7209TAg; Rajan Menon and Eugene B. Rumer, *Conflict in Ukraine: The Unwinding of the Post--Cold War Order*, First Edition edition (The MIT Press, 2015); Samuel Charap and Jeremy Shapiro, "A New European Security Order: The Ukraine Crisis and the Missing Post-Cold War Bargain" (Fondation pour la Recherche Strategique, December 8, 2014).

See for example: Yu Bin, "China-Russia Relations: Navigating through the Ukraine Storm," *Comparative Connections* 16, no. 2 (September 2014): 131–41,174,

http://search.proquest.com/docview/1580561624/abstract/339FD1F2AB144E64PQ/1; Joy Mitra, "Russia, China and Pakistan: An Emerging New Axis?," *The Diplomat*, August 18, 2015,

http://thediplomat.com/2015/08/russia-china-and-pakistan-an-emerging-new-axis/; Anita Inder Singh, "Unequal Partners: China and Russia in Eurasia," *The Diplomat*, June 3, 2015,

http://thediplomat.com/2015/06/unequal-partners-china-and-russia-in-eurasia/; M. Titarenko and V. Petrovsky, "Russia, China and the New World Order," *International Affairs* 61, no. 3 (2015): 13, http://search.proquest.com/docview/1699516751/339FD1F2AB144E64PQ/12; Dmitri Trenin, "From Greater Europe to Greater Asia? The Sino-Russian Entente," *Carnegie Moscow Center*, April 9, 2015, http://carnegie.ru/2015/04/09/from-greater-europe-to-greater-asia-sino-russian-entente/i64a#; Dmitri Trenin, "Russia's Breakout From the Post–Cold War System: The Drivers of Putin's Course" (Moscow, Russia: Carnegie Moscow Center, December 2014), http://carnegie.ru/2014/12/22/russia-s-breakout-from-post-cold-war-system-drivers-of-putin-s-course/hxsm. These studies sometimes edge into questions of global order, but are not in-depth analyses of specific institutions.

It must be stated explicitly that this is a story about words more than deeds.³ It is an investigation of what Russian leaders have said more than an analysis of what they have done. In part, this is because the stories this study tells are so new that declarations have not always had time to translate into actions. More importantly, however, I focus on rhetoric because it is significant in its own right. Words are themselves political choices. They have meaning apart from whether or not what is said comes to pass. Words shape policy choices, and they can be used to lead and mislead the audience. Political rhetoric is an indication of what leaders would have the public understand to be true, even if it is not. When the rhetoric changes, it gives insight into a shift in how leaders wish their positions to be perceived. When that shift is precipitated by dramatic changes in a country's internal or external environment, an adjustment in rhetoric can be indication of where policy may be headed even before those concrete changes are visible. Rhetoric, therefore, is an integral part of the policy process. It must be taken seriously as such.

At the same time, this is not a story of words without connections to reality. Changes in how Russia has talked about BRICS have taken place in the context of very real shifts in both the relationship with the West and the international environment. Repeated cycles of deterioration and renewal in the U.S.-Russian relationship have been caused by a mutually reinforcing cycle of concrete policies and changes in rhetoric. For example, the period between the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 witnessed both productive cooperation and conciliatory framing of the

³ On words versus deeds in foreign policy, see Coral Bell, *The Reagan Paradox: American Foreign Policy in the 1980s* (New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 1989), chap. 1.

⁴ On the cyclical nature of U.S.-Russian relations, see Angela Stent, *The Limits of Partnership: U.S.-Russian Relations in the Twenty-First Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014).

relationship on the part of the Russian leadership. By contrast, the negative impact of U.S. unilateralism in the Iraq war on U.S.-Russian relations was exacerbated by shifts in Russia's domestic politics that necessitated a more pessimistic description of Russia's place in the Euro-Atlantic order.

Similarly, BRICS did not come together simply because Russia willed it so. There is a strong political economy rationale for BRICS in addition to the equally noteworthy rhetorical constructions about it. Changes in the distribution of global economic power and mistrust of U.S. leadership of international institutions laid the foundation for cooperation among these unlikely partners. This cooperation has proved durable through changes in leadership as well as economic downturns across the group. While coordination in the BRICS group is only just beginning to bear tangible fruit, in the form of a development bank and contingency currency pool, it has advanced sufficiently to constitute an association worthy of attention.

Although the three stories are ultimately connected, they begin in different ways and at different times. Anti-Westernism in Russian political rhetoric traces both to centuries-old debates over national identity and to related but more recent conflicts over how post-Soviet Russia should engage with the international system. The origins of BRICS lie the economic rise of the non-West and growing anger at U.S. foreign policy that occurred over the course of the late 1990s and early- to mid-2000s. These stories are the topic of the first chapter, which lays the foundation for understanding my overarching argument that BRICS has become more important to Russia because of Russia's split with the

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⁵ South Africa is the only member country not to have gone through a leadership transition.

West, while simultaneously, BRICS itself has begun to constitute an important part of a new world order.

The second chapter situates this study within the broader literature on BRICS. BRICS as a political grouping is a fairly new object of academic study. In addition, there are no book-length academic studies in either English or Russian dedicated to the analysis of the role of BRICS in Russian foreign policy and political rhetoric. This chapter draws out the main themes of academic thought on BRICS and Russia's place in the group. Identifying why the topic of BRICS has often been met with skepticism and how authors understand Russia's approach of the group reveals the gaps in the existing literature and makes plain the contributions of this study.

The third and fourth chapters address separately the questions of how BRICS developed and how Russian leaders made space for the concept in Russian foreign policy. The third chapter presents an institutional and intellectual history of the development of BRICS on the international stage. The chapter details the main milestones of cooperation, beginning with the first informal meeting in 2005 and running through the creation of the BRICS Development Bank and Contingency Reserve Arrangement at the 2014 summit in Fortaleza. It also includes a short quantitative examination of the development of trade and investment relationships among the BRICS, tracked against the group's political institutional development. The primary conclusion of chapter three is that BRICS has progressed from being a private sector catchphrase to a self-sustaining group with prospects for deeper cooperation.

Just like the third chapter, the fourth chapter also provides a more unified intellectual history of a single narrative. Looking primarily at presidential speeches and foreign policy concepts from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it traces how the meanings of the ideas of sovereignty and national identity evolved during Vladimir Putin's first two presidential terms. The chapter traces how, between 2000 and 2007, Putin relied on increasingly exclusionary definitions of these terms. The goal of the redefinition was to separate Russia rhetorically from the West and establish Russia as an independent pole in international affairs. The primary argument of the fourth chapter is that the rhetorical separation of Russia from the political West was a key inflection point that allowed for the incorporation of BRICS into Russian political rhetoric when the group burst forth in 2008.

The three narratives come together with the onset of the 2008 global financial crisis. This is the topic of the fifth chapter. 2008 witnessed the simultaneous emergence of BRICS in the international arena and the beginning of a volatile period in Russian-Western relations, marked by the low of the 2008 war between Russia and Georgia and the high of the Reset. The chapter considers the impact of these developments from two angles: the official and the unofficial. On the official level, I analyze Russian government policy and rhetoric on BRICS in the context of improving relations with the West and President Medvedev's emphasis on economic modernization as opposed to political status. On the unofficial level, I consider the proliferation of analyses of BRICS between 2008 and 2013 in Russian state universities and research institutions. This two-level analytical approach

reveals the chasm between the potential BRICS held for Russia and the role it actually played: while BRICS cooperation was increasing, the Russian leadership continued to conceive of the group as strictly a rhetorical balance against the West. This further underscores the extent to which relations with the West have determined how Russian leaders conceive of BRICS.

The connection between relations with the West and Russia's approach to BRICS was brought out in sharp relief with the onset of the crisis in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine in February 2014. The Ukrainian crisis and its after effects are the subject of the sixth and final chapter. This section analyzes how the crisis and the economic and political rupture with the West affected Russia's attitude towards BRICS. It looks in particular at the change in political rhetoric following the March 2014 annexation of Crimea, and the role of anti-Western sentiment in Russia's BRICS policy and in the BRICS group as a whole. The chapter also explores Russian efforts to increase economic ties with the BRICS countries after the imposition of both Western sanctions and Russian "anti-sanctions" (self-imposed bans on agricultural imports from the EU and several other countries). The main argument of this chapter is that BRICS after Crimea serves important political and economic functions for Russia. As a result, the crisis has forced Russian leaders to think more seriously about BRICS within Russian foreign policy as more than just a theoretical alternative to current partnerships. Simultaneously, the ongoing institutionalization of BRICS, which began to intensify following agreements at the 2014 Summit in Fortaleza, has made it much more rational for Russia to begin taking BRICS more seriously.

All three stories in this dissertation are still ongoing. Their short- to medium-term implications, however, are already evident. Although the crisis in Ukraine remains unresolved, it is clear that it has fundamentally altered the relationship between Russia and the West and caused Russian leaders to define a Russia that stands in opposition to the West. Even though BRICS remains more in the realm of oratory than action in Russian foreign policy, the BRICS group has helped Russia stand up to Western censure and sanctions. Finally, the BRICS institutions have not yet begun to operate, but they have been ratified by the member states and have begun the process of opening their doors and offering concrete alternative institutional options. Each of these developments individually has changed the landscape of international relations and Russia's place in the international system. Taken together, they represent the accelerating fragmentation of international norms and global governance.

1. Status Quo Revisionism: Post-Soviet Russia and the International System

[Russia] is ready to take a part in international relations, but she prefers other countries to abstain from taking interest in her affairs: that is to say, to insulate herself from the rest of the world without remaining isolated from it.

- Isaiah Berlin¹

Over the next 10 years, the weight of the BRICs...in world GDP will grow....In line with these prospects, world policymaking forums should be re-organised an in particular, the G7 should be adjusted to incorporate BRIC representatives....It is time for the world to build better global economic BRICs.

- Jim O'Neill, 2001²

Ever since Peter the Great took his Grand Embassy through Europe in 1697-1698 and began to open Russia up to outside influences, Russia's place vis-à-vis the West, and indeed with regard to the international system, has been somewhat unsettled. The discomfort has come from an ongoing internal struggle between a desire to engage with the international system – that is, play a leading role in its formation and administration – while still maintaining complete control over domestic development and national identity. National identity, further, has been divided between identification with Europe and the (ideological) West and the idea of Russia as a civilization apart. The latter

¹ Isaiah Berlin, *The Soviet Mind: Russian Culture under Communism* (Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2004), 90.

² Jim O'Neill, "Building Better Global Economic BRICs" (Goldman Sachs, 2001), S.01–S.03, http://www.goldmansachs.com/our-thinking/archive/archive-pdfs/build-better-brics.pdf.

³ Richard Sakwa, "The Problem of 'the International' in Russian Identity Formation," *International Politics* 49, no. 4 (July 2012): 451, doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/ip.2012.10.

conception dictates that Russia is required by virtue of geography and culture to follow its own developmental path.⁴

This divide has produced a foreign policy approach that sometimes attempts to position Russia as an alternative center of power and undermine the legitimacy of the reigning system. An alternate tactic is to present Russia as a bridge between old and new structures. The result is a country that is at once both a status quo and a revisionist power: post-Soviet Russia has attempted to maintain the status quo where its power is magnified. However, when efforts to join established organization have proven unsuccessful or the requirements for entry were unacceptable, the government has retreated and created alternative organizations. This institutional creation has been accompanied by efforts to undermine rhetorically the legitimacy of the organizations from which Russia is excluded

The role of this chapter is to establish a framework within which to understand Russia's BRICS diplomacy. It therefore has two tasks. The first is to trace how Russia has interacted with leading global institutions, and the international order more generally, since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The second is a discussion of the changes the international system has undergone during that era, with particular emphasis on the

⁴ Boris Dubin, "The Myth of the 'Special Path' in Contemporary Russian Public Opinion," *Russian Politics & Law* 50, no. 5 (October 9, 2012): 35–51,

http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=83403922&site=ehost-live&scope=site; Sergei Magaril, "The Mythology of the 'Third Rome' in Russian Educated Society," *Russian Politics & Law* 50, no. 5 (October 9, 2012): 7–34,

http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=83403923&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

period until 2008. This sets the backdrop for understanding why BRICS was so appealing to Russia and locates BRICS within the evolving international system.

The chapter begins with definitions of the main terms at play throughout this dissertation, such as international order and national identity. This is followed by a discussion of methodology. The chapter then moves to a review of the main foreign policy perspectives that have predominated among the post-Soviet Russian elite. That overview is followed by a two-part examination of Russia's relationship with the West. First, why the relationship has remained strained since the end of the Cold War; second, how Russia has responded to that strain. Finally, the discussion broadens to an evaluation of seminal global changes in the past twenty-five years that have markedly affected the international order. This broader discussion contextualizes Russia's debates and actions within broader international trends.

Terms and Definitions

Ideas such as "international system," "international legitimacy," "revisionist" and "status quo" are inherently subjective and therefore often ill-defined. Following Henry Kissinger, I define international order as "an international agreement about the nature of workable arrangements and about the aims and methods of foreign policy." Legitimacy "implies the acceptance of the framework by all major powers," at least to the extent than none

⁵ Henry Kissinger, *A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace, 1812-22* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), 1.

feels compelled to fundamentally undermine that framework.⁶ Therefore, a legitimate international system is one in which the most powerful countries are in general agreement about which countries, institutions and norms should manage international affairs and conflict, and no major power wishes to overturn that agreement.

Kissinger defines a power that is unsatisfied with the existing framework as "revolutionary." I prefer the term "revisionist," because it allows for a continuum of the change the power wishes to implement. For example, Steven Ward argues that there is a substantive difference between pushing to change the allocation of resources (power, prestige, wealth) within a given system, and advocating for a change of the system itself. However, the two goals are linked, because the perceived legitimacy of how goods are distributed within a system is tied to norms about who constitutes a legitimate actor. For example, the emphasis on human rights and good governance in the current world order undermines Russia's image as a legitimate actor, and therefore its ability to push for a reallocation of power in its direction.

The question of whether a country is revisionist or status quo is a question about its strategic orientation towards the system. Following both Ward and Legro, I define strategic orientation as "national ideas about the desirability of joining and sustaining the

⁶ Ibid., 2.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Steven Michael Ward, "Status Immobility and Systemic Revisionism in Rising Great Powers" (Ph.D., Georgetown University, 2012), 8.

http://search.proquest.com/pqdtft/docview/1024545881/abstract/47B627621017445CPQ/1?accountid=1175

^{2. &}lt;sup>9</sup> Ibid., 12.

extant international order."¹⁰ A status quo power is one that is pleased with the allocation of resources and the legitimizing norms of the system. A revisionist power is one that is dissatisfied and wishes to make adjustments. Russia is a problematic case because it wishes to maintain some elements of the current institutional and distributive order while at the same time it spearheads institutional formation whose goal is to undermine other elements of this same order. At a normative level, Russia seeks to change how the legitimizing norms of the current system are applied, but it is not clear that it wishes to substitute alternative norms.¹¹ Richard Sakwa terms this approach "neo-revisionist," but I prefer to keep both "status quo" and "revisionist" in play because doing so better captures the contradiction in the Russian approach.¹²

"National interest" is as slippery a term as "international order" or "revisionist." At its most basic, the national interest can be defined as "the interest of a state, usually as defined by the government." In international relations theory, realists often use the term to denote not only how a state should behave in relation to other states, but also the idea that states are constrained by a variety of factors, including geography and the relative power of other states. States have to conduct foreign policy in a way that maximizes their own position while maneuvering around set limitations over which they have no

¹⁰ Jeffrey Legro, *Rethinking the World: Great Power Strategies and International Order* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2005), 8.

¹¹ Sakwa, "The Problem of 'the International' in Russian Identity Formation," 453.

¹² Ibid., 450.

¹³ Peter Byrd, "National Interest," ed. Iain McLean and Alistair McMillan, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics* (Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 356. This is a problematic definition since it includes within it part of the term being defined.

¹⁴ Byrd, "National Interest." Other theoretical traditions have different definitions of what the national interest is and how it is derived.

control.¹⁵ This definition suggests that there exist some "permanent" national interests, devoid of ideological or moral intent, to which all in the state would agree.¹⁶

The problem with this definition, however, is that it gives little information as to what interests actually are in concrete terms. More importantly, it ignores or discounts the role of the leader in defining how national interest will be reflected in state policy. Once the leader is included in the equation, it becomes clear that antecedent to the definition of interests is the question of how the individual leader understands those interests. Indeed, as Robert Axelrod and Robert Keohane argue, "Perceptions define interests." Building on that observation, John Spanier and Robert Wendzel argue that, "different individuals and groups will have varying ideas about what their nations should seek to achieve or protest." Put differently, the national interest does not exist as such, except to the extent that it is defined by those in power based on their own understanding of a given environment.

The importance of leaders in defining national interest is crucial. As Anne Clunan argues, "getting to the root of a state's national interests means unearthing what its elites identify as the country's political purpose and international status." Within certain limits, those in power both set the boundaries of the conversation and execute policy. Their words and

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Francis Fukuyama, "The Ambiguity of 'National Interest," in *Rethinking Russia's National Interests*, ed. Stephen Sestanovich (Washington, D.C: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1994), 12.

¹⁷ Robert Axelrod and Robert O. Keohane, "Achieving Cooperation Under Anarchy," in *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate*, ed. David A. Baldwin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 88.

¹⁸ John W. Spanier and Robert L. Wendzel, *Games Nations Play*, 9th ed (Washington, D.C: CQ Press, 1996), 284.

¹⁹ Anne L. Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 3.

actions, therefore, matter most in understanding how a country perceives its national interests, and why the leadership may be pursuing a given policy. Relatedly, analyzing changes in how the leadership talks about national interests and national identity can yield insights about coming policy shifts.

Three additional items bear mention. First, national interests change over time and as a consequence of both changing elites and shifting elite identities. These changes within the elite impact the conceptualization of national identity. Second, individual elite identities and definitions of national interest also change over time. This is particularly important in the Russian case, where the ruling elite has been largely stable in the period under discussion, but the definition of Russian national identity has evolved in large part because of how the leadership has altered its rhetorical construction. As the national identity has evolved, so too has the consensus about the most appropriate foreign policy. Finally, I follow Clunan in defining national identity as "sets of ideas about the country's political purpose and international status."

Methodology: The Meaning of Political Rhetoric

Much of this dissertation rests on the analysis of elite political rhetoric.

Methodologically, these are tricky waters. As Stacie Godard and Ronald Krebs argue in a special issue of *Security Studies* devoted to the study of political rhetoric, "scholars of international relations often dismiss rhetorical contestation as meaningless posturing,"

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²⁰ Ibid., 10.

unworthy of serious analysis."²¹ It is not hard to see why. Politicians say so much to so many different audiences that it seems logical to focus more on what gets done than on what gets said.

That approach, however, misses a critical piece of the creation of foreign policy. As Goddard and Krebs argue, "public talk is essential to the process of how states coalesce around collective intention and how institutions shape their members' subsequent behavior."²² Put differently, the process of rhetorical contestation – of politicians talking and shaping the debate – is a fundamental piece of how a government arrives at a foreign policy that has public support.

This is not a new consideration. Vibeke Tjalve and Michael Williams note that the post-World War II generation of realists understood that rhetoric is an important component of foreign policy action both domestically and internationally. ²³ They saw rhetoric as fundamental to responsible and responsive policy creation. ²⁴ These scholars were not blind to the potential abuses of rhetoric. Indeed, concern that "American grand strategy... had become dependent on rhetoric of fear or destiny" was part of what motivated them to consider the role of rhetoric in policy, and search for alternative sources for rhetorical flourishes. ²⁵ They saw danger in rhetoric based in fear.

²¹ Stacie E. Goddard and Ronald R. Krebs, "Rhetoric, Legitimation, and Grand Strategy," *Security Studies* 24, no. 1 (January 2, 2015): 6, doi:10.1080/09636412.2014.1001198.
²² Ibid., 31.

²³ Vibeke Schou Tjalve and Michael C. Williams, "Reviving the Rhetoric of Realism: Politics and Responsibility in Grand Strategy," *Security Studies* 24, no. 1 (January 2, 2015): 37, doi:10.1080/09636412.2015.1003725.

²⁴ Ibid., 40.

²⁵ Ibid., 46.

Indeed, these scholars were concerned about the practical implications of reckless words. As Hans Morgenthau wrote in an indictment of the Truman Administration's foreign policy:

You have deceived once: now you must deceive again, for to tell the truth would be to admit having deceived. If your better judgment leads you near the road of rational policy, your critics will raise the ghost of your own deception, convict you out of your own mouth as appeaser and traitor, and stop you in your tracks.

You have falsified the real issue between the United States and the Soviet Union into a holy crusade to stamp out Bolshevism everywhere on earth, for this seemed a good way of arousing the public: now you must act as though you mean it...you have told the people that American power has no limits, for flattery of the people is "good politics": now you must act as though you mean it.²⁶

This is almost a causal argument. Morgenthau does not see speeches and doctrines that appealed to the national ego and national morality as window dressing on concrete national interests. Instead, he and his contemporaries saw political rhetoric as having "important and even determining" influence on foreign policy behavior.²⁷

Morganthau was not simply fear-mongering about the dangers of fear-mongering. As Charles Gati argues in his book on the 1956 uprising against the Soviets in Hungary, U.S. promises had real impact in the field. Gati writes:

Combining the best techniques of Hollywood with those of Madison Avenue, the United States was offering a product – liberation – it could not deliver. The advertising was misleading, but it convinced the oppressed peoples of Eastern Europe that their cause was America's

²⁶ Hans J. Morgenthau, In Defense of the National Interest: A Critical Examination of American Foreign *Policy*, [1st ed.] (New York: Knopf, 1951), 239–240.
²⁷ Tjalve and Williams, "Reviving the Rhetoric of Realism," 44.

cause, and it reinforced the Soviet oppressors' belief that in America they had an implacable enemy. ²⁸

In Gati's estimation, U.S. rhetoric about intentions to liberate Eastern Europe inculcated in its audience false beliefs that spurred tangible outcomes. On U.S. government directive, Radio Free Europe did not use its platform to press for any moderation among the Hungarian audience, and it even offered advice on how to manufacture weapons.²⁹ Hungarians took up arms in Budapest at least in part because U.S. rhetoric made them believe that they would be supported in their struggle.³⁰ The U.S. government, moreover, believed that those words were sufficient support. Documents indicate that while material support was never meant to be forthcoming, U.S. officials seem to have "had an excessive, almost religious faith in the power of words."³¹

As Gati rightly notes, however, there was a domestic context to what he terms the U.S. "huffing and puffing" about rolling back the Soviet armies.³² Democrats and Republicans were as concerned about demonstrating their superior fitness to rule as they were about the national security threat that the USSR posed to the United States and its allies.³³ Another way of understanding the role of the domestic context in shaping U.S. Cold War rhetoric is to posit that as much as rhetoric can have a determinant influence on policy, it does not work free of constraints.

²⁸ Charles Gati, *Failed Illusions: Moscow, Washington, Budapest, and the 1956 Hungarian Revolt* (Washington, D.C Stanford, Calif: Woodrow Wilson Center Press Stanford University Press, 2006), 72, https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/catalog/bib_2625052.

²⁹ Ibid., 219.

³⁰ Robert L. Scott, "Cold War and Rhetoric: Conceptually and Critically," in *Cold War Rhetoric: Strategy, Metaphor, and Ideology*, by Martin J. Medhurst et al., [Rev. ed.] (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1997), 12.

³¹ Gati, Failed Illusions, 218.

³² Ibid., 71.

³³ Ibid.

This links the discussion to the analysis in the previous section about the role of national identity in determining national interests. In answer to the question of why some identity narratives catch on while others do not, Ann Clunan proposes that,

[W]hether...national self-images and their behavioral orientations towards the outside world come to be epistemically dominant rests on their perceived legitimacy among the majority of political elites.³⁴

National identity cannot be derived *de novo*; it is bound by what the political elite understands as a "legitimate" interpretation. What this means in practical terms is that the debate over national identity and by extension national interest is bounded by what the audience is willing to hear. Goddard and Krebs make a similar point. They argue that certain strategic options, regardless of their technical merits, will never come up for debate because cultural or historical reasons preclude the legitimation of the policy.³⁵

The preceding argument demonstrates that rhetoric has practical influences on policy adoption and operates within understood and bounded constraints. Rhetorical analysis, therefore, is methodologically sound and potentially quite revealing. This is not an argument that rhetoric is the same as policy. Indeed, it is a softer claim than that made by Morgenthau, wherein rhetoric has discernable concrete effects. My argument is that if rhetoric helps shape policy, then analysis of the rhetorical roots of policy must be part of analyzing policy. Tracing how the framing of ideas and arguments evolves over time offers new depth and nuance in understanding foreign policy actions.

³⁵ Goddard and Krebs, "Rhetoric, Legitimation, and Grand Strategy," 11.

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³⁴ Clunan, The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence, 204.

This is not the same as the literature on the influence of ideas on policy, although that literature is related. From a general perspective, ideational approaches have been gaining ground across the social sciences, and especially in political economy, for several years.³⁶ On Russia specifically, scholars such as Jeffrey Checkel and Sarah Mendelson have studied how ideas came to affect and effect political change in the late Soviet and early post-Soviet eras.³⁷ The difference between these scholars' arguments and the work presented here is that ideational analysis is fundamentally concerned in one way or another with ideas as causal variables. As Daniel Béland and Robert Henry Cox write, "ideas are causal beliefs." Though they group under this umbrella the process of the dissemination of ideas and political discourse, their ultimate concern is with how ideas effect change. My concern is how the framing of fluid concepts moves the bounds of acceptable policy options and creates space for policy changes.³⁹ Put differently, my interest is more in how rhetoric changes ideas than how ideas change policy. The final chapter delves somewhat more deeply into policy adjustment, but that is as a consequence of an external shock (Ukraine) rather than the impact of ideas.

Russia offers particularly fertile ground for this analytical approach. Speeches and foreign policy concepts play an unusually large role in the Russian foreign policy

³⁶ Daniel Béland and Robert Henry Cox, "Introduction," in *Ideas and Politics in Social Science Research*, ed. Daniel Béland and Robert Henry Cox (Oxford University Press, 2010), 3–20, http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199736430.001.0001/acprof-9780199736430-chapter-1.

³⁷ Jeffrey T. Checkel, *Ideas and International Political Change: Soviet/Russian Behavior and the End of the Cold War* (New Haven [Conn.]: Yale University Press, 1997); Sarah Elizabeth Mendelson, *Changing Course: Ideas, Politics, and the Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1998).

³⁸ Béland and Cox, "Introduction."

³⁹ The literature on ideas would be relevant to a follow up study delving more deeply into the investigation in chapter five on research on BRICS at state universities and research institutions. However, that is not the central task in this dissertation.

process. Most Western states, for example, do not define a specific, codified foreign policy concept. 40 The USSR relied heavily on programmatic policy documents, but Andrei Kozyrev was initially reluctant for post-Soviet Russia to follow that tradition. 41 However, as the debate over whether or how much to orient Westward became more heated, foreign policy elites (governmental and otherwise) argued that the government needed "to provide a framework for its foreign policy." 42 The first post-Soviet foreign policy concept was published in January 1993. 43 Since then, the government has approved new official concepts in 2000, 2008, and 2013. While these concepts are not the definitive statement on the foreign policy that a given leader will conduct, they can be seen as setting the bounds of the debate. As Jeffrey Mankoff argues, foreign policy documents and their ilk (e.g. the National Security Concept) "define the mental universe in which policy decisions are made." 44 Changes in the documents over time, therefore, indicate shifts in the acceptable parameters of foreign policy.

Similarly, presidential speeches indicate intentions and agenda setting. As Gordon Hahn argues:

In Russia, the words of a country's leader mean something: they are taken as important signals throughout the bureaucracy and cannot be used to promise important plans that the leadership has no intention of fulfilling.

⁴⁰ Margot Light, "Foreign Policy Thinking," in *Internal Factors in Russian Foreign Policy*, by Neil Malcom et al. (Oxford [England] New York: Published for the Royal Institute of International Affairs by Oxford University Press, 1996), 38.

⁴¹ Ibid., 38–39; Bobo Lo, *Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 69.

⁴² Light, "Foreign Policy Thinking," 38.

⁴³ Ibid., 61.

⁴⁴ Jeffrey Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy: The Return of Great Power Politics*, 2nd ed (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012), 16.

Often cryptic and cautious, they nevertheless provide political orientation to politicians and bureaucrats alike.⁴⁵

As with the foreign policy concepts, most speeches are not direct indications of coming policy actions. Instead, they reflect how a leader conceptualizes current challenges, and how he would have Russia react to those challenges. Taken together, therefore, official policy documents and presidential speeches show how the government wishes to see foreign policy evolve.

A Review of Russian Foreign Policy Orientations

Although Russian politicians now frequently speak of protecting Russian interests, the idea of "national interest" did not really enter the Russian foreign policy discourse until the mid-1990s. 46 During the Stalin era, foreign policy choices were couched in talk of state security, capitalist encirclement, and the mutual incompatibility of the capitalist and socialist systems. 47 Even as actual policy drifted more towards pragmatism under Brezhnev, it was still governed (officially) by ideology. 48 The turn to "New Thinking" under Gorbachev, meanwhile, appealed to universalism and international law, rather than

⁴⁵ Gordon M. Hahn, "Medvedev, Putin, and Perestroika 2.0," *Demokratizatsiya* 18, no. 3 (Summer 2010): 244,

http://search.proquest.com/docview/755430930/abstract/8EDA5EFE4CCB4AC2PQ/2?accountid=11752.

46 Hans Adomeit, "Russia as a 'Great Power' in World Affairs: Images and Reality," *International Affairs*, 1995, 54.

⁴⁷ Paul Marantz, "Changing Soviet Conceptions of East-West Relations," *International Journal* 37 (1982 1981): 221,

http://he in online.org/HOL/Page? handle = he in. journals/intj37 & id = 230 & div = & collection = journals.

⁴⁸ On ideology setting the bounds of policy debate, see Bruce Parrott, *Politics and Technology in the Soviet Union* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1983), 3.

framing policies in terms of the Soviet national interest.⁴⁹ It was only in the wake of the backlash against Yeltsin and Kozyrev's Western-oriented policy over the course of 1992 that the language of foreign policy "in defence of Russia's interests" emerged.⁵⁰ The emergence of this terminology at a time of fierce domestic debate about Russia's role in the world and its post-Soviet identity was no accident.

Indeed, how different sections of the Russian elite chose to define the national interest was intertwined with the broader competing foreign policy orientations under discussion in the early 1990s. The most traditional divide is that between Westernizers and Slavophiles. Dating back to the debates among the members of the proto-intelligentsia of the 1840s, the two groups agreed that Russia needed to modernize and develop economically. They disagreed on the correct method for doing so. Westernizers advocated development according to European principles and pathways. Slavophiles, by contrast, argued that Russia has a special historical and cultural mission, and could only develop in accordance with native-born traditions. Since the end of the Cold War, this debate has been reframed as a debate between Atlanticists and Eurasianists, where the core question is whether (or how much) to orient towards the institutional and ideological West. Like the original Westernizer/Slavophile debate, the Atlanticist/Eurasianist divide also encompasses debates about whether Russian economic and political development

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⁴⁹ R. Craig Nation, *Black Earth, Red Star: A History of Soviet Security Policy, 1917-1991* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 1992), 296. Part of the problem, of course, was that the Soviet Union was comprised of more than just Russia. Defining Soviet interests was not the same task as the post-Soviet problem of defining Russian interests.

⁵⁰ Adomeit, "Russia as a 'Great Power' in World Affairs," 52–54.

⁵¹ Angela Stent, "Reluctant Europeans," in *Russian Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century and the Shadow of the Past*, ed. Robert Legvold (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 418; On the idea of an ideological West, see Strobe Talbott, "Dangerous Leviathans," *Foreign Policy*, April 15, 2009, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/04/15/dangerous leviathans.

should directly emulate the Western model, or if it should instead follow a unique Russian path.⁵² While Atlanticism reigned in the very early post-Cold War years, by October 1993 it was no longer the dominant paradigm.⁵³

Not everyone believes that this simple dichotomy is sufficient. Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott identify five main schools of thought in Russian foreign policy, particularly with respect to relations with the former Soviet republics. These are: those who advocate an activist but non-expansionist policy; those who view Russia as a multiethnic great power; those who think of Russia as a great power with an ethnically defined base; those who see post-Soviet Russia as undergoing spiritual rebirth following the disasters of communism; and the extreme far right. The first and fourth schools match with the Atlanticist and Eurasianist views, but this breakdown injects helpful nuance into the stark dichotomy of the Atlanticist/Eurasianist schema.

Whereas Dawisha and Parrott focus in particular on Russian foreign policy orientations towards the former Soviet republics, Andrew Kuchins and Igor Zevelev turn their attention to Russian attitudes toward the wider world. Kuchins and Zevelev define three basic orientations (each with several subgroups) in Russian foreign policy discourse: pro-Western liberals, Great Power Balancers, and Nationalists. ⁵⁵ Pro-Western liberals, notably Boris Yeltsin and Andrei Kozyrev, are satisfied with integration into the

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⁵³ Light, "Foreign Policy Thinking," 35.

⁵² Dubin, "The Myth of the 'Special Path' in Contemporary Russian Public Opinion," 36.

⁵⁴ Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott, eds., *Russia and the New States of Eurasia: The Politics of Upheaval* (Cambridge New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 199–202.

Andrew Kuchins and Igor Zevelev, ""Russia's Contested National Identity and Foreign Policy," in Worldviews of Aspiring Powers: Domestic Foreign Policy Debates in China, India, Iran, Japan, and Russia, ed. Henry R. Nau and Deepa M. Ollapally (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 183.

institutional West on Western terms.⁵⁶ Great Power Balancers, notably Evgenii
Primakov, Igor Surkov, and Vladimir Putin, take a roughly realist approach to foreign
policy and stress the primacy of the state and the importance of national interests. They
do not oppose cooperation with the West, but they are unwilling to cooperate at the
perceived expense of Russian national interests.⁵⁷ Finally, nationalists are largely averse
to working with the West.⁵⁸ Kuchins and Zevelev argue that a coalition of liberals and
balancers dominated the scene from 1993 through 2002, while from 2002 to 2008 it
became a coalition of balancers and nationalists.⁵⁹ Following the global economic crisis
and the inauguration of Dmitri Medvedev, the modernizers seemed to regain some
influence, but that waned with the return of Vladimir Putin to the Kremlin in 2012.⁶⁰

Those Kuchins and Zevelev identify as Great Power Balancers, Margot Light classifies as "Pragmatic Nationalists." The advantage of her analysis and classification scheme, taken together with that of Kuchins and Zevelev, is that it traces the path through which this group came to power in the early post-Soviet era.⁶¹ Perhaps most important is her insight that many who ended in the Pragmatic Nationalist camp began as Liberal Westernizers.⁶²

This is important for two reasons. First, it demonstrates that the ongoing prevalence of Pragmatic Nationalists in positions of power is not just a story of loss of power by Atlanticists (in Light's formulation, Liberal Westernizers). Instead, it is demonstrative of

⁵⁶ Ibid., 185.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 187–192.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 192.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 183.

⁶⁰ On modernizers regaining influence after 2008, see Ibid.

⁶¹ Light, "Foreign Policy Thinking," 34.

⁶² Ibid., 51.

an overall shift in views among the Russian foreign policy elite toward a more nationalistic conception of Russian identity and national interests. This has serious implications for analysis: if the Pragmatic Nationalists had grown primarily from an opposition group, then it might be fair to conclude that there remained a strong basis of Atlanticist elites. Since the Atlanticists themselves became Pragmatic Nationalists, it suggests that the views they espouse – moderate Eurasianism, cordial but not subordinate relations with the West, and the pursuit of great power status – represents a broad swath of the Russian foreign policy establishment. That the Pragmatic Nationalist group has persisted in power since 1993, but now allies more closely with nationalists, indicates that the shift away from the Atlanticist view has continued and intensified.

It is also significant that it is precisely the Liberal Westernizers who changed their minds. The shift away from the Atlanticist view has strong elements of political disillusionment. Indeed, one reason Kozyrev and his coterie lost ideological control was public and official disappointment with the level of assistance (monetary and otherwise) that Russia received from the West, and especially the United States, in managing the detritus of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. He sense that Russia was held to different standards than, for example, Estonia, and that the West had no sympathy for Russian security concerns in its border regions left a bad taste in the collective mouth of the Russian elite. Whether or not this was a fair perception of the realities on the ground (the next

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Eric Shiraev and Vladislav Zubok, *Anti-Americanism in Russia: From Stalin to Putin*, 1st ed (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 53, https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/catalog/bib_2175314; Light, "Foreign Policy Thinking," 84–85.

⁶⁵ Light, "Foreign Policy Thinking," 84–85.

section takes up this question), Russian disappointment with the West is a fundamental variable for understanding Russian foreign policy rhetoric and behavior.

All the authors discussed above wrote at different times and offer different classification schemes and names. Nevertheless, there is little substantive difference in where they draw the lines between groups, or what they believe to be the basic orientation of each group. Nearly twenty-five years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the core debate within the Russian foreign policy establishment remains the extent to which Russia should engage with the existing (Western-led) international system, and what policy orientation best supports Russian development. Indeed, even the simple Westernizer/Slavophile dichotomy distills down to the same question. No matter how it is parsed, the foreign policy making elite is in agreement that Russia's main task is development, in pursuit of becoming (or staying) a great power. 66 The crisscrossing debates are over how best to accomplish this aim.

Russia and the West: A Failed Experiment?

As noted above, there was a brief window before the end of 1992 when those in favor of joining the West were politically ascendant and capable of implementing their policy vision without crippling domestic opposition.⁶⁷ It is worth posing the question, therefore, of why the debate over Russia's "special path" renewed itself so quickly following

⁶⁶ Ibid., 52; Mankoff, Russian Foreign Policy, 2012, 21.

⁶⁷ This is not to argue that there was no domestic opposition, merely that Yeltsin and his government were strong enough to override it.

dissolution of the Soviet Union. It is an important question because the international institutional choices made during this era have had long-lasting and far-reaching consequences for how Russia engages with the international system.⁶⁸

There are three basic reasons that Russia did not integrate into the Western order in the early 1990s. First, there was an ambiguous embrace from the West. Second, Russia was unwilling to join the existing order as a supplicant with no agency in how the existing organizations operated. Finally, domestic opposition quickly became sufficiently intense to preclude integration while domestic policy choices further closed off international opportunities.

Following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet outer empire in Eastern Europe, there existed a brief opportunity to utterly remake the international system. Mikhail Gorbachev spoke of the need to build "a common European home," and U.S. President George H.W. Bush spoke of "a Europe whole and free." The obvious institutional organ to accomplish this goal was the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE, later OSCE). Formed as part of 1975 Helsinki Final Act, the CSCE gave all the major players a seat at the table and an equal voice. The French were initially in favor of this approach. Alternatively, the Soviets and the West could

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⁶⁸ M. E. Sarotte, *1989: The Struggle to Create Post-Cold War Europe* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2009), 5.

⁶⁹ Nation, *Black Earth, Red Star*, 298; George H.W. Bush, "A Europe Whole and Free" (Speech, Rheingoldhalle. Mainz, Federal Republic of Germany, May 31, 1989), http://usa.usembassy.de/etexts/ga6-890531.htm.

⁷⁰ Mary Elise Sarotte, "Perpetuating U.S. Preeminence," *International Security* 35, no. 1 (Summer 2010): 112, http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=mth&AN=51999026&site=ehost-live&scope=site. The French did not want NATO to dissolve, but since they initially did not want NATO to expand to include East Germany, they favored a different solution for Euro-Atlantic security architecture.

have agreed on some type of new pan-European security structure including both the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Treaty Organization. This was the path that Gorbachev advocated, especially after he realized that the Soviet Union would have no role in a united Germany. One of these approaches to post-Cold War security architecture could have been taken up if the goal was a common European home including the Soviet Union, and then Russia as its main successor state.

As Mary Sarotte argues, however, this goal was not shared on both sides of the Atlantic. Instead, President Bush was more concerned about maintaining U.S. influence on the continent. He was convinced that elevating NATO over the CSCE was the way to accomplish that aim. The indeed, Secretary of State James Baker even told President Bush that the "real risk to NATO is the CSCE." Bush and West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl exploited the Soviet Union's dire economic situation to convince Gorbachev to agree to NATO's perpetuation and expansion into East Germany, using West German money as an inducement. Sarotte's research further suggests that even as Bush and Kohl were working on convincing Gorbachev to assent to membership of a unified Germany in NATO, they were already planning for longer-term NATO expansion into the former Soviet satellites in Central and Eastern Europe.

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⁷⁵ Sarotte, "Perpetuating U.S. Preeminence," 121–122.

⁷¹ Sarotte, *1989*, 105.

⁷² Sarotte, "Perpetuating U.S. Preeminence," 112–113.

¹³ Ibid., 112.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 120; Mark Kramer, "The Myth of a No-NATO-Enlargement Pledge to Russia," *Washington Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (Spring 2009): 54, doi:10.1080/01636600902773248.

The question of who said what and when about NATO enlargement during the discussions about German unification remains bitterly divisive. American scholars generally agree that neither Bush nor Kohl, nor any of their representatives, ever made a formal promise to Gorbachev that NATO would not enlarge beyond absorbing East Germany. Even Sarotte states quite clearly: "Put simply, there was never a formal deal, as Russia alleges."⁷⁶ The difference in U.S. scholarship arises over whether or not one was implied. Sarotte has argued that the Russians are not wrong to see successive rounds of NATO enlargement as the betrayal of a gentleman's agreement. 77 By contrast, Mark Kramer argues that the discussions between Kohl, Baker, Bush, and Gorbachev all dealt directly with the question of East Germany's status within NATO. Therefore, the Russian interpretation of the agreement that NATO would not move eastward as promise about general NATO expansion is incorrect. ⁷⁸ Angela Stent concurs, and argues that enlargement beyond the inclusion of East Germany was not under discussion until after Bill Clinton was in the U.S. White House. 79 On the Russian side, Gorbachev argued that a commitment was made as part of the Two Plus Four agreements that facilitated German unification. 80 However, some Soviet diplomats who participated in the Two Plus Four negotiations disagree that there was an implicit promise regarding a NATO presence beyond East Germany.81

⁷⁶ Mary Elise Sarotte, "A Broken Promise? What the West Really Told Moscow about NATO Expansion," *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 5 (September 2014): 90–97, doi:http://www.foreignaffairs.com/archive.

⁷⁷ Mary Elise Sarotte, "Enlarging NATO, Expanding Confusion," *The New York Times*, November 30, 2009, sec. Opinion, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/30/opinion/30sarotte.html.

⁷⁸ Kramer, "The Myth of a No-NATO-Enlargement Pledge to Russia."

⁷⁹ Angela Stent, *Russia and Germany Reborn: Unification, the Soviet Collapse, and the New Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 216–217. Stent argues it was a combination of U.S. and German foreign and domestic politics that ultimately drove forward the debate on NATO enlargement. ⁸⁰ Ibid 213

⁸¹ Jack Matlock, "NATO EXPANSION: WAS THERE A PROMISE?," *JackMatlock.com*, April 3, 2014, http://jackmatlock.com/2014/04/nato-expansion-was-there-a-promise/.

Who is right in this debate is ultimately much less important than what the debate signifies. At root, the disagreement reveals a larger truth that is essential to understanding Russian foreign policy thinking and behavior. From the very beginning there existed profound misunderstandings between the two former Cold War enemies about the future of the European security order and Russia's place in it. From the Russian perspective, these misunderstandings have never been sufficiently addressed. The result has been a Russia that is on the margins of the European order, and, more importantly, a Russia that feels itself to be marginalized by the European order.

Samuel Charap terms this stalemate an "integration dilemma." In international relations theory, a security dilemma occurs when states arm themselves for defensive purposes, but in doing so they scare other states into arming as well. As a result, states become less secure than they would have been had they not pursued the armament policy. Charap and Jeremy Shapiro apply this theory to the integration processes in post-Cold War Europe. They argue that Russia could never have been absorbed into either NATO or the European Union. Sa a result, "barring a realistic prospect of joining itself, Moscow viewed Euro-Atlantic integration for Russia's neighbors as inherently threatening to

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⁸² Samuel Charap, "The Ukraine Crisis: Causes and Consequences" (Russia-Eurasia Forum, Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, Washington, DC, October 28, 2015).

⁸³ Jennifer Sterling-Folker, "Realism," in *Making Sense of International Relations Theory*, ed. Jennifer Sterling-Folker (Boulder, Colo: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), 14, https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/catalog/bib 2590186.

William A. Darity Jr., ed., "Deterrence, Mutual," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 2nd ed., vol. 2 (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2008), 334–35,

http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CCX3045300578&v=2.1&u=balt85423&it=r&p=GVRL&sw=w&asid=d4ca1bbf00da1b19b470fdebfdcc28ef.

⁸⁵ Charap and Shapiro, "A New European Security Order: The Ukraine Crisis and the Missing Post-Cold War Bargain," 2.

Russian interests."⁸⁶ In the language of the security dilemma, the West's effort to secure Europe – which was remarkably successful– made Russia feel less secure.

Charap and Shapiro do not argue that the integration dilemma is the result of malign intentions on the part of the United States and Europe. ⁸⁷ As Stephen Sestanovich has written, the main goal of immediate post-Cold War decision-making was to stabilize an unstable situation. To attempt to do so by creating an entirely new institutional architecture would have been incredibly risky, and even cavalier, given the difficulty of creating strong institutions and the consequences of failure. ⁸⁸ Charap does not disagree with that assessment. ⁸⁹ Here these authors disagree with Sarotte. She argues that the "international order was up for grabs" during the negotiations over German reunification. ⁹⁰ Sestanovich and Charap and Shapiro, while not debating the point that decisions made in that era have had lasting consequences, are less convinced of the viability of alternative paths. ⁹¹

Whether or not the right decisions were made in the early 1990s, those decisions cast a long shadow. The extent to which the Russian elite feels that Russian interests have been encroached upon in the post-Cold War institutional settlement, particularly but not exclusively in Europe, remains a key driver of how its leaders have conceived of and executed foreign policy. It is important to remember, however, that the Russian

⁸⁶ Ibid., 5.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Stephen Sestanovich, "Could It Have Been Otherwise?," *The American Interest*, accessed April 16, 2015, http://www.the-american-interest.com/2015/04/14/could-it-have-been-otherwise/.

⁸⁹ Charap, "The Ukraine Crisis: Causes and Consequences."

⁹⁰ Sarotte. *1989*, 213.

⁹¹ Sestanovich and Charap and Shapiro cover a longer time frame than just the negotiations over German reunification, but the argument holds.

leadership has also found it useful to heighten that threat perception for domestic political aims. 92 This leads to the second and third parts of the story: Russian unwillingness to join international organizations as a supplicant, and the domestic drivers of that unwillingness.

The basis of Charap and Shapiro's argument that Russia could never have joined either NATO or the EU is that Russia could not agree to a non-negotiable accession process. ⁹³
This is not a problem only in the Euro-Atlantic context, but globally as well. Post-Soviet Russia's circuitous path to membership in organs of global economic governance provides a case in point.

Russia applied for membership in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1993, shortly before GATT became the World Trade Organization (WTO) following the 1994 Uruguay Round. However, Russia's early enthusiasm for membership soon dwindled, and meetings during the 1990s were more about show than substance. Russian negotiators refused to meet their negotiating partners' demands about lowering tariffs, and were unwilling to make other concessions required for WTO membership. Russia ultimately would not join the WTO until August 2012. Russia ultimately would not join the WTO until August 2012.

⁹² Lilia Shevtsova, "Post-Communist Russia: A Historic Opportunity Missed," *International Affairs* 83, no. 5 (September 2007): 901, doi:10.1111/j.1468-2346.2007.00661.x. See the section in this chapter "Anti-Westernism in Russia" for a fuller discussion of this point.

⁹³ Charap and Shapiro, "A New European Security Order: The Ukraine Crisis and the Missing Post-Cold War Bargain," 3.

⁹⁴ Anders Åslund, *How Russia Became a Market Economy* (Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution, 1995), 152.

⁹⁵ Keith A. Darden, *Economic Liberalism and Its Rivals: The Formation of International Institutions among the Post-Soviet States* (Cambridge New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 56–57.

⁹⁶ Ibid 57

⁹⁷ http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/tif_e/org6_e.htm

In his book *Economic Liberalism and Its Rivals*, Keith Darden argues that a main reason for the reluctance of successive Russian governments (other than the early years Vladimir Putin's first term) to pursue WTO membership aggressively is that Russian elites tend to hold economic ideas that run counter to the liberalism engrained in the WTO. ⁹⁸ This is part of the explanation, but it is not the whole story. Instead, the unwillingness to join the WTO is an example of a broader phenomenon in the Russian approach to the international system.

As Darden himself notes, aspirant countries have very little bargaining power with respect to WTO membership terms: accession "primarily involves unilateral tariff or market-access concessions by the prospective member in order to secure support for entry." Essentially, joining the WTO means acceding to the demands of other countries, with no ability to change how negotiations are conducted. This is not just a feature of WTO accession. As Russia realized to its dismay throughout the 1990s, aspirants to reigning international institutions have no agency; they must either accept the rules as written or stay outside the club. 100 All post-Soviet Russian leaders, however, have been generally unwilling to join institutions and organizations Russia has not helped design. 101

The story of Russia's integration into the International Monetary Fund (IMF) offers an interesting counterpoint to the WTO accession story. It is further indication of how and

⁹⁸ Darden, Economic Liberalism and Its Rivals, 158.

⁹⁹ Ibid 53

¹⁰⁰ Cynthia Roberts, "Russia's BRICs Diplomacy: Rising Outsider with Dreams of an Insider," *Polity* 42, no. 1 (January 2010): 61, doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/pol.2009.18.

¹⁰¹ Mankoff, Russian Foreign Policy, 2012, 274.

when Russia is willing to be incorporated into an existing order. Immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia applied for and was granted membership in the IMF. It also succeeded in obtaining a sole directorship, a privilege normally reserved for the most powerful economies. ¹⁰²

According to senior IMF officials, it was made clear from the beginning that Russia should get special treatment in its dealings with the IMF. ¹⁰³ In this case, it was coordinated pressure from G7 countries (in part as a way of redirecting aid to Russia through the IMF) rather than Russian expectations of special treatment that produced the final outcome. ¹⁰⁴ Indeed, Russia had very complicated feelings towards the institution, since Soviet leaders had long portrayed it "as a tool of Western capitalism and especially U.S. foreign policy." ¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, once G7 leaders decided that aid to Russia should be channeled through the IMF, the country benefited from special treatment in its accession, and received preferential membership terms that its economic performance did not necessarily justify. ¹⁰⁶ In addition, this was not all due to coordinated pressure from G7 members: Russia actively lobbied G7 members to get its own seat on the Executive Board. ¹⁰⁷

¹⁰² Bessma Momani, "Another Seat at the Board: Russia's IMF Executive Director," *International Journal* 62, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 921,

http://search.proquest.com/docview/220865291/abstract/1413C993CF8172A6CA6/1?accountid=11752. The USSR was originally granted a sole Executive Director seat, but lost it when the country withdrew from the IMF soon after its founding. See ibid, 924.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 923.

¹⁰⁴ Martin G. Gilman, *No Precedent, No Plan: Inside Russia's 1998 Default* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2010), 28–29.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 17.

¹⁰⁶ Momani, "Another Seat at the Board," 927.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 929.

The reason for Russia's preference for not joining international institutions where its special status is not recognized leads to the third main reason for its failure to integrate fully into the Western order following the collapse of the Soviet Union. By the middle of 1992, domestic political pressures in Russia had reached a point where the Yeltsin government could no longer pursue an explicitly pro-Western policy without fear of reprisal at home. 108 Part of the problem was a sense, not entirely unfounded, that the post-Cold War order looked very much like the Cold War order, most notably in the persistence of NATO. 109 Economic reform also proved disastrous for the majority of the Russian population, with real wages falling by over one third and personal consumption dropping by 40 percent. 110 These reforms were associated in the popular mind with Western economic advisors. 111 Combined with the rampant corruption during the course of privatization, the process destroyed much public support for the Yeltsin government's perceived deference to Western interests. 112 Simultaneous, Western states had a fiercely negative reaction to Russia's activities during the first Chechen War in 1994. Taken together, these factors opened up space for a renewal of the longstanding debate about Russia's distinctiveness from the West and the wisdom of pursuing a foreign policy not entirely oriented westward. 113

¹⁰⁸ Adomeit, "Russia as a 'Great Power' in World Affairs," 45.

¹⁰⁹ Mankoff, Russian Foreign Policy, 2012, 37.

¹¹⁰ Thane Gustafson, *Capitalism Russian-Style* (Cambridge, England New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 171, https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/catalog/bib 2111533. This is not to argue that reformers faced an easy task, or that they went about reform the wrong way. It is simply to note that the Russian population suffered, and, rightly or wrongly, that suffering had consequences for Russia's relationship with the United States.

¹¹¹ Shiraev and Zubok, Anti-Americanism in Russia, 55.

¹¹² Jerry F. Hough, *The Logic of Economic Reform in Russia* (Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), 7; Mankoff, Russian Foreign Policy, 2012, 37. As Shiraev and Zubok point out, the United States also made a useful scapegoat, regardless of the country's actual responsibility or culpability.
113 Dubin, "The Myth of the 'Special Path' in Contemporary Russian Public Opinion," 36.

There was also an ideational aspect to the rise in domestic opposition to the Yeltsin-Kozyrev program: agreement that Russia is a Great Power and should be treated as such in international affairs. ¹¹⁴ As noted above, there is a consensus among the Russian elite that the goal of Russian foreign policy should be to return the state to its historic position as a Great Power with independence of maneuver on the international stage. ¹¹⁵ While the wisdom of this approach remained a subject of public debate throughout the 1990s, the consensus has gone largely unchallenged since 1999. ¹¹⁶ The result of this foreign policy consensus has been a Russia unwilling to embrace the institutional order that emerged after the Cold War because of a sense that to do so would run counter to the core of Russian national identity.

There are several factors in the explanation above that raise questions about whether opportunities were missed or different outcomes might have been achieved with different choices. For example, had NATO not persisted, would Russia have felt so alienated so early? Alternatively, had economic reform been administered better and with less corruption on the part of the Yeltsin government, would there have been such susceptibility to the renewal of the distinctiveness narrative? Ultimately, however, these counterfactuals are useful for interrogation of what went wrong in 1990s, but they do not change the ending. As a result of Western choices, Russian's unwillingness to accept its newly weakened international position, and the resurgence of domestic opposition, Russian integration with Western institutional structures was essentially off the table (at

suggests the lack of challenge may be more due to Putin's repression of the media than genuine consensus.

¹¹⁴ Kuchins and Zevelev, ""Russia's Contested National Identity and Foreign Policy," 182.

Clunan, The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence, 72; Mankoff, Russian Foreign Policy, 2012, 5.
 Mankoff, Russian Foreign Policy, 6; Andrei P. Tsygankov, "Preserving Influence in a Changing World," Problems of Post-Communism 58, no. 2 (April 3, 2011): 31. It should be noted that Mankoff

least in the short and medium term) by the middle of the 1990s. The logical next question, then, is what Russia did instead.

Russian Responses to the Post-Cold War Order

One of Russia's primary objectives following the collapse of the Soviet Union was to maintain those elements of the previous world order in which Russia, as the largest Soviet successor state, would play a leading role. This meant first and foremost the United Nations (UN), because of Russia's permanent seat and veto power in the Security Council (UNSC). Indeed, Russian preference for maintaining the primacy of the UNSC as the main arbiter of international legitimacy has been a hallmark of the post-Cold War era. That Russia has not hesitated to act counter to UN directives, or refused to allow issues to come before the UNSC when it suited the national interest, has not undermined the government's consistent rhetorical support for the institution.

Russia also continued its advocacy for the CSCE into the 1990s, even after it was clear that NATO would persist and predominate as the prime organ of Euro-Atlantic security. That support declined, however, as Russia perceived that the main focus of what was now the OSCE had shifted to human rights and elections in the former Soviet Republics, while NATO and the European Union took over the competencies of security and economics on

¹¹⁷ Andrei Zagorski, "Russian Approaches to Global Governance in the 21st Century," *Internationale Spectator* 45, no. 4 (2010): 28, doi:10.1080/03932729.2010.527099.

¹¹⁸ See for example: Sergei Lavrov, "Face to Face with America: Between Nonconfrontation and Convergence," *Russian Politics & Law* 47, no. 3 (June 5, 2009): 58,

http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=43090889&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

On circumventing the UN, consider, for example, preventing votes on the conflict in Syria to come before the UNSC, and continued operations in Ukraine in 2013 despite UN condemnation.

the continent. ¹²⁰ As Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov explained during the 2010 Munich Security Conference:

With the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty Organization a real opportunity emerged to make the OSCE a full-fledged organization providing equal security for all states of the Euro-Atlantic area. However, this opportunity was missed, because the choice was made in favor of NATO expansion, which meant not only preserving the line that separated Europe during the cold war into zones with different levels of security, but also moving those lines eastward. The role of the OSCE was, in fact, reduced to servicing this policy by means of supervision over humanitarian issues in the post-Soviet space. 121

It is unlikely that further Russian action would have reversed the preeminence of NATO over the OSCE. It is worth recognizing, however, that Russian support for the institution diminished when it became apparent that the OSCE would no longer serve to maintain or magnify Russian influence.

Parallel to the status quo approach to the UN and the OSCE, Russia also pursued a policy of new institutional creation designed to amplify its dominance of the post-Soviet space. First but weakest among these was the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which was established as part of the agreement that dissolved the Soviet Union. However, since the original purpose of the CIS was to facilitate Russian independence from the former Soviet republics, it proved an ineffective mechanism for reviving

¹²⁰ EASI Working Group on Historical Reconciliation ad Protracted Conflicts, "Historical Reconciliation and Protracted Conflicts," Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 2012), 4–5, http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/02/03/historical-reconciliation-and-protracted-conflicts/9cwb. The CSCE formally became the OSCE in January 1995.

¹²¹ As reproduced in Tsygankov, "Preserving Influence in a Changing World," 32.

¹²² Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity*, Second Edition (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010), 48.

Russian power once foreign policy objectives shifted in that direction. ¹²³ The CIS did (and does), however, provide a very loose framework for regional cooperation. 124

In the 1990s, attention shifted initially to furthering economic integration among the New Independent States. In 1995, at Kazakhstan's initiative, Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan agreed to form a Customs Union. 125 The agreement was implemented fairly well initially. but backsliding began in 1996, in part because of disagreements over the common external tariff. 126 Economic cooperation continued, however, and in 2000 the initial trade agreement morphed into the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), which included Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. 127 In 2003, Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus also signed an agreement on creating a Common Economic Space. 128 The Customs Union implemented common customs duties in July 2010, and further integration has proceeded apace. 129

In addition to economic organizations, Russia has also attempted to coordinate regional security cooperation through the creation in 2002 of the Cooperative Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). 130 CSTO member states include Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan,

¹²³ Ibid., 79.

¹²⁴ Darden, Economic Liberalism and Its Rivals, 59.

¹²⁵ Vitaly V. Naumkin, "Russian Policy Toward Kazakhstan," in *Thinking Strategically: The Major* Powers, Kazakhstan, and the Central Asian Nexus, ed. Robert Legvold (MIT Press, 2003), 46. ¹²⁶ Darden, Economic Liberalism and Its Rivals, 69–70.

¹²⁷ Alexander Cooley, Great Games, Local Rules: The New Great Power Contest in Central Asia, First Edition (Oxford University Press, USA, 2012), 59.

¹²⁸ Edinoe ekonomicheskoe prostranstvo: vozmozhnosti, problemy, perspektivy (Moskva: Nekommercheskiĭ fond Nasledie Evrazii, ND), 9.

¹²⁹ Cooley, *Great Games, Local Rules*, 2012, 61. See chapter five for a more detailed discussion of the Eurasian Union. ¹³⁰ Ibid., 56.

Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and (since 2006) Uzbekistan. Putin has consistently attempted to use the CSTO as a basis for cooperation with NATO (especially in Afghanistan), an approach that recalls Gorbachev's argument for cooperation between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. NATO has been unwilling to cooperate with the CSTO, however, and many in the West assume that the CSTO is a mechanism for projecting Russian power among former Soviet republics, rather than a legitimate security organization. Whether or not this is the case, and regardless of how effectively the agreements of both the CSTO and the Customs Union are implemented among their members, both organizations have provided Russia with platforms from which to compete rhetorically with Western-led alternatives.

Alternative institutional formation has extended beyond the states of the former Soviet Union. Most notable among these is the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The SCO was established in 2001 out of the grouping formerly known as the "Shanghai Five" (Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan). The SCO has been a useful mechanism for managing the relationship between Russia and China, and has been effective at promoting regional economic cooperation. The organization has also

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.; Sarotte, *1989*, 105.

¹³³ For an alternate view recommending NATO-CSTO coordination, see Zbigniew Brzezinski, "An Agenda for NATO.," *Foreign Affairs* 88, no. 5 (September 1, 2009): 18.

¹³⁴ Cooley, Great Games, Local Rules, 2012, 72.

¹³⁵ Chien-Peng Chung, "The Shanghai Co-Operation Organization: China's Changing Influence in Central Asia," *The China Quarterly*, no. 180 (December 2004): 991.

¹³⁶ Bobo Lo, *Axis of Convenience: Moscow, Beijing, and the New Geopolitics* (Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2008), 106–109.

attracted interest from other regional powers, notably Iran, India, and Pakistan. ¹³⁷ During the 2015 SCO Summit in Ufa (held in conjunction with the BRICS summit), India and Pakistan were accepted as full members in the organization. ¹³⁸ There remains some potential for institutional conflict between the SCO and the CSTO. ¹³⁹ However, the SCO remains the best example of Russia's larger institutional approach to its perceived alienation from the order that emerged in Europe at the end of the Cold War. The SCO has attracted not just former Soviet republics but, with the inclusion of India and the participation of Iran and Turkey, other major regional and global powers. ¹⁴⁰

This institutional approach is nested in a larger strategic approach: working towards the creation of a multipolar world. Evgenii Primakov was the first to articulate multipolarity as a grand strategy for Russia during his time as Foreign Minister in the mid-1990s. Primakov put a great deal of emphasis on the importance of building ties with non-Western powers, particularly China and India. The aims of this strategy were to maintain Russian influence in the former Soviet region and to contain U.S. hegemony.

¹³⁷ Nicklas Norling and Niklas Swanström, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Trade, and the Roles of Iran, India and Pakistan," *Central Asian Survey* 26, no. 3 (September 2007): 431, doi:10.1080/02634930701702779.

¹³⁸ Reid Standish, "China and Russia Lay Foundation for Massive Economic Cooperation," *Foreign Policy*, July 10, 2015, https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/07/10/china-russia-sco-ufa-summit-putin-xi-jinping-eurasian-union-silk-road/.

¹³⁹ Lo, Axis of Convenience, 109; Cooley, Great Games, Local Rules, 2012, 71.

¹⁴⁰ Iran currently has observer status in the SCO, while Turkey is a dialogue partner. http://www.sectsco.org/EN123/

Andrey Makarychev and Viatcheslav Morozov, "Multilateralism, Multipolarity, and Beyond: A Menu of Russia's Policy Strategies," *Global Governance* 17, no. 3 (July 2011): 355, http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=mth&AN=65289476&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

¹⁴² Kuchins and Zevelev, ""Russia's Contested National Identity and Foreign Policy," 188; Harsh V. Pant, "Feasibility of the Russia-China-India 'Strategic Triangle': Assessment of Theoretical and Empirical Issues," *International Studies* 43, no. 1 (January 1, 2006): 52, doi:10.1177/002088170504300103. See the third chapter for a more in-depth discussion of Primakov and the Russia-India-China (RIC) strategic triangle.

¹⁴³ Kuchins and Zeveley, ""Russia's Contested National Identity and Foreign Policy," 188.

The goal of multipolarity has been official Russian doctrine since 1997, and was formally enshrined in the 2000 foreign policy concept that Vladimir Putin approved in his first year in office. 144

Multipolarity in its most basic meaning is "the ability of sovereign powers to take political decisions of their own." ¹⁴⁵ Implicit in this definition is the idea of balance of power: in a multipolar world, the poles balance against one another to prevent hegemony. In Kremlin usage, multipolarity is specifically a counterbalance to Western "collective unilateralism" and, more broadly, an alternative to globalization. ¹⁴⁶ Essentially, Kremlin leaders use the idea of multipolarity to lobby against Western dominance of the international system and for a system where sovereign states remain the principle actors. Its closest analogue is a concert of great powers along the lines of that established by the Congress of Vienna. ¹⁴⁷ In the Kremlin's conception, a multipolar world would also provide for the competitive coexistence of different value systems, rather than the value homogenization that Western discourse envisions. ¹⁴⁸ This is a core feature of the civilizational approach that emerged in Russian rhetoric in the later years of President Putin's second presidential term (discussed in more depth in chapter four). ¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁴ Victoria Panova, "Mesto Rossii v BRIKS: videnie i prakticheskie rezultaty. Vlianie vneshnikh igrokov vzaimodeistviia v 'klube,'" *Vsia Evropa i Luxemburg* 68, no. 7–8 (2012), http://alleuropalux.org/?p=3927; Makarychev and Morozov, "Multilateralism, Multipolarity, and Beyond," 355.

¹⁴⁵ Andrei Makarychev, *Russia and the EU in a Multipolar World: Discourses, Identities, Norms*, Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society 127 (Stuttgart, Germany: ibidem-Verlag, 2014), 57.

¹⁴⁶ Makarychev and Morozov, "Multilateralism, Multipolarity, and Beyond," 354, 361.

¹⁴⁷ Robert Legvold, "The Role of Multilateralism in Russian Foreign Policy," in *The Multilateral Dimension in Russian Foreign Policy*, ed. Elana Wilson Rowe and Stina Torjesen (London New York: Routledge, 2009), 27; In an article in 2002, Duma member and NKI BRIKS Presidium Chair Vyacheslav Nikonov proposed an updated version of the Concert. See V.A. Nikonov, "Back to the Concert," *Russia in Global Affairs*, November 16, 2002, http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/n 12.

¹⁴⁸ Zagorski, "Russian Approaches to Global Governance in the 21st Century," 31.

¹⁴⁹ V.A. Nikonov, "Ot Kontserta derzhav k Kontserty tsivilizatsii," *Strategiia Rossii*, no. 11 (November 2012),

The idea of multipolarity as a system based on the actions of sovereign states is critical for understanding one of the primary links between Russia's foreign policy and its domestic context. The domestic twin of multipolarity is sovereign democracy. As Andrei Zagorski argues, "the concept of sovereign democracy...does not stipulate the peculiar Russian understanding of democracy, but, rather, the principle of state sovereignty." In the Russian view, few states are fully sovereign, meaning few states are able to conduct the foreign policy they wish without fear of repercussions from other global actors. Sovereign states are the leading nations, those that are able to pursue their own national interests and that play a role in shaping and coordinating global governance. In addition, Russia understands sovereignty as the right to control territory, not responsibility to the population. Therefore, sovereign democracy is about the Russian government's right to administer its domestic affairs as it sees fit, without interference, while maintaining the rights of an independent sovereign actor on the international stage.

A corollary to the preference for unfettered freedom of action on the international stage is a preference for informal as opposed to formal alliances. Russian leaders often appeal rhetorically to the primacy of international law and show a preference for legally binding agreements on some specific issues (notably on U.S. plans for ballistic missile defense in

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http://sr.fondedin.ru/new/fullnews_arch_to.php?subaction=showfull&id=1352195650&archive=135478809 0&start from=&ucat=14&.

¹⁵⁰ Zagorski, "Russian Approaches to Global Governance in the 21st Century," 32.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid., 32–33.

¹⁵³ Makarychev and Morozov, "Multilateralism, Multipolarity, and Beyond," 362.

Europe). 154 In terms of coalitions and long-term partnership agreements, however, Russia's preference is clearly in favor of informality and flexibility. 155 Indeed, none of the new organizations whose creation Russia has spearheaded include binding action clauses analogous to Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty. 156 While there are benefits to retaining freedom of action, the penchant for flexibility also creates a situation where Russia has no guaranteed partners in times of need.

In contrast to the Soviet era, post-Soviet Russia, especially since 2000, has also integrated the need for a strong economy into its conception of power. ¹⁵⁷ There is no question that military strength remains a big part of how Russia conceives of power on the international stage. However, by the time Dmitry Medvedev was in power, Russians increasing associated being a great power with economic development rather than military might. 158 That shift in appreciation of economic power was also evident in government policy. By the end of Putin's second term in office, Russia used economic might more than military prowess to project power. 159 Both the August 2008 war with Georgia and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine are ample evidence that military power remains important. However, economic and political concerns in Russia are very intertwined, and economics, whether through energy or otherwise, plays a central role in

¹⁵⁴ On the primacy of international law, see Lavroy, "Face to Face with America," 46. The BRICS Summit statements all stress the primacy of international law, suggesting that, at least from a rhetorical perspective, Russia finds common cause on this issue with its BRICS partners.

¹⁵⁵ Tsvgankov, "Preserving Influence in a Changing World," 29.

^{156 &}quot;The North Atlantic Treaty" (NATO, April 4, 1949),

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official texts 17120.htm.

¹⁵⁷ Celeste A. Wallander, "Russia: The Domestic Sources of a Less-than-Grand Strategy," in Strategic Asia 2007-08: Domestic Political Change and Grand Strategy, ed. Ashley J. Tellis and Michael Wills (Seattle and Washington, D.C.: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2007), 141.

¹⁵⁸ Tsygankov, "Preserving Influence in a Changing World," 31.

¹⁵⁹ Angela E. Stent, "Restoration and Revolution in Putin's Foreign Policy," *Europe-Asia Studies*, August 2008, 1089, http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=33210373&site=ehostlive&scope=site.

how Russia engages with the international system. In addition, especially since the 2008 financial crisis, imbalances in the global economic order have taken a more central place in the overall Russian narrative about general imbalance in global governance. ¹⁶⁰

Anti-Westernism in Russia

The preceding sections have detailed the relationship between Russia and the West since the end of the Cold War. An important corollary to that discussion is the question of anti-Americanism, and anti-Westernism more broadly, in Russian foreign and domestic policy. These are related but not identical phenomena. At root, anti-Americanism might be considered a sub-set of anti-Westernism, where the former is anger at specific U.S. policies and attributes, and the latter is a more cultural dissociation from what the collective ideological West represents. ¹⁶¹

Eric Shiraev and Vladislav Zubok identify three basic types of anti-Americanism worldwide: violent (e.g. terrorism); non-violent but with policy impact, such as the boycott of American products or rejection of treaties; and societal and cultural, which includes public criticism and denunciation of U.S. government policies. ¹⁶² The first two

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¹⁶² Shiraev and Zubok, Anti-Americanism in Russia, 2.

¹⁶⁰ See for example: A.A. Dynkin and N.I. Ivanova, eds., *Globalnaia perestroika* (Moscow, Russia: Ves Mir, 2014).

¹⁶¹ As Max Paul Friedman notes, anti-Americanism in its general form is best understood as a contested concept, whose meaning has evolved over time. The discussion in this section is not about general anti-Americanism (or anti-Westernism), but what those ideas mean very specifically in Russia. See Max Paul Friedman, *Rethinking Anti-Americanism: The History of an Exceptional Concept in American Foreign Relations* (Cambridge New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 7.

variants are mostly irrelevant to the Russian case. During the 1990s, a version of the third type appeared in Russia: public opinion was fairly anti-American, but the government actively pursued close cooperation with the United States. Since Putin has been in power, the level of specific denunciation of U.S. policies and actions has increased in official rhetoric, though not on a linear trajectory. This denunciation of the United States encompasses not only U.S. foreign policy, but also the global policy approaches the United States has championed and which it carries out in concert with others, most importantly military intervention into sovereign nations.

Anti-Americanism has also been helpful in Russia's efforts to consolidate a post-Soviet national identity. As discussed above, many in Russia blame the United States and its advisors for the economic calamities that Russia experienced during the 1990s. 165

Further, there is enduring anger that the United States treated Russia like a defeated power during the 1990s and did not make good faith efforts to build an equal partnership with the Soviet Union's successor state. 166 The anger about that humiliation is a useful rallying cry for domestic nationalists. 167 Humiliation is particularly potent because of the role of the idea of honor in Russian foreign policy. This manifests as a simultaneous need for recognition from Western states of Russia's great-power status while resisting any attempts to strip Russia of the attributes that make it distinct from the West. 168

¹⁶³ The introduction of anti-sanctions after the United States and the EU put Russia under sanctions in 2014 could be considered a manifestation of the second variant, but it is also a direct response to U.S. and EU policies.

¹⁶⁴ Shiraev and Zubok, Anti-Americanism in Russia, 2.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 53.

¹⁶⁶ Stent, The Limits of Partnership, 255–256.

¹⁶⁷ Shiraev and Zubok, Anti-Americanism in Russia, 145.

¹⁶⁸ Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russia and the West from Alexander to Putin: Honor in International Relations* (Cambridge New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 5.

As much as parts of the Russian population harbor real anger towards the United States and its allies, the leadership also manipulates that anger for its own purposes. ¹⁶⁹ Lilia Shevtsova argues the following:

"Humiliation" is useful for Russia's rulers. It detracts attention from domestic problems, from the anti-national essence of the *rentier* class, and from the fact that the country has been turned into a raw materials state. The public becomes too preoccupied with suspicion and feelings of hostility toward the outside world. No détente in relations with the West will convince the political class to give up this advantage. Doing so would require it to find another way to rule Russia. ¹⁷⁰

Shevtsova gives a fatalistic interpretation of the role anti-Westernism plays in Russian domestic politics. Her argument also assumes that Russian political rhetoric about the West is purely manipulative and is not based in any belief on the part of the leadership. That seems too simplistic. Indeed, more worrying might be the idea that the government believes its own propaganda machine.¹⁷¹ But this too discounts the complexities of the historic role of anti-Westernism in Russian political thought and rhetoric.

As argued above, the domestic debate over Russia's relationship with the West is one that dates back centuries. It originally had to do with Russia's relationship with the European great powers. In addition to cultural elements detailed in the previous section, there was also a profound political element to the debate. The split between Westernizers and Slavophiles was not simply about Russia's cultural closeness to Germany and the United

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¹⁶⁹ Shiraev and Zubok, Anti-Americanism in Russia, 146.

¹⁷⁰ Lilia Shevtsova, *Lonely Power: Why Russia Has Failed to Become the West and the West Is Weary of Russia* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2010), 121.

¹⁷¹ On the propaganda machine, see Gary Shteyngart, "Out of My Mouth Comes Unimpeachable Manly Truth," *The New York Times*, February 18, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/22/magazine/out-of-my-mouth-comes-unimpeachable-manly-truth.html. Thanks to a not-for-attribution event at SAIS for the idea about the Russian leadership beginning to believe the propaganda.

Kingdom. It was also about what the European great powers represented as leaders and arbiters of the world order, and Russia's place in that top echelon of states. The European interstate system facilitated Russia's 19th century rise as a great power, but unlike interactions with today's Europe, Imperial Russia had agency over the shape of that system. Nevertheless, interaction with other European states was always fraught, and Russia (and later the Soviet Union) simultaneously sought inclusion in Europe and insulation from excessive foreign influence on domestic affairs. 173

In the years since the debate over Russia's place among European great powers began,
America has overtaken Western Europe as first the other half of a bipolar order and, after
the Cold War, as the global hegemon. This in turn has altered the narrative of antiWesternism in Russia. As Shiraev and Zubok argue:

Russians have a traditionally ambivalent view about the West; throughout history they have been inclined to choose a particular Western country against which to measure themselves. In the twentieth century, it was America's turn to be such a country. 174

There is no doubt that it grates on the collective Russian consciousness that the country's erstwhile adversary has retained its global status. However, the discomfort with specifically American leadership is also subsumed into the historical debate about Russia's relationship with the West, meaning the traditional leaders of the international system.

¹⁷² Stent, "Reluctant Europeans," 394. Agency came, for example, through Russia's participation in the Concert of Vienna.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 293–394.

¹⁷⁴ Shiraev and Zubok, Anti-Americanism in Russia, 144.

In practice, scholars and politicians alike often conflate the ideas of anti-Americanism and anti-Westernism. This is in part because since the United States is the *de facto* leader of the West, distinguishing between the two terms might be seen as a distinction without a difference. This work also uses the two terms roughly interchangeably, but with the background that anti-Americanism is a more specific variant of the larger phenomenon.

Finally, anti-Westernism in Russia exists along a continuum. Efforts to balance against the United States and its allies represent the mildest variant. Creating a narrative of an "evil West" with harmful intentions towards Russia and the world is at the other end of the spectrum. Countless permutations exist in between. In the story of the role BRICS plays in Russian political rhetoric and policy, the level of anti-Westernism, and the type, changes over time. That change is part of the argument presented here.

How Policy Gets Made: Institutions and the Power of the President

Although the focus of this dissertation is foreign policy rhetoric rather than foreign policy action, it is worth delineating the different entities responsible for foreign policy in Russia. The four main organs involved with setting and implementing foreign policy are the Presidential Administration (PA), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MID), the Security Council, and military and intelligence services. ¹⁷⁵ Constitutionally, the president is the director of foreign policy, and MID is the main implementation organ, along with the

¹⁷⁵ Nikolas K. Gvosdev and Christopher Marsh, *Russian Foreign Policy: Interests, Vectors, and Sectors* (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, 2014), 28–37; Dmitri Trenin, interview by Rachel S. Salzman, Personal Interview, December 2, 2014, Moscow, Russia.

Prime Minister as the formal head of the government. ¹⁷⁶ In practice, the Security Council manages much of the coordination between the different agencies and ministries, and is also responsible for long-term conceptualization of strategy. ¹⁷⁷ MID, as in the Soviet era, is fairly removed from the strategic side of the equation. ¹⁷⁸ MID also has no formal responsibility for foreign economic policy. Though this is theoretically under the purview of the different economic ministries, in practice the Prime Minister and his deputies oversee it. ¹⁷⁹ In general, the Duma and Federation Council (collectively, the parliament) have very little influence over foreign policy, except to the extent that they represent a cross-section of the elite with particular interests. ¹⁸⁰ Most decision-making is concentrated in the PA, though while Putin was Prime Minister some power shifted with him to the White House. ¹⁸¹

Since the 1993 Russian constitution vests so much power in the office of the president, it is important to examine just how much the president personally controls and influences foreign policy. Here, it is useful to look back at the scholarship about decision-making under the Soviet system. In the 1970s, a debate began in American Sovietology about the role of conflict between elites in determining Soviet policy. Writing in 1971 and taking on the then-dominant theory of totalitarianism, H. Gordon Skilling argued that it was

¹⁷⁶ Gvosdev and Marsh, Russian Foreign Policy, 27–28, 32.

¹⁷⁷ Mankoff, Russian Foreign Policy, 2012, 55.

¹⁷⁸ Robert H. Donaldson and Joseph L. Nogee, *The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems, Enduring Interests*, 4th ed (Armonk, N.Y: M.E. Sharpe, 2009), 133, https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/catalog/bib 3517686; Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*, 2012, 54.

¹⁷⁹ St. 1914 St. 1914

¹⁷⁹ Gyosdev and Marsh, Russian Foreign Policy, 35.

¹⁸⁰ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*, 2012, 54; Donaldson and Nogee, *The Foreign Policy of Russia*, 2009, 155; Gvosdev and Marsh, *Russian Foreign Policy*, 31.

Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*, 2012, 54; Donaldson and Nogee, *The Foreign Policy of Russia*, 2009, 124. The White House is the seat of the Russian prime minister.

wrong to conceive of the Communist Party (CPSU) as monolithic. ¹⁸² Instead, it consisted of different interest groups, including specialist elites and professional groups.

Competition between these groups exerted influence over policy. Unlike the totalitarian model, which posited the absolute control of state influence over policy, this new conflict model argued that interest groups were an important input in the policy process. ¹⁸³

In response, critics such as William Odom argued that focus on interest groups ignored the critical fact of power centralization in the USSR. While factions of elites might have differing policy priorities, the structure of the system deprived them of an effective transmission mechanism for influencing policy. Therefore, while bureaucratic politics likely played a role in the policy process, it was wrong to conceptualize the factions within the USSR as formal interest groups, such as the term was understood in the study of developed (Western) political systems.¹⁸⁴

The Russian government has a significantly different structure from the Soviet Union's. Indeed, many Russian analysts see more parallels with the Tsarist era than with the Soviet era. However, this Sovietology debate offers useful insights and terminology for analyzing the contemporary system. While there are clearly different groups within the

¹⁸² H. Gordon Skilling, "Interest Groups and Communist Politics: An Introduction," in *Interest Groups in Soviet Politics*, ed. H. Gordon Skilling and Franklyn Griffiths (Princeton, N.J: Published for the Centre for Russian and East European Studies, University of Toronto by] Princeton University Press, 1971), https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/catalog/bib 513780.

¹⁸³ David C. Engerman, *Know Your Enemy: The Rise and Fall of America's Soviet Experts* (Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 206; Skilling, "Interest Groups and Communist Politics: An Introduction."

William E. Odom, "A Dissenting View on the Group Approach to Soviet Politics," *World Politics* 28, no. 04 (1976): 542–67, doi:10.2307/2010066.

¹⁸⁵ Trenin, "Russia's Breakout From the Post–Cold War System," 20; Andrei P. Tsygankov, "Nobody Loves Russia: How Western Media Have Perpetuated the Myth of Putin's 'neo-Soviet Autocracy," *EUROPP*, August 17, 2015, http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2015/08/17/nobody-loves-russia-how-western-media-have-perpetuated-the-myth-of-putins-neo-soviet-autocracy/.

present Russian elite, Russia's weak institutionalization makes these groups more akin to rival clans than political interest groups (or political parties). 186 The president is the "chief arbiter" between these groups: it is his job to balance between competing interests and manage the competition between the clans. 187 As such, his personal views and those of his closest advisors are much more important than they would be in a less centralized system. 188

Further, power has centralized considerably under the Putin presidency, and on top-tier issues (such as the crisis in Ukraine), Putin has direct control over foreign policy. 189 On these issues, even the Soviet model of an inner circle of advisors is inappropriate. 190 Instead, the better analogy is the Tsarist model of *samoderzhavie* – autocracy. ¹⁹¹ Lesser issues, and BRICS counts among these, devolve more to Putin's staff and speechwriters, but he still has final control on how an issue is portrayed. 192

Given his centrality to shaping policy, this analysis depends heavily on speeches from Putin. This is not the result of a mistaken belief that there are no competing interests

¹⁸⁶ Gvosdev and Marsh, Russian Foreign Policy, 52; Brian D. Taylor, State Building in Putin's Russia: Policing and Coercion after Communism (Cambridge New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 57. ¹⁸⁷ Gyosdev and Marsh, Russian Foreign Policy, 50.

¹⁸⁸ Donaldson and Nogee, *The Foreign Policy of Russia*, 2009, 161.

¹⁸⁹ Fyodor Lukyanov, interview by Rachel S. Salzman, Personal Interview, December 13, 2014, Moscow, Russia.

¹⁹⁰ The Soviet model evolved over time, and there is a big difference between leadership under Stalin and leadership under Stalin's successors. From the perspective of the centrality of the leader, the Stalin model is not entirely inappropriate. However, the Stalin system comprised much more than just a singularly strong executive; it was also a terrorizing, totalitarian regime, and that too impacted how decisions were made. Advisors who fear for their lives are much more cowed than those who may fear for their livelihoods. Though the current government has shown willingness to use violence against opponents, the scale is simply not comparable to previous eras. On the whole, therefore, state structure under Stalin is an inappropriate analogy for the current system.

Lukyanov, interview.

192 Ibid.

among the Russian elite or that Putin is unconstrained by either domestic politics or, to some extent, public opinion. Instead, it is because, especially in the realm of discourse and rhetoric about an issue, what he says matters most. The ideas that influence what he says and how he balances between competing groups are beyond the purview of this study. Instead, the emphasis is on the speeches that are finally given and the policy concepts that are adopted.

Seminal Changes in the International System Since 1991

The preceding sections have reviewed how changing relations with the West, and especially the United States, impacted Russia's foreign policy posture following the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Those interactions, however, took place in a wider context. That broader story is important for understanding why Russia's efforts to bring BRICS together as a political group were ultimately successful.

Immediately following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the conservative columnist

Charles Krauthammer famously declared the beginning of the "unipolar moment." He argued that with the end of the Cold War and the demise of the only other power capable of countering the United States, the coming period would be one of unparalleled U.S. dominance in the international arena. 194 The next year, Francis Fukuyama proclaimed "the end of history." The scholar argued that democracy had proved itself the only

¹⁹³ Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 1 (January 1, 1990): 23–33, doi:10.2307/20044692.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid

¹⁹⁵ Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York Toronto: Free Press Maxwell Macmillan Canada, 1992).

sustainable form of government, the market the only viable basis for an economy, and liberal democracy the victorious "ideology of potentially universal validity." The United States had won the Cold War not only in its material aspect, but its ideational one as well. ¹⁹⁷

In some ways, the 1990s bore out those arguments. U.S. dominance on all metrics of power, including military, economic, and soft power, made the United States seem untouchable. At the same time however, crises around the world sowed discontent with U.S. management of the international system. The Asian Financial Crisis of 1997, which helped fuel the Russian default in 1998, called into question the wisdom of neoliberal economics. They also fueled anger at the United States and the IMF for the harsh remedies imposed in the aftermath of the crises. The war in Kosovo in 1999, pursued without U.N. Security Council authorization, was perceived abroad (especially Russia) as the United States ignoring and breaking international law.

The discontent planted by the policies of the 1990s blossomed in the 2000s, in the wake of the unilateral U.S. invasion of Iraq and George W. Bush's Freedom Agenda. A Pew survey published in June 2007 concluded that international distrust of American leadership had increased overall, and that since 2002 favorable global impressions of the United States had declined worldwide. ¹⁹⁸ Those unfavorable impressions were not just

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 39–42.

¹⁹⁷ On the role of ideas in the Cold War, see Henry R. Nau, "Ideas Have Consequences: The Cold War and Today," *International Politics* 48, no. 4–5 (September 2011): 460, doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/ip.2011.19.
¹⁹⁸ "Global Unease With Major World Powers," Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project (Washington, DC, June 27, 2007), http://www.pewglobal.org/2007/06/27/global-unease-with-major-world-powers/.

about U.S. military activities, but also related to a sense that U.S. policies widened the divide between rich and poor countries and took little account of the desires of other actors. ¹⁹⁹

The Pew survey revealed that the mistrust ran deeper than discreet U.S. policies. It concluded that:

In much of the world there is broad and deepening dislike of American values and a global backlash against the spread of American ideas and customs. Majorities or pluralities in most countries surveyed say they dislike American ideas about democracy — and this sentiment has increased in most regions since 2002. ²⁰⁰

In part, this burgeoning mistrust of American values was related to the perception that U.S. democracy became militarized during the Bush presidency.²⁰¹ Regardless of the precise cause, the results of this poll are an important indication of the extent to which much of what the United States symbolizes internationally had become a matter of debate and distaste even before the onset of the 2008 financial crisis.²⁰² This decline, combined with the economic rise of Brazil, Russia, India, and China opened the door to serious challenges to the post-Cold War system. Russia's BRICS diplomacy, which began in earnest in 2005, must be understood in this context.²⁰³

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Ibid. It is worth noting that though trust in the United States had declined, there was also deep skepticism of the challengers to U.S. global leadership, such as Venezuela, and considerable fear of the rise of China.

²⁰² George W. Bush is not the only cause of the decline of trust in the United States. A WIN/Gallup poll from 2013, a year into Obama's second term, had similar findings to 2007 Pew survey. See Post Editorial Board, "US Is the Greatest Threat to World Peace: Poll," *New York Post*, January 5, 2014, http://nypost.com/2014/01/05/us-is-the-greatest-threat-to-world-peace-poll/.

²⁰³ Yurii Valerianovich Andreev, "BRIKS: Cherez sotrudnichesvo – k bezoposnosti?," *Puti k miry i bezopasnosti* 45, no. 2 (2013): 127,

http://new.imemo.ru/files/File/magazines/puty miru/2013/13026 andreev.pdf.

Anger against U.S. global leadership, however, was not the only catalyst for BRICS efforts to reform global economic governance. Profound changes in the distribution of economic power rendered the allocation of effective power in organizations such as the IMF obsolete. For example, in 2007, Indian gross domestic product (GDP) grew at a rate of 9.8 percent and comprised 5.3 percent of global GDP as measured in purchasing power parity (PPP). By contrast, French GDP grew at a rate of 2.4 percent, and comprised 2.9 percent of global GDP (PPP). Nevertheless, France had its own Executive Director seat on the IMF executive board and 4.87 percent of total IMF votes. India, on the other hand, represented a constituency of four countries that received only 2.36 percent of total votes for the whole group. ²⁰⁵

The underrepresentation of emerging economies was not just a problem in terms of quota weights; it also had deep effects on the influence of these countries on IMF governance.

As Ngaire Woods explains:

Executive Directors from the United States, Japan, Germany, France, and the United Kingdom are held directly to account by the government that appoints each. If a director fails to perform...he or she can be summarily removed and replaced. By contrast, no country in a constituency can

²⁰⁴ "World Economic Outlook Database," *International Monetary Fund*, October 2015, https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2015/02/weodata/index.aspx.

²⁰⁵Peter B. Kenen, "Reform of the International Monetary Fund," CSR (Washington, D.C.: Council on Foreign Relations, May 2007), fig. 1, http://www.cfr.org/international-organizations-and-alliances/reform-international-monetary-fund/p13276; In the portion of the quota formula that accounts for GDP, the IMF uses a weighted mix of GDP measured in PPP and GDP measured in market exchange rates (MER), with a bias towards the latter. This bias is its own source of friction between emerging markets and advanced economies, because GDP (MER) tends to understate dramatically the weight of developing economies. For more see Tim Callen, "PPP Versus the Market: Which Weight Matters?," *Finance and Development*, March 2007, http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2007/03/basics.htm.

require their executive director to resign. Once elected a director stays in office until his or her two-year term has expired. 206

Underrepresentation, therefore, has knock-on effects. Not only do countries have less raw power in the form of voting weight, they also have less power over how their interests are represented in the Fund. The imbalance also tended to make Fund management less responsive to the demands of non-agenda setting countries for information or support as compared to the demands of G7 countries. Finally, in addition to consequences of numeric underrepresentation, there is a long-standing agreement that the head of the IMF always be European while the head of the World Bank be American. This agreement closes off avenues for equally qualified candidates from the developing world to take the helm of either organization.

This dissertation balances between narratives of BRICS as an anti-hegemonic project and narratives of BRICS as a logical outgrowth of a changing global political economy. As will be discussed in greater detail in later chapters, for Russia political motivations for BRICS cooperation have mostly outstripped economic motivations. Nevertheless, when BRICS began to coalesce, Russia was one of the new global creditors that desired more say in global economic governance. Russia found common cause with the other BRIC countries because all, to a greater or lesser degree, found global economic governance unfair and counter to their interests. Had there not been an existing and increasing imbalance between economic weight and political power, the BRICS project would have withered before it began. The effort to bring BRICS together as a political group is

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²⁰⁶ Ngaire Woods, *The Globalizers: The IMF, the World Bank, and Their Borrowers* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2006), 192, https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/catalog/bib_2602549.

²⁰⁸ Kenen, "Reform of the International Monetary Fund," 12.

therefore representative of how post-Soviet Russia has engaged with the international system, but it is also a multicountry response to outdated global economic governance.

Chapter Conclusion

Russia has long had a complicated relationship with integration into the dominant international system. A combination of conflicted national identity, a widely held consensus on the importance of the country being accepted as a great power, and a profound disappointment with the West following the end of the Cold War magnified these complications. By the middle of the 2000s, Russian policy had settled into a balance between cooperation and competition with Western-led institutions. Russia attempted to maintain the importance of those institutions where it had a full voice and created alternatives to those that highlighted how much stature Russia had lost on the international stage since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The Russian dialectic between cooperation and competition with the West took place within an international environment that was also rapidly changing. By the middle of the first decade of the 2000s, U.S. global leadership was increasingly unpopular. At the same time, rapid growth in countries underrepresented in global economic governance forced the question of reform of some international institutions. As a result of these twin processes, long-simmering discontent in the developing world began to manifest as outright efforts to block Western domination of international decision-making. The unipolar moment, if it had ever existed, was over, and history was back.

It was not a political scientist who first grouped together the countries that would go on to symbolize the rise of the developing world. Instead, it was an economist at the investment bank Goldman Sachs. Since the 2001 release of the report *Building Better Global Economic BRICs* heralded the rise of Brazil, Russia, India, and China, however, the term BRIC has spread far beyond Wall Street. The next chapter presents a review of that process, investigating how the BRIC term has been used and understood in academic literature.

2. BRICS and Russian Foreign Policy: The State of the Field

BRICS is not a very popular topic among those who study Russian foreign policy, and Russia is not a very popular topic among those who study BRICS.¹ Those who study Russia often see BRICS as a distraction, and those who study BRICS are more concerned with institutional dynamics than the specifics of Russian policy. Further, BRICS itself remains a controversial topic. In part because of its origins on Wall Street, in part because of its diverse membership, and in part because of its short history, the group's validity as an object of study and an agent in international politics is not universally accepted.

This dissertation addresses all of these themes. As noted in the previous chapter, it balances at the intersection of different interpretations of BRICS itself: that of BRICS as a Russian anti-Western project, and that of BRICS as a legitimate and strengthening feature of contemporary global governance. Because the topic is so new and so unsettled, I have chosen to separate the literature review into an independent chapter rather than folding it into the initial analysis of Russian approaches to the international system. The aim in this chapter is twofold: to highlight main approaches within the new field of studying BRICS as a unitary actor on the international stage, and to investigate more fully the emerging literature on Russia and BRICS.

¹ As is explained in more detail below, BRIC did not become BRICS until 2011. I therefore use a roughly chronological approach to terminology: efforts that took place before 2011 are described as "BRIC efforts" whereas those after 2011 are "BRICS efforts." The exception is in the generic term: in discussions that are not tied to place and time, but rather about the general impact of the idea or where chronology is not relevant to the argument, I use "BRICS" because it is the most inclusive description of the group.

The chapter begins with a review of scholarly analyses of BRICS as a group, focusing on how experts conceive of the group's role (current or future) in global governance. It then examines how major general studies of Russian foreign policy have addressed BRICS.

The penultimate section looks at the literature on Russian policy towards BRICS and debates over whether or not Russia is a rightful member of the group. Finally, I identify gaps that others have ignored, and detail the specific contributions of this study.²

One final note is needed about the terminology employed to describe BRICS. As discussed in more detail below, the question of how to define BRICS remains an ongoing concern for both the politicians engaged with it and the academics that study it. The official Russian term is *obedinenie* (association). "Group" is another term used frequently in both Russian and non-Russian literature, and is arguably a more neutral term than "association." Still others have spoken about BRICS as a "quasi-organization," a term as cumbersome as it is unhelpful. I shall for the most part speak just of "BRICS," with the understanding that these countries are coordinating in a way that makes it conceptually rational to speak of common goals and activities, but are not (yet) sufficiently institutionalized to merit a more formal designation. However, for the sake of linguistic variety, throughout the text I employ the terms "forum," "group," and "association" interchangeably.³

² This review is primarily of Western literature, with a few exceptions. I cover the majority of the Russian language analyses of BRICS in chapter 5, in the discussion of the role of the academy in Russian BRICS policy from 2008-2013.

³ This paragraph appears in slightly different form in Rachel S. Salzman, "From Bridge to Bulwark: The Evolution of BRICS in Russian Grand Strategy/De Bridge a Bulwark: La Evolución de Los Países BRICS En La Estrategia Global de Rusia," *Comillas Journal of International Relations* 0, no. 3 (2015): 3, http://revistas.upcomillas.es/index.php/internationalrelations/article/view/5523.

Development of BRICS as an International Association

Although the BRIC acronym has been around since 2001, and firmly within the public sphere since 2003, academic analysis of the group as such remains sparse. The field narrows still further when the focus is the geopolitical and geoeconomic aspects of the group, rather than literature aimed at business students or potential investors. The term BRIC originated in a 2001 paper about the future of the global economy by Jim O'Neill, then director of global economic research at Goldman Sachs. It became BRICS when South Africa joined the group in 2011. The history of this transition and the group is discussed more fully in the following chapter. The focus here is on how scholars and analysts write about BRICS, and what role, if any, they see for the group on the international stage.

Some of the reticence toward BRICS in the academic world may come from a certain disdain for the idea's origins as a private sector investment strategy. Even though the idea of BRICS has now spread far beyond the halls of Wall Street, it remains a strong brand for Goldman Sachs from which the institution has profited enormously. There is also, however, a more fundamental concern among academics that runs deeper than intellectual snobbery. A driving question of the literature is whether these countries can

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⁴ Oliver Stuenkel, "The Financial Crisis, Contested Legitimacy, and the Genesis of Intra-BRICS Cooperation," *Global Governance* 19, no. 4 (October 2013): 612–613,

http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=mth&AN=92015918&site=ehost-live&scope=site.
⁵ Examples of this type of analysis include: Stephanie Jones, *BRICs and Beyond* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2012); Mark Kobayashi-Hillary, ed., *Building a Future with BRICs: The next Decade for Offshoring* (Berlin: Springer, 2008)

⁶ Gillian Tett, "The Story of the Brics," *Financial Times*, January 15, 2010, http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/112ca932-00ab-11df-ae8d-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2hRROifdt. Within the investment world, it remains BRIC; bankers have not accepted the addition of South Africa to the group.

fairly be considered comparable.⁷ As Valerie Bunce memorably phrased the question in her sharp response to Philippe Schmitter and Terry Karl in the debate over transitology in the 1990s, the question is whether the BRICS countries are all "varietals of fruit," or whether they are instead "apples and kangaroos." In the latter case, comparison will produce no useful insights.⁸ If the countries are not comparable, then analyzing them as a group, and analyzing intra-group dynamics, is suspect.

The literature takes several different approaches to the question of comparability. Some come at it from an empirical perspective, focusing on the ways these countries are historically, demographically, and geographically similar. For example, in an article that based on a conference held at the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAN), Alexander Bobrovnikov and Vladimir Davydov looked primarily at economic indicators. Writing before the BRIC idea had penetrated the literature, these authors discussed the Giant Emerging Economies (GECs), and separated them into two levels, with BRIC as the most potentially powerful. Bobrovnikov and Davydov argued that the GECs, and the BRICs in particular, are all geographically and demographically large countries with significant natural resources, rapid GDP growth, and additional growth potential. Each also is a regional power, often has recognized military prowess, and is somewhat powerful in

⁷ Andrew Hurrell, "Hegemony, Liberalism and Global Order: What Space for Would-Be Great Powers?," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 82, no. 1 (2006): pp. 1–19, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3569127; Lindsay Marie Jacobs and Ronan Van Rossem, "The BRIC Phantom: A Comparative Analysis of the BRICs as a Category of Rising Powers," *Journal of Policy Modeling*, accessed April 7, 2014, doi:10.1016/j.jpolmod.2013.10.008.

⁸ Valerie Bunce, "Should Transitologists Be Grounded?," *Slavic Review*, 1995, 112; Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, "The Conceptual Travels of Transitologists and Consolidologists: How Far to the East Should They Attempt to Go?," *Slavic Review* 53, no. 1 (April 1, 1994): 173–85, doi:10.2307/2500331.
⁹ Alexander Bobrovnikov and Vladimir Davydov, "Voskhodiashchie strany-giganty na mirovoi stsene XXI veka," *Latinskaia Amerika*, no. 5 (May 31, 2005): 5.

existing organs of global governance.¹⁰ Based on these indicators, Bobrovnikov and Davydov concluded that the GECs, and the BRIC countries especially, were poised to change the landscape of global governance, especially in the area of international financial architecture.¹¹

Andrew Hurrell, in the introductory essay to a special issue of *International Affairs* devoted to the BRIC countries, offers a similar analysis. He argues that there are four compelling reasons to consider the BRIC countries as a comparable group. First, they are all large, regionally powerful states with "some capacity to contribute to the production of international order, regionally or globally." Second, all four believe that they have a right to a larger say in world affairs and have enough power to mount a credible challenge to the existing order. Third, there are multiplying ties between the states at both the bilateral and the multilateral levels. Finally, all four original BRIC states are on the margins of the existing international system. ¹² Further, "they all have historically espoused conceptions of international order that challenged those of the liberal developed West," notably as leading proponents of either Communism or the Non-Aligned Movement. ¹³

Hurrell, however, steps further into theoretical questions and implications than do Bobrovnikov and Davydov. In so doing, he presages the conceptual debate that appears in the literature beginning with Leslie Elliott Armijo's 2007 article, "The BRICs

¹⁰ Ibid., 7–9.

¹¹ Ibid., 16.

¹² The four original BRIC countries are Brazil, Russia, India, and China.

¹³ Hurrell, "Hegemony, Liberalism and Global Order: What Space for Would-Be Great Powers?," 1–3.

Countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) as Analytical Category: Mirage or Insight?"¹⁴ Armijo investigates whether BRIC constitutes a valid category under any of the three leading International Relations (IR) theoretic paradigms: realism, institutionalism, and economic liberalism. ¹⁵ Since the four states have different levels of material power, different domestic institutions, and different approaches to integration with the global economy, Armijo concludes that BRIC cannot rightly be considered a true category of rising powers. ¹⁶ She offers the caveat, however, that the BRIC concept remains a useful interrogative tool for researchers as they frame their questions and investigations. ¹⁷

Other researchers agree with Armijo that BRIC is not a clear category or coalition, but suggest instead that it would be more useful to understand the group as an international regime. The paradigmatic definition of international regimes comes from Stephen Krasner's *International Regimes*. Krasner defines regimes as "sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations." Conceptualizing BRIC as a regime rather than as a set category, a coalition, or a proto-alliance allows scholars to accept the significant differences between the BRICs while still considering them as a

¹⁴ Leslie Elliott Armijo, "The BRICs Countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) as Analytical Category: Mirage or Insight?," *Asian Perspective* 31, no. 4 (2007): 7–42,2,

http://search.proquest.com/docview/215885138/abstract/1410EB5F8056E013A8F/1?accountid=11752.

¹⁵ Ibid., 10.

¹⁶ Ibid., 38.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Stephen D. Krasner, ed., *International Regimes* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 2.

group with limited shared aims around which cooperation coalesces. ¹⁹ The primary common aim is reform of international financial architecture. The assumption is that cooperation will not proceed beyond that point because shared interests among the group will not be strong enough to propel cooperation. ²⁰

Theodor Tudoroiu also presents BRIC as an international regime, but considers cooperation beyond global finance. Tudoroiu argues that the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) provides a helpful metric against which to analyze BRIC. ²¹ He notes that OPEC began as a political initiative and in its heyday was at the forefront of the broader anti-West and global South movement. ²² For example, OPEC established a multilateral development fund analogous to the BRICS development bank. ²³ In addition, just as BRICS does now, OPEC "called... for the establishment of a new international economic order based on justice, mutual understanding and genuine concern for the wellbeing of all peoples." ²⁴ This mirrors the BRICS demands for a more democratic international order.

Tudoroiu, however, offers an interesting twist on analysis of BRICs as a regime by bringing in ideational aspects as well. Using a weak cognitivist variant of regime theory, Tudoroiu asserts that while incentives and utility maximization are important elements

¹⁹ Sadik Ünay, "Reality or Mirage?: BRICS and the Making of Multipolarity in the Global Political Economy," *Insight Turkey* 15, no. 3 (Summer 2013): 89, http://search.proguest.com//docview/1435589606?accountid=11752.

²⁰ Ibid., 19; For a dissenting view on the long term sustainability of cooperation, see Stuenkel, "The Financial Crisis, Contested Legitimacy, and the Genesis of Intra-BRICS Cooperation," 622–624.

²¹ Theodor Tudoroiu, "Conceptualizing BRICS: OPEC as a Mirror," *Asian Journal of Political Science* 20, no. 1 (2012): 25, doi:10.1080/02185377.2012.673857.

²² Ibid., 26.

²³ Ibid., 45.

²⁴ Ibid., 25.

for understanding BRIC cooperation, so too were certain shared beliefs about the nature of the international system. While this did not, and will not, rise to the level of a common identity or the formation of a new international community, it has "created affinities and natural solidarity between the rather similar BRIC states as well as between them and other emerging countries." These affinities have simultaneously eased cooperation between the BRIC states and hampered cooperation with the West.

The tension in the literature between defining BRICS as a group of states with similar interests versus imparting onto them a group identity cuts to the core of the difficulty in understanding what BRICS is and what its impact could be. At a basic level, there are clear similarities among the BRICS countries that make comparison fairly straightforward. All are geographically enormous, continental in scale or nearly so. They comprise upwards of 40% of global landmass and global population, and when combined they are the largest economic bloc other than the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Through 2013, all were fast-growing economies but were for the most part still developing. Finally, all have historically been on the periphery of the global order. There are therefore both empirical and conceptual bases for comparison. Nevertheless, there remains discomfort with accepting the group as a coherent, or at least comparable, whole.

Marion Fourcade offers a possible solution. She simultaneously sidesteps the question of analytic validity of the concept while also providing an explanation for the particular

²⁵ Ibid., 39.

²⁶ Ünay, "Reality or Mirage?," 84.

appeal of the idea. Fourcade, writing in a special issue of *Review of International Political Economy* exploring the BRICs and the Washington Consensus, argues that BRICs is best understood as a "narrative strategy." While its original goal was to change investment patterns and showcase the power of Goldman Sachs to "categorize" the global economy, it became more than that as a result of the 2008 global financial crisis.²⁷ Fourcade notes that there was a visible increase in the belief in the power of the BRICs at the same time that the far less flattering acronym PIGS emerged to describe debt-strapped members of the Eurozone.²⁸ The solid and dependable notion of global BRICs in the midst of the financial turmoil roiling the developed world became a symbol of the power shift away from the traditional centers.²⁹ The financial crisis therefore was instrumental in propelling the idea out of geoeconomics and into geopolitics.

Conceiving of BRIC as a narrative strategy, as do Fourcade and the Brazilian scholar Oliver Stuenkel, allows for two important levels of flexibility in interpretation of the group's significance.³⁰ First, it gives space to appreciate how the use of the term has changed over time, especially as a result of the global financial crisis. Second, conceiving of BRICS as a narrative strategy gives room to show how the members of the group have manipulated its meaning, with each member crafting out of BRIC the narrative it found most useful.

²⁷ Marion Fourcade, "The Material and Symbolic Construction of the BRICs: Reflections Inspired by the RIPE Special Issue," *Review of International Political Economy* 20, no. 2 (2013): 263–264, doi:10.1080/09692290.2013.779408.

²⁸ Ibid., 262. PIGS stands for Portugal, Italy, Greece, and Spain. It is sometimes rendered as PIIGS, to include Ireland.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Stuenkel, "The Financial Crisis, Contested Legitimacy, and the Genesis of Intra-BRICS Cooperation," 614. This is addressed more fully in chapter 3.

The 2008 global financial crisis was a critical juncture for BRIC.³¹ As BRIC countries continued to grow despite market crashes in developed countries, the narrative of BRIC began to encompass the notion of global power shifts. Amidst the panic of the crisis, analysts both in the West and in the BRIC countries declared the end of American hegemony and the arrival of multipolarity.³² The rise of belief in BRIC as the future at precisely the moment when there was no certainty about the future points to a critical aspect of discourse about BRIC. Despite the compelling reasons for believing that the four original BRIC countries have the capacity to be global powers, they are not yet, nor will they be (by traditional measures) for some time. Instead, much of the belief in the power of BRIC and the validity of the idea is a projection of what they could be rather than what they already are. As Andrew Hart and Bruce Jones argue, "there is something akin to a 'shadow of the future' effect at work that helps to explain why...many of the BRICs, especially China, are treated as if they were already major powers."³³ Because the BRICs had been on a clear and measurable ascent before the crisis, their continued ascent on both economic and political measures was projected into the future and taken as fact.³⁴

This projection highlights an inflection point in the BRIC narrative, when the story became more about politics than economics. It also reveals an undercurrent of tension in

³¹ Ibid., 612.

³² See for example: Luiz Inácio Da Silva, "The BRICS Come of Global Age," *NPQ: New Perspectives Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (July 15, 2010): 21–22, doi:10.1111/j.1540-5842.2010.01175.x; David Held and Kevin Young, "Global Governance in Crisis? Fragmentation, Risk and World Order," *International Politics* 50, no. 3 (May 2013): 309–32, doi:10.1057/ip.2013.9; Charles Kupchan, *No One's World: The West, the Rising Rest, and the Coming Global Turn* (Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); B.F. Martynov, "BRIK i degradiruiushchii miroporiadok," *Latinskaia Amerika*, no. 5 (May 2008): 4–20, http://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/17590915.

Andrew F. Hart and Bruce D. Jones, "How Do Rising Powers Rise?," *Survival* 52, no. 6 (January 12, 2010): 76, doi:10.1080/00396338.2010.540783.
 Ibid.

the debate about BRIC's future. The notion of BRIC's rise is predicated on the assumption that economic power can effectively be translated into political power. However, as numerous analysts have noted, it is a mistake to assume that economic power can automatically be transformed into political influence. Further, despite their similarities, the BRIC countries differ in their economic systems, economic bases, military prowess, and place in the current global power hierarchy (as measured by role in existing organs of global governance). However, as numerous analysts have noted, it is a mistake to assume that economic power can automatically be transformed into political influence.

These debates about whether or not BRICS is worth studying and analyzing persist.

Nearly ten years on from the first official meeting in 2006, however, the literature has settled somewhat. John Kirton, the Director of the BRICS Information Centre at the University of Toronto, identifies ten established schools of thought on BRICS.³⁷ One of those schools looks at BRICS primarily as "Russia's counter-hegemonic coalition." Several others debate the place of BRICS vis-à-vis the Group of Eight (G8) and the Group of Twenty (G20).

Kirton himself is likely in the school that argues that BRICS has become an independent and successful group. He contends that BRICS has persisted and strengthened primarily because of:

³⁵ Ibid., 70; Jacobs and Van Rossem, "The BRIC Phantom," 3.

³⁶ Jacobs and Van Rossem, "The BRIC Phantom," 4.

³⁷ John Kirton, "Explaining the BRICS Summit Solid, Strengthening Success," *International Organizations Research Journal* 10, no. 2 (2015): 2–4, http://www.brics.utoronto.ca/biblio/iorj-2015-02-kirton.pdf. The BRICS Information Centre is a joint project with International Organization Research Institute at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow.

³⁸ Ibid., 3.

³⁹ Ibid., 4.

[T]he failure of the international institutions from the 1940s and 1975 [the G7] to give the leading emerging powers an equal role in solving the compounding global financial, food, and other challenges and crises erupting since 2008.⁴⁰

Kirton assesses BRICS's performance since the first summit in 2009 along six metrics including compliance with commitments and clarity of mission. He finds that the group has performed well on all, and has developed faster than did the G7 along the decision-making metric.⁴¹

In the introduction of his 2015 book *BRICS and the Future of Global Order*, Oliver Stuenkel writes:

The transformation of the BRICs acronym from an investment term into a household name of international politics and, more recently, into a semi-institutionalized political outfit is one of the defining developments in international politics of the first decade of the twenty-first century. 42

The juxtaposition of the vague term "semi-institutionalized political outfit" with the proclamation that BRICS is "one of the defining developments in international politics" sums up the difficulty facing a scholar writing about BRICS. The group is not yet an international organization or even necessarily an informal organ of global governance analogous to the G7. Yet at the same time, the group has held seven summits, none of which a single BRICS leader has ever missed. It has developed working groups and contact groups on issues ranging from international financial architecture to health and education. While much of this cooperation has yet to bear fruit, it continues to move

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., 5–7.

⁴² Oliver Stuenkel, *The BRICS and the Future of Global Order* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015), ix.

forward. Calling BRICS an international regime or a narrative strategy, therefore, is no longer either sufficient or appropriate.

There is no guarantee, however, that the group will move beyond the awkward inbetween phase of institutional development into something more substantial. This makes assessing the role of the group within the foreign policy of its members more challenging, for two conflicting reasons. On the one hand, the group's amorphousness can make its seem more like a narrative strategy than something that could develop into an international organization. This makes it tempting to ignore. On the other hand, the group's promise, given its membership and rapid development thus far, can make it easy to overstate the group's role in current foreign policy strategy. Most of the literature on Russia has erred to far in the first direction, as I discuss below.

BRICS and Russian Foreign Policy

Scholars writing broad reviews of Russian foreign policy tend not to give much attention to BRICS. It does not appear at all in *Russian Foreign Policy: Sources and Implications* (2009), despite the fact that Russia released its first press statement about participation in the group in July of 2008 and Putin alluded to the group in his 2007 speech at the Munich Security Conference. ⁴³ The term BRIC does appear in the index of first edition of *Russian Foreign Policy: The Return to Great Power Politics*, but in the text it is only an

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⁴³ Olga Oliker et al., *Russian Foreign Policy: Sources and Implications* (Rand Corporation, 2009); Kremlin, "The Leaders of the BRIC Countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) Met during the G8 Summit in Japan" (Tokyo, Hokkaido, Japan, July 9, 2008), http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/text/news/2008/07/203929.shtml.

aside in a discussion of Russian relations with the other group members.⁴⁴ Even some very recent reviews bypass the topic entirely: the term "BRICS" does not appear in the index at all of the fifth edition of *The Foreign Policy of Russia* by Robert Donaldson and Joseph Nogee, and a full text search of the book yields just one result: a passing reference to President Medvedev's attendance at the 2012 BRICS summit in New Delhi.⁴⁵

Donaldson and Nogee (2014) aside, analyses published after 2010 do usually include cursory analysis of BRICS as a new element of Russian foreign policy. The coverage varies in its emphasis. Some authors stick to a brief statement about the group offering Russia an alternative to the West. Others focus on the group's potential to help Russia promote its interests as a rising economic power. Still others present a somewhat more multifaceted analysis, seeing in BRICS both Russian efforts to balance against the West as well as economic opportunity and manifestation of Russia's peculiar approach to multilateralism. What all of these have in common, even in books devoted to Russian policy in general and not a specific bilateral relationship, is the paucity of space and analysis devoted to BRICS as a persistent element of Russian foreign policy.

Two recent books somewhat buck this trend. *Russian Foreign Policy: Interests, Vectors, and Sectors*, by Nikolas Gvosdev and Christopher Marsh, and *Russia and the New World Disorder*, by Bobo Lo, both offer substantive analyses of BRICS within Russian foreign

⁴⁴ Jeffrey Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy: The Return of Great Power Politics* (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 344, 15, 228.

⁴⁵ Robert H. Donaldson and Joseph L. Nogee, *The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems, Enduring Interests*, 2014, 5th ed (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2014), 426, 339.

⁴⁶ Ben Judah, *Fragile Empire: How Russia Fell In and Out of Love with Vladimir Putin* (Yale University Press, 2013), 160–161.

⁴⁷ Tsygankov, Russia's Foreign Policy, 214.

⁴⁸ Stent, The Limits of Partnership; Mankoff, Russian Foreign Policy, 2012.

policy. ⁴⁹ Gvosdev and Marsh devote four pages to BRICS at the end of their discussion of the African and Latin American vectors of Russian policy. They link the project intellectually to Evgenii Primakov's "Strategic Triangle" of Russia, India, and China (RIC), and argue that Moscow has "a clear desire" to build BRICS into a strong "alternative power center." They also note that the group is important for Russia both in terms of bilateral relations with other BRICS member states as well as for the collective group goals of revising the international system. ⁵¹

Lo is similarly serious in his analysis of the role BRICS plays in Russian foreign policy. He argues that the "sustained campaign to build up the BRICS as an international body on par with the G-8 and other Western-dominated institutions" is the most important of Moscow's efforts to "bolster its international position." Lo notes the discrepancy between what Russia desires from BRICS and what the group has actually offered in terms of both prestige and policy impact. He also states quite plainly that, "Despite protestations about its 'non-bloc character and non-aggressive nature with regard to third parties, the BRICS for Moscow is all about countering the West in its various dimensions." Though Lo devotes somewhat less space to BRICS than do Gvosdev and Marsh, his analysis stands out for how it links Russia's BRICS policy to its wider foreign policy aims.

⁴⁹ Gvosdev and Marsh, *Russian Foreign Policy*; Bobo Lo, *Russia and the New World Disorder* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press with Chatham House, 2015).

⁵⁰ Gyosdev and Marsh, Russian Foreign Policy, 387.

⁵¹ Ibid., 388–389.

⁵² Lo, Russia and the New World Disorder, 77.

⁵³ Ibid., 79.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 78.

In her 2010 article "Russia's BRICs Diplomacy: Rising Outsider with Dreams of an Insider," Cynthia Roberts questions the explicitly anti-hegemonic aims of Russia's BRICS policy. She argues that Russia effectively used the forum as a "power multiplier" that increases Russia's voice in some parts of the international system. ⁵⁵ However, she contends that BRIC(S) is not a Russian attempt to revise the international system wholesale, but rather a mechanism through which Russia can "renegotiate the terms of its accommodation to the Western system." Unlike Lo, she does not see BRICS as an anti-American project. ⁵⁷ In Roberts's telling, BRICS is a manifestation of grudging acceptance of U.S. dominance in the international system, and a subsequent attempt to make strides on the margins.

In the edited volume *The Rise of the BRICS in the Global Economy*, Stephen Fortescue agrees. ⁵⁸ He argues:

The BRICS is an attempt to square the circle of challenging Western hegemony without rejecting it, and doing so in a way that does not require either demeaning or dangerous alignments with more radically critical states, or limiting its ambitions to dominating its own part of the world. The BRICS is made of countries which, to varying degrees, have their own great power and civilizational claims, both global and regional levels, are thereby seen as worthy in a limited challenge to the West. ⁵⁹

For both Fortescue and Roberts, Russia's BRICS policy is aimed at balancing against Western hegemony, but is not explicitly motivated by anti-Western sentiment. What's

⁵⁷ Ibid., 51.

⁵⁵ Roberts, "Russia's BRICs Diplomacy," 42.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Stephen Fortescue, "The BRICS and Russia," in *The Rise of the BRICS in the Global Political Economy: Changing Paradigms?*, ed. Vai lo Lo and Mary Hiscock (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2014). ⁵⁹ Ibid., 234.

more, it shows an acknowledgment in Moscow that partnering with other large powers will be the most effective way to achieve its aims of revising, but not overthrowing, the current international system.

Should Russia be a BRIC?

Some of the debate about Russia and BRICS is not about Russian policy, per se, but rather the extent to which it is even logical to group Russia together with the other three original BRIC countries. On the one hand, Russia is a nuclear weapon state that holds a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Until 2014 Russia was a member of the G8, and it holds an Executive Director seat at the International Monetary Fund. It is also an energy super power with the largest global gas reserves. Russia has much higher literacy rates than the other BRICS, as well as higher GDP per capita (though South Africa is not far behind). Further, while dependence on energy remains a worry for the economy, the domestic market has strong potential and there has already been some diversification. While no longer a superpower, Russia is clearly both a regional power and a country with significant sway – as both help and hindrance – on the international stage.

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⁶⁰ From the perspective of O'Neil's original conception, each of the four countries has come under criticism at least once for its inclusion in the group. See Jim O'Neill, *The Growth Map: Economic Opportunity in the BRICs and beyond* (New York: Portfolio / Penguin, 2011), 45. As regards South Africa's accession, which made BRICs BRICS, no one makes the argument that it was on pure economic merits, since it is dwarfed by the other four countries on O'Neil's parameters. Debate continues over the political logic of South Africa's inclusion, but most scholarship suggests that the country was included at China's insistence.

⁶¹ http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS; http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.KD

⁶² Aleksandr Gevorkyan, "Is Russia Still a BRIC? Some Observations on the Economy and Its Potential for Diversification," *Challenge* 55, no. 6 (November 2012): 113,

http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eoh&AN=1341841&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

On the other hand, while Russia remains a regional power with influential international memberships, it is no longer one half of a bipolar world order. This relative decline in power prompted one analyst to argue that Russia is best understood as a falling power "attempting to stop the bleeding." In addition, the dependence of the Russian economy on hydrocarbon exports has made other industries in Russia less competitive. Finally, although it was growing steadily before the 2008 crisis, Russia was by far the hardest hit of the BRIC countries. On both economic and political measures, then, classifying Russia as an emerging power – as a BRIC – is not an altogether clear choice.

And yet of all four of the original BRIC countries, Russia has been the clear leader in transforming and shaping the BRIC narrative. Indeed, almost all scholarship about BRICS political activities includes some mention of Russia's role in the forum's formation. Christian Brütsch and Mihaela Papa refer to Russia as "the initial BRIC leader." Oliver Stuenkel notes that Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov is often credited as "the intellectual architect of the politicization of the BRICs platform." Cynthia Roberts argues that Russia was very adept at turning the economic designation of

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http://csis.org/files/publication/151020 Degaut DoBRICSMatter Web.pdf.

⁶³ S. Neil MacFarlane, "The 'R' in BRICs: Is Russia an Emerging Power?," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 82, no. 1 (January 1, 2006): 43, http://www.istor.org/stable/3569129.

⁶⁴ Marcos Degaut, "Do the BRICS Still Matter?," CSIS Americas Program (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 2015), 7,

⁶⁵ Igor Naumov, "Rossiiu priznali slabym zvenom BRIK," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, April 1, 2009, 65 edition, http://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/19825361.

⁶⁶ Christian Brütsch and Mihaela Papa, "Deconstructing the BRICS: Bargaining Coalition, Imagined Community, or Geopolitical Fad?," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 6, no. 3 (September 1, 2013): 321, doi:10.1093/cjip/pot009.

⁶⁷ Oliver Stuenkel, "Emerging Powers and Status: The Case of the First BRICs Summit," *Asian Perspective* 38, no. 1 (March 2014): 103, http://search.proquest.com/docview/1501333974/abstract?accountid=11752.

being a BRIC to political advantage in order to further "Russia's own international agenda." Going one step further, Sadik Ünay declares:

Russia's public diplomacy toward the institutionalization of the BRICS and the development of a widespread awareness with the global public opinion concerning the idea of a multipolar global economic – and, increasingly, political – order could be considered one of Moscow's most successful international initiatives in recent decades.⁶⁹

Without Russian diplomatic energy and impetus, BRICS as a political forum would not exist.

Russia has also has been the most vocal member of the forum. Along with Brazil, Russia has been most willing to seize onto the narrative potential of BRICS as representative of an alternate development path. At a conference held at the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) in May 2009 in preparation for the first BRIC summit in June 2009, the Russian participant was the only one to suggest that BRIC had the potential to stand "as an alternative to the Western World Order." Even earlier, at a sideline meeting of BRIC leaders at the 2008 G8 summit in Hokkaido, Japan, Russia made clear its desire for institutionalization. Russia is the member who first brought the group together and crafted its political narrative. It is also the member that has pushed longest and most forcefully for institutionalization.

⁶⁸ Roberts, "Russia's BRICs Diplomacy," 39.

⁶⁹ Ünay, "Reality or Mirage?," 86.

⁷⁰ Michael A. Glosny, "China and the BRICs: A Real (but Limited) Partnership in a Unipolar World," *Polity* 42, no. 1 (January 2010): 113, doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/pol.2009.14.

⁷¹ Ivan Safranchuk, "BRIC Agenda and Instruments," in *BRIC and the New World Order: Perspectives from Brazil, China, India and Russia*, ed. Nandan Unnikrishnan and Samir Saran (New Delhi: Observer Research Foundation in association with Macmillan Publishers India, 2010), 9.

⁷² Stuenkel, "Emerging Powers and Status," 91.

Contribution of this Study

The roots of the BRICS narrative in Russian political discourse and strategy, however, have never been exposed and dissected. While the authors discussed above take for granted that BRICS is something that Russia wants and cares about to some degree, none has traced precisely how the idea developed over an extended period of time. Neither has any author done extended work on how the BRICS narrative links specifically with discourse on national identity and Russia's relationship with the West. This makes the change in the Russian approach following the onset of the crisis in Ukraine harder to appreciate. That is the primary contribution of this study. This dissertation offers the first retrospective analysis of BRICS within Russian foreign policy discourse.

This is important because it was not inevitable that BRICS would become important, either in Russian policy or more generally. Understanding how the idea was deployed before it rose up the list of foreign policy priorities yields useful insight into how BRICS itself has evolved. A central argument of this dissertation is that while Russia was the most vocal about the importance of BRICS in the "new world order," the group was in fact nothing more than a narrative strategy for Russia until the crisis in Ukraine forced the Russian leadership to think more seriously about the group as an international association. Yet even if the leadership did not put resources behind its rhetoric until after the onset of the crisis, the group began to institutionalize on its own, as a result of "spillover effects of cooperation" and persistent imbalances in global governance

architecture.⁷³ In other words, even while the Russian leadership focused on BRICS as a narrative strategy, the group continued to develop, such that it was available as an alternate foreign policy vector when relations with the West cratered.

This study, therefore, links two different readings of BRICS. It falls between both those who see the group as essentially a Russian anti-hegemonic project and those who see it as something that has developed into an independent, unitary actor within global governance. Since 2008, BRICS has become an organization worth watching, and this transformation has allowed Russia to bypass some of the more negative consequences of its ruptured relationships to its West, particularly with regard to its international image. The haven the BRICS has provided from sanctions and from visible isolation is an example of the splintering of the American-led international system. This is not because the BRICS themselves will take up the baton of international leadership. Instead, it is a demonstration of how powers discontented with the current order now have other options.

⁷³ On spillover effects, see Stuenkel, "The Financial Crisis, Contested Legitimacy, and the Genesis of Intra-BRICS Cooperation," 612.

3. From BRIC to BRICS: An Institutional History

Today, the BRICs have become essential players in major international decision- making. As such, we are acutely aware of our potential as agents of change in making global governance both more transparent and democratic.

-Luiz Inácio Lula Da Silva, 2010¹

Although the stories this study tells are intertwined, they also developed on somewhat different tracks. It is easier, therefore, to separate out the narratives in the early parts before bringing them back together in the final chapters. Further, having a complete and uninterrupted history of the institutional development of BRICS is useful grounding for the deeper analysis of the term's evolution in Russian discourse. The goal in this chapter, therefore, is to give a straightforward institutional history of BRICS and an assessment of its accomplishments thus far, divorced from the changing ways in which Russia approached the group over time.

The chapter proceeds in two parts. The first part approaches BRICS development from a qualitative perspective. It begins with a brief account of how the term BRIC jumped from the private sector to the public sphere, emphasizing how the idea fit with other notions in the intellectual ether of the time. It then looks at three institutional antecedents of BRICS: Evgenii Primakov's "Strategic Triangle" of Russia, India, and China (RIC); the India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA); and the Outreach 5 (O5/G8+5 process).

¹ Da Silva, "The BRICS Come of Global Age."

The narrative then turns to BRICS itself, looking at the group's early years and then its rapid rise to prominence in the wake of the 2008 Global Financial Crisis. The qualitative analysis concludes with a consideration of the VI BRICS Summit in Fortaleza, Brazil in July 2014.

The second part of the chapter presents BRICS from a quantitative perspective. This quantitative snapshot of main economic indicators gives visual and numerical representations of how the economic relationships among these countries have evolved from the initial BRICS appellation in 2001 to the present day. The generally weak economic relationships also vividly underscore that politics provides a stronger rationale for continued cooperation than do economics. The quantitative section concludes with an analysis of the institutionalization of BRICS through 2014.

BRICS Beginnings

The term BRIC first appeared in a 2001 analytical report called "Building Better Global Economic BRICS." The author was Jim O'Neill, then head of global economics research at Goldman Sachs. The paper was inspired by O'Neill's realization, spurred in part by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, that in future "globalization" would no longer be synonymous with "Americanization." The report's goal was to identify the likely future leaders of the global economy, based on anticipated gross domestic product (GDP)

² O'Neill, "Building Better Global Economic BRICs."
³ O'Neill, *The Growth Map*, 12; Tett, "The Story of the Brics."

growth rates, GDP per capita, and population size.⁴ Using these parameters, O'Neill concluded that the expected share of global GDP of Brazil, Russia, India, and China (BRIC) could be expected to grow substantially over the coming years.⁵

O'Neill was not blind to the potential political implications of his analysis. In his paper, he argued that based on the figures presented, "it seems quite clear that the current G7 needs to be 'upgraded' and room made for the BRICs in order to allow for more effective economic policymaking." However, his emphasis was very much on these four countries as large economies, not as global political actors, and his immediate audience was his own firm's clients.

Indeed, O'Neill's paper was so successful from the perspective of Goldman's marketing department that in 2003 two of his colleagues released a follow-up report entitled "Dreaming with BRICs: The Path to 2050." This report was if anything aimed more specifically at an investor audience than its predecessor. Even so, it was with this report that the idea of BRIC made the leap from the private sector to the public sphere. The idea of the rise of the non-Western world was compelling because it capitalized on the

⁴ Stuenkel, "The Financial Crisis, Contested Legitimacy, and the Genesis of Intra-BRICS Cooperation," 613.

⁵ O'Neill, "Building Better Global Economic BRICs," S.03.

⁶ Ibid., S.10. Although Russia was a member of the G8 at this point, the finance ministers continued to meet separately at the G7 level,

⁷ Tett, "The Story of the Brics."

⁸ Dominic Wilson and Roopa Purushothaman, "Dreaming with BRICs: The Path to 2050," Global Economics Paper (Goldman Sachs, October 2003), 10/22/2013, http://www.goldmansachs.com/our-thinking/archive/archive-pdfs/brics-dream.pdf; This paper made such an impact that some authors wrongly date the idea to the 2003 paper Stuenkel, *The BRICS and the Future of Global Order*, 15; FOr an example of misattribution, see L.N. Borisoglebskaia and V.M. Cheterikov, eds., *Razvitie stran BRIKS v globalnom prostranstve* (Moscow, Russia: INFRA-M, 2013), 85.

⁹ Stuenkel, "The Financial Crisis, Contested Legitimacy, and the Genesis of Intra-BRICS Cooperation," 613–614.

simultaneous increase in economic fortunes in the Global South and the growing discontent with American international leadership as a result of the beginning of the Iraq war 10

The 2003 report also had the good fortune to be released as the countries themselves were beginning to think about how increasing South-South cooperation would be to their benefit. For example, in December 2002, then President-Elect of Brazil Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva announced that he would make improving ties with rising powers, especially China, India, and Russia, a priority for his administration's foreign policy. Celso Amorim, Lula's Minister of External Relations, added Mexico and South Africa to the list shortly thereafter. ¹¹

There was therefore some luck in how the BRIC term took hold. Goldman Sachs was not the only company thinking about the role of these countries in the coming century;

O'Neill was not even the first to publish on the topic. On the business side, Deutsche Bank and PricewaterhouseCoopers both did work on which countries to watch. On the academic side, authors including Ignacy Sachs, Jeffery Garten and Robert Chase were writing about the possible political economic and policy impact of rising states. The BRIC acronym, however, had the virtue of coming from one of the world's most prominent investment banks, of being clever and catchy, and of being reinforced by

¹⁰ Zaki Laidi, "The BRICS Against the West?," *CERI Strategy Papers* 11, no. 2 (2011): 2, http://www.sciencespo.fr/ceri/sites/sciencespo.fr.ceri/files/n11_112011.pdf.

¹¹ Martynov, "BRIK i degradiruiushchii miroporiadok," 7.

¹² Vladimir Davydov and Aleksandr Bobrovnikov, *Rol voskhozhiashchikh gigantov v mirovoi ekonomike i politike [shantsy Braziii i Meksiki v globalnom izmerenii]* (Moscow, Russia: ILA RAN, 2008), 13. ¹³ Stuenkel, *The BRICS and the Future of Global Order*, 4, n. 29–31.

external events not driven by Wall Street. While the BRICS group has come to be seen as an unexpected outgrowth of O'Neill's investment strategy, though, the groundwork for a network of these countries was already developing parallel to the succession of reports coming out of Goldman Sachs's analytical department.

BRICS Institutional Roots: RIC, IBSA, and the O5

Although no one expected the BRIC countries to organize into an independent political bloc, and then add to their number, the idea of these countries coordinating with one another did not originate with the advent of the BRIC term itself. Instead, their coordination has three distinct institutional roots: Evgenii Primakov's "Strategic Triangle" of Russia, India, and China (RIC); the India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA); and the Outreach 5 (O5), initiated by the Group of Eight (G8) at the 2005 Summit in Gleneagles, Scotland. All three groups – two initiated by the countries themselves, and one by Western powers – have different origins and purposes, but each played an important part in fostering the development of BRICS.

The earliest antecedent to BRICS is RIC, initially proposed by Evgenii Primakov in 1999 while he was Prime Minister of Russia. ¹⁴ RIC was an explicit effort to balance against the West by aligning with non-Western great powers. ¹⁵ Fearing that it was too antagonistic towards the United States, neither China nor India was enthused by the proposal when it

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¹⁴ Mankoff, Russian Foreign Policy, 2012, 188.

¹⁵ Ibid

originally emerged.¹⁶ However, in the face of geopolitical shifts, growing Russo-Chinese ties, and the gradual normalization of Sino-Indian relations, interest in the idea grew in Beijing and Delhi.¹⁷ Officials from the three countries began gathering on the sidelines of international meetings in 2003, and the first stand-alone meeting of RIC foreign ministers took place in Vladivostok in 2005.¹⁸ The leaders first met in the RIC format at the sidelines of the 2006 G8 meeting in St. Petersburg.¹⁹

Although the leaders have met under RIC auspices, there has never been an independent RIC leaders summit, and the RIC dialogue is coordinated primarily through the foreign ministries.²⁰ The primary operational focus of RIC is increasing regional security in Eurasia.²¹ However, it also includes formal cooperation on agriculture, poverty, and health, as well as some emphasis on non-governmental contacts.²² Despite an expanding official agenda, however, actual intra-RIC cooperation remains low, and the organization is not very active.²³

¹⁶ Glosny, "China and the BRICs," 109; Harsh V. Pant, *Contemporary Debates in Indian Foreign and Security Policy: India Negotiates Its Rise in the International System*, 1st ed (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 40.

¹⁷ A.V. Lukin, "Rossiia i Kitai v RIK i BRIKS," in *Voskhodiashchie gosudarstva-giganty BRIKC: rol v mirovoi politike, strategii modernizatsii*, ed. A.A. Orlov and L.S. Okuneva (Moscow, Russia: MGIMO - Universitet, 2012), 275.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ M.L. Titarenko, *Rossiia i Kitai: stretegicheskoe partnerstvo i vyzovy vremeni* (Moskva: FORUM, 2014), 106.

²¹ Ibid., 107.

²² Lukin, "Rossiia i Kitai v RIK i BRIKS," 275–276.

²³ N.V. Stapran, "'Treugolnik Primakova' v ramkakh BRIKS i ne tolko," in *Voskhodiashchie gosudarstva-giganty BRIKC: rol v mirovoi politike, strategii modernizatsii*, ed. A.A. Orlov and L.S. Okuneva (Moskva: MGIMO - Universitet, 2012), 286; Nandan Unnikrishnan, interview by Rachel S. Salzman, Personal Interview, September 22, 2014, Moscow, Russia.

From the perspective of RIC as an antecedent to BRICS, there are two significant points. It was the first quasi-formalized group that brought Russia, India, and China together. More importantly, the ideological basis of both RIC and BRICS, especially from the Russian perspective, is almost identical.²⁴ In an examination of Russian policy toward BRICS, then, the antecedent of RIC is critical, even if RIC itself has been somewhat underwhelming.

The next forum to emerge was the India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA), which was formalized in the June 2003 Brasilia Declaration. The decision to formalize the group was spurred in part by anger with the G8. In 2003, the leaders of India, Brazil, and South Africa were invited to attend the G8 Summit in Evian, France, but the leaders left feeling as though their presence had been more ornamental than substantive. The countries agreed to form IBSA three days later. The

IBSA describes itself as an informal group designed to promote cooperation among countries of the Global South. It is based on principles of "democracy, respect for human rights, and Rule of Law." The group is in many ways a more logical and cohesive group than either RIC or BRICS. The countries all have democratic political systems, they all lack representation on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), and all have similar challenges to overcome, including significant income inequality and a multiethnic and

²⁴ Stapran, "'Treugolnik Primakova' v ramkakh BRIKS i ne tolko," 281.

²⁵ "The India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum," accessed February 5, 2015, http://www.ibsa-trilateral.org/about-ibsa/background.

²⁶ Stuenkel, *The BRICS and the Future of Global Order*, 5.

²⁷ Ibid., 6

²⁸ "The India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum."

multilingual population.²⁹ Like RIC, IBSA never achieved the worldwide name recognition that BRICS enjoys, though IBSA too continues to meet as an independent forum. Unlike RIC, IBSA holds dedicated independent summits.

IBSA constitutes the second building block of BRICS for two main reasons. First, it is the forum that brought together the democratic members of BRICS for the first time. Second, and no less important, it is the origin of the BRICS mantle of representing the Global South, something the BRICS claim but which the RIC great power premise could not support.³⁰

The final piece of the institutional mosaic that formed the foundation for BRICS is the Outreach 5, also known as the G8+5 or (later) the Heiligendamm Process. Initiated by Tony Blair for the 2005 G8 Summit in Gleneagles, the O5 came about in large part as a result of increasing generalized anxiety about the legitimacy of the G8, on the part of both its membership and those who felt they were (wrongly) excluded.³¹ The five countries invited to the summit as part of the initiative were China, India, Brazil, Mexico, and South Africa. Since Russia was then a member of the G8, all the future BRICS were present. The O5 had a fairly limited mandate; it was initially convened to consider

²⁹ Michael Emerson, "Do the BRICS Make a Bloc?," CEPS Commentary (Brussels, Belgium: Centre for European Policy Studies, April 30, 2012), 2, http://www.ceps.eu/book/do-brics-make-bloc.

³⁰ Oliver Stuenkel, "The Uncertain Future of IBSA" (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 18, 2015), http://carnegieendowment.org/2015/02/18/uncertain-future-of-ibsa/i2j5.

Andrew F Cooper and Kelly Jackson, "The Incremental Transformation of the G8 through the Heiligendamm Process," *Studia Diplomatica* 61, no. 2 (2008): 79–80; Anthony Payne, "The G8 in a Changing Global Economic Order," *International Affairs* 84, no. 3 (May 2008): 520, doi:10.1111/j.1468-2346.2008.00721.x.

"issues of climate change, clean energy, and environment." That focus has broadened somewhat to include investment, development and technology as the O5 has evolved into the Heiligendamm Process. 33

With the rise of the G20 following the 2008 financial crisis, the inclusion of outside powers at G8/G7 meetings is less important, and the O5 is not consistently included in G8/G7 meetings. At the time of its initiation, however, the O5 constituted an explicit recognition from traditional powers that global governance architecture was not sufficiently representative or inclusive. As the independent creation of RIC and IBSA demonstrate, those outside the G8 did not need to be told that they were underrepresented. What is conceptually important about the creation of the O5 is that it signified a point where it was not just global malcontents who wished to change the system. Instead, all the major states seemed to be reaching the conclusion that the system that had persisted in various permutations since the end of World War II needed serious adjustment.

RIC, IBSA, and the O5 never made headline news. Though they all persist in some form, each is also weaker than BRICS itself and none meet with regularity. Together, though, they serve as important precedents for cooperation among traditionally peripheral powers with the specific aim of addressing global problems and revising the existing architecture of global governance.

³² Payne, "The G8 in a Changing Global Economic Order," 530. Russia was not happy at the inclusion of these five countries in the summit.

³³ Ibid., 531

³⁴ Stuenkel, *The BRICS and the Future of Global Order*, 11.

BRIC Begins to Organize

In the midst of the institutional innovation of RIC, IBSA, and the O5, the idea began to take hold in Brazil and Russia of deploying the BRIC designation to achieve political aims.³⁵ Coordination among the countries began in 2005 with a meeting of the deputy foreign ministers.³⁶ The following year, at Russian President Vladimir Putin's initiative, the four foreign ministers met on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).³⁷ The first meeting of heads of state took place on the sidelines of the 2008 G8 in Hokkaido, Japan, again at Russia's behest.³⁸ At that meeting, the leaders agreed to hold the first stand-alone BRIC summit in Ekaterinburg, Russia the following year; the group has met annually at the heads of state level ever since. The transformation of the group from investment strategy to political forum was completed in 2011, when South Africa joined and BRIC became BRICS.

This initial period from 2005 to 2008 reveals two significant elements of BRIC's coalescence. First, it shows that the impetus for these early meetings came from the very top. For example, Vyacheslav Trubnikov, who served as Ambassador to India from 2004-2009 and would have been a logical candidate for priming his Indian counterparts for a

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³⁵ Borisoglebskaia and Cheterikov, *Razvitie stran BRIKS v globalnom prostranstve*, 74; Vladimir Mikhailovich Davydov, interview by Rachel S. Salzman, Personal Interview, September 22, 2014, Moscow, Russia.

³⁶ Andreev, "BRIKS: Cherez sotrudnichesvo – k bezoposnosti?," 127.

V.A. Nikonov, *Probuzhdenie BRIK (The Awakening of BRIC)* (Moscow, Russia, 2009), 43,
 http://www.nkibrics.ru/system/asset_publications/data/544c/e6f9/6272/6925/e86f/0000/original/%D0%9F%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B1%D1%83%D0%B6%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B5_%D0%91%D0%A0%D0%98%D0%9A
 The Awakening of BRIC.pdf?1414326008.

³⁸ Oliver Stuenkel, "Emerging Powers and Status: The Case of the First BRICs Summit," *Asian Perspective* 38, no. 1 (March 2014): 91.

meeting, was not involved in arranging the 2006 meeting at the UN.³⁹ Although academic institutions were involved in refining the ideas at the beginning, BRICS began as a very top-down initiative.⁴⁰

The second conceptual novelty of the early period is how little it involves anyone from an economic ministry. All of the initial gatherings, or at least those in the public record, were of representatives from the foreign ministry or, later, the leaders themselves. In Russia, the idea originated in the policy planning section of the foreign ministry, and only later were economic ministries included in the process. ⁴¹ Further, as discussed in the first chapter, MID has no formal authority over foreign economic policy. This suggests that the initial overtures from the Russian side were concerned with politics rather than economics. The other countries had more interest in the economics, as evidenced by the initial 2006 agreement to focus primarily on increasing cooperation with respect to trade and management of the international financial system. ⁴² However, other than sideline meetings at the semi-annual World Bank and IMF meetings, coordination involved primarily the foreign ministers and their deputies until after the onset of the financial crisis. ⁴³

³⁹ Vyacheslav Trubnikov, interview by Rachel S. Salzman, Personal Interview, December 18, 2014, Moscow, Russia.

⁴⁰ On the role of academic institutions, see Davydov, interview; Davydov and Bobrovnikov, *Rol voskhozhiashchikh gigantov v mirovoi ekonomike i politike [shantsy Braziii i Meksiki v globalnom izmerenii]*, 13. Lula's 2002 speech and Putin's role in initiating the 2006 meeting also support the contention that BRICS has flowed from the top.

 ⁴¹ Georgii Toloraya, interview by Rachel S. Salzman, Personal Interview, May 14, 2014, Moscow Russia.
 42 M.L. Titarenko and S.V. Ulianaev, "Perspektivy formata BRIK: Vzgliad is cheteryekh stolits," *Aziia i Afrika segodnia*, no. 5 (May 2010): 2–8, http://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/22043433.
 43 On IMF and World Bank sidelines, see Leslie Elliott Armijo and Cynthia Roberts, "The Emerging

Powers and Global Governance: Why the BRICS Matter," in *Handbook of Emerging Economies*, ed. Robert E. Looney (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 504.

This early decoupling of BRIC as a political entity from BRIC as an investment strategy is exemplified in the ire that South Africa's initial exclusion from the group incurred in Pretoria. He from the very beginning of BRIC coordination on the international stage, South Africa lobbied for inclusion. President Jacob Zuma wrote a letter to the group in 2009 seeking membership, and in 2010 he lobbied each of the original BRIC members individually, sometimes bringing large delegations of businessmen to highlight the trade opportunities that existed. Though the lobbying method focused on business, however, the goal was to "[project] South Africa as an emerging power and regional leader." The South African leadership also saw significant convergence between South African and BRIC foreign policy goals.

The implication is that South Africa was not unhappy that Jim O'Neill did not name it as one of the four emerging economies to watch in 2001. Instead, the problem was being excluded as BRIC began to cooperate as a political organism. ⁴⁹ As Frances Kornegay, Jr., an American-born scholar who lives and works in South Africa, writes:

As BRIC has become BRICS, the resulting quintet, in jazz-like fashion, has retuned itself in accordance with the rhythmic beat originally intended

⁴⁴ Francis A. Kornegay Jr., "South Adrica, the Indian Ocean, and the IBSA-BRICS Equation: Reflections on Geopolitical and Strategic Dimensions," Occasional Paper (New Delhi: Observer Research Foundation, 2011), 4,

http://orfonline.org/cms/export/orfonline/modules/occasionalpaper/attachments/op 30 1326083085778.pdf

⁴⁵ Stuenkel, *The BRICS and the Future of Global Order*, 41.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 42.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ V.G. Shubin, "Ot BRIK k BRIKS: rol IuAR v sostave gruppy i v kontinentalnom kontekste," in *Voskhodiashchie gosudarstva-giganty BRIKC: rol v mirovoi politike, strategii modernizatsii - sbornik nauchnykh trudov*, ed. L.S. Okuneva and A.A. Orlov (Moscow, Russia: MGIMO - Universitrt, 2012), 198. ⁴⁹ Kornegay Jr., "South Adrica, the Indian Ocean, and the IBSA-BRICS Equation," 4.

– one having nothing to do with the increasingly discordant notes in the global financial districts of an occupied Wall Street.⁵⁰

Note Kornegay's assumption that cooperation among the BRIC(S) countries was never governed by Goldman's parameters. South Africa from the beginning understood BRIC as a political initiative designed to challenge the global status quo. Attaining BRICS membership has helped South Africa solidify its regional role and could be considered one of the main policy achievements of the Zuma administration.⁵¹

South Africa is not alone in its understanding of BRICS. The BRICS group that now exists is entirely distinct from Jim O'Neill's "global economic BRICS." According to Georgii Toloraya, CEO of the National Committee for BRICS Research (NKI BRIKS) in Russia, BRICS is first and foremost a political group. Most of the coordination happens in international financial organizations, but the fight is over political control of the organs of global economic governance. Further, long term goals are broader, including an expansion of the United Nations Security Council. The end goal, as an Indian expert put it, is "to redesign the world;" the BRICS wish to revise the current system to the point where they have more voice and agency. S4

⁵⁰ Ibid., 3. Part of that anger was based on a feeling of being "deserted" by IBSA partners India and Brazil. See ibid.

⁵¹ Stuenkel, *The BRICS and the Future of Global Order*, 51; O'Neil disagrees with the inclusion of South Africa. See Sharda Naidoo, "South Africa's Presence 'Drags down Brics," *The M&G Online*, March 23, 2012, http://mg.co.za/article/2012-03-23-sa-presence-drags-down-brics/.

⁵² This distinction is reinforced by the fact that those writing for a business audience often continue to write about BRIC rather than BRICS. Wikipedia has the two terms as separate entries.

⁵³ Toloraya, interview.

⁵⁴ Unnikrishnan, interview.

A Brief Digression: What is Global Governance?

At this point it is necessary to consider more fully what the BRICS and their antecedent organizations mean when they express a concern for increased legitimacy in organs of global governance. "Global governance" is a very vague term that means many different things depending on context and audience. For the BRICS, however, it has come to have quite specific meaning that is worth parsing out more explicitly. This section first offers a general definition of global governance. It then identifies the primary loci of BRICS's dissatisfaction and intent.

Thomas Weiss and Ramesh Thakur define global governance as "the sum of laws, norms, policies, and institutions that define, constitute, and mediate relations among citizens, society, markets, and the state in the international arena." Organs of global governance include international institutions such as the IMF and the UN, international courts, and multinational companies, as well as prevailing norms and expectations (such as Responsibility to Protect, R2P). They also increasingly include informal constellations of countries, such as the G7/8 and the G20.

There are dozens of ideas and organizations that fall under the general rubric of "organs of global governance." The main grievances of the RIC/IBSA countries, later codified in

⁵⁵ Thomas George Weiss and Ramesh Thakur, *Global Governance and the UN: An Unfinished Journey* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 6.

⁵⁶ John Gerard Ruggie, "Forward," in *Global Governance and the UN: An Unfinished Journey*, by Thomas G. Weiss and Ramesh Thakur (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010), xv.

BRICS statements, can be simplified into one ideational objection and two concrete institutional objections. I detail these below.

The ideational objection is that Western hegemony is no longer appropriate in global governance. There has long been concern over Western dominance of international institutions, and nations outside the ideological West, particularly in the developing world, have long felt a lack of ownership in the American-dominated international order. General concern and specific protests have crystallized in recent years, however, as a result of shifts in economic power and perceived Western violations of international law, in particular disregard for national sovereignty. The BRICS countries seek a world order that allows for a multiplicity of values and domestic orders, rather than the perceived imposition of a single set of norms and standards.

The ideational objection can seem amorphous and easier to dismiss, especially since the BRICS have not substituted an alternative normative framework. The institutional objections, however, have remained distinct and concrete since the initial BRIC meetings. The BRICS demands tend to center around two institutions: the IMF and the United Nations Security Council. ⁵⁹ When the BRICS summit documents speak of the need for more democratic international relations, they refer in particular to increased quota and voting weights in the IMF and expanding the UNSC to include India, Brazil, and South

⁵⁷ Amitav Acharya, *The End of American World Order* (Hoboken: Wiley, 2014), 39.

⁵⁸ Zaki Laïdi, "BRICS: Sovereignty Power and Weakness," *International Politics* 49, no. 5 (September 2012): 614–32, doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/ip.2012.17; Fyodor Lukyanov, "What Holds the BRICS Together?," *BricsAge Magazine*, April 2013, http://bricsage.com/#p=36.

⁵⁹ Marina Larionova, "BRICS: A Rising Global Governance Actor" (Russian International Studies Association, MGIMO - Moscow State Institute of Internation Relations, April 25, 2014).

Africa. As discussed in the first chapter, voting weights in the IMF do not represent the contemporary distribution of economic power. The same might be said of the UNSC, with regard to political power. The IBSA countries have long histories of seeking permanent UNSC seats with veto power. China and Russia, in the context of BRICS, rhetorically support these countries' goal to have a larger voice in the United Nations, but have not explicitly endorsed UNSC expansion. ⁶⁰

Throughout the remainder of the dissertation, the idea of reforming global governance will be used in reference specifically to these concerns and demands: the general desire for the West to cede ideational control, and the localized concerns about representation in the IMF and the UNSC. These also are some of the concerns that RIC, IBSA, and the O5 aimed to address, from different angles. The bases of these concerns, and the extent to which they are linked to anti-Americanism or rooted in real grievances with the dominant system, is addressed in more detail in chapter 6.

The Global Financial Crisis, the Rise to Prominence, and Nascent Institutionalization

Although the BRIC countries began meeting in 2005, they forged as a group only in the crucible of the 2008 Global Financial Crisis. They quickly became an important sub-

⁶⁰ In August 2015, Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov indicated that Russia supports India's bid for a permanent seat on the UNSC. See Smriti Kak Ramachandran, "Russia Backs India's Bid for a Permanent UNSC Seat," *The Hindu*, August 18, 2015, http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/russia-backs-indias-bid-for-a-permanent-unsc-seat/article7551058.ece.

group in the newly prominent G20.⁶¹ At Brazil's initiative, the Finance Ministers began meeting as a group following the 2008 G20 in São Paolo. In 2009, the finance ministers met twice to coordinate their positions for upcoming G20 meetings.⁶² That coordination paid dividends. The high water mark of BRIC visibility and success within the G20 came at the 2009 Pittsburgh Summit, when the group was able to push through significant reforms on weights and quotas within the IMF. As a mark of their influence at the time, then-U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner met with the countries as a group, the only time a U.S. official has met with BRIC(S).⁶³

Since the 2009 G20, much BRICS coordination has focused on strengthening relations among members of the group rather than acting as a bloc to achieve ends in larger international arenas. This is in part because the IMF quota and governance reforms agreed to during the Pittsburgh Summit remain stuck in the U.S. Congress with no movement in sight, despite pressure from Fund leaders. However, this may have been something of a blessing in disguise in the long term. While all five countries would prefer to see the reforms go through, the forced focus on building the internal aspect of BRICS has not been wasted effort.

⁶¹ Stuenkel, "The Financial Crisis, Contested Legitimacy, and the Genesis of Intra-BRICS Cooperation," 612.

⁶² Marina Larionova, "BRIKS v sisteme globalnogo upravleniia," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn*, no. 4 (April 2012): 2, http://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/27160066.

⁶³ Victoria Panova, "BRIKS: Mesto Rossii v Grupe, videnie i prakticheskie rezultaty, sovmestnaia deiatelnost 'piaterki' v ramkakh mnogostoronnikh institutov," in *Strategiia Rossii v BRIKS: tseli i instrumenty*, ed. V.A. Nikonov and G.D. Toloraya (Moscow: Universitet, 2013), 51.

⁶⁴ "Statement by IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde on IMF Quota and Governance Reforms," Press Release (Washington, D.C: International Monetary Fund, March 25, 2014), http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2014/pr14127.htm.

The leaders' summits get most of the press, but they are only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to coordination and cooperation within the BRICS framework. The countries have slowly ramped up their cooperation; it now includes working groups on topics ranging from health to agriculture to education. In 2012, the countries established the BRICS Think Tank Council (BTTC). The BTTC designated specific institutes in each country to act as BRICS research centers, and supports the Academic Forums that have run annually since 2008. At the fifth summit in 2013 in Durban, South Africa, the group created the BRICS Business Forum. The BRICS Business Forum is an analogue to the B20 (a forum through which international business leaders provide policy recommendations to the G20), and formalizes the business meetings that began during the 2011 summit in Sanya, China. The BRICS Business meetings that began during

These are not just empty statements and institutions. The national think tanks that are part of the BTTC, and the yearly Academic Forums they support, have produced a wide variety of reports. The BTTC is currently working on a Strategic Concept for BRICS, spurred in part by a paper authored by several Indian experts from Observer Research Foundation, the Indian arm of the BTTC.⁶⁷ The Russian arm, the National Committee for BRICS Research (NKI BRIKS), is also active. It has produced several monographs and

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⁶⁵ Renato Coelho Baumann das Neves and Tamara Gregol de Farias, eds., *VI BRICS Academic Forum* (Brasilia, Brazil: Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), 2014), 14, http://www.ipea.gov.br/portal/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=24280.

⁶⁶ See http://www.brics.utoronto.ca/docs/index.html

⁶⁷ Toloraya, interview; Samir Saran, Ashok Kumar Singh, and Vivan Sharan, "A Long-Term Vision for BRICS," Submission to the BRICS Academic Forum (Observer Research Foundation, 2013), http://orfonline.org/cms/export/orfonline/modules/report/attachments/bricsvision_1376295709857.pdf.

edited volumes, hosts large international conferences on a regular basis, and circulates semi-regular bulletins summarizing recent BRICS research.⁶⁸

On a more concrete level, the BTTC has supported socialization among academics from the different countries, bringing what began as a very leader-led initiative further down into the respective societies. The feedback loop is not yet reciprocal: the ideas from the Academic Forums tend not to make it into the final summit statements. However, their persistence and the substantive research presented at the forums are signs of BRICS making it down to another level of local elites. More broadly, the cross-pollination of ideas among scholars from the Global South is an indication of how BRICS has facilitated the multipolarization of ideas about international relations and global governance away from Western-centric discourse.

The most significant BRICS achievements to date, however, happened during the 2014 summit in Fortaleza, Brazil. The Fortaleza summit is important for two reasons: one about optics and one about actions. The 2014 summit was the sixth BRICS summit. It marked the beginning of the second summit rotation. All of the member countries have now hosted at least once. Further, every member other than South Africa has retained its interest in the group through a change in leadership, and no leader has ever missed a summit. The group can therefore point to an institutional track record of convening on an annual basis that has survived to repeat hosting and new administrations in both its

⁶⁸ See www.nkibrics.ru (in Russian)

⁶⁹ Oliver Stuenkel, "Connecting the Global South: Why the BRICS Academic Forum Matters," *Post Western World*, May 23, 2015, http://www.postwesternworld.com/2015/05/23/connecting-academic-matters/.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

democratic and non-democratic members. This supports the contention that the group will persist as a force within the international arena.

More important are the deliverables from the sixth summit. In Fortaleza, the leaders agreed to establish a BRICS development bank (the New Development Bank, NDB) and a contingency reserve arrangement (CRA).⁷¹ It is too soon to judge how well these institutions will function, but they are significant not just because they are the first concrete BRICS institutions, but also because they represent the first time that BRICS membership has imposed a cost on its members. Until Fortaleza, one of the main benefits of BRICS was that it offered members some level of extra clout within international forums without also imposing costs for membership.⁷² The NDB and the CRA are modest by international standards: the NDB has initial authorized capital of \$50 billion, and the CRA has committed funds of \$100 billion.⁷³ The initial sums not withstanding, the creation of these institutions does suggest a growing willingness among members to devote more than just their voices to the BRICS cause.

There is another element of this institutional creation that bears mention. Much of the criticism of BRICS's viability focuses on the many divisions among the member countries, and in particular on the animosity between India and China. That these five countries were able to agree on who hosted the bank (China), who would be the first

⁷¹ David Pilling, "The BRICS Bank Is a Glimpse of the Future," *Financial Times*, July 30, 2014, http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/f7b876a0-170e-11e4-b0d7-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3HX7B8Hnp.

⁷² Oliver Stuenkel, interview by Rachel S. Salzman, Personal Interview, December 4, 2014.

⁷³ "Agreement on the New Development Bank" (Fortaleza, Brazil, July 15, 2014), http://www.brics.utoronto.ca/docs/140715-bank.html; "Treaty for the Establishment of a BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement" (Fortaleza, Brazil, July 15, 2014), http://www.brics.utoronto.ca/docs/140715-treaty.html.

president (India), and other sticky political issues suggests that the five are learning to cooperate as a group.⁷⁴ The significance of that agreement should not be overblown, but it is also clearly a step forward in BRICS cooperation and cohesion.

The NDB officially launched in July 2015 in Shanghai. ⁷⁵ Prospects for the NDB especially look promising, in part because China sees it as supportive of its Asian International Infrastructure Bank (AIIB). ⁷⁶ Indeed, Kundapur Vaman Kamath, the new NDB president, stated that the two institutions would closely cooperate. ⁷⁷ While their missions may seem somewhat iterative of each other, they have different geographic scopes. The AIIB will focus specifically on development financing in Asia, whereas the NDB has a global remit and an office in South Africa. ⁷⁸ The two also have different voting structures: though Beijing is the primary economic force in both, it holds a 49 percent stake in the AIIB, whereas voting weights in the NDB are spread equally among the five members. ⁷⁹ Together, the two institutions represent China's effort to make its

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^{74 &}quot;Agreement on the New Development Bank."

⁷⁵ Tito Mboweni, "Brics Bank to Balance Global Order," *Business Day Live*, August 20, 2015, http://www.bdlive.co.za/opinion/2015/08/20/brics-bank-to-balance-global-order.

⁷⁶ Samir Saran, "From Cold War to Hot Peace: Why BRICS Matters," *Observer Research Foundation*, July 14, 2015.

http://orfonline.org/cms/sites/orfonline/modules/analysis/AnalysisDetail.html?cmaid=85328&mmacmaid=85313&utm_content=buffer3d594&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer; Ye Yu, "BRICS New Development Bank Moves Ahead Quietly," *The Interpreter*, June 25, 2015, http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2015/06/25/BRICS-New-Development-Bank-moves-ahead-quietly.aspx.

⁷⁷ Brenda Goh, "'BRICS' Bank Launches in Shanghai, to Work with AIIB," *Reuters India*, July 21, 2015, http://in.reuters.com/article/2015/07/21/emerging-brics-bank-idINKCN0PV07Z20150721.

⁷⁸ "How China Is Reshaping Global Development," *DW.COM*, November 19, 2014, http://www.dw.com/en/how-china-is-reshaping-global-development-finance/a-18072984; Mboweni, "Brics Bank to Balance Global Order."

⁷⁹ Jaimini Bhagwati, "AIIB & BRICS Bank," *Business Standard*, March 19, 2015, http://www.business-standard.com/article/opinion/jaimini-bhagwati-aiib-brics-bank-115031901207_1.html.

mark in development financing, as well as the lessening of the dominance of the Bretton Woods institutions in international financial architecture.⁸⁰

BRICS is still in early days, and it would be unwise to make predictions about its future prospects. What the gradual increase in internal institutionalization and activity indicates, however, is that the group is durable. Similar to the G7, it now operates like an international club, with privileges for its members and mechanisms for observers and dialogue partners.⁸¹ It also has a clear policy outlook, and an increasingly distinct agenda. 82 Further, its track record indicates that it continues to be a group in which its members find value, and to which its members are increasingly willing to devote not only time but financial resources as well. This suggests that BRICS is likely to continue its slow, plodding, but determined evolution towards becoming a permanent feature of the global governance landscape.

BRICS by the Numbers

The previous sections have detailed BRICS's institutional development from a qualitative perspective. This section considers BRICS from a quantitative angle, looking specifically at the following indicators: BRICS GDP growth; BRICS share of global GDP; major trade partners of each BRICS country; and institutional trends.

^{80 &}quot;How China Is Reshaping Global Development."

⁸¹ Armijo and Roberts, "The Emerging Powers and Global Governance: Why the BRICS Matter." 82 Kirton, "Explaining the BRICS Summit Solid, Strengthening Success," 6.

The purpose of this analysis is not to provide a quantitative picture that mirrors the qualitative picture. Instead, it is to offer support to the contention that economic relations are not sufficient to explain overall BRICS institutionalization. In addition, and somewhat in contrast to the previous point, much of the motivation for intra-BRICS cooperation is to promote economic development in each country. Although the main focus in this dissertation is on the political aspect of the group and its development as a cohesive international organization, internal cooperation comprises the majority of BRICS activities at this point. It is therefore important to explore, however briefly, the extent to which these countries do invest in economic relations with their BRICS partners.

BRICS and the World Economy

The general economic picture is unsurprising. First and foremost, China is the economic giant of the BRICS on all metrics. Second, and also important, over the last decade all of the BRICS generally grew at a faster pace than either the G7 as a group or most individual G7 member (Figures 1 and 2). Growth has been slowing overall for several years, but it was not until the 2014 crises in Brazil, Russia, and South Africa, and the uptick in growth in the United States, that any G7 economy showed stronger growth than the BRICS. Overall, although the global economic position of the BRICS is not as strong as it was (either factually or in terms of perception), they still collectively hold a large and growing share of world GDP, especially when measured using purchasing power parity (PPP) (Figure 3). This is important because even though the official position is that

BRICS is a political group no longer united just by strong economic performance, their growth rates continue to be an important prism through which observers perceive the strength and longevity of the group.

A second word about China is warranted. As Figure 3 vividly demonstrates, the discussion of the BRICS's share of global GDP is in effect synonymous with speaking about China's share of global GDP. India makes some contribution, but Brazil, Russia, and South Africa are clear laggards, even in years when their growth rates were impressive. This raises the question of whether it is misleading to speak in aggregate about BRICS's share of global GDP, and thereby bestow upon the other BRICS the reflected glory of China's economic success. This question is simultaneously critical and entirely beside the point. From one side, it is likely that if China were to find BRICS cooperation against its interest and publicly disavow membership, interest in the BRICS would plummet. On the other hand, however, growth is already slowing in China and across the other BRICS, and yet cooperation continues.⁸³ This further underscores the fundamental argument that there is more to the BRICS story than macroeconomics.

⁸³ It is too soon to tell what effect, if any, the August 2015 stock market instability in China will have on BRICS projects and cooperation.

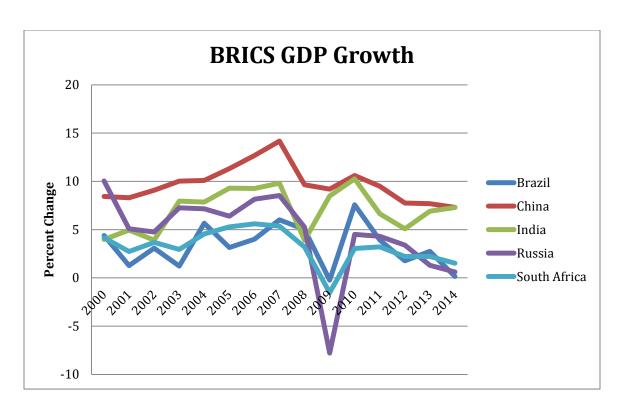


Figure 1: BRICS GDP Growth, 2000-2014

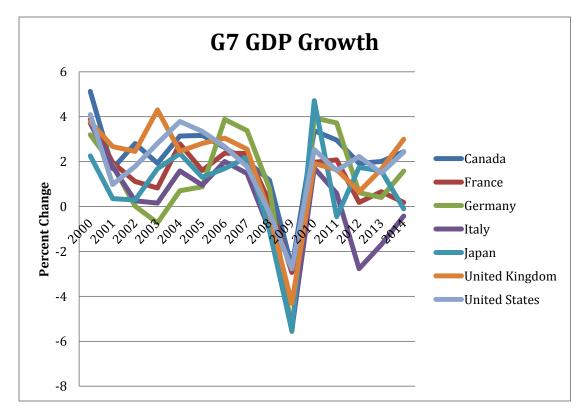


Figure 2: G7 GDP Growth, 2000-2014

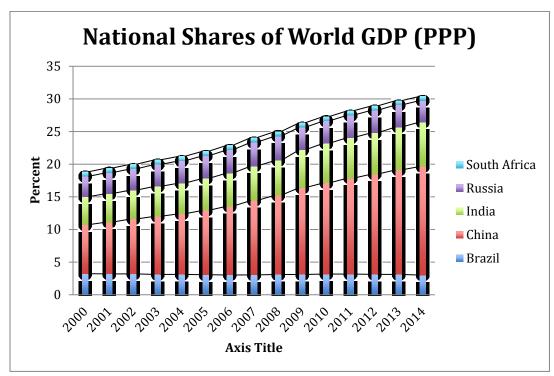


Figure 3: BRICS National Shares of World GDP (PPP), 2000-2014 (estimated after 2011)

Source: International Monetary Fund World Economic Outlook Database October 2015

Intra-BRICS Economic Relations

The main story of intra-BRICS economics is that cross-national economic relations, with the singular exception of each country's relationship with China, are very weak. An analysis of the top five trade partners by exports and imports of each BRICS member draws out this point. The tables below (Figure 4) present the top five trading partners of each BRICS country in 2001, when the group was first defined economically, and then annually from 2005 through 2013. ⁸⁴ The data demonstrate that nearly ten years of cooperation has had little impact on trade patterns. There is no single significant intra-

⁸⁴ 2005 is the first informal meeting of BRIC deputy ministers, and 2013 is the last year for which there is complete information.

BRICS trade relationship other than China's outsized presence in each country's trade. Further, none of the BRICS feature among China's main trade partners.

The trade data also points to another interesting angle: with few exceptions, the top five trading partners of the BRICS are all developed economies. Again, that has not really shifted over the last decade, despite the weaker growth in the United States and Europe compared with the developing world. This is important, because it illustrates the gap between the rhetoric about BRICS as a paradigm for South-South cooperation and the reality that the countries remain much more economically tied to Western countries than to any country in the developing world.

Finally, trade is not the only area where intra-BRICS economic relations are fundamentally weak. The story is much the same with regard to inward and outward foreign direct investment (FDI): cross-BRICS FDI is very weak. China is a player in all of the markets, and Russia a marginal player in China, but all are far down the list of sources and destinations for FDI. Ultimately, there may be no better proof that BRICS is a political rather than economic group than the paucity of economic relations among its members.

Indeed, those who dismiss BRICS as unimportant on the basis of both weak economic performance and weak intragroup economic ties miss the point. The BRICS countries have different regime types, differently structured domestic economies, and different

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http://brics.ibge.gov.br/downloads/BRICS Joint Statistical Publication 2014.pdf.

⁸⁵ "BRICS Joint Statistical Publication" (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística - IBGE, 2014), 172–174,

economic bases, not to mention their geographic dispersion. ⁸⁶ All of these make the group a poor candidate for either a free trade zone or anything resembling an optimum currency area. ⁸⁷ These differences, however, need not hinder political cooperation. As argued in the preceding sections, BRICS cooperation is primarily concerned with a reallocation of power within global economic governance. Accomplishing that goal requires alignment on a discreet set of political concerns. The motivation for presenting the data below, therefore, to underscore that meager economic relations have not hindered cooperation in other areas.

Figure 4: Major Trading Partners of BRICS Countries

Brazil

2001	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Exports									
United States	United States	United States	United States	United States	China	China	China	China	China
Argentina	Argentina	Argentina	Argentina	Argentina	United States	United States	United States	United States	United States
Netherlands	China ⁸⁸	China	China	China	Argentina	Argentina	Argentina	Argentina	Argentina
Germany	Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands
Belgium- Luxembourg not specified	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	Japan	Japan	Japan
Imports									
United States	United States	United States	United States	United States	United States	United States	United States	China	China
Argentina	Argentina	Argentina	China	China	China	China	China	United States	United States
Germany	Germany	China	Argentina						

⁸⁶ T.M. Isachenko, "Strany BRIKS vo vneshneekonomicheskoi strategii Rossii: poisk alternativ," *Mezhdunarodnaja zhizn*, no. 11 (November 2011): 85–87.

⁸⁷ On the effect of regime type on trade, see Edward D. Mansfield, Helen V. Milner, and B. Peter Rosendorff, "Free to Trade: Democracies, Autocracies, and International Trade," *The American Political Science Review* 94, no. 2 (June 1, 2000): 305–21, doi:10.2307/2586014; on the basic theory of an optimum currency area, see Robert A. Mundell, "A Theory of Optimum Currency Areas," *The American Economic Review* 51, no. 4 (September 1, 1961): 657–65, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1812792.

⁸⁸ In these tables "China" refers to Mainland China; Taiwan, Macao and Hong Kong are broken out separately. "Korea" refers to the Republic of Korea, and "Iran" refers to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Japan	China	Germany							
Italy	Japan	Nigeria	Nigeria	Japan	Japan	Korea	Korea	Korea	Nigeria

Russia⁸⁹

2001	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Exports									
Germany	Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands
Italy	Germany	Italy	Italy	Italy	Italy	Italy	China	China	Italy
United States	Italy	Germany	Germany	Germany	China	China	Italy	Germany	Germany
Ukraine	China	China	Turkey	Turkey	Germany	Germany	Germany	Italy	China
China	Ukraine	Ukraine	Belarus	Ukraine	Poland	Poland	Poland	Turkey	Turkey
Imports									
Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	China	China	China	China	China	China
Ukraine	Ukraine	China	China	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany
United States	China	Ukraine	Ukraine	Japan	Ukraine	Ukraine	Ukraine	Ukraine	United States
Kazakhstan	Japan	Japan	Japan	Ukraine	United States	Japan	Italy	Japan	Ukraine
China	Belarus	Korea	United States	United States	Italy	Italy	United States	United States	Italy

India

2001	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Exports									
United States	United States	United States	United States	United Arab Emirates	United Arab Emirates	United Arab Emirates	United Arab Emirates	United Arab Emirates	United States
United Arab Emirates	United Arab Emirates	United Arab Emirates	United Arab Emirates	United States	United States	United States	United States	United States	United Arab Emirates
Hong Kong	China	China	China	China	China	China	China	China	China
United Kingdom	Singapore	Singapore	Singapore	Singapore	Hong Kong	Hong Kong	Singapore	Singapore	Singapore
Germany	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	Singapore	Singapore	Hong Kong	Hong Kong	Hong Kong
Imports									
Switzerland	China	China	China	China	China	China	China	China	China
United States	United States	United States	United States	Saudi Arabia	United States	United Arab Emirates	United Arab Emirates	United Arab Emirates	Saudi Arabia
United Kingdom	Switzerland	Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia	United States	United Arab Emirates	Switzerland	Switzerland	Saudi Arabia	United Arab Emirates

⁸⁹ Russia has a uniquely small trading relationship with the United States compared with the other four BRICS countries.

Belgium	Germany	Switzerland	United Arab Emirates	United Arab Emirates	Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia	Switzerland	Switzerland
Germany	Belgium	United Arab Emirates	Iran	Iran	Australia	United States	United States	United States	United States

China

2001	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Exports									
United	Hong Kong								
States									
Hong	United States								
Kong									
Japan									
Korea									
Germany									
Imports									
Japan	Korea								
Taiwan	Korea	Japan							
United	Taiwan								
States									
Korea	United	United States							
	States								
Germany									

South Africa

2001	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Exports									
United Kingdom	Japan	Japan	United States	Japan	China	China	China	China	China
United States	United Kingdom	United States	Japan	United States	United States	United Kingdom	United States	United States	United States
Germany	United States	United Kingdom	Germany	Germany	Japan	United States	Japan	Japan	Japan
Japan	Germany	Germany	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	Germany	Japan	Germany	Germany	Germany
Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands	China	China	United Kingdom	India	United Kingdom	India	United Kingdom
Imports									
Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	China	China	China	China	China
United States	China	China	China	China	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany
United Kingdom	United States	United States	Spain	United States	United States	United States	United States	Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia
Saudi Arabia	Japan	Japan	United States	Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia	Japan	United States	United States
Japan	Canada	Saudi Arabia	Japan	Japan	Japan	United Kingdom	Saudi Arabia	Japan	India

Source: International Monetary Fund Direction of Trade Statistics, measured in U.S. Dollars

Unlike these weak economic relationships, the level of BRICS institutionalization has increased substantially. First, there have been a rising number of stand-alone meetings of BRICS governmental representatives of all levels (Figure 5). 90 The trends in Figure 5 demonstrate where there is serious interest amongst BRICS partners to deepen cooperation. For example, the repeated meetings of health ministers and economic representatives indicate that these are areas where the group members find value in developing BRICS capacity on these topics. By contrast, the sporadic meetings of the agriculture ministers and the ministers for science, technology, and innovation suggest there is less political will to explore these areas. Most important, however, is the general upward trend in the number of official contacts. Further, this chart does not include either meetings from 2015 (due to incomplete data), or the many track II BRICS initiatives, including the annual Academic Forum and BRICS Business Council meetings.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Leaders	1	1	1	2	2	2	2
Foreign Ministers	1	2	1	2	0	1	2
Heath	0	0	1	2	1	3	2
Trade and Economy	0	0	1	2	2	1	1
Finance	1	2	0	1	2	1	4
Agriculture	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
Science, Technology, and Innovation	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Education	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
TOTAL	3	5	5	10	7	11	11

Figure 5: Meetings of BRICS Leaders and Ministers, 2008-2014

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⁹⁰ Larionova, "BRICS: A Rising Global Governance Actor."

More significant than the upward trend in the number of meetings is the increasing level of compliance with commitments from those meetings. John Kirton and several co-authors have developed a methodology to measure compliance of groups including the G8, the G20, and the UN. As he explains it, "the method requires extensive, systematic research on the actual behaviour of BRICS members in implementing their priority summit commitments and doing so caused by and consistent with the summit commitments their leaders made." Assessing specifically the commitments made during BRICS annual leader summits from 2009 through 2013, Kirton finds a compliance record of over 70%, on average. This record is comparable to average compliance in the G7/8 for its first 37 years. Overall, therefore, quantitative analysis of BRICS supports the conclusions from the qualitative analysis that the group is deepening cooperation and increasing its level of institutionalization.

Chapter Conclusion

BRICS has come a long way since 2001. Building on three previous configurations of developing countries, the group has matured into a forum that holds multiple independent meetings annually, including one among its leaders. The leaders also always convene on the sidelines of other global forums, and often pre-coordinate the group's position on questions of interest. Cooperation encompasses everything from finance to health and

⁹¹ Kirton, "Explaining the BRICS Summit Solid, Strengthening Success," 7.

⁹² Ibid

⁹³ Tbid.

includes academic and business councils that supplement the contacts between officials. In less than a decade, BRICS has transformed itself into an accepted feature of the landscape of global governance.

Economic cooperation, however, remains anemic. There is no strong economic network among the BRICS countries. Instead, each has strong bilateral ties with China, with the West, and within its own region. This reinforces the position that BRICS is at this point primarily political. It poses a problem, however, in that much of intra-BRICS cooperation is theoretically aimed towards addressing common socio-economic challenges that hinder economic development in emerging powers. For that goal to come to fruition, the group will need a much denser web of economic ties.

The idea of BRICS as a political organism, however, brings the narrative back to Russia. The next chapter presents an analysis of Russian elite political discourse during Vladimir Putin's first two presidential terms. Most of this period predates the coalescence of BRICS into a political group. Instead, the emphasis is on how changing rhetoric from Russian leadership about the concepts of sovereignty and national identity laid the foundations for the role BRICS would come to play in Russian foreign policy before the crisis in Ukraine.

4. Laying the Rhetorical Foundation for BRIC: The Evolution of the Concepts of Sovereignty and National Identity, 2000-2007

Do you believe that if [Peter I] had found a rich and fertile history...he would not have hesitated to cast the nation into a new world, to divest it of its nationality? On the contrary, would he not have sought the means of regenerating the nation in this nationality itself? And as for the nation, would it have put up with the fact that its past was ravaged, that Europe's was, as it were, imposed upon it?

- Peter Chaadaev, Apologia of a Madman¹

No doubt, messianism is of no use to us now, but the mission of the Russian nation needs to be specified. Without establishing Russia's role among other countries...without understanding who we are and why we are here, out national life will not be full-fledged.

- Vladislav Surkov, 2007²

Being named a BRIC by Goldman Sachs in 2001 could not have come at a timelier moment for Russia. The country was beginning to recover from nearly a decade of economic instability that culminated in the August 1998 default. Being included in the list of likely future leaders of the global economy by one of the world's premier investment banks provided external validation that others had noticed Russia's revival.

There was no immediate move, however, to begin bringing BRIC together as a political group. The notion of the rise of the non-Western world appealed to existing strains within Russian foreign policy, particularly with Eurasianists and Great Power Balancers, both of

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¹ P. Ia. Chaadaev, *The Major Works of Peter Chaadaev*, ed. and trans. Raymond T. McNally (Notre Dame, IA: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), 204.

² As cited in Fyodor Lukyanov, "Putin's Russia: The Quest for a New Place," *Social Research* 76, no. 1 (Spring 2009): 141,

http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=44123180&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

whom gained power in the latter years of the Yeltsin presidency. Nevertheless, the focus, especially during Putin's first presidential term, was on consolidating domestic economic growth and political stability. In addition, Putin's early political rhetoric lacked the bluster and wounded pride that marked many of the statements from the Yeltsin era.³ Therefore, though it was evident from the outset that Putin would not pursue a strictly pro-Western foreign policy, neither did he immediately begin building alternative coalitions (rhetorical or otherwise).

Further, the BRIC appellation hit Russia at the core of its internal debate over national identity. Being a BRIC also meant being separate from Europe and the West, if the idea were taken to a political connotation. The debates over identity and civilizational association (European or specifically Russian) had hamstrung foreign policy under Yeltsin. 4 Putin, because of his ties to both the liberal Anatoly Sobchak and the more conservative security forces, was acceptable across the identity spectrum. He also had sufficient political acumen to understand that reviving the national identity debate would undermine his efforts to put Russia on a more stable path both domestically and internationally. ⁵ Therefore, though much of his early rhetoric placed Russia more in European than Eurasian civilization, civilizational discourse in general was a minor feature of his early speeches.

This approach shifted over the course of Putin's first two terms as president. As a result of changes in both the domestic and international environments, Putin's political rhetoric

³ Lo, Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy, 4. ⁴ Ibid., 14–15.

⁵ Ibid 15–16

became more strident and more anti-Western over his first eight years in office. This chapter examines how that shift laid the groundwork for incorporating BRIC into Russian foreign policy. The aim is to trace the evolution of two concepts critical for understanding Russia's relationship to BRIC: sovereignty and national identity. Identifying how the rhetorical framing of these ideas showcased an increasingly antagonistic view of the West sets the stage for understanding the role BRIC would play in Russian foreign policy.

A Note on Sources

The main sources for this chapter are the annual presidential speeches to the Federal Assembly, and the official foreign policy concepts and documents that have been adopted since 2000. The analysis assumes that from 2000-2008 Vladimir Putin was the ultimate arbiter of Russian foreign policy strategy, and therefore his speeches can be taken as direct evidence of foreign policy planning. As discussed in the first chapter, these speeches are not taken as direct evidence of coming policy choices. Instead, the argument is that the evolving outlook on display in the speeches reflected changing approaches to engagement in the international arena.

Analysis of the annual addresses, as opposed to just official MID documents, also gives a more nuanced perspective on attitude evolution. Putin approved a foreign policy concept and a national security concept at the beginning of his first tenure as president. Though a new official foreign policy concept was not adopted until Dmitri Medvedev assumed the

presidency in 2008, MID produced an internal review in 2007 that gives insight into major changes from the time of the adoption of the 2000 concepts. There are significant differences between the 2000 and 2007 documents, and the annual presidential addresses give a window into the source of those differences. Put another way, the 2000 and 2007 documents show a beginning and an end to a process; the annual speeches show the interim steps.

Finally, it is worth noting that Putin himself viewed these speeches as policy-setting events. In his 2006 address, he stated that, "today's and previous addresses provide the basis for domestic and foreign policy for the next decade." If these speeches, as Putin argued, set the basis for policy, then they can be analyzed to illuminate how policy aims were articulated, and how that articulation changed over time.

Sovereignty and Independence

One of the persistent themes in official rhetoric about foreign policy in Russia is the degree of policy "independence" – the extent to which Russia is able to conduct the foreign policy it wishes, without concern for international influences or repercussions. The idea of policy independence is closely linked with the broader concept of national sovereignty. As explained in the first chapter, sovereignty in the Russian lexicon means complete control over domestic affairs without external meddling or any devolution of

⁶ Vladimir Putin, "Poslanie k Federalnomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii" (Moscow, Russia, May 10, 2006), http://archive.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2006/05/105546.shtml.

control to supranational or international bodies.⁷ Sovereignty, in turn, is tied to the overall goal of multipolarity, a world system wherein no single country has the power to bend other great powers to its will.

The tone in the National Security Concept and the Foreign Policy Concept that Putin approved in his first months in office bear out this point. The National Security Concept avows that, "Russia will help shape the ideology behind the rise of a multipolar world." Similarly, the Foreign Policy Concept notes the importance of Russia's balanced and multivector policy, and lists the creation of a new world order based on multipolarity as the top international priority. However, while the fundamental assumption of sovereignty and independence was present from the beginning, the way the ideas were framed and presented changed from 2000 to 2008.

During the 2000 Address to the Federal Assembly, Vladimir Putin declared unequivocally, "the independence of our foreign policy is not in doubt." The tone, however, was not confrontational. Instead, it reads almost as a required nod to a long-standing Russian policy in the midst of a speech much more consumed with overcoming Russian domestic struggles. This is not to argue that Putin did not believe in the importance of Russian foreign policy independence. Rather, his primary focus was on domestic issues. Similarly, in an article published shortly before he assumed office as

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⁷ Makarychev and Morozov, "Multilateralism, Multipolarity, and Beyond," 362.

 ^{8 &}quot;National Security Concept of the Russian Federation," January 24, 2000, http://www.mid.ru/bdomp/ns-osndoc.nsf/1e5f0de28fe77fdcc32575d900298676/36aba64ac09f737fc32575d9002bbf31!OpenDocument.
 9 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," June 28, 2000, http://fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/doctrine/econcept.htm.

¹⁰ Vladimir Putin, "Poslanie k Federalnomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii" (Speech, Moscow, Russia, July 8, 2000), http://archive.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2000/07/28782.shtml.

acting president, Putin carefully framed Russia's development within the context of a larger universal narrative and process. ¹¹ Further, the absence of mention of foreign policy independence in the annual addresses from 2001, 2002, and 2003 suggest that in the early years, emphasis on sovereignty was lower on the priority list and less important for the domestic political audience. ¹²

In part, this is because the early years of Putin's tenure were devoted to stabilizing Russia both politically and economically. As Ben Judah argues, Putin and his first prime minister, Mikhail Kasyanov, "were waging a two-front war for legitimacy: one a battle for Chechnya and the other a struggle to push through economic reforms that had stalled in the late 1990s." The problem was not only one of discreet issues, such as tax reform and instability in the Caucasus. Instead, part of Putin's task was to restore faith in the government after the erratic final years of his predecessor. This was also important for foreign policy: Putin had to stabilize the situation so that foreign policy became more consistent and less apt to fall victim to party politics. If In practice, this involved bringing domestic constituencies in line by building a broad base of support and gaining the support of both the elite and the general public. If Part of gaining that confidence was

¹⁵ Ibid., 20.

¹¹ Vladimir Putin, "Russia at the Turn of the Millennium," December 30, 1999, http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/Putin.htm.

¹² Vladimir Putin, "Poslanie k Federalnomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii" (Moscow, Russia, April 3, 2001), http://archive.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2001/04/28514.shtml; Vladimir Putin, "Poslanie k Federalnomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii" (Moscow, Russia, April 18, 2002), http://2002.kremlin.ru/events/510.html; Vladimir Putin, "Poslanie k Federalnomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi

http://2002.kremlin.ru/events/510.html; Vladimir Putin, "Poslanie k Federalnomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii" (Moscow, Russia, May 16, 2003), http://archive.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2003/05/44623.shtml.

13 Judah, *Fragile Empire*, 39.

¹⁴ Lo, Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy, 19–20.

stabilizing the economy, returning the country to a balanced budget and showing that Putin was a leader who followed through on his commitments.¹⁶

By 2004, this had been accomplished. Between 2000 and 2003 (inclusive), Russia's gross domestic product (GDP) grew at an average rate of 6.8% per year. ¹⁷ In addition, in 2004 Russia went through a stable election cycle, with Putin elected to another four-year term. The 2004 elections were less competitive than previous presidential elections. ¹⁸ However, this is evidence of less democracy, not less stability; in Putin's mind, these may be two sides of the same coin. By these metrics and many others, Russia was a dramatically more stable country in 2004 than it had been when Putin inherited control four years prior. Putin touted these accomplishments in his 2004 address to the Federal Assembly. How he did so, however, matters, and is an indication that 2004 was a turning point in how Putin discussed the twin concepts of independence and sovereignty.

During the 2004 address, Putin announced that in the previous year, "for the first time in a long period Russia became a politically and economically stable country in financial relations and in international affairs." Had he simply left it at that, it would be reasonable to interpret the declaration as simply acknowledgment of the improvement in the national economy and increased domestic political stability. However, Putin

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¹⁶ Judah, *Fragile Empire*, 41.

¹⁷ Data from the International Monetary Fund World Economic Outlook Database October 2014, https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2014/02/weodata/index.aspx

¹⁸ Timothy Colton, "Putin and the Attenuation of Russian Democracy," in *Putin's Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*, ed. Dale R. Herspring, 3rd ed (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 39.

¹⁹ Vladimir Putin, "Poslanie k Federannomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii" (Moscow, Russia, May 26, 2004), http://archive.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2004/05/71501.shtml.

combined his praise for Russia's newly stable situation with a warning that Russia's resurgence would engender discontent in other corners of the world. He stated:

Far from everyone in the world wishes to deal with an independent, strong, and self-assured Russia. Now in the global competitive fight, which actively uses political, economic and information pressure, the strengthening of our statehood [gosudarstvennosti] is sometimes consciously construed as authoritarianism.²⁰

The warning that Russia's resurgence would provoke negative reactions in other countries shows the beginning of the return of the "fortress Russia" mentality.²¹ It also points to a link between a Russia that pursues an independent policy and one that is alone in its fight for its place in the global order.

There are two other important pieces here. The first is the reference to *gosudarstvennost*. Jeffery Mankoff translates this as "etatism" (statism), and defines it as:

The idea that the state should play a leading role in the economic and political life of the country, and that the national interests in foreign policy should be defined in reference to the well-being of the state itself.²²

As noted in the first chapter, the centrality of the wellbeing of the state, rather than the emphasis on the wellbeing of the citizens of that state, marks one of the key differences in how Russia defines sovereignty from how it is defined in the West. While this was not a new idea to Russian discourse in 2004, it is significant that it is this specific definition,

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²⁰ Ibid

²¹ On Russian feelings of insecurity and hostility vis-à-vis the outside world, see Lo, *Russia and the New World Disorder*, 19–20.

²² Mankoff, Russian Foreign Policy, 2009, 63.

rather than the more generic "sovereignty" (used earlier in the quotation) that Putin brings in as he is reviving his discussion about Russia's political independence.

The second element of note is linked to the idea of sovereignty, and especially control over domestic affairs. In his reference that some countries equate the strengthening of the Russian state with authoritarianism, Putin underscores the fact that some of the discomfort other countries may have with Russia's rise was about the Russian domestic order rather than its increased assertiveness in foreign policy. Much of the BRICS argument with the current global order hinges on disagreement with the perceived interference in the domestic affairs of sovereign states. It is therefore worth highlighting the reemergence of this argument in Russian political discourse in the year before the BRIC countries held their first informal meeting.

Although improved domestic conditions and increased national confidence comprise part of the basis for this newly assertive tone, it is also a product of changes in Russia's international relationships. By 2004, what had begun as good relations between Putin and then-U.S. President George W. Bush, bolstered by close cooperation following the terrorist attacks of September 11,2001, had deteriorated considerably. The decline began in May 2002, when Bush made clear that the United States would withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty and begin pursuing missile defense initiatives. Other than calling the decision a "mistake," Putin reacted coolly to the announcement. He averred that an American missile defense program would not

²³ Stent, The Limits of Partnership, 68–69.

²⁴ Lo. Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy, 18.

threaten the Russian deterrent, and cooperation on issues of mutual interest continued.²⁵ Although the specific issue of missile defense would not become the main irritant in the relationship until later, the U.S. abrogation of the ABM Treaty marked the end of the "honeymoon in U.S.-Russian relations" that followed 9/11.²⁶

In 2004, the primary causes of strain in U.S.-Russian relations were the Iraq war, the recent spate of color revolutions in the post-Soviet space, and Russia's domestic politics. In 2003, when the United States invaded Iraq without UNSC authorization, Russia joined with France and Germany to condemn the invasion. The initial U.S. reaction was summed up as "punish France, ignore Germany, forgive Russia," attributed to then-National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice. That attitude did not last long. The repercussions of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, and in particular the Bush "Freedom Agenda" and its implications for democratization efforts in former Soviet republics, further soured already troubled U.S.-Russian relations.

Russia's domestic situation compounded the problem. The core of the disagreement between the United States and Russia over both the invasion of Iraq as well as the broader "Freedom Agenda" was the problem of interference in the domestic affairs of sovereign states in contravention of international law. The Freedom Agenda became central to American foreign policy at the same time that tainted presidential elections and

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Stent, The Limits of Partnership, 66.

²⁷ John Tagliabue, "France, Germany and Russia Vow to Stop Use of Force Against Iraq," *The New York Times*, March 5, 2003, sec. International Style / Europe,

http://www.nytimes.com/2003/03/05/international/europe/05CND-PARI.html.

²⁸ "France Will Be Punished," *The Telegraph*, June 1, 2003, sec. Comment,

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/telegraph-view/3592078/France-will-be-punished.html.

the seizure of the Yukos oil company signaled Russian's domestic trajectory away from democracy and liberal economic reform. This disagreement is the root of Putin's statement about increasing state capacity being "consciously construed as authoritarianism." Putin is arguing that by the precepts of the Freedom Agenda, intentionally misconstruing a strong independent Russia as authoritarian would give the United States pretense to work towards regime change in Russia itself, and not just on its borders.²⁹

The strain in relations with the United States affected how Putin described Russia's international partnerships in the 2004 address. In listing important international partners, Putin equates the importance of Russia's relations with the United States with that of its relations with China and India. This is not a serious equation. Putin did actively pursue partnerships with countries and organizations in the Asia Pacific from the beginning of his term. However, Russia did not begin really designing a coherent policy towards Asia until after the 2008 financial crisis, and even now the relationship remains quite shallow. However, the emphasis on relations with China and India was a signal of the renewed attention to Primakov's Strategic Triangle (RIC – Russia-India-China) in Russian strategy after lying fallow since its inception in 1997. Further, it indicated the beginning of the rhetorical deployment of Russia's relations with these countries as an alternative to its relationship with its Western partners.

²⁹ 2004 was also the year of the "big bang" enlargement, when 10 former Warsaw Pact members, including the three Baltic states (which had been republics of the USSR) joined NATO and the EU. This brought NATO directly to Russian borders.

³⁰ Putin, "Poslanie k Federannomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii."

³¹ Lo, Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy, 17.

³² Alexander Gabuev, interview by Rachel S. Salzman, Personal Interview, December 5, 2014, Moscow, Russia.; Lo, *Russia and the New World Disorder*, xxi.

³³ Putin, "Poslanie k Federannomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii."

The shift in rhetorical framing of sovereignty and independence between 2000 and 2006 was overall fairly mild. 2007, however, marked a seismic change in the development of these concepts, and concurrently of the incorporation of BRIC into Russian foreign policy strategy and discourse. Two documents exemplify this change: publicly, Putin's speech at the annual Munich Security Conference signaled his administration's change in perspective. Internal to the government, the 2007 Survey of Russian Foreign Policy, the first major review of foreign policy since Putin assumed office in 2000, laid out the extent of the changes and their implications for foreign policy objectives. In the shift of the changes and their implications for foreign policy objectives.

In truth, Putin's Munich speech was something of a coming out party for views that had been in development for some time. In a 2006 speech to members of the United Russia Party, then-First Deputy Chief of the Russian Presidential Administration Vladislav Surkov said that the former members of the Eastern Bloc who joined the European Union were simply trading one type of diminished sovereignty for another, an overt denigration of Western integration.³⁶ In the same speech, Surkov declared that sovereignty was the "political synonym of [Russian] competitiveness."³⁷ By 2007, four years after the invasion of Iraq and three years after the Yukos affair, Putin's dissatisfaction with U.S.

³⁴ Vladimir Putin, "Putin's Prepared Remarks at 43rd Munich Conference on Security Policy," *The Washington Post*, February 12, 2007, sec. World, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/02/12/AR2007021200555.html.

³⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "A Survey of Russian Foreign Policy" (Moscow, Russia, March 2007), http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/89a30b3a6b65b4f2c32572d700292f74?OpenDocument.

³⁶ Cited in Bruce Parrott, "Russia: European or Not?," in *Europe Today: A Twenty-First Century Introduction*, ed. Ronald Tiersky and Erik Jones, 4th ed (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2011), 212–213.

³⁷ "Pervyi zamestitel glavy kremlevskoi administratsii Vladislav Surkov: Syvernitet - eto politicheskii sinonim nashei konkurentsposobnosti," *Komsomolskaia pravda*, March 7, 2006, sec. Politika - Rossii, http://www.kp.ru/daily/23669/50644/; Fyodor Lukranov argues that by the end of Putin's second presidential term, the idea of "competition" had taken on an ideological caste, with particular reference to competition against Western ideational control in the international system. See Lukyanov, "Putin's Russia," 133–136.

foreign policy, and the West more broadly, was already well documented. That dissatisfaction was also being stoked anew by the announcement about planned U.S. missile defense sites in Poland and the Czech Republic.³⁸

The Munich speech is therefore not distinctive because of its general content. Instead, its import derives from the following three elements: its tone, its specificity, and its foreshadowing of future policies. On tone, this was no gentle chiding of the keepers of the global status quo; it was a forceful and even vitriolic recrimination against nearly two decades of (perceived) ill treatment. Putin condemned what he saw as the hypocrisies of the United States with regard to democracy, arguing "Russia – we – are constantly being taught about democracy. But for some reason those who teach us do not want to learn themselves." Here Putin conflates democracy at the domestic level – the U.S. concern – with democracy in international relations – the Russian concern. The implicit message, however, is unequivocal: the United States expects other countries to operate by one set of standards, while it remains unbound those same standards.

Putin then made that message explicit. He said:

One state and, of course, first and foremost the United States, has overstepped its national borders in every way. This is visible in the economic, political, cultural and educational policies it imposes on other nations.⁴⁰

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³⁸ Michael R. Gordon, "U.S. Is Proposing European Shield for Iran Missiles," *The New York Times*, May 22, 2006, sec. International / Middle East,

http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/22/world/middleeast/22missiles.html.

³⁹ Putin, "Putin's Prepared Remarks at 43rd Munich Conference on Security Policy."

⁴⁰ Ibid.

This was not a new criticism, but it was more forceful than its previous iterations. If Western policymakers had before been able to brush Russian concerns aside, Munich made clear that further inattention was no longer an option.

Second, the speech represented the first formal announcement of Russia's "nonalignment" and search for new partners and a new system. At the conclusion of his remarks, Putin stated:

Russia is a country with a history that spans more than one thousand years and has practically always used the privilege to carry out an independent foreign policy

We are not going to change this tradition today. At the same time, we are well aware of how the world has changed and we have a realistic sense of our own opportunities and potential. And of course we would like to interact with responsible and independent partners with whom we could work together in constructing a fair and democratic world order that would ensure security and prosperity not only for a select few, but for all.⁴¹

There are two important elements here: the stress on Russia as an independent actor on the international stage, and the call to build a new world order that does not privilege the interests of certain members of the international community over those of others. The former is a public declaration that Russia is a country out to protect its own interests and does not consider itself bound by the preferences of the Euro-Atlantic community. The latter is a verbatim foreshadowing of the overall goal that would soon be incorporated in every BRICS summit declaration.

⁴¹ Ibid.

This foreshadowing of BRICS concerns is the third symbolism in the Munich speech. During the speech, after highlighting the impressive growth rates of Brazil, Russia, India, and China, Putin declared that "[t]here is no reason to doubt that the economic potential of the new centres of global economic growth will inevitably be converted into political influence and will strengthen multipolarity."⁴² The quick connection between the economic rise of the BRICs and the assumption of their future political prowess is evidence that, less than five months after the first meeting of the BRIC foreign ministers at the 2006 UNGA, Putin was already thinking about how BRIC could be mobilized as a political force.

These public pronouncements are reinforced by the findings and recommendations in the 2007 Survey on Russian Foreign Policy, an internal document produced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The survey hails the "newly acquired policy independence of Russia," and argues that the time is ripe for Russia to take a more active role as a subject rather than an object of international affairs. ⁴³ As the introduction to the nearly seventy-page document explains:

Russia is firmly entering the mainstream of international life, and therefore the supertask [sverkhzadacha] of the Survey is intellectually and psychologically to get accustomed to this new position for us. The qualitatively new situation in international relations creates favorable opportunities for our intellectual leadership in a number of areas of world politics. In other words, it is about Russia's active participation not only in carrying out the international agenda, but also in shaping it.⁴⁴

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⁴³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "A Survey of Russian Foreign Policy."

⁴² Ibid

⁴⁴ Ibid.; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Obzor vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii" (Moscow, Russia, March 27, 2007), http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/378188.

The "qualitatively new situation" to which the document refers is the effects of globalization. The survey opens with the following observation:

Substantial changes have taken place on the world scene in recent years. The growing processes of globalization, despite their contradictory consequences, lead to a more even distribution of resources of influence and economic growth, thus laying the objective basis for a multipolar construct of international relations.⁴⁵

The rest of the document details a plan for how best to capitalize on those developments to increase Russian weight in the international system. BRIC is explicitly part of that plan. Though the group is only mentioned once, in the section on economic diplomacy, the Survey recommends that Russia "continue developing cooperation in [the BRIC] format." More significantly, it also recommends that cooperation move beyond economics and onto other issues of mutual concern, including counter-terrorism. ⁴⁷ This is an indication that in 2007 the Russian foreign policy apparatus already saw in BRIC a political platform. The overriding message of the 2007 Survey is of a coming change in the international order. It is also of a resurgent Russia, one with the capacity to influence this change, and to do so from an independent foreign policy position.

Russia's Evolving National Identity and the Rise of "Civilizationalism" in Foreign Policy Discourse

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⁴⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "A Survey of Russian Foreign Policy."

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Ibid.

The preceding section explored the development of the concepts of sovereignty and independence in Russian foreign policy discourse. This section considers the evolution of the rhetorical framing of Russian national identity during Putin's first two terms in office, with particular emphasis on two issues: the question of Russia's developmental path, and how that question morphs into the related but broader idea of a "dialogue of civilizations." The discussion builds on previous discussions of Russian national identity, but brings the focus to how Russia's identity was publicly formulated in official speeches and documents during Putin first two terms in office.

As in the preceding section, the analysis draws on the annual presidential addresses and official policy concepts to demonstrate both gradual evolution and watershed moments. Two main questions animate the exploration. First, the extent to which Russia's European identity is stressed over a unique Russian identity. Second, and related, is the broader question of how the idea of "civilization" is framed, particularly whether it is singular or multiple, and how it is connected to economic and political development.

In "Russia at the Turn of the Millennium," Putin made clear his views on Russia's place in the world and its future development. He argued:

Russia is completing the first, transition stage of economic and political reforms. Despite problems and mistakes, it has entered the highway by which the whole of humanity is traveling. Only this way offers the possibility of dynamic economic growth and higher living standards, as the world experience convincingly shows. There is no alternative to it. 48

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⁴⁸ Putin, "Russia at the Turn of the Millennium."

To underscore the message of joining the universal path to development, Putin stated that Communism "was a road to a blind alley, which is far away from the mainstream of civilization." Indeed, much of the first section of the Millennium Manifesto details the negative legacies the Soviet economic structure bequeathed to Russia, including the emphasis on natural resources and the lack of competition. In his analysis of the current situation in Russia, Putin declared: "today we are reaping the bitter fruit, both material and mental, of the past decades." The desire to leave behind the previous model of development and its crippling effects on Russia's global competitiveness are clear.

Putin is not arguing that all countries and peoples are the same. He writes about the specificities of Russian national identity, and how those specificities fit with more universal values. He speaks of the dangers of simply applying foreign models whole cloth. The emphasis on a strong and stable state as a prerequisite for Russian success that would become sharper over the course of his first term in office also comes through clearly in the Millennium Manifesto. He also decries all extreme reform models, including those pursued in the early 1990s. However, Putin's argument is primarily that the principles of a model must fit the realities on the ground. He is not arguing that having a distinct national identity implies being a member of a distinct civilization requiring an entirely different development path.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Tbid.

Second, and equally significant, is the abandonment of the longstanding tradition of Russia as the vanguard of a countermovement in the global marketplace of ideas. This marks a decisive turn from (late) tsarist and Soviet iterations of Russian foreign policy, where leadership of a global counterculture – whether Moscow as the "Third Rome" or, as in the previous example, Communism – was a bedrock principle. Russia (like the United States) has a long history of believing it has a global mission. ⁵⁴ Putin's call to join the path of the rest of civilization and his disavowal of Communism and all it represented developmentally thus marked a major change.

This is not to argue that Russia professed no global ambition during Putin's early years in office. As noted above, the 2000 National Security Concept underlines the importance of promoting a multipolar world with Russia as "one of its influential centres." The 2000 Foreign Policy Concept, like all of its successors, identifies the formation of a new world order as the top Russian priority in "resolving global problems." The difference is that in the earlier documents, Russia's conflicts with Western policies are framed in political rather than civilizational or identity terms.

The annual addresses to the Federal Assembly from 2000-2003 support this interpretation. In these speeches, Putin expressed frustration with humanitarian intervention and NATO expansion, but he also repeatedly stressed that relations with the European Union and the United States were Russia's top foreign policy priorities after

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⁵⁴ On the Russian tradition, see Magaril, "The Mythology of the 'Third Rome' in Russian Educated Society." 21.

^{55 &}quot;National Security Concept of the Russian Federation."

⁵⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation."

relations with the countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Throughout this period, the refrain was of Russia reclaiming its rightful place as a European great power and a member of the top echelon of developed nations.⁵⁷

This approach is best exemplified in the 2003 Address, where Putin touted the achievement of the full membership in the Group of Eight (G8) as the best indication of Russia's international integration. He declared:

Above everything else, in June of last year Russia was invited to become a full member of the club of eight most developed states in the world. In it, together with our partners, we are working on providing for our national interests and in resolving general problems that stand before modern civilization.⁵⁸

Here is a clear statement of both international priorities and, less directly, Russian identity. Russia is identified as a country of the Global North, a developed country cooperating with its rightful partners, the other most developed countries. Further, Putin speaks of the idea of confronting common problems of "modern civilization." Although elsewhere in the speech Putin speaks of Russia as "unique community," and there is the reference to protecting Russian national interests, there is no indication of the existence of a multiplicity of civilizations or alternative paths of national development.

As with the discourse about sovereignty and independence, the approach to identity began shifting noticeably in 2004. However, the change was not immediately apparent as

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⁵⁷ Putin, "Poslanie k Federalnomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii," July 8, 2000; Putin, "Poslanie k Federalnomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii," April 3, 2001; Putin, "Poslanie k Federalnomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii," April 18, 2002; Putin, "Poslanie k Federalnomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii," May 16, 2003.

⁵⁸ Putin, "Poslanie k Federalnomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii," May 16, 2003.

an adjustment in the framing of national identity. Instead, the change is visible in two smaller rhetorical stresses and innovations that began appearing in the annual addresses after 2004. The first is the renewed emphasis on World War II (the Great Patriotic War) as a cornerstone of contemporary Russian national identity. The second is the revival of the idea of responsibility for ethnic Russians living beyond Russia's borders.

The Narrative of the Great Patriotic War

It is hard to overstate the impact of the Second World War on the Soviet Union. The USSR suffered the greatest losses among the combatant powers during the war, and also made the greatest contribution to the Allied victory. ⁵⁹ The number of Soviet casualties was five times that of German casualties. ⁶⁰ Despite these unimaginable losses, or perhaps because of the collective experience of surviving and ultimately defeating the enemy, "the war strengthened Communist rule, especially by creating a sense of besieged national unity and providing the government with a source of legitimacy as defender of the homeland." ⁶¹ It is the idea of the war as a source of unity in a hostile world that became most important when Putin began reviving the memory of war in 2005.

During his 2005 address (the 60th anniversary of the Victory), Putin argued that, "Victory was possible not just through the strength of weapons, but through the strength of all the peoples [*narodov*] united at the time in the union state." The important element here is

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60 Ibid., 138.

⁵⁹ Archie Brown, *The Rise and Fall of Communism* (New York: Ecco, 2009), 135.

⁶¹ Nicholas Riasanovsky and Mark Steinberg, *A History of Russia since 1855 - Volume 2*, Eighth edition (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 544.

⁶² Vladimir Putin, "Poslanie k Federalnomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii" (Moscow, Russia, April 25, 2005), http://archive.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2005/04/87049.shtml.

the emphasis on the spiritual aspect of victory, reinforced later in the speech with the statement that "the soldiers of the Great Patriotic War should by rights be called soldiers of freedom [po pravu nazyvaiut soldatami svobody]." Such a characterization explicitly ignores both the atrocities of the Soviet army on its march to Berlin (and earlier, such as the Katyn massacre), as well as the brutal regime these soldiers served and suffered under. Glossing over these more uncomfortable sides of the Soviet war experience, Putin's arguments are consciously linked with statements about contemporary Russia's freedom, as a sovereign nation, to define its own path to and variant of democracy. Veneration of the Victory, and pageantry on May 9 (den Pobedy, Victory Day), have become critical elements in the Putin government's efforts to construct a modern Russian national identity.

As noted above, the Soviet experience during the war was indelibly extreme. It is only logical that it would be incorporated into later constructions of the national sense of self. The problem is that the veneration has taken on an exclusionary character. Highlighting the singular achievement of the Soviet Union in defeating the Nazis and saving Europe – and linking that singularity to modern Russian identity – creates a separation between Russia and the rest of Europe. It also recalls the Brezhnev policy of lionizing the role of the Communist Party in the World War II victory as part of its own regime legitimation strategy following Nikita Khrushchev's ouster. More problematically, the emphasis on the Soviet achievements during World War II without mention of Soviet crimes, and

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⁶³ Ibid

⁶⁴ Ibid

⁶⁵ Jerry F. Hough and Merle Fainsod, *How the Soviet Union Is Governed* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 255.

especially the seizure of the Baltic states and the atrocities committed in Poland, drive a wedge between Russia and its closest European neighbors.

This leads to the broader problem of the lionization of the memory of the Great Patriotic War: the man who led the country at the time. Analysis of Putin's appeal to the (selective) memory of World War II would be incomplete without discussion of Stalin and Stalinism. As Robert Legvold writes of Stalin:

Never before or since has a Russian ruler so ravaged existing political, economic, and social structure. Not a single institution, from the family to the inner sanctum of power...escaped wholesale transmogrification. More than that, of course, the collectivization of agriculture, the forced-draft industrialization, and the purge of the party and the military thoroughly rescripted the very underpinnings of society. 66

Stalin and the system he created were responsible for millions of civilian deaths across the Soviet Union, as a result of direct execution, state-sponsored famine, and slave labor in the GULAG system. Further, his faith that Hitler would honor the Molotov-Ribbentrop Non-Aggression Pact of 1939 left the USSR unprepared for war and likely increased the number of Soviet casualties among both soldiers and civilians.

Yet despite these crimes, Stalin has a complicated place in post-Soviet historical narratives. According to a poll commissioned by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and conducted by the Levada Center in 2012:

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⁶⁶ Robert Legvold, "Russian Foreign Policy During Periods of Great State Transformation," in *Russian Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century and the Shadow of the Past*, ed. Robert Legvold (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 85.

Almost half of Russians surveyed believe "Stalin was a wise leader who brought the Soviet Union to might and prosperity. But over half of the Russians surveyed believe that Stalin's acts of repression constituted "a political crime that cannot be justified." And about two thirds agree that "for all Stalin's mistakes and misdeeds, the most important thing is that under his leadership the Soviet people won the Great Patriotic War. 67

As the survey results show, it is precisely Stalin's links to World War II that makes his legacy so complicated. If Stalin's crimes are fully acknowledged, then this taints his biggest achievement: the Soviet victory in World War II. 68 Therefore, while his image has been erased from public life and street signs, he remains "a hidden hero," whose presence continues to influence both Russian politics and the relationship between state and society.69

Putin's approach to Stalin during his first two terms in office reflected the ambiguity of Stalin's place in the Russian consciousness. The strong state Putin established, with its dependence on the security ministries, is a Soviet vision of the state, and Stalin is closely associated with that model.⁷⁰ Putin oversaw a system where school textbooks were changed to extoll Stalin as "an efficient manager" while simultaneously including Gulag Archipelago on the reading list. ⁷¹ In October 2007, Putin visited one of places where mass executions took place during the Great Terror and was apparently moved and

⁶⁷ Maria Lipman, Lev Gudkov, and Lasha Bakradze, *The Stalin Puzzle: Deciphering Post-Soviet Public* Opinion, ed. Thomas De Waal (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2013), 16; Though the poll was conducted outside the timeframe addressed in this chapter, there is no reason to think that it would have yielded significantly different results in 2005, since the big change in veneration of WWI came with Putin's accession. See David Satter, It Was a Long Time Ago, and It Never Happened Anyway: Russia and the Communist Past (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 105...

⁶⁸ Lo, Russia and the New World Disorder, 22.

⁶⁹ Lipman, Gudkov, and Bakradze, *The Stalin Puzzle: Deciphering Post-Soviet Public Opinion*, 16. ⁷⁰ Ibid., 18. See note 189 in the first chapter for debate over how analogous the Stalin model is to the current system.
⁷¹ Judah, *Fragile Empire*, 112.

shocked by the experience.⁷² Nevertheless, his regime has also prevented the establishment of an official memorial center for Stalin's victims, and Memorial, the Russian organization devoted to rehabilitating Stalin's victims, is under frequent threat of closure.⁷³ Ultimately, the approach from 2000-2008 was one of a careful balance. Putin acknowledged some level of wrongdoing on the part of Stalin and his system, but he did not allow criticism to progress to a point that it threatened the narrative of the Great Patriotic War, especially when that narrative became more important to Putin's construction of national identity.⁷⁴

The "Russian World" and Civilizational Discourse

The other shift that happened with Putin's second term in office was the revival of the idea of the broader Russian community beyond Russia's geographical borders. Mentions of Russia's responsibility to protect compatriots abroad are long-standing features of official Russian policy documents, but after 2004 the tone began to change. Indeed, the famous line of the collapse of the USSR as the "biggest geopolitical catastrophe of the twentieth century [*krupneishei geopoliticheskoi katastrofa veka*]," which appeared in Putin's 2005 Annual Address, is nested within a paragraph about Russians finding themselves on the wrong side of the border.⁷⁵

The emphasis on the existence of a "Russian world," to be strengthened through the promulgation of Russian language and culture, is in some ways simply an example of

⁷⁵ Putin, "Poslanie k Federalnomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii," April 25, 2005.

⁷² Lipman, Gudkov, and Bakradze, *The Stalin Puzzle: Deciphering Post-Soviet Public Opinion*, 19. ⁷³ Ibid., 20; Lo, *Russia and the New World Disorder*, 22.

⁷⁴ Leon Rabinovich Aron, *Roads to the Temple: Truth, Memory, Ideas, and Ideals in the Making of the Russian Revolution, 1987-1991* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 299.

Russia experimenting with deploying soft power. It has also been interpreted as a renewal of historical Russian imperialism. Both of these interpretations have merit. In this analysis, however, what is important is the reintroduction of idea that Russians are a distinct and unique civilization. Though not fully articulated in the annual speeches until later, these quiet nods to the idea laid the groundwork for the major innovations on this topic introduced in the 2007 foreign policy survey.

As with the discourse on independence and national sovereignty, 2007 marked a turning point in the discourse on civilization. The section on multilateral diplomacy of the 2007 survey prepared by the MFA includes an entire subsection entitled "Dialogue Among Civilizations." The subsection opens with a statement about the dangers of globalization erasing "national distinctiveness," and goes on to argue:

The promotion of the dialogue among civilizations in these circumstances is becoming one of the most important elements of our foreign policy strategy. There are grounds to make this theme the thread running through our international contacts and secure it as the "big idea" of Russian diplomacy for the foreseeable future. This is already becoming an effective means for asserting the intellectual leadership of Russia in world politics, upholding our foreign policy independence and advancing national interests in particular situations and questions of international life 76

This paragraph points to two major deviations from the Millennium article that Putin endorsed seven years prior. First is the idea of multiple civilizations, as opposed to, as in the Millennium Address, joining the path that all of civilization joins. This is particularly notable because the notion of a dialogue of civilizations is standard language in BRICS statements and declarations.

⁷⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "A Survey of Russian Foreign Policy."

The second deviation is more striking, and, from the perspective of how BRICS fits into Russian foreign policy, more important. Here is the reintroduction of the search for the next "great idea" that will reinstate Russia as the leader of a global counterculture. This is quite different from the assertion in the Millennium article that the Bolshevist experiment was an "historic futility." Tr also suggests that part of the goal in bringing BRIC together was to create a forum where Russia could offer "big ideas." The phrase "intellectual leadership" is especially significant, as it is the same phrase the leader of NKI BRIKS uses to describe Russia's role in the group.⁷⁹

The 2007 Survey also explicitly identifies the aim of establishing Russia, and Russians, as a distinct civilization. In the subsection "Protecting the interests of Compatriots Abroad," which appears in a chapter on "the Humanitarian Direction of Foreign Policy," the report states:

For the new Russia, especially as tens of millions of our people [desiatki millionov nashikh liudei] as a result of the breakup of the USSR have found themselves outside of the country, defending compatriots' interests is a natural foreign policy priority, whose significance will only grow. There is a need for continuous all-round assistance to the strengthening of the compatriots' links with the historical Homeland and the creation of a "Russian world" as a unique element of human civilization. 80

There are several notable ideas in this paragraph. First, the paragraph recalls the phraseology of the paragraph from the 2005 Annual Address about the context of the

⁷⁷ Putin, "Russia at the Turn of the Millennium."

⁷⁸ Lukyanov, interview.

⁷⁹ Tolorava, interview.

⁸⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "A Survey of Russian Foreign Policy"; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Obzor vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii."

collapse of the Soviet Union as a great geopolitical catastrophe, suggesting that the message of that speech has been internalized into policy direction. Second, in recommending that resources be devoted to "creating" Russia and Russians as a distinct civilization, the Survey implicitly indicates that the proposal represents a shift in policy. The recommendation builds on previously adopted documents related to language and resettlement assistance programs for Russians living abroad, but this shows a unification of these disparate attempts into a higher-level, conceptual push towards public unification of Russia as a separate civilization.81

Restoring Balance to Putin's Rhetorical Balancing

It is important to remember that even as Putin's rhetoric on issues of sovereignty and civilization became more strident, it never progressed to the point of a wholesale rejection of the West in terms of either identity or policy during his first two presidential terms. Neither was it an uncomplicated process of separation. Even in speeches delineating Russia from its European neighbors, Putin also declared that the country was a "great European nation." The 2007 foreign policy survey touts Russia's inclusion in the G8 as proof that the group is becoming more representative and no longer simply "an exclusive 'club of Western powers,'" while at the same time Russia balked at the idea of inviting the O5 countries to the 2006 G8 summit in St. Petersburg, the first hosted by Russia. 83 Russia was also initially opposed to the G20 financial group, worried that

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "A Survey of Russian Foreign Policy."
 Putin, "Poslanie k Federalnomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii," April 25, 2005.

⁸³ Payne, "The G8 in a Changing Global Economic Order," 530.

including other countries would minimize its own power, even though it was already excluded from the G7 finance minister meetings.⁸⁴

There are several interrelated issues here. Partly, it is that regardless of the change in rhetoric, the political elite, including Putin, remained firmly Western oriented. In addition, the overriding goal has always been maintaining Russia's preeminence in the world's most powerful (or most exclusive) clubs. Up until the beginning of the financial crisis, those clubs were almost entirely Western. The rhetoric, therefore, indicated possible changes in policy direction; it did not represent a real sea change in the core political perspective. In that sense, the combative and separatist rhetoric that emerged over Putin's first two terms in office is better understood as a warning shot against Western countries to prevent them from encroaching on Russian national interests rather than an intention to leave the Western sphere entirely.

This leads to the second issue: balancing. BRIC was in no way capable of being an actual balance against the West between 2000 and 2007. Although the countries' growth and future potential were recognized very early in Putin's first term, meetings did not begin until 2005. Indeed, as the brief partnership with France and Germany in the wake of the onset of the Iraq War demonstrates, early balancing efforts were more about dividing the United States and Europe rather than forming new coalitions. Finally, public efforts to

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⁸⁴ Pavel Baev, "Leading in the Concert of Great Powers: Lessons from Russia's G8 Chairmanship," in *The Multilateral Dimension in Russian Foreign Policy*, ed. Elana Wilson Rowe and Stina Torjesen (London New York: Routledge, 2009), 60. This is not the same G20 that materialized after the beginning of the 2008 global financial crisis

global financial crisis.

85 Gabuev, interview; Lukyanov, interview; Victoria Panova, interview by Rachel S. Salzman, Personal Interview, September 19, 2014, Moscow, Russia.

coordinate against Western influence before the onset of the crisis, notably Russia's nomination of an alternative candidate for the position of Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund in 2007, were unsuccessful. ⁸⁶ The best Putin could do, therefore, was establish Russia's status as an independent actor rhetorically, deploying the BRIC moniker as a buttress where possible, while slowly building up the group behind the scenes.

Finally, there is the question of economics. While it is tempting to read Russia's BRIC engagement, and the idea of a "multi-vector" policy more broadly, as strictly anti-Western, this would be an oversimplification, especially in the early years. The one absolute constant in all of Putin's speeches in his first two terms, and a constant which held in the official concepts produced by the ministries, was that the primary foreign and domestic policy goal was economic development. This necessitated both a diversification of the economy away from natural resources (which Putin did not achieve) and a diversification of economic partners (which he did). During his time as president, Russian trade with non-European partners did increase somewhat, as seen in the charts presented in the previous chapter. Therefore, although BRIC was and is more about politics than economics for Russia, it is worth remembering that it also served economic objectives.

Understanding the role BRIC would play in Russian foreign policy once the group debuted on the international scene, therefore, requires accepting several competing truths simultaneously. Rhetoric about Russia as its own civilization distinct from Europe and

⁸⁶ Peter Finn, "Russia Challenges West With Nomination to IMF," *The Washington Post*, August 23, 2007, sec. World, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/08/22/AR2007082202487.html.

the country's right to define its own development path increased between 2000 and 2007; this was both cause and consequence of deteriorating relations with the West. At the same time, the preference for remaining in the top echelon of international clubs mandated continued prioritization of groups like the G8 over fledgling associations with other powers. Finally, economic logic offered a veneer for emphasizing relations beyond the West, and a changing distribution of economic power supported those efforts.

Chapter Conclusion

There is no official record of the first meetings of BRIC representatives. Major newspapers (Russian or otherwise) did not cover them, and it was not until the first leaders' meeting at the 2008 Hokkaido G8 that the Kremlin even published a press release about BRIC. ⁸⁷ Neither was BRIC mentioned in any of the Annual Addresses during Putin's first two terms in office. In terms of documentary evidence, the very early years of BRIC in Russian political discourse are visible almost exclusively in how attendant concepts were framed.

This may be a result of the lack of an initial vision for what BRIC could become. Cynthia Roberts argues that Russia's initiation of BRIC meetings was more a tactical move than a strategic one. 88 From a procedural perspective, this is probably true. Certainly, it made

⁸⁷ Kremlin, "The Leaders of the BRIC Countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) Met during the G8 Summit in Japan."

⁸⁸ Cynthia Roberts, "Building the New World Order BRIC by BRIC," *The European Financial Review*, 2011. 4.

http://www.mid.ru/brics.nsf/8aab06cc61208e47c325786800383727/0076861093dc5f86c32578bc0045fca4/\$FILE/Cynthia%20Roberts.pdf.

little sense to advertise the group until its potential was evident. As soon as it became clear that the group had long-term prospects, Russia was at the forefront of publicly touting its importance.⁸⁹

However, there is also evidence that BRIC was beginning to feature in Russian foreign policy planning before the 2008 financial crisis. This is evident in Putin's 2007 speech at the Munich Security Conference, where he suggested that new economic centers would become the new global political leaders. BRIC also features in the 2007 Foreign Policy Survey. Though the group is mentioned only in the context of economic diplomacy, the report stresses the importance of continuing to develop it as a dialogue forum. By 2007, BRIC had penetrated into MID strategic planning as a useful vector for Russian foreign policy, beyond the use of each individual BRIC country as an economic partner.

What is more important, however, is the extent to which the evolution of rhetoric during Putin's first two terms in office created a space for BRIC to be incorporated into Russian foreign policy. This is primarily a result of the twin phenomena of increasing frustration with the West and economic growth that made Russia a more self-assured actor on the international stage. By the time of the onset of the financial crisis in 2008, Putin had publicly redefined Russia's international orientation sufficiently to support a credible belief that the country was no longer interested in joining the Western-led international system, but would instead forge an alternative path. That this was in some ways a rhetorical feint is both critical and incidental. Critical, because that is very much the role BRIC played for Russia between 2008 and 2013: that of a theoretical alternative option

⁸⁹ Ibid., 5.

deployed as a bargaining chip in other forums. It is incidental, though, because maintaining the fiction of BRIC as a real alternative led to an ongoing push for actual institutionalization.

In a twist of fate, even as Putin had primed the foreign policy machine to promote BRIC as political group with the principal aim of balancing against Western hegemony, he also installed a successor whose rhetoric was markedly more conciliatory towards Russia's erstwhile partners in the West. Political BRIC thus began to flourish contemporaneously with the U.S.-Russia Reset and better Russia-NATO relations than had existed since the early 1990s. The evolution of BRIC under Medvedev, and how it was incorporated into Medvedev's approach to foreign policy, is the topic of the next chapter.

5. Potemkin Villages and Rhetorical Bridges: BRICS in Russian Policy, 2008-2013

The Lisbon summit has made decisions related to the forming of a modern partnership, one based on the indivisibility of security, mutual trust, transparency, and predictability. We have decided on how we will work on the creation of a common space of peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic region. This makes us moderately optimistic when we evaluate the prospects of our work on Russia's initiative on a new European security treaty.

- Dmitry Medvedev, 2010¹

Cooperation in the BRICS format is one of the key long-term priorities in foreign policy for the Russian Federation.

- Sergei Lavrov, 2012²

The Russian approach to BRICS between 2008 and 2013 should have become progressively deeper, wider, and more nuanced. Over the preceding seven years, Vladimir Putin's rhetorical constructions of sovereignty and national identity had prepared the foreign policy establishment to embrace BRIC as an alternative to the Western-led international system. When BRIC burst forth in the wake of the Global Financial Crisis, it could have become a centerpiece of a new Russian foreign policy.

Instead, the approach to BRIC in this era remained largely static. The Russian leadership maintained it as a rhetorical alternative, but never invested in it as a real policy priority. What's more, Putin's anointment of Dmitry Medvedev as his successor almost

² Sergei Lavrov, "BRIKS - globalnyi forum novogo pokoleniia," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn*, no. 3 (March 2012): 3.

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¹ Dmitry Medvedev, "Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation" (Moscow, Russia, November 30, 2010), http://eng.kremlin.ru/transcripts/1384.

guaranteed that Russian political rhetoric and policy choices would reorient toward the West. Why Putin chose a successor who was so palatable to the West after years of increasingly anti-American rhetoric, and how much agency Medvedev had over his foreign and domestic policy remain unknowns.³ This complicates the analysis of Russian policy and political rhetoric during his tenure.

The complications are compounded by the confluence of several major regional and global events that occurred near the beginning of Medvedev's term in office. These include the August 2008 war with Georgia, the September 2008 onset of the acute phase of the Global Financial Crisis, and the November 2008 election of Barack Obama as U.S. president. The result was a fundamentally altered international context from that which had existed when Putin left the presidency in May 2008. These shifts produced openings in several directions for the Russian leadership to change the course of Russian foreign policy; the option they chose is indicative of underlying Russian foreign policy orientations and preoccupations.

Finally, the rapid evolution of BRICS itself during this period poses its own set of constraints. As discussed in chapter three, the onset of the 2008 financial crisis was a catalyst for BRIC's development as a coordinated group. It is therefore an unequal comparison to consider Medvedev's policy towards BRICS against Putin's earlier stage setting. Although Putin had cued up the foreign minister meetings, Medvedev was the first Russian president to meet formally with his BRIC counterparts (in July 2008), and

³ For speculation and suggestions on how to interpret the Medvedev era, see Trenin, "Russia's Breakout From the Post–Cold War System," 4–6.

was at the helm when world events suddenly gave BRIC a perfect entre onto the international stage. It is hard to determine whether the increased emphasis Medvedev gave to BRIC in his first year, therefore, was because of Russian political leanings, his own inclinations, or simply because the context had changed and the opportunity presented itself.

By the same token, that early phase of BRIC's international prominence did not last. By 2011, the group had adopted a much more inward looking approach to cooperation. The intra-BRICS agenda supported Russian goals for economic modernization. It detracted focus, however from the element of the group that had always most interested the Russian leadership, and which Putin had developed through his rhetoric as president:

BRIC as a balance against the West, and a way to gain leverage in Russia's ongoing attempts to revise the post-Cold War international institutional architecture. Though Medvedev was less vocally anti-American than Putin, he was no less committed to bringing about a multipolar world. When BRICS turned inward, the group was no longer explicitly useful for that project. S

As a result of the changing international context and the changes within BRICS itself, BRICS did not penetrate Russian foreign policy beyond official rhetoric either during Medvedev's term or for the first two years of Vladimir Putin's third term. Further, the

⁴ By "inward looking" I mean that BRICS activity focused on strengthening intra-group ties and cooperation as opposed to efforts to effect changes in global economic governance architecture. This was in part due to the delay of getting the 2010 IMF quota reforms through the U.S. Congress, in addition to the group's efforts to begin crafting a positive, BRICS-specific agenda.

⁵ I will discuss in the next chapter how the intra-BRICS agenda has in the long run proved useful for this goal, particularly the New Development Bank and the Contingency Reserve Arrangement. The point here is that when BRICS became a less vocal, and less effective, group in international fora like the G20, it was no longer a useful rhetorical weapon for Russian leaders.

rhetoric itself stayed fairly shallow. Though leaders could have highlighted the growing economic and development agenda, the focus stayed on the role BRICS could play in changing the international order.

Though leaders remained frozen on the international aspect of BRICS, Russian academics and experts at state research institutions considered BRICS in a more nuanced fashion. They produced a plethora of books, reports and analyses about current and potential areas of BRICS cooperation. In some ways, this intellectual output filled in gaps that the narrow official approach to BRICS left open, thereby showing a deeper thinking about BRICS among the intellectual elite than was evident in the ruling elite. These scholars produced a framework of ideas and goals for BRICS that could be further developed if desire (or need) arose. Though the work was often supported with state funds, however, the analysis was not incorporated into official discourse. This suggests that the goal of supporting BRICS research projects was part of the overall Russian attempt to build a façade of BRICS policy rather than an indication of official interest in the details of the topic.

This chapter finally unites the three main narratives of the dissertation. The first section considers official approaches to BRICS from 2008 through 2013, with particular reference to how changing relations with the West and other international projects affected how officials portrayed the role of the BRICS group and its importance to Russia. The second section analyzes the unofficial approach to BRICS during this era, looking in particular at the material produced in state universities and research institutes.

Finally, the third section draws those two prior analyses together to explain why the Russian approach to BRICS was so loud but so empty, even when BRICS itself was developing so rapidly.

A Note on Sources

As with the preceding chapter, presidential speeches and statements form the majority of the source base. The ambiguity of Medvedev's *de facto* power vis-à-vis Putin, who was then prime minister, however, makes it more difficult to ascribe to his speeches the same agenda-setting power as to those given by Putin during his (first) presidential tenure. The challenge is that Medvedev was neither puppet nor free agent. Instead, he was somewhere in between, but the precise balance is unknown. Further, it is unlikely that the balance remained constant throughout Medvedev's four-year term.

The question of how independent Medvedev was is of particular importance in considering foreign policy, the realm in which he was constitutionally supreme. There are conflicting opinions on this issue. Gordon Hahn, for example, argues that in the first two years of the tandemocracy "except for sporadic forays into foreign policy, Putin...settled into the economic policymaking as premier and avoid[ed] involvement in the president's prerogatives, at least in public." By contrast, Angela Stent, citing an unnamed U.S. official, argues that Medvedev wished to "'establish his own power base," but was unable

⁶ Hahn, "Medvedev, Putin, and Perestroika 2.0."

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to do so, for fear of threatening Putin. Though the context is a more general question of which leader in the tandem held more power, it suggests that in all areas, including foreign policy, Medvedev's actions were constrained. In addition, the 2008 Foreign Policy Concept, which Medvedev approved shortly upon taking office, vested some foreign policy power in the cabinet and the office of the prime minister.⁸

Given these unknowns, the approach to the analysis will be as follows. At the basic level, I assume that Medvedev was not merely a stooge, but rather represented a faction of the elite who for some period was ascendant over Putin's traditional power ministry clan.⁹ Therefore, his words had weight. Indeed, even assuming Putin was quite powerful behind the scenes, Medvedev, especially in his first two years, presented a different vision for Russia than that which Putin had put forth during the final years of his second presidential term. Whatever the power dynamics, it is clear that Medvedev was permitted to do so, and this is significant. As argued in the first chapter, the words of the leader matter. Therefore, it is almost irrelevant whether Medvedev was "allowed" to be reform oriented and less anti-Western in his foreign policy, or whether he was independent enough to present those ideas over Putin's objections. Either way, the views were publicized, suggesting a shift in direction.

Just because those views were promulgated at the highest level, though, does not mean elite infighting had ceased and everyone had acquiesced to the new priorities. Russian elite opinion has never been monolithic. When Putin was president in his first two terms,

⁷ Stent, *The Limits of Partnership*, 220.
⁸ Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*, 2012, 17.

⁹ On the power ministries forming Putin's political base, see Taylor, State Building in Putin's Russia.

however, he commanded sufficient respect and power that it is fair to consider his statements as representatives of the overwhelmingly dominant portion of the ruling elite (as distinct from the intellectual elite). Medvedev was seen as president conditional on Putin's good will. Therefore, though Medvedev's words and speeches will be given pride of place, in this chapter more supporting documents, such as speeches by the foreign minister, will be drawn in as additional support.

BRICS in Russian Official Policy, 2008-2013

2008: The Year that Everything Could Have Changed

By every measure, 2008 was a watershed year in international politics and economics. Domestically, both Russia and America held presidential elections, and each brought in a leader whose stance appeared quite different from his predecessor's and whose election was a landmark event. However uncontested his election, the election of Dmitry Medvedev marked the first peaceful democratic transfer of power in Russian history. Barack Obama became the first African-American president of the United States, and his

¹⁰ Parts of this and the following section draw heavily on Rachel S. Salzman, "U.S. Policy Toward Russia: A Review of Policy Recommendations," Designing U.S. Policy towards Russia (Cambridge, Mass.: American Academy of Arts & Sciences, May 2010), http://www.amacad.org/russia/recommendations.pdf. ¹¹ Henry A. Kissinger, "Unconventional Wisdom about Russia," *The New York Times*, July 1, 2008, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/01/opinion/01iht-edkissinger.4.14135943.html?pagewanted=all; Putin was acting-president when he won his first election in 2000. The actual power transfer happened outside the democratic process. By contrast, though Medvedev received Putin's endorsement and imprimatur, he did not come into the 2008 election as an incumbent. Further, though European observers questioned the fairness of the 2008 elections, the outcome was judged to be "the will of the people." Therefore, the transfer from Putin to Medvedev is closer to a democratic transfer of power than was the transition from Yeltsin to Putin. On the views of the observers, see "PACE Says Medvedev Won Russian Polls, but Doubts Fairness," March 3, 2008, http://sputniknews.com/world/20080303/100488297.html.

election was a symbol both domestically and internationally of a repudiation of the divisive policies of the George W. Bush era. 12

Relations between Russia and the United States also suffered a severe shock in 2008. The August war with Georgia was a wake-up call that bilateral relations had been allowed to drift dangerously. American and Russian analysts called for a more pragmatic approach to the bilateral relationship. As one Russian expert put it, "Washington needs to think strategically about Russia, not theologically or ideologically." An American expert argued that, "The crisis in Georgia brings us face-to-face with the reality that the United States and Russia have squandered the opportunity to build a relationship that works for both parties." Though the dividends did not begin to materialize until 2009, this sudden jolt spurred both sides to renew their emphasis on the bilateral relationship, in ways that had implications for each country's wider foreign policy stance.

The shocks were not just domestic and bilateral, however. In September 2008, after a tense weekend of closed-door negotiations at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, the U.S. government declined to bail out Lehman Brothers, a multinational financial services

¹² Jeff Zeleny and Nicholas Kulish, "Obama, in Berlin, Calls for Renewal of Ties With Allies," *The New York Times*, July 25, 2008, sec. U.S. / Politics,

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/25/us/politics/25obama.html.

¹³ Dmitri Trenin, "Thinking Strategically About Russia," Policy Brief, Foreign Policy for the Next President (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, December 2008), 5, http://carnegieendowment.org/files/thinking_strategically_russia.pdf.

¹⁴ Rose Gottemoeller, "Russian-American Security Relations after Georgia," Policy Brief, Foreign Policy for the Next President (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, October 2008), 1, http://carnegieendowment.org/files/russia us security relations after georgia.pdf.

firm headquartered in midtown Manhattan. 15 On September 15, 2008, Lehman collapsed, sending shockwaves through the international financial system. ¹⁶ In addition to roiling international markets, Lehman's demise intensified an ongoing discussion about the creation of new international financial governance architecture because of the signal it sent about America's capacity for leadership and ability to impose its vision for world order. 17

The combination of the decline in bilateral Russian-American relations as a result of the war in Georgia with the more general global questioning of America's role in the world following the beginning of the financial crisis had a noticeable effect on Russian rhetoric. During his first address to the Federal Assembly, President Medvedev blamed both the Georgia war and the financial crisis on irresponsible American policy. 18 He also listed BRIC as a group with responsibility and importance for global governance, arguing:

The mistakes and crises of 2008 are a lesson to all responsible nations that it is time for action. We need to radically reform the political and economic systems. Russia, in any event, will insist on this. We will work together on this with the United States, the European Union, the BRIC countries and all parties with an interest in reform. We will do everything possible to make the world a fairer and safer place. 19

¹⁵ For an excellent play-by-play analysis of the events leading up to Lehman's collapse, see Andrew Ross Sorkin, Too Big to Fail: The inside Story of How Wall Street and Washington Fought to Save the Financial System from Crisis--and Themselves (New York: Viking, 2009).

16 Alex Berenson, "Wall St.'s Turmoil Sends Stocks Reeling," The New York Times, September 15, 2008,

sec. Business Day / World Business,

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/16/business/worldbusiness/16markets.html.

¹⁷ Vladimir Georgievich Baranovsky, "Vvedenie," in *Globalnaia perestroika*, ed. Alexander Alexandrovich Dynkin (Moscow, Russia: Ves Mir, 2014), 295; Steve Weber, The End of Arrogance: America in the Global Competition of Ideas (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2010), 110.

¹⁸ Dmitry Medvedev, "Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation" (Moscow, Russia, November 5, 2008), http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/1968. ¹⁹ Ibid.

The message was clear: for Russia (rhetorically), the United States and the system it dominated had been overtaken by events, and Western powers would not have a monopoly on solving the problem they created.

Part of the reason the Russian leadership was so quick to condemn the profligacy of Western policy was that while Western markets were troubled beginning in 2007, the effects hit Russia only after Lehman crashed. Indeed, "up until 2008, Russia was hailed as an economic miracle, enjoying rapid GDP growth, macroeconomic stability, and an unprecedented rise in real disposable income (more than 10 percent per annum on average over eight years)." In January of 2008, before the depth of the crisis was clear but when the problems in the U.S. economy were already evident, the Russian finance minister Alexei Kudrin stated that Russia would be an "island of stability" amidst the recessions hitting Western economies. In August 2008, Russia also had the world's third largest national currency reserves, just after China and Japan.

Nevertheless, the effect of the global crisis was already evident in Russia when Medvedev gave his address to the Federal Assembly in November 2008. By October of that year, the Russian stock market had lost 80 percent of its May 2008 value.²³ Plunging

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²⁰ Peter Aven, "Forward," in *Russia after the Global Economic Crisis*, ed. Anders Aslund, Sergei Guriev, and Andrew C. Kuchins (Washington, DC Moscow: Peterson Institute for International Economics Center for Strategic and International Studies New Economic School, 2010), xi, https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/catalog/bib 3578754.

²¹ Andrew E. Kramer, "Russia Talks of a Stability Beyond Ties to the U.S.," *The New York Times*, January 25, 2008, sec. Business / World Business,

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/25/business/worldbusiness/25ruble.html.

²² Anders Åslund, Sergei Guriev, and Andrew C. Kuchins, eds., *Russia after the Global Economic Crisis* (Washington, DC Moscow: Peterson Institute for International Economics Center for Strategic and International Studies New Economic School, 2010), 1.
²³ Ibid.

commodities prices, capital flight, and bailouts of inefficient state companies tore through the country's foreign currency reserves.²⁴ The Russian economy suffered the worst effects as a result of the 2008 crisis of any G20 economy.²⁵ These economic realities, however, did not stop Medvedev from capitalizing on the global discontent with U.S. international leadership that the crisis had magnified and crystalized.

Medvedev's call to reconstruct global governance architecture to be more inclusive was not a new feature of Russian political rhetoric. Its roots trace back at least to Evgenii Primakov's calls to establish a multipolar world in the late 1990s, and, in some guises, to the Soviet era as well. Neither was mention of BRIC as a force in bringing about a new world order entirely new; though this is the first annual address to mention the group, the sentiment is similar to that expressed by Putin in Munich in 2007. What is significant about this statement is twofold: first, Putin spoke generally about the rise of the BRICs as a new force in international politics. Medvedev, in the statement quoted above and again later in the same speech, explicitly referred to BRIC as an organized group conceptually on par with the G8 in terms of its role as forum responsible for global governance. In doing so, he also implicitly highlighted the value Russia sees in its membership in that group.²⁶

This new emphasis on BRIC followed statements made by Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov after the first stand-alone meeting of the BRIC foreign ministers in

²⁴ Aven, "Forward," xi; Andrew E. Kramer, "A \$50 Billion Bailout in Russia Favors the Rich and Connected," *The New York Times*, October 31, 2008, sec. Business / World Business, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/31/business/worldbusiness/31oligarch.html.

²⁵ Aven, "Forward," xi.

²⁶ Medvedev, "Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation," November 5, 2008.

Ekaterinburg, Russia in May 2008. The meeting was initiated by Russia. Following the meeting, Lavrov told the press:

Russia attaches great significance to its development in the BRIC format. This is a format which is not far fetched [sic], but derives from real life. It derives from the fact that the high rates of economic growth exhibited by our countries largely ensure the steady development of the world economy. Now that there is much talk about reforming the prevailing global financial-economic architecture, we have something to discuss, especially the protection of our common interests, including responsibility for the state of affairs in the present-day world.²⁷

When Lavrov gave his press conference the heads of state had never met formally as BRIC. The group had only just held its first stand-alone conference, as opposed to sideline meetings at other events. When Medvedev spoke, the leaders had held a sideline at the Hokkaido G8, but had not held their first summit. Russian political leaders, therefore, appear to have included BRIC as a significant group as a signal of Russia's aspirations and intentions for the future. ²⁸

The 2008 Foreign Policy Concept that Medvedev signed in July 2008 undergirded the aspirations expressed in both Medvedev's and Lavrov's statements.²⁹ The new concept, the first since 2000, includes many of the innovations from the 2007 review of foreign policy, including the idea of Russia once again being prepared to be an international

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²⁷ "Transcript of Remarks and Response to Media Questions by Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov at Press Conference Following Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC), Yekaterinburg," May 16, 2008,

 $http://www.mid.ru/bdomp/brp_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/050fbe17adc9418fc325744e00423e32!OpenDocument.$

²⁸ In June 2008, Brazilian Foreign Minister Ceslo Amorim published an article (in Portuguese) entitled "The BRICs and the Reorganization of the World." This suggests that by mid-2008 Russia was not the only BRIC country to be integrating the group into its foreign policy position. See Stuenkel, *The BRICS and the Future of Global Order*, 12–13.

²⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," July 2008, http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/text/docs/2008/07/204750.shtml.

leader, and the centrality of the civilizational dimension of international relations. In another signal of Russia's shift away from a Western-centric approach toward a more fully multivector foreign policy, the concept also explicitly mentions the Troika (the Russia-India-China configuration) and BRIC as two forums Russia will actively use, in addition to the G8, in its quest to design a more stable world system.³⁰

The 2008 Concept, however, also suggests a greater emphasis on economic stability and international economic integration than did its predecessor from 2000. Although it proposes a need to reshuffle international governance and represents a Russia more assured of its place, it also is less combative about that place than the concept Putin adopted in his first presidential term (discussed in the previous chapter). Instead, the document proclaims the importance of "network diplomacy," announcing Russia's intention to "cooperate not as part of a group, but with shifting groups of countries as necessary." In other words, Russia wishes to be everywhere, and part of every discussion, driving towards the goal of enhanced international power through increased economic growth. It is a continuation of the long-standing emphasis on Russia as an independent international actor. The emphasis on economics, however, is new.

The decrease in pugilistic rhetoric was also visible in how Lavrov spoke about BRIC in his press conference following the 2008 Ekaterinburg meeting of the foreign ministers. In

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ Molly O'Neal, "Competition and Convergence in Russian Foreign Policy Thinking: The Role of Elite Cleavages," in *Society and Identity in Russian Foreign Policy Formulation* (Association for Slavic, East European, & Eurasian Studies Annual Convention, Los Angeles, CA, 2010), 14.

³² Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation."

the quotation above, Lavrov framed BRIC as the logical outgrowth of "real life." BRIC is presented as a group prepared to take responsibility for improving global governance architecture, motivated to act in concert because of shared common interests. Though these sentiments are not substantively different from what Putin said in Munich, the gloss is one of global cooperation rather than global confrontation. Put another way, BRIC here is presented as one of many tools in Russia's pocket that the country could and would use to pursue its interests. It is by no means a replacement for other international partnerships. This presentation is also more in line with the tone of later BRICS summit declarations, and accords with the official BRICS position that its formation has been a response to objective shifts in global economic power.

The moderation in rhetoric was not the only indication that BRIC would not supersede traditional partnerships in Russia's foreign policy priorities. In 2008, concurrent with the increased public emphasis on BRIC as a force in global governance, Medvedev also looked West. During the World Policy Conference in Evian, France, the Russian president outlined his proposal for a new European Security Treaty (EST).³⁴ He struck many of the same themes as he would in his 2008 address to the Federal Assembly the following month, as well as in the recently adopted Foreign Policy Concept. His statements, however, were all nested within a firm argument that Russia is an integral part of the Euro-Atlantic world.³⁵

³³ "Transcript of Remarks and Response to Media Questions by Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov at Press Conference Following Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC), Yekaterinburg."

³⁴ Dmitry Medvedev, "Speech at World Policy Conference" (World Policy Conference, Evian, France, October 8, 2008),

http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/10/08/2159_type82912type82914_207457.shtml.
³⁵ Ibid.

The EST proposal was poorly thought out and very vague on details. It also included suggestions that would clearly be anathema to NATO and the European Union, including a minimization of each of their roles in European security architecture.³⁶ It was, however, also the first major international policy proposal of Medvedev's presidency. Although he did not elaborate on the details until October 2008, Medvedev actually first presented the proposal at a meeting in Berlin before any of the 2008 crises hit.³⁷ This suggests that improving relations with the West was a higher priority for Medvedev than BRIC. The EST remained a key priority even after the August War and the onset of the financial crisis, as evidenced by the release of the full draft treaty in November 2009. Therefore, while BRIC was an important rhetorical device in 2008, it did not displace the traditional focus on relations with the West.³⁸

This is not to argue that Medvedev ever intended a return to the 1990s policy of (perceived) subordination of Russian national interests to Western leadership. Quite the contrary: the EST was itself indicative that Medvedev, like his predecessor, was committed to the goal of renegotiating post-Cold War institutional architecture. Unlike Putin, however, the proposal for revision centered around the Euro-Atlantic space. In Munich, Putin presented a Russia fed up with the West and ready to shift its focus to entirely new quarters. With the EST, whatever its faults and impracticalities, Medvedev highlighted that while the creation of a new world order was the international political

³⁶ Richard Weitz, "The Rise and Fall of Medvedev's European Security Treaty" (Washington, DC: German Marshal Fund of the United States, May 2012), 1, http://www.gmfus.org/publications/rise-and-fall-medvedev%E2%80%99s-european-security-treaty.

³⁸ "The Draft of the European Security Treaty," *President of Russia*, November 29, 2009, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/6152.

priority of his presidency, he would aim to do so from a Western-oriented perspective.

The proposal is also evidence of the ongoing tension in Russian elite discourse over trying to be accepted by the West and trying to compete with or balance against it.

It is worth noting that while the EST was a firm indication of Medvedev's political goals, the economic goals were somewhat different. Most important, the Global Financial Crisis for the first time forced Russia to develop a comprehensive economic policy toward China. While economic relations had existed on paper for some time, such as a Memorandum of Understanding between China and Gazprom from 2006, the Russian side was not convinced of the worth of those deals. After the Global Financial Crisis, and especially after the precipitous drop in Russian GDP in 2009, that changed. In 2010, China became Russia's largest trading partner. That same year, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade announced the intention to increase Chinese foreign direct investment (FDI) in Russia by \$10 billion over the next ten years, from \$2 billion to \$12 billion. The unwillingness of Western banks to lend to Rosneft and Transneft (state oil and oil transit companies) after the financial crisis hit Russia in 2009 also acted as a spur to increase Russian-Chinese energy relations.

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³⁹ Gabuev, interview.

⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹ Mankoff, Russian Foreign Policy, 2012, 194.

⁴² Ibid., 195

⁴³ Lo, Russia and the New World Disorder, 146.

Rhetorical emphasis on BRIC subsided after 2008. This was a result of improved Russian-U.S. and Russian-NATO relations, specifics of Medvedev's policy priorities, and changes within BRIC itself. Throughout the remainder of Medvedev's term and into the beginning of Putin's return to the presidency, therefore, the approach to BRICS in Russian foreign policy remained unchanged. It served the specific role of "rhetorical balancing" – with varying degrees of confrontational overtones – without becoming a real priority for the leadership.

U.S.-Russian relations improved dramatically following the election of Barack Obama. In part, this was because there was nowhere to go but up after the nadir of the Georgia War. There was also optimism on both sides that with two leaders who came of age at the end of the Cold War, the historical baggage of the relationship could finally be jettisoned in favor of a new, modern partnership. Most important, though, was the presence in Washington of an administration that appeared willing to take a pragmatic rather than value-driven approach to U.S.-Russian relations. ⁴⁴ This new approach was motivated both by the shock of the collapse in relations following the Georgia War as well as a move among American experts to consider U.S. policy toward more holistically, as one piece of America's larger foreign policy goals and objectives. ⁴⁵

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45 Ibid., 11.

⁴⁴ Salzman, "U.S. Policy Toward Russia: A Review of Policy Recommendations," 10.

The U.S.-Russia Reset got off to a rocky start when U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton gave Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov a button labeled "overload" instead of "reset." Despite these rough beginnings, however, the new approach bore significant early fruit. Following a sunny first meeting between the two leaders at the London G20 in April 2009, the two countries concluded a much-needed successor to the lapsed START agreement and established a Bilateral Presidential Commission (BPC). The BPC included working groups focusing on areas such as energy, democracy and human rights, and counterterrorism. Much to the benefit of the United States and its NATO allies, the Reset also produced an agreement on the Northern Distribution Network (NDN), which provided a more reliable transit route to resupply troops in Afghanistan.

Perhaps the most important benefit of the Reset from the Russian perspective, however, was the cancellation of planned missile defense sites in Poland and the Czech Republic in favor of the Phased, Adaptive Approach (PAA). As discussed in the previous chapter, missile defense has long been an irritant in U.S.-Russian relations, especially since George W. Bush unilaterally withdrew from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty in June 2002. U.S. administrations have always held that the purpose of a missile defense system in Europe is to protect European allies from Iran, and that the system would have no effect on the Russian nuclear deterrent. Russia, however, maintains that the system undermines strategic stability and poses a threat to Russian national interests. The sites in Poland and the Czech Republic were especially distasteful to the Russian

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⁴⁶ Jill Dougherty, "Clinton 'Reset Button' Gift to Russian FM Gets Lost in Translation," *CNN Political Ticker*, accessed May 6, 2015, http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2009/03/06/clinton-reset-button-gift-to-russian-fm-gets-lost-in-translation/.

⁴⁷ Stent, The Limits of Partnership, 231.

leadership because they were to be situated on the territory of former Warsaw Pact allies. President Obama emphasized that the switch to the PAA was driven by a new threat assessment rather than a desire to placate Russia. He also, however, reportedly sent a secret letter to Medvedev early in his term offering to withdraw the plan for sites in Poland and the Czech Republic if Russia agreed to cooperate on sanctioning Iran. On hearing of the cancellation of those plans, the Russian MFA stated that it was a positive sign that indicated America's interest in developing U.S.-Russian relations.

The move to the PAA paved the way for deeper cooperation on missile defense under both bilateral and NATO auspices. At the bilateral level, the Arms Control and International Security Working Group of the BPC included discussions on how to cooperate on missile defense. The Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative, a high level trilateral track II project, coordinated a working group on missile defense that included the former Chief of Staff of the Strategic Rocket Forces on the Russian side, the former Director of the Missile Defense Agency on the U.S. side, and a former defense minister of Poland, among other experts. The payoff of these efforts, combined with work in the NATO-Russia Council, reached its zenith during the 2010 NATO summit in Lisbon, when President Medvedev addressed the Alliance and supported the broad strokes of a

⁴⁸ "FACT SHEET U.S. Missile Defense Policy A Phased, Adaptive Approach for Missile Defense in Europe," *The White House*, accessed May 6, 2015, https://www.whitehouse.gov/node/4873; Peter Baker, "Obama Offered Deal to Russia in Secret Letter," *The New York Times*, March 3, 2009, sec. Washington, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/03/washington/03prexy.html.

⁴⁹ "Obama poshel na kompromis: SShA otkazalis ot pazmeshcheniia PRO v Polshe i Chekhii," *Newsru.com*, September 17, 2009, http://www.newsru.com/world/17sep2009/prousa.html.

⁵⁰ Bureau of Public Affairs Department Of State. The Office of Website Management, "Arms Control and International Security," May 27, 2010, http://www.state.gov/p/eur/ci/rs/usrussiabilat/c37312.htm.
⁵¹ FASI Working Group on Missile Defense, "Missile Defense, Towards a New Paradigm" (Washington)

⁵¹ EASI Working Group on Missile Defense, "Missile Defense: Towards a New Paradigm" (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 2012),

 $http://carnegie endowment.org/files/WGP_MissileDefense_FINAL.pdf.\ The\ author\ worked\ on\ EASI.$

joint missile defense project.⁵² Though the project was presented in less conciliatory terms during his annual address to the Federal Assembly the following week, it was nevertheless a milestone in post-Cold War relations between Russia and the West.⁵³

The upswing in relations with Russia's traditional partners, though, was not the only reason BRIC was a low priority. As discussed above, Medvedev was more oriented toward economic liberalization and international economic integration than Putin had been by the end of his first tenure as president. This new approach was hinted at in the 2008 foreign policy concept. In 2009, Medvedev released an article entitled *Rossiia*, *vpered!* (*Forward Russia!*) that focused mostly on domestic goals. ⁵⁴ Though it also included some discussion of foreign policy, the discussion was more fully fleshed out in the unofficial 2010 survey of Russian foreign policy that was leaked to the Russian edition of *Newsweek*. ⁵⁵ The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs would not confirm that the leaked document represented a new doctrine, but analysts and newspapers accept it as a genuine reflection of the Medvedev team's foreign policy outlook at the time. ⁵⁶ Further,

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⁵² Simon Tisdall, "Lisbon: The Most Exciting Post-Cold War Nato Summit?," *The Guardian*, November 15, 2010, http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cifamerica/2010/nov/15/lisbon-nato-summit. The EASI Working Group on Missile Defense came together after Lisbon, but built on that momentum.

⁵³ RFE/RL, "Warning Of New Arms Race, Medvedev Calls For Cooperation With West On Missile Shield," *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, January 12, 2010, sec. News, http://www.rferl.org/content/russia medvedev parliament/2234566.html.

⁵⁴ Dmitry Medvedev, "Rossiia, vpered!," *Gazeta.ru*, September 10, 2009, http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/5413.

⁵⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "O programme effektivnogo ispolzovaniia na sistemoi osnove vneshnepoliticheskikh faktorov v tseliakh dolgosrochnogo razvitiia Rossiiskoi Federatsii" (Russkii Newsweek, May 11, 2010), http://perevodika.ru/articles/13590.html.

⁵⁶ Michael Stott, "Russia's New Foreign Policy Puts Business First," *Reuters*, May 25, 2010, http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/05/25/us-russia-policy-idUSTRE64O28020100525; Stent, *The Limits of Partnership*, 318 n. 13; Nikolaus von Twickel, "Leaked Paper Calls for Friendlier Foreign Policy," *The Moscow Times*, May 13, 2010, http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/leaked-paper-calls-for-friendlier-foreign-policy/405884.html.

the Ministry did confirm that the paper was prepared in response to President Medevedy's exhortation to use Russian foreign policy to drive investment.⁵⁷

In part, the new orientation towards economic modernization and diversification put forth in both Rossiia vpered! and the leaked foreign policy paper was spurred by necessity. Unlike its BRIC partners, which managed to get through the 2008 crisis largely unscathed, Russia's GDP plummeted by 7.9% in 2009.⁵⁸ As noted above, it was the hardest-hit economy in all of the G20.⁵⁹ As a result, the confidence that marked the end of Putin's time in office was no longer sustainable; in order to modernize, Russia needed foreign capital.⁶⁰

The text of the leaked 2010 paper, however, suggests that the focus on economic modernization and integration was not simply a result of immediate necessity. Entitled "Program for the Effective Exploitation on A Systemic Basis of Foreign Policy Factors for the Purposes of the Long-Term Development of the Russian Federation," the document runs more than fifty pages and details goals for Russia's economic relationship with countries in every region of the world. 61 Unlike previous concepts and surveys, which all speak explicitly about the need to construct a new world order, the main thrust of the Program is how to promote balanced economic relations across the globe as a way of speeding Russian development. The United States and Europe are seen as essential to

⁵⁷ von Twickel, "Leaked Paper Calls for Friendlier Foreign Policy."

⁵⁸ Stott, "Russia's New Foreign Policy Puts Business First."

⁵⁹ Åslund, Guriev, and Kuchins, Russia after the Global Economic Crisis, 1.

⁶⁰ Stott, "Russia's New Foreign Policy Puts Business First."

⁶¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "O programme effektivnogo ispolzovaniia na sistemoi osnove vneshnepoliticheskikh faktorov v tseliakh dolgosrochnogo razvitiia Rossiiskoi Federatsii."

this process as potential sources of high technology. The Program also asserts that increasing economic integration with the Asia Pacific Region is of paramount importance as part of the larger project of developing the Russian Far East. Nevertheless, the sections on China and India are remarkably short, and in the preamble, written as a cover letter to Medvedev, Lavrov states that the United States and Europe are the most "desirable partners."

Lavrov's preamble is the only section of the Program that reads like other Russian foreign policy documents. In it, he identifies the United States as a source of global political and economic instability, and he stresses the importance of BRIC coordination in effecting (promised) changes in IMF quotas. Lavrov also argues that one of the primary goals of U.S. policy is "to marginalize multilateral formats where the United States is not a member, including BRIC and the [Shanghai Cooperation Organization]." The overriding message of the preamble is that Russia must modernize its economy in order to maintain its seat at the international decision-making table. 64

The idea of economic modernization via the BRIC mechanism is absent from the rest of the document, including in the discussion of bilateral relations with the individual countries themselves. This absence reinforces the notion that Russia was not really interested in the economic potential of the group. By the time the Program was leaked to

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⁶² Ibid.; Roger McDermott, "Kremlin Contemplates a Seismic Shift in Russian Foreign Policy," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, May 17, 2010,

http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=36393&cHash=f2c72323eb. 63 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "O programme effektivnogo ispolzovaniia na sistemoi osnove

vneshnepoliticheskikh faktorov v tseliakh dolgosrochnogo razvitiia Rossiiskoi Federatsii." ⁶⁴ Ibid.

Russkii Newsweek, BRIC had already held two summits. Although the group was still in its infancy, the Joint Statement from the second summit included a commitment to cooperate in the energy sphere on research and development (R&D) and high technology transfer. The group had also agreed to explore a wide range of sectoral cooperation, and had held the first Business Forum in Rio di Janeiro the day before the leaders' summit in Brasilia. Brasilia.

If Russia valued these developments, the growing intra-group economic agenda should have been incorporated into the official framing of BRIC in speeches and documents from that point onwards. In some ways it was. In his 2010 address to the Federal Assembly, President Medvedev spoke of the importance of "economic diplomacy" and the need to build "modernization alliances" with the BRIC countries, among others. ⁶⁷ The 2011 speech contains a similar, though weaker, exhortation. ⁶⁸ In both cases, though, the mention of the economic potential of BRICS was entwined with a statement on the role of BRICS in increasing Russia's international voice. During this time, economics and internal development of BRICS as a mechanism became the principal priorities for the group, as demonstrated in the summit declarations beginning with the 2011 Sanya Declaration. Regardless of these developments, in most statements, Medvedev still

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⁶⁵ BRIC Leaders, "BRIC Summit - Joint Statement" (Second BRIC Summit, Brasilia, Brazil, April 16, 2010), http://www.brics5.co.za/about-brics/summit-declaration/second-summit/.

⁶⁷ Medvedev, "Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation," November 30, 2010.

⁶⁸ Dmitry Medvedev, "Address to the Federal Assembly" (Moscow, Russia, December 22, 2011), http://eng.kremlin.ru/transcripts/3268.

focused primarily on BRICS as a narrow rhetorical political tool in Russia's ongoing international balancing act.⁶⁹

Even Medvedev's speeches at the BRICS summits often emphasized BRICS on the international stage over the intra-BRICS agenda. In the press statement following the first BRIC summit in Yekaterinburg in 2009, President Medvedev emphasized the primacy of the foreign ministries in coordinating BRIC. The implication was that other ministries, including those charged with economic development and cooperation, would play secondary roles. 70 Similarly, in his speech at the fourth summit in New Delhi in 2012, Medvedev proposed that:

A gradual transformation of BRICS into a fully-developed mechanism of interaction on major issues in global economy and politics could become our strategic goal. Such a step forward is only possible through joint efforts on the concept. I would like to suggest that our Foreign Ministers begin this work.

The adoption of the forum's foreign relations strategy is also long overdue as it will help anchor the BRICS in the international relations system, to expand and strengthen the gravitational field which is already being formed around our five countries.⁷¹

The speech did also praise burgeoning intra-BRICS cooperation, but not to do so would have been impolitic. However, besides touting the growing BRICS Business Forum,

brics/summit-declaration/fourth-summit/; BRICS Leaders, "eThekwini Declaration" (Fifth BRICS Summit: BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Development, INtegration, and Industrialisation, Durban, South Africa, March 27, 2013), http://www.brics5.co.za/about-brics/summit-declaration/fifth-summit/; Unnikrishnan,

⁷⁰ Dmitry Medvedev, "Press Statement Following BRIC Group Summit," (First BRICS Summit, Ekaterinburg, Russia, June 16, 2009), http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/4475.

⁶⁹ BRICS Leaders, "Sanya Declaration" (Third BRICS Summit, Sanya, China, April 14, 2011), http://www.brics5.co.za/about-brics/summit-declaration/third-summit/; BRICS Leaders, "Delhi Declaration" (Fourth BRICS Summit, Delhi, India, March 29, 2012), http://www.brics5.co.za/about-

⁷¹ Dmitry Medvedev, "Russian President's Address at the BRICS Summit" (Fourth BRICS Summit, New Delhi, India, March 29, 2012), http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/14870.

Medvedev seemed most interested in increasing BRICS's role in the larger international system or, at a minimum, how intra-BRICS cooperation would support that goal.⁷² He was much less enamored with the benefits of BRICS cooperation for Russian economic development or the other less political aspects of intra-BRICS coordination.

2012-2013: Putin's Return and the Rise of the Eurasian Union

When Putin returned to the Russian presidency in 2012, it might have been logical to assume a renewed emphasis on BRICS. The group was now a more established actor with a growing independent agenda, including a preliminary agreement to form a BRICS development bank. 73 In addition, most of Medvedev's much-vaunted efforts in improving relations with the West and modernizing the Russian economy had failed to deliver on their initial promise. Joint cooperation on missile defense collapsed for good in November 2011.⁷⁴ When Michael McFaul, the principal architect of the Reset, came to Moscow in January 2012 to become U.S. Ambassador to Russia, he arrived just after a series of popular protests against rigged elections. The protests, and McFaul's academic specialty in democratization, prompted accusations from Moscow that the United States was trying to foment a "color revolution" in Russia, just as it had in Georgia and Ukraine. 75 After McFaul gave a speech on U.S.-Russian relations at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow the following May, the Ministry released an official statement

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ BRICS Leaders, "Delhi Declaration."

⁷⁴ Stent, *The Limits of Partnership*, 228.

⁷⁵ Remnick, "Vladimir Putin's New Anti-Americanism," The New Yorker, August 11, 2014, http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/08/11/watching-eclipse; on Moscow's view of the Color Revolutions, see Lincoln Abraham Mitchell, The Color Revolutions, 1st ed (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 193.

accusing McFaul of crossing the boundaries of diplomatic decency. ⁷⁶ McFaul's statements about avoiding linkages between American relations with countries in the former Soviet space and American relations with Russia provoked particular ire. ⁷⁷ The Reset was dead, and the importance of BRICS could conceivably have expanded in its wake.

It did not. Instead, Putin turned his focus to the Eurasian Union, a project he proposed in one of a series of articles he wrote as part of his 2011-2012 presidential campaign. Putin detailed a vision to bring together many of the former Soviet Republics into a customs union and free trade area, with some features that mirrored the operation of the European Union.⁷⁸ This was a renewal and expansion of a project that had been nominally part of Russian foreign (economic) policy since the mid-1990s, but Putin's article gave the plan new life.

Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev first proposed the idea of a Eurasian Union in 1994. However, as discussed in the first chapter, Russia's interest in the idea waxed and waned in the intervening years between that proposal and its emergence as a central tenet of Putin's foreign policy during his third presidential term. Indeed, for much of the post-

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⁷⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Zaiavlenie MID Rossii v sviazi s vyskazyvaniiami Posla SShA v Moskve M. Makfola," May 28, 2012, http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/7511BC12330A28A244257A0C00591D4B.

⁷⁷ Miriam Elder, "Michael McFaul, US Ambassador to Moscow, Victim of Kremlin 'Twitter War,'" *The Guardian*, May 29, 2012, sec. World news, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/may/29/michael-mcfaul-twitter-attack-russia; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "McFaul's Mention of 'linkages' Supposedly Put Forward by Russia in the Discussion of Pressing International Issues Is Also Unprofessional," Twitter, @*mfa_russia*, (May 28, 2012), https://twitter.com/MFA_Russia/status/207171965499355136; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Michael McFaul's Analysis Is a Deliberate Distortion of a Number of Aspects of the Russian-U.S. Dialogue," Twitter, @*mfa_russia*, (May 28, 2012), https://twitter.com/MFA_Russia/status/207171509628837889.

⁷⁸ Vladimir V. Putin, "Novyi integratsionnyi proekt Evrazii - budushchee, kotoroe rozhdaetsia segodnia," *Izvestia*, October 3, 2011, http://izvestia.ru/news/502761.

Cold War era, Russian interest in pursuing the Eurasian Union had been lukewarm, and the country was largely unwilling to undertake policies (e.g. tariff reductions) that would have made the nominal customs union formed in 1995 anything more than a piece of paper.⁷⁹

The turning point came in 2009, when then-Prime Minister Putin announced that Russia would withdraw its bid to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) in favor of a joint bid as a customs union with Belarus and Kazakhstan. Putin made his announcement during the annual St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF), sometimes seen as Russia's version of the Davos World Economic Forum and a time when foreign eyes are more focused on Russia than they might be otherwise. The announcement came as a surprise to many both in and outside of Russia. ⁸⁰ Though the Russian leadership ultimately reversed the statement and affirmed that Russia would seek individual WTO accession, efforts to build and strengthen the Customs Union continued. The Customs Union officially went into effect in 2010. The laws on making the Customs Union a single economic space entered into force in January 2012. ⁸¹ Integration with the former Soviet space has nominally been the top priority in Russian foreign policy since the end of the Kozyrev era. Putin's new vision, however, gave that vague priority a specificity and explicit prominence it had not previously enjoyed.

⁷⁹ Naumkin, "Russian Policy Toward Kazakhstan," 53.

⁸⁰ Anders Áslund, "Why Doesn't Russia Join the WTO?," *Washington Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (2010): 60. ⁸¹ Alexander 1972- Cooley, *Great Games, Local Rules: The New Power Contest in Central Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 60. The customs union for Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia went into effect in 2010. See ibid.

In years since Putin's announcement at the 2009 SPIEF, the Russian conception of the Eurasian Union took on a more political angle.⁸² This caused friction with the other members, particularly Kazakhstan, which also has not benefited as much economically from the Customs Union as it anticipated.⁸³ In December 2013, Nazarbayev came out against further politicization of the project, and serious conceptual differences over the future of the Eurasian Union exist between Kazakhstan and Russia.⁸⁴ Nevertheless, even if the project stays strictly in the economic realm and does not progress to political cooperation, this iteration of the project has proved more durable than past efforts.

BRICS, by contrast, remained primarily in the realm of rhetoric. The discussion of BRICS and its role in global affairs in Putin's 2012 and 2013 addresses to the Federal Assembly recalled the rhetoric of 2006 and 2007 in its emphasis on BRICS over Western organizations. However, his statements reflected neither an advancement in the approach towards the group nor the strides the group had made towards institutionalization over the preceding years. Similarly, though the foreign policy concept Putin approved in 2013 highlighted BRICS over the G8 in the discussion of how Russia would use its

⁸² Nursha Askar, "Evolution of Political Though in Kazakhstan on the Problems of Eurasian Integration: 'Eurasia-Optimists' and 'Eurasia-Skeptics," Working Paper (Astana and Almaty: The Institute of World Economy and Politics at the Foundation of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan - The Leader of the Nation, 2014), 33.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 44.

⁸⁵ Vladimir Putin, "Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation" (Moscow, Russia, December 12, 2012), http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/17118; Vladimir Putin, "Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation" (Moscow, Russia, December 12, 2013), http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/19825.

international connections to build a new world order, the concept otherwise ignored BRICS in the details of Russian foreign policy plans and priorities.⁸⁶

Putin's press statement following the Durban summit in 2013 reinforced the perception that he was more interested in the idea of BRICS rather than the nuts and bolts of intra-BRICS cooperation. The theme of the Durban summit was "BRICS and Africa:

Partnership for Development, Integration, and Industrialization." In his press statement, Putin focused on the work of the BRICS Business Forum, which if successful would theoretically bring substantive financial benefit to Russia, but beyond that the statement seems almost perfunctory. He slipped in references to Russia's taking a leading role in promoting the group's development and reminded the audience that the member countries were "global growth leaders." However, there was little in the short address to suggest that it was a group in which Putin found specific benefit beyond the aura of membership itself. 88

The official "Concept of the Participation of the Russian Federation in BRICS" (henceforth "BRICS Concept") was approved in March 2013 just ahead of BRICS summit in Durban. ⁸⁹ It is a useful window into the duality of the Russian approach to BRICS before the onset of the crisis in Ukraine. ⁹⁰ On the one hand, the Concept lays out a long-term goal of further institutional formalization of the BRICS association, and lists

⁸⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation," February 8, 2013, http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/76389FEC168189ED44257B2E0039B16D.

⁸⁷ BRICS Leaders, "eThekwini Declaration."

⁸⁸ Vladimir Putin, "Press Statement Following the BRICS Summit" (Fifth BRICS Summit, Durban, South Africa, March 27, 2013), http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/17756.

⁸⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Concept of Participation of the Russian Federation in BRICS," March 21, 2013, http://eng.news.kremlin.ru/media/events/eng/files/41d452b13d9c2624d228.pdf.
⁹⁰ Ibid.

the ways the BRICS group can support Russian foreign policy and domestic economic goals. ⁹¹ On the other hand, the text emphasizes maintaining informal links and not institutionalizing the group to the point that it overrides bilateral relations. ⁹² The BRICS concept is more detailed in its vision for the group than the speeches of either Putin or Medvedev had been on the topic. However, it does not include ideas that had not already been raised in either BRICS meetings or similar BRICS conceptual documents. ⁹³

This lack of conceptual innovation, especially from the country that sees itself as the intellectual architect of BRICS, is revealing. ⁹⁴ It indicates that through the end of 2013, Russian policies and intentions towards BRICS remained both narrow and shallow. BRICS was another table to sit at and a useful theoretical alternative to Western clubs. It also was a convenient rhetorical weapon to show both domestic and international audiences that Russia had other friends besides Europe and the United States. It was not taken seriously, however, as a real alternative option for Russia. As Alexander Sergunin argues:

BRICS for Russia seems to represent mainly a vehicle for *global normative transformation*, while for achieving specific geopolitical objectives Moscow prefers to use other organizations...which are regional in scope and more practical in their outlook. ⁹⁵

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b13d-22867ff8ea2a.pdf.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation."

⁹³ For example, Saran, Singh, and Sharan, "A Long-Term Vision for BRICS."

⁹⁴ On Russia as the intellectual architect of BRICS, see Toloraya, interview.

⁹⁵ Alexander Sergunin, "Understanding Russia's Policies towards BRICS: Theory and Practice," in *Russian Politics* (Voices from Outside: Re-shaping International Relations Theory and Practice in an Era of Global Transformation, Singapore: International Studies Association, 2015), 11, http://web.isanet.org/Web/Conferences/GSCIS%20Singapore%202015/Archive/55c376c8-7911-42be-

In other words, the real value of BRICS to Russia was in the ability to speak about and tout its existence and maturation as an international group as a way of pushing back against global norms with which it disagreed. The substance of cooperation was much less important.

BRICS in Russian Intellectual Circles, 2008-2013

In contrast to the narrow official approach, the period between 2008 and 2013 saw an enormous output of academic analysis on BRICS and the role of Russia in BRICS. Some of that was a response to the evolution of the forum. As BRICS added working groups and expanded its membership to include South Africa, research expanded correspondingly. However, in some cases research in Russia predated the inclusion of those topics in BRICS, notably with the work on a strategic concept. Overall, the work of Russian academics on BRICS between 2008 and 2013 was broader and more nuanced than the official presentation of the project in government speeches and concepts.

The academic books range from region-specific analysis about BRICS and Africa or Latin America, often produced in preparation for or as a consequence of a BRICS summit, to detailed conference reports and publications covering almost every topic imaginable. ⁹⁷ Some books also explored BRICS from angles of particular concern to

⁹⁶ As discussed in the third chapter, the Indian arm of the BTTC, the Observer Research Foundation, began working on a long term plan for BRICS before NKI BRIKS undertook a similar project.

⁹⁷ Tatiana Lazerevna Deich and Evgenii Nikolaevich Korendiasov, eds., *BRIKS-Afrika: parterstvo i vzaimodeistvie* (Moscow, Russia: IAfr, 2013); Vladimir Mikhailovich Davydov, ed., *BRIKS - Latinskaia Amerika: positsionirovanie i vzaimodeistvie* (Moscow, Russia: ILA RAN, 2014); Liudmila Sergeevna

Russia, such as natural resource cooperation. ⁹⁸ Articles in academic journals also delved into the details, examining topics ranging from comparative foreign direct investment among the BRICS to the potential for BRICS to play a bigger role in Russian foreign economic policy and how China uses BRICS to burnish its own image. ⁹⁹

This flowering of BRICS research becomes more interesting when contextualized by the fact that the line between state and academia in Russia is somewhat blurred, since most of the main research institutions as well as the most prominent universities are state-owned. Russian educational institutions such as the constellation of institutes under the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAN) are considered "budgetary institutions," which are a special class of institutions created by the state to serve specific, non-commercial purposes. Budgetary institutions are usually financed from the federal or local government budget. Formally, though the majority of funding comes from government dollars, educational institutions have full autonomy over the direction of research, faculty selection, and financial activity. They also are supposed to have rights over their capital assets, including property, and are allowed to rent these out as they see fit. 103

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Okuneva and A.A. Orlov, eds., *Voskhodiashchie gosudarstva-giganty BRIKS: rol v mirovoi politike strategii modernizatsii, sbornik nauchnykh trudov* (Moscow, Russia: MGIMO - Universitet, 2012). ⁹⁸ E.A. Kozlovskii, M.A. Komarov, and R.N. Makyshkin, *Braziliia, Rossiia, Indiia, Kitai, IuAR: strategiia*

 ⁹⁸ E.A. Kozlovskii, M.A. Komarov, and R.N. Makyshkin, *Braziliia, Rossiia, Indiia, Kitai, IuAR: strategiia nedropolzvaniia* (Moscow, Russia: NKI BRIKS, 2013).
 ⁹⁹ V Bobrova, "Priiamie innostanye investitsii v stranakh BRIKS," *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye*

otnosheniia, no. 2 (2013); Isachenko, "Strany BRIKS vo vneshneekonomicheskoi strategii Rossii: poisk alternativ"; Ivan Antonov, "BRIKS kaka imedzhevaia kopilka," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn*, no. 4 (May 2011). ¹⁰⁰ S. Batkibekov et al., *Perfection of the System of Management and Funding of Budget Institutions*, vol. I, Increasing the Efficiency of Budget Expenditure on Funding Public Institutions and Management Of Public Unitary Enterprises Perfection of the System of Management and Funding of Budget Institutions (Moscow: Gaidar Institute, 2003), 6,

http://iep.ru/en/publications/publication/265.html?highlight=WyJkZXpoaW5hII0=. 101 Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid., I:29.

¹⁰³ Ibid., I:27.

The role of the Ministry of Education, and the state more generally, with respect to educational institutions is officially limited to enforcing standards, accreditation, and other similar roles. ¹⁰⁴ In practice, however, the laws regarding state control over educational institutions are poorly and unevenly enforced, largely as a result of ambiguities in the legislative language. ¹⁰⁵ In addition, RAN has been undergoing a long and controversial reform process that has altered how funding is dispensed. The reform has incurred accusations that the government (and Putin himself) is exerting more direct control. ¹⁰⁶ In 2013, when a bill to reform RAN was introduced into the Duma, Prime Minister Medvedev stated: "academic science should provide full-fledged expert support to the state in priority areas." ¹⁰⁷ The 2013 bill was extremely controversial, in part because its authorship remains unclear; the Ministry of Education and Science denied that it drafted the bill and the confusion never lifted. ¹⁰⁸

In addition to state financing of research, there is a great deal of cross-fertilization between universities, institutes, and government. For example, Vyacheslav Nikonov is

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¹⁰⁸ Irina Dezhina, "The Special of Structural Reforms in Russian Science," SSRN Scholarly Paper

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., I:30.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., I:31.

¹⁰⁶ Andrey Allakhverdov and Vladimir Pokrovsky, "Putin: Reform Begins at Home," *Science* 306, no. 5698 (November 5, 2004): 957,

http://search.proquest.com/docview/213609549/abstract/18878DFCF6C0424FPQ/2?; Bryon MacWilliams, "Academy Agrees to Post-Soviet Crash Diet," *Science* 310, no. 5745 (October 7, 2005): 42,

http://search.proquest.com/docview/213608514/abstract/7F1E2FD3FF6D4910PQ/4?; Mikhail Gelfand,

[&]quot;What Is to Be Done about Russian Science?," Nature 500, no. 7463 (August 22, 2013): 379,

http://search.proquest.com/docview/1440314107/abstract/95538FC11F334DFEPQ/4?

¹⁰⁷ Interfax, "Russian Academy of Sciences System Is Obsolete, Will Be Reformed - Medvedev," *Interfax*: *Russia & CIS General Newswire*, June 27, 2013,

http://search.proquest.com/docview/1372021043/abstract/C863079ADF004875PQ/2?

⁽Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, November 25, 2013), 44, http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2359349. One of the more controversial aspects of the law was that it stripped RAN of the right to act as lessor on federal properties. Since some parts of RAN are situated in central Moscow, on properties that would fetch extremely high rents on the open market, this is a blow to RAN revenue and also may be one of the government motivations for stripping RAN of the right to act as lessor.

simultaneously a member of the Duma, the Dean of the School of Public Administration at Moscow State University, and the Chair of the Presidium of NKI BRIKS. In addition, both the Moscow State Institute of International Affairs (MGIMO) and the NKI BRIKS are formally part of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Indeed, President Medvedev himself established NKI BRIKS in 2011. It is the Russian arm of the BRICS Think Tank Council. 109 It acts as a coordinating body for BRICS research in Russia at a variety of institutes and universities. 110 Since the spring of 2012, NKI BRIKS has also published a semi-regular bulletin that summarizes main BRICS research worldwide. 111 In addition, in 2013, the organization released *Strategiia Rossii v BRIKS: tseli i instrumenty (Russia's Strategy in BRICS: Goals and Instruments)*, which details Russia's goals towards and possible strategies within the BRICS group. 112

The different types and levels of association with the federal government mean there is a continuum of research independence. Work that is formally released by one of the institutes of RAN, especially if it is not listed as an NKI BRIKS publication on the website, is likely further from state influence than, for example, *Strategiia Rossii v BRIKS*. At the same time, though, because of the cross-fertilization, much of the research could be considered part of a "Track II" level project rather than something wholly separate from government discourse. This is not to argue that every time a Russian

¹⁰⁹ http://www.nkibrics.ru/pages/about (in Russian) Russia is the only BRICS country whose BTTC member was chartered by the government. Other countries designated BTTC institutions are often close to the government (e.g. the Observer Research Foundation in India), but were not formed by presidential mandate specifically to coordinate research for BRICS.

¹¹⁰ Toloraya, interview.

¹¹¹ http://www.nkibrics.ru/pages/bulletins (in Russian).

¹¹² V.A. Nikonov and G.D. Toloraya, eds., *Strategiia Rossii v BRIKS: tseli i instrumenty* (Moscow, Russia: Universitet, 2013).

scholar published a book or article on BRICS it was automatically because of a government directive. Rather, the point is that despite the fairly unidimensional official discussion of BRICS at the highest official levels, government money was making possible more nuanced input from universities and research institutes.

In some cases, government also engaged with academia directly. In 2011, MGIMO sponsored a large conference addressing the issues of BRICS in world politics and intra-BRICS cooperation as a means of modernization. Vadim Lukov, the ambassador in the MFA tasked with coordinating Russia's engagement with BRICS, took part, as did ambassadors from other BRICS countries. Between 2008 and 2013 (and onward), the Russian MFA's journal *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn* (*International Affairs*) published articles about BRICS by officials, including Lavrov and Lukov, as well as local and foreign academics. ¹¹⁴

Because these works are not part of official government discourse, they have greater freedom to explore and propose a wider array of possible roles for BRICS on the global stage. Some build directly off of common BRICS themes, such as the details of monetary cooperation within the group, and the likelihood of various options for trade and monetary cooperation. Other suggestions seem quite radical: for example, one

¹¹³ Okuneva and Orlov, Voskhodiashchie gosudarstva-giganty BRIKS: rol v mirovoi politike strategii modernizatsii, sbornik nauchnykh trudov.

¹¹⁴ Vadim Lukov, "BRIKS - Faktor Globalnogo Znachenie," *Mezhdunarodnaia Zhizn*, no. 6 (2011); Lavrov, "BRIKS - globalnyi forum novogo pokoleniia"; Li Sin, "Strany BRIKS: ukreplialia sotrudnichestvo," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn*, no. 2 (February 2012).

¹¹⁵ Natalia Gennadievich Khmelevskaia, "Valiutnoe partnerstvo BRIKS: uslovia sozdaniia i instrumentarii sblizheniia interesov," in *Voskhodiashchie gosudarstva-giganty BRIKS: rol v mirovoi politike strategii modernizatsii, sbornik nauchnykh trudov*, ed. Liudmila Sergeevna Okuneva and A.A. Orlov (Moscow,

contribution from the MGIMO conference suggests that it would be unwise to rule out military cooperation among the BRICS, especially if the United States and NATO continue their destabilizing policies. ¹¹⁶ This suggestion is not entirely without support: In 2013, NKI BRIKS sponsored a conference about instituting military cooperation among the BRICS. ¹¹⁷ Following the conference, Nikonov stated that the situation in Syria was impetus for exploring military cooperation. ¹¹⁸ However, there is not widespread support for including a military dimension in BRICS cooperation, and becoming a military alliance would undercut the general BRICS position that they are not a bloc aligned against any other blocs in the international system.

The academic analysis is also not all unstintingly adulatory. Even among those analysts who support Russia's membership in BRICS and find it to be in line with Russia's strategic objectives, there is no illusion that BRICS is prepared to replace the G7 or that it is a grouping without internal divisions among its members. There is also recognition that in order to be sustainable, BRICS must develop its own positive agenda, rather than simply standing against perceived Western excesses. Suggestions involve coordination on efforts to include BRICS currencies in the international reserves of other countries; economic and technological cooperation to support modernization; and cooperation on

Russia: MGIMO - Universitet, n.d.); Isachenko, "Strany BRIKS vo vneshneekonomicheskoi strategii Rossii: poisk alternativ," 86–87.

A.A. Orlov, "BRIKS: Novaia Realnost XXI Veka," in Voskhodiashchie Gosudarstva-Giganty BRIKS: Rol v Mirovoi Politike Strategii Modernizatsii, Sbornik Nauchnykh Trudov, ed. Liudmila Sergeevna Okuneva and A.A. Orlov (Moscow, Russia: MGIMO - Universitet, 2012), 45.

¹¹⁷ "BRICS Explore Political, Military Cooperation," *The BRICS Post*, September 20, 2013, http://thebricspost.com/brics-explore-political-military-cooperation/.

Panova, "Mesto Rossiia v BRIKS"; L.E. Grishaeva, "Rossiia i BRIKS: novyi etap sotrudnichestva," in *Voskhodiashchie gosudarstva-giganty BRIKC: rol v mirovoi politike, strategii modernizatsii*, ed. Liudmila Sergeevna Okuneva and A.A. Orlov (Moscow, Russia: MGIMO - Universitet, 2012), 304.
 Panova, "Mesto Rossiia v BRIKS."

counter-terrorism and narco-trafficking. ¹²¹ Most (though not all) of the authors agree that while BRICS holds potential if handled properly, the group is still in institutional infancy.

Strategiia Rossii v BRIKS represents an effort to define a clear and robust positive agenda for BRICS that supports Russian foreign policy goals and ambitions. The book covers a wide array of topics, ranging from older issues of reforming the international financial system to newer frontiers such as the possibilities of cooperation in the civil nuclear sphere. It includes contributions from both regional and functional experts from some of the most respected universities and research institutes in Russia. The collection is a detailed effort to make BRICS into a full-fledged international grouping with distinct and specific mandates that support Russian foreign policy and foreign economic policy objectives.

The problem with *Strategiia Rossiia v BRIKS* is that it is in large part a review of existing levels of cooperation. The articles it includes do not push the idea forward conceptually much more so than did the official BRICS concept. This suggests a larger point about the type of demand the research answered. Publishing a book about possible directions in which BRICS could develop was useful in terms of optics. It showed that BRICS was a

¹²¹ Marina Larionova et al., "Vozmozhnosti sotrudnichestva v BRIKS dlia formirovaniia reshenii BRIKS is 'dvadtsatki' po kliuchevym napravleniiam reformy mezhdunarodnoi finansovo-ekonomicheskoi arkhitektury v interesakh Rossii [BRICS Cooperation: A Resource for Forging BRICS and G20 Decisions in the Key Areas of International Financial and Economic Architecture]," *Vestnik mezhdunarodnoi organizatsii*, no. 4 (2012): 204, http://iorj.hse.ru/en/2012--4/70750733.html; Victoria Panova, "Russia in the BRICS," (Open talk, June 28, 2012), https://www.academia.edu/1922238/Russia_in_the_BRICS.

¹²² Nikonov and Toloraya, *Strategiia Rossii v BRIKS: tseli i instrumenty*.

topic Russia took seriously. But it was also part of constructing the larger Russian BRICS Potemkin village. 123

Similarly, consider the BRICS Center at MGIMO, which was established in 2011 and organized the conference that produced the collection in which many of the works cited here appear. ¹²⁴ As noted above, MGIMO is formally a part of MID. If BRICS were a priority in Russian foreign policy, then presumably the university that trains a vast majority of future Russian diplomats would invest in educating those future diplomats accordingly and the MGIMO BRICS Center would reflect that prioritization. Instead, the Center is one tiny office at the far end of the old building of the MGIMO complex, whose only real staff is its director. As serious as individual scholars are about the prospects of BRICS, the official infrastructure surrounding them is more about showing that such a center exists rather than facilitating BRICS research.

This points to a broader conclusion. From the nexus of the official rhetoric about BRICS as a new alternative of BRICS and the academic analysis emerges Russia's real goal towards BRICS before the Ukraine crisis. For all the mentions of BRICS in high-level speeches and research produced at state or near-state institutions, the official interest in BRICS before 2014 was primarily as a rhetorical feint to help Russia boost its international standing and punch above its weight in global decision-making. Academic

¹²³ A "Potemkin village" is a façade designed to impress an audience, but entirely lacking in actual substance. The phrase comes from the habit of Prince Grigorii Potemkin (a favorite of Catherine II) of building portable villages to make the Tsaritsa believe that Crimea was more developed than it was in actuality.

¹²⁴ Okuneva and Orlov, *Voskhodiashchie gosudarstva-giganty BRIKS: rol v mirovoi politike strategii modernizatsii, sbornik nauchnykh trudov*, 29.

research supported that goal in so far as it gave the appearance of BRICS being high on the agenda. That official discourse was for the most part disinterested in the ideas coming out of the state research institutions indicates that Russian political leaders were more interested in talking about the institutionalization of BRICS than actually implementing that goal.

BRICS as Bridge?

As discussed in the second chapter, Russia's desire to use BRICS to increase its weight in the international system is among the more standard explanations of Russia's policy toward the group. Where previous analysis falls somewhat short is in defining precisely how Russia hoped to use BRICS to magnify its voice, especially since BRICS would seem at first to be a "second best" solution. As Cynthia Roberts notes, coordination with these large emerging countries did give Russia a bigger voice in some international organizations (such as the IMF). It did not, however, produce similar effects in Euro-Atlantic organizations, such as NATO or the G8, which are the prime locus of Russian dissatisfaction with the current system. ¹²⁵ The rise of BRICS certainly did nothing to make Western states take Medvedev's EST proposal seriously.

However, there is another angle that is worth considering. As much as the effort to institutionalize BRICS was designed to give Russia (rhetorical) parallel options to further accommodation with the West, there was also a hope that the country could use its unique

¹²⁵ Roberts, "Russia's BRICs Diplomacy," 42. G20 has overtaken G8, but that is less a consequence of the rise of the BRICS and more a result of the global response to the 2008 financial crisis.

position as a member of both the G8 and BRICS to increase its influence in both. ¹²⁶ It is here that Roberts's theory about BRICS as a power multiplier needs to be extended: the aim was not just to gain influence in general international organizations, but was also about looking for a way to position the country such that it could increase its leverage in those clubs with which it was most concerned. BRICS initially offered Russia an opportunity to portray itself as the link between (old) Western institutions and the emerging powers, with the goal of using its membership in both and dual-emerging and established power identity to increase its voice on both sides. ¹²⁷

Unsurprisingly, these hopes went largely unrealized. In the period from 2008-2010, when BRICS coordination was most successful on the world stage, membership in the group did make Russia's foreign policy look more balanced, showing relations with rising powers even as Russia assented to the Reset. It did not, however, increase Russia's leverage vis-à-vis traditional powers except within the limited arena of the IMF. Once the BRICS agenda began to focus more on building intra-BRICS cooperation, it no longer served the same use of providing Russia with a non-Western pseudo-analogue to the G8. The burgeoning BRICS agenda, which focused primarily on economic modernization and socio-economic challenges of developing countries, was not irrelevant to Russia's needs. It was not, however, what Russia sought or wanted out of the forum.

¹²⁶ Shubin, "Voskhodiashchie gosudarstva-giganty BRIKC," 305; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Concept of Participation of the Russian Federation in BRICS."

¹²⁷ On whether or not this was a realistic hope, see Panova, "BRIKS: Mesto Rossii v Grupe, videnie i prakticheskie rezultaty, sovmestnaia deiatelnost 'piaterki' v ramkakh mnogostoronnikh institutov."

Until it was ejected from the G8 in 2014, Russia was a member of both the old and the new global governance frameworks. Further, the same Russian diplomat was responsible for Russian activities within the G8, the G20, and BRICS. Russia is also historically a power that desires the role of norm-setter, rather than norm-taker, on the international stage. Russia hoped that its membership in the G8 combined with the efforts to make BRICS seem like the next big thing in global governance would help push the traditional powers to make adjustments while not forcing Russia to relinquish its seat at the most prestigious international tables. The idea of BRICS as a bridge, therefore, has a dual meaning. In one sense, Russia hoped it could act as a bridge between the old and the new. In the other, Russia hoped that BRICS would provide a bridge to what it had always desired but membership in the G8 had not provided: a place at the top of the international power hierarchy.

Russia has a long tradition of positioning itself as a bridge, both civilizational and otherwise, between Europe and Asia, or, more recently, between the United States and China. ¹²⁹ What is interesting about the BRICS project is that Russia used it simultaneously to balance against the West and also as a mechanism for increasing its value to the West. Since Russia's investment in the project did not expand much beyond rhetorically extolling the group's virtues, however, the group was less effective than it might have been for either objective. By 2013, BRICS had forced reforms in the IMF,

¹²⁸ "Meeting with Vadim B.Lukov Ambassador-at-Large of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs," *Research Centre for International Cooperation and Development*, July 6, 2010, http://en.rcicd.org/news/meeting-with-vadim-b-lukov/.

Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Whose World Order?: Russia's Perception of American Ideas after the Cold War* (Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), 96–97; Lo, *Russia and the New World Disorder*, 50.

expanded to include another member state, and begun seriously considering creating its own development bank and currency pool. Though the agenda remained speculative, the group had progressed sufficiently from its beginnings that had the Russian leadership wished, it could have legitimately touted those accomplishments. The failure of the political leadership to convey these achievements indicates that the Russian leadership did not incorporate the evolution of BRICS into its approach to the group.

Chapter Conclusion

Russian policy towards BRICS between 2008 and 2013 was a lot of show and very little substance. The period saw rapid development of the BRICS mechanism itself and expanded opportunities for both rhetorical framing and concrete cooperation.

Nevertheless, the approach of the Russian ruling elite remained frozen in its original conception of BRICS as a rhetorical tool of international politics. The leadership did not incorporate the changes within the forum into either its rhetoric or policy planning.

By contrast, the academic community showed more appreciation of the possibilities of the evolving BRICS mechanism. Reports covering every angle of Russia's participation in BRICS, including suggestions that would likely be rejected by the other BRICS members, emerged in concert with the expanding BRICS agenda and membership. These analyses provided a framework onto which Russian leaders could overlay substance if they wished.

As 2013 drew to a close, it became clear that this framework would be put to use sooner than anticipated. The Euromaidan Revolution in Ukraine turned regional politics upside down, and pushed longstanding Russian foreign policy doctrines from the realm of rhetoric to one of concrete consideration. The next chapter will explore how the repercussions of Maidan, and Russia's reaction to them, changed the approach to BRICS and catapulted the group up the list of Russia's foreign policy priorities.

6. From Bridge to Bulwark?: Russia and BRICS After the

Onset of the Ukraine Crisis

This year, as has been the case during crucial historical moments, our people have demonstrated national enthusiasm, vital endurance, and patriotism. The difficulties we are facing today also create new opportunities for us. We are ready to take up any challenge and win.

-Vladimir Putin, December 2014¹

The escalation of hostile language, sanctions and counter-sanctions, and force does not contribute to a sustainable and peaceful solution, according to international law, including the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter.

- BRICS Foreign Ministers, March 2014²

As fall turned to winter in 2013, Russian foreign policy and elite political rhetoric seemed to have settled into a familiar pattern. President Putin frequently decried the danger of "value-based approaches" in international relations, and BRICS was fully integrated, along with the G20, the G8, and the SCO, into sound bites about the new world order. Even as Putin criticized American foreign policy, however, Russian-Western cooperation continued on some issues, including the Northern Distribution Network, which was slated to play a critical role in the planned U.S. drawdown from Afghanistan. Russia was preparing to host its second G8 summit in January 2014. The deteriorating situation in Syria brought the United States and Russia to the table as partners, albeit partners with

¹ Vladimir Putin, "Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation" (Moscow, Russia, December 4, 2014), http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/47173.

² "BRICS at Hague Slam Attempts to Isolate Putin," *The BRICS Post*, March 24, 20114, http://thebricspost.com/brics-at-hague-slam-attempts-to-isolate-putin/.

³ Vladimir Putin, "Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation" (Moscow, Russia, December 12, 2013), http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/19825.

⁴ Stent, The Limits of Partnership, 232.

vastly different visions for how to bring the conflict to an end. In short, there was nothing to suggest that the tense accommodation between Russia and Western powers would not continue just as it had for the majority of the post-Cold War era.

Things were changing, however, and quickly. In November 2013, the long-simmering integration dilemma between Russia and Europe exploded into an open tug-of-war over Ukraine's economic affiliation and integration. As the situation in Ukraine, fueled by domestic politics and foreign meddling, spiraled out of control, Russia found itself no longer on the margins of the Euro-Atlantic order, but unambiguously in conflict with it. As a result, a decade of rhetoric about the importance of BRICS both to Russia and to the future of the global order took on a much deeper resonance. In the wake of the geopolitical tensions set off by the crisis in Ukraine, Russian leaders began to bring their endorsement of BRICS from the realm of rhetoric to one of serious consideration as a viable alternative for Russian foreign policy. It also made Russia's latent anti-Western agenda for the BRICS group much more explicit, raising questions about how far the other BRICS countries might be willing to go in their support.

This chapter begins with a review of the crisis in Ukraine through 2014, and the varying responses to those events by Western powers and the BRICS countries. It then turns to how Russia's approach to BRICS has altered at the practical and rhetorical levels as a result of the rupture with the West. This in turn leads to analysis of the role of anti-Western sentiment within the group as both a motivating and dividing factor.⁵

⁵ Parts of this chapter, including the title, draw on Salzman, "De Bridge a Bulwark."

The Crisis in Ukraine (2013-2014)

Euromaidan and the Ouster of Viktor Yanukovych

The Euromaidan Revolution began when protesters gathered in Kyiv's Independence Square (*Maidan Nezalezhnosti*) on the evening of November 21, 2013. Initially at issue was Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych's decision not to sign a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) agreement with the European Union, but the protests were later fueled by Yanukovych's use of force against the protesters as well as revelations about astonishing level of corruption within his regime. Though the roots of the protests were mutlifactorial, the public narrative quickly became that of a proxy fight between Russia and the West for control over Ukraine's political and economic future. Putin had lobbied hard for Ukraine to join the Customs Union (and by extension the developing Eurasian Union); EU laws made membership in those organizations incompatible with the DCFTA. Observers interpreted Yanukovych's decision not to sign the DCFTA as a choice of Moscow over the West. This interpretation was reinforced by the deal Yanukovych reached with Moscow in December 2013 for a \$15 billion bail out and a sharp reduction in the price of gas.

⁶ "Protivniki priostanovki evrointegratsii Ukrainy v nochi vyshli na ulitsy Kieva," *Newsru.com*, November 22, 2013, http://www.newsru.com/world/22nov2013/ukr.html; "Answering Remaining Questions about Ukraine's Maidan Protests, One Year Later," *The Washington Post*, February 25, 2015, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/02/25/answering-remaining-questions-about-ukraines-maidan-protests-one-year-later/.

⁷ Valentina Pop and Andrew Rettman, "Merkel: Ukraine Can Go to Eurasian Union," *EUobserver*, August 25, 2014, https://euobserver.com/foreign/125331.

⁸ Alexander J. Motyl, "Yanukovych Chooses Russia over EU for Ukraine," *World Affairs Journal*, November 25, 2013, http://worldaffairsjournal.org/blog/alexander-j-motyl/yanukovych-chooses-russia-over-eu-ukraine.

⁹ Nadia M. Diuk, "Euromaidan: Ukraine's Self-Organizing Revolution," *World Affairs Journal*, March 2014, http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/euromaidan-ukraine%E2%80%99s-self-organizing-revolution.

December 2013 and January 2014 witnessed a rapid deterioration of the situation. Protests spread to other cities in Western Ukraine and citizens in the east, historically both Russophone and more Russophilic than Western Ukrainians, began protesting in fear of what was happening in Kyiv. Yanukovych at first refused to negotiate with the opposition, and instead signed an anti-protest law in mid-January 2014. The law was repealed less than two weeks later, but by then the situation was moving forward on its own momentum. Yanukovych's violence against the protesters also increased: between February 18 and February 20, 2014, more than 100 people in Kyiv were killed.

After that spate of violence, though, it seemed that the crisis might be over. On February 21, 2014, Yanukovych and the main opposition leaders signed an EU-brokered deal that promised a "political resolution to the crisis." The deal included agreement on a timeline for constitutional reform, parliamentary and presidential elections, and amnesty for the protesters. Yet that very evening, due to both pressure from the opposition and abandonment by his erstwhile allies, Yanukovych fled the capital, and the opposition took control of the government. According to a Russian government-produced documentary in 2015, Russian military helicopters evacuated Yanukovych first to Crimea and shortly thereafter into southern Russia. Yanukovych gave a press conference from

¹⁰ "Ukraine Crisis: Timeline," *BBC News*, accessed May 27, 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-26248275.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² "Agreement on the Settlement of Crisis in Ukraine - Full Text," *The Guardian*, accessed May 27, 2015, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/21/agreement-on-the-settlement-of-crisis-in-ukraine-full-text. ¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Andrew Higgins and Andrew E. Kramer, "Ukraine Leader Was Defeated Even Before He Was Ousted," *The New York Times*, January 3, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/04/world/europe/ukraine-leader-was-defeated-even-before-he-was-ousted.html.

¹⁵ "Putin Reveals Secrets of Russia's Crimea Takeover Plot," *BBC News*, March 9, 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-31796226.

the Russian town of Rostov-on-don on February 28, 2014 in which he urged Russia to take action against the new Ukrainian government. ¹⁶ He then disappeared from the public eye.

The Annexation of Crimea and War in Eastern Ukraine

Russia immediately declared the ouster of Yanukovych the result of an illegal coup, and delayed the bailout it had promised Ukraine while Yanukovych was still in power. ¹⁷
Russia also quickly took decisive action to protect its interests in Crimea, a historically Russian enclave that became part of the Ukrainian SSR in 1954. ¹⁸ Crimea has both historic and strategic importance for Russia. It is where the 1945 Yalta Conference took place, in the old Imperial Livadia Palace. Leo Tolstoy fought in the Crimean War there, and wrote about in *Sevastoplskie rasskazy* [*Sevastopol sketches*]. ¹⁹ Indeed, the Crimean port city of Sevastopol has been the home of the Russian Black Sea Fleet for centuries. As a result, the local population has a high percentage of retired Russian military

¹⁶ Shaun Walker, "Viktor Yanukovych Urges Russia to Act over Ukrainian 'Bandit Coup," *The Guardian*, February 28, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/28/viktor-yanukovych-russia-ukraine-coup.

¹⁷ James Marson, Alan Cullison, and Alexander Kolyandr, "Ukraine President Viktor Yanukovych Driven From Power," *Wall Street Journal*, February 23, 2014, sec. World, http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702304914204579398561953855036.

¹⁸ General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev transferred Crimea to Ukraine in commemoration of the tercentennial anniversary of the 1654 Treaty of Peiyaslav, when Ukrainian Cossack joined their land to the nascent Russian Empire. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the peninsula stayed part of Ukraine. ¹⁹ Charles King, "How the Horrors of Crimea Shaped Tolstoy," *The New Republic*, March 23, 2014, http://www.newrepublic.com/article/117102/tolstoy-crimea.

personnel, and a history of demanding independence from Ukraine.²⁰ Though earlier secessionist efforts failed, Crimea was officially an autonomous republic within Ukraine.

The official Russian narrative holds that the seizure in of Crimea was a response to the unraveling situation in Kyiv. However, a document leaked to the Russian newspaper *Novaya gazeta* in February 2015 revealed that the Russian government had been preparing for a post-Yanukovych scenario weeks before his flight from Ukraine. ²¹ *Novaya gazeta* reported that an oligarch submitted a document with a plan to take Crimea to the Presidential Administration sometime between February 4 and February 12 of 2014, while massive protests in Kyiv were still ongoing. ²² It described the dangers Russian leadership foresaw if the "'Banderovskaia junta" of the Ukrainian opposition was allowed to prevail, and outlined a political and logistical strategy for Russia's intervention into the conflict. The strategy included separating Crimea and eastern Ukraine from the rest of the country. ²³ The seizure of Crimea and the stoking of hostilities in Eastern Ukraine did not deviate overmuch from this early plan.

²⁰ Serge Schmemann, "Crimea Parliament Votes to Back Independence From Ukraine," *The New York Times*, May 6, 1992, sec. World, http://www.nytimes.com/1992/05/06/world/crimea-parliament-votes-to-back-independence-from-ukraine.html.

²¹ "Predstavliaetsia Pravilnym Initsiirovat Prisoedinenie Vostochnykh Oblastei Ukrainy K Rossii," *Новая Газета*, February 25, 2015, http://www.novayagazeta.ru/politics/67389.html.

²³ Ibid.; "Banderovskii" refers to the World War II era Ukrainian Stepan Bandera. Bandera is a very controversial figure, beloved by Ukrainian nationalists for his fight for Ukrainian independence during World War II, and decried by Poles, Jews, and Russians (and some Ukrainians) for his collaboration with the Nazis in support of those aims. For a (relatively) fair biography, see Timothy Snyder, "A Fascist Hero in Democratic Kiev," *NYRblog*, February 24, 2010, http://www.nybooks.com/blogs/nyrblog/2010/feb/24/a-fascist-hero-in-democratic-kiev/.

On February 27, 2014, unmarked Russian military personnel seized the Crimean parliament building and began occupying local Ukrainian military bases.²⁴ This bloodless invasion was aided by local protests led by Sergei Aksyonov that had begun in response to the unrest in Kyiv. The Russian leadership quickly designated Aksyonov the legitimate leader in Crimea.²⁵ Under his leadership, the Crimean Parliament voted to hold a referendum on independence from Ukraine. ²⁶ On March 16, in outright violation of Ukraine's constitution, a reported ninety percent of Crimean residents voted to secede from Ukraine and join Russia.²⁷ In a landmark speech on March 18, 2014, President Putin formally announced Russia's annexation of the peninsula.²⁸

Following the annexation of Crimea, pro-Russian separatists in southeastern Ukraine began to mount their own rebellions. Fighting continues throughout the region, despite several attempts at reaching a ceasefire. Russia largely refuses to acknowledge the presence of Russian troops in Ukraine, but there is significant evidence that Russia is

Home - EN Subtitles - Full Documentary, accessed May 27, 2015, https://vimeo.com/123194285.

²⁴ Simon Shuster and Benjamin Crump, "Putin's Man in Crimea Is Ukraine's Worst Nightmare," *Time*, 33:08, -05-28 13:09:32 2015, http://time.com/19097/putin-crimea-russia-ukraine-aksyonov/; Simon Ostrovsky, "Sneaking into a Ukrainian Military Base," webcast, Russian Roulette (Ukraine: Vice News, March 5, 2014), https://news.vice.com/video/russian-roulette-the-invasion-of-ukraine-dispatch-two. ²⁵ Shuster and Crump, "Putin's Man in Crimea Is Ukraine's Worst Nightmare"; In a Russian state produced documentary about the annexation of Crimea, Putin claims that he had never heard of Aksyonov before these events, and that Crimean politicians chose him as their representative. For more see Crimea: The Way

²⁶ Shuster and Crump, "Putin's Man in Crimea Is Ukraine's Worst Nightmare."
²⁷ Jon Lee Anderson, "Thugs on the Streets for Crimea's Referendum," *The New Yorker*, March 16, 2014, http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/thugs-on-the-streets-for-crimeas-referendum; Ilya Somin, "Russian Government Agency Reveals Fraudulent Nature of the Crimean Referendum Results," The Washington Post, May 6, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/volokhconspiracy/wp/2014/05/06/russian-government-agency-reveals-fraudulent-nature-of-the-crimeanreferendum-results/.

²⁸ Vladimir Putin, "Address by President of the Russian Federation" (Moscow, Russia, March 18, 2014), http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603.

providing ongoing material support to the separatists.²⁹ By September 2014, there was also increasing evidence that support for the separatists had progressed from the provision of arms to involvement of Russian soldiers in the conflict.³⁰ As of this writing, a ceasefire is mostly holding, but the conflict remains unresolved and unstable.³¹

Vladimir Putin's Justification for the Annexation of Crimea and its Implications

In some ways, Putin's March 18, 2014 speech announcing the annexation of Crimea was the logical extreme of the rhetorical approach he had cultivated over the preceding fourteen years. He highlighted Russia and Crimea's unique historical bond, tracing their joint history to Crimea as the place where Prince Vladimir accepted Christianity in 988 C.E. Putin also emphasized that modern Russia, unlike the Russia of the 1990s, is ready and able to defend its national interests; chief among these is the protection of Russian citizens, language, and culture abroad. This argument found particular resonance because one of the first actions of the new Ukrainian government was to ban Russian as the second official language in the country. Though the law was quickly overturned, it

²⁹ Maksymillian Czuperski et al., "Hiding in Plain Sight: Putin's War in Ukraine" (Washington, DC: Atlantic Council, May 2015), http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/publications/reports/hiding-in-plain-sight-putin-s-war-in-ukraine-and-boris-nemtsov-s-putin-war.

³⁰ Benjamin Bidder et al., "Undeclared War: Putin's Covert Invasion of Eastern Ukraine," *Spiegel Online*, September 2, 2014, sec. International, http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/russia-expands-war-ineastern-ukraine-amid-web-of-lies-a-989290.html.

³¹ The Associated Press, "Ukraine Says 1 Solider Killed, 5 Wounded in Separatist Raids," *The New York Times*, November 11, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/11/11/world/europe/ap-eu-ukraine.html.

³² Putin, "Address by President of the Russian Federation."

infuriated the population in Russian-speaking regions and was fodder for Putin's rhetoric at home.³³

The speech also tied the annexation of Crimea with the tradition of veneration of World War II. Putin asserted that, "Nationalists, neo-Nazis, and anti-Semites executed this coup. They continue to set the tone in Ukraine to this day." The connection between the victory over fascism in World War II and the fight against Ukraine in the present day is notable for two reasons. First, and most obviously, it points to the overwhelming domestic element of Putin's Ukraine policy. Just as Putin used the veneration of World War II in successive speeches and displays as part of rebuilding contemporary Russian national identity around a memory of unity, suffering, and ultimate victory, so too is the struggle against the "fascists and anti-Semites" in modern Ukraine aimed at bolstering Putin's domestic popularity and consolidating his political base. The argument was particularly convincing given the involvement of the far right Ukrainian nationalist coalition Right Sector in toppling Yanukovych. ³⁴ The annexation of Crimea was by and large extremely popular in Russia, and in the aftermath Putin's popularity soared. ³⁵

The second significance of the nod to World War II is deeper than an effort to reinforce national unity. It is intricately tied to broader themes about Russia's role in the world. In the fight against German and Italian fascism, the Soviet Union played a decisive role in overcoming Hitler's terror and restoring world order. The main theme of Putin's speech

^{33 &}quot;Ukraine Crisis: Timeline."

³⁴ Julia Embody, "Beware Ukraine's Rising Right Sector," *The National Interest*, August 12, 2015, http://nationalinterest.org/feature/beware-ukraines-rising-right-sector-13558.

³⁵ "Support for Putin Soars in Ukraine Crisis: Poll," *Reuters*, May 15, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/15/us-russia-putin-support-idUSBREA4E0L620140515.

on Crimea is that while Russia has continued to obey international law and respect world order, Ukraine and its Western supporters have become rogue states that threaten global stability. Putin presents a carefully constructed, if contradictory, argument that the annexation of Crimea was not in fact a violation of international law and, even if it was, it is no more a violation than the independence of Kosovo. He concluded the argument with a sweeping indictment of the current global order:

[T]he situation in Ukraine reflects what is going on and what has been happening in the world over the past several decades. After the dissolution of bipolarity on the planet, we no longer have stability. Key international institutions are not getting any stronger; on the contrary, in many cases, they are sadly degrading. Our western partners, led by the United States of America, prefer not to be guided by international law in their practical policies, but by the rule of the gun. They have come to believe in their exclusivity and exceptionalism, that they can decide the destinies of the world, that only they can ever be right. They act as they please: here and there, they use force against sovereign states, building coalitions based on the principle "If you are not with us, you are against us." To make this aggression look legitimate, they force the necessary resolutions from international organisations, and if for some reason this does not work, they simply ignore the UN Security Council and the UN overall. 36

In a mirror image of the rhetoric in the United States and much of Europe, Putin casts Russia as the responsible global citizen, and the West as the outlaw.

There is another significance to that quotation: the explicit transformation of the crisis in Ukraine into a conflict between Russia and the West. Reiterating arguments he had voiced on numerous previous occasions, Putin maintained that over the preceding twenty-five years, Russia had always been willing to cooperate with the West but the interest was

³⁶ Putin, "Address by President of the Russian Federation."

never reciprocated.³⁷ Instead, Russia's national interests were systematically ignored and belittled. He accused NATO and the United States of repeatedly lying about their intentions, primarily with regard to the deployment of military personnel and infrastructure in the newer NATO members, and the goals for the planned missile defense installations.³⁸ He concluded that section of his speech with the assertion that, "with Ukraine, our western partners have crossed a line, and behaved themselves rudely, irresponsibly and unprofessionally."³⁹

As noted above, it was clear before this speech that Russia viewed U.S. and EU intervention in Ukraine, both before and after the final collapse of the Yanukovych government, as a direct violation of Russia's national interests. Furthermore, American officials (unintentionally) were equally frank in their view of the "right" outcome of the conflict. In a leaked discussion between U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey R. Pyatt and Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Victoria Nuland, Nuland told Pyatt that she believed Arseniy Yatseniuk rather than Vitaly Klitschko should be part of a new Ukrainian government. The idea of Yanukovych retaining power did not come up in the conversation. It matters, however, that in a speech aimed at both the domestic and international audience, the two pillars that Putin chose as his main framework for justifying his actions in Crimea were international law and the U.S.

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³⁷ For a good summary of the alternative view, that America and the West did behave in good faith, see Sestanovich, "Could It Have Been Otherwise?"

³⁸ Putin, "Address by President of the Russian Federation."

³⁹ Vladimir Putin, "Obrashebie Presidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii" (Moscow, Russia, March 18, 2014), http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603.

⁴⁰ "Ukraine Crisis: Transcript of Leaked Nuland-Pyatt Call," *BBC News*, accessed June 4, 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26079957.

disregard for it, and a very explicit brand of anti-Americanism (and somewhat broader anti-Westernism).

This framing has important implications both for how Russia positions itself vis-à-vis BRICS, and for how the BRICS countries responded both individually and collectively. First, Putin's gymnastics in trying to justify the seizure of Crimea, thin as the final argument may be, allowed him to fit the annexation within his broader narrative of the primacy of international law and national sovereignty. These are persistent themes in his rhetoric. They also are the two basic tenets of the BRICS group. In cobbling together what Alexander Cooley terms a "patchwork of international principles, rules, and norms" to give his actions a veneer of legitimacy, Putin also provided other countries with just enough cover to stay silent.

Global Responses to the Annexation of Crimea and the War in Eastern Ukraine

Globally, there were two basic responses to Russia's annexation of Crimea and ongoing covert actions in Ukraine: complete opprobrium, and silence. The opprobrium came from the West and its allies, with the United States at the forefront. On March 17, 2014, just after the referendum in Crimea and the day before Putin confirmed the annexation, U.S.

⁴² Alexander Cooley, "Scripts of Sovereignty: The Freezing of the Russia-Ukraine Crisis and Dilemmas of Governance in Eurasia" (Center for Global Interests, 2015), 7, http://globalinterests.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Scripts-of-Sovereignty_Center-on-Global-Interests.pdf.

President Barack Obama declared the new U.S. policy of trying isolate Russia for its behavior in Ukraine. The U.S. president stated:

From the start, the United States has mobilized the international community in support of Ukraine to isolate Russia for its actions and to reassure our allies and partners...And as I told President Putin yesterday, the referendum in Crimea was a clear violation of Ukrainian constitutions [sic] and international law, and it will not be recognized by the international community.⁴³

U.S. sanctions had been approved two weeks previously, following the invasion of Crimea. In the March 17 speech, Obama announced an expansion of those sanctions. He claimed the moral high ground and the support of the international community for the U.S. response to Russia's actions.

Three days later, after Putin had confirmed that Russia would absorb Crimea, Obama came onto the South Lawn of the White House to announce a further expansion of the sanctions. This time the sanctions covered not only top officials, but also oligarchs known to support Putin, and Bank Rossiia, the bank preferred by Russian senior leaders. ⁴⁴ Just as in his previous press statement, Obama once again cloaked his statement in the mantel of international law. On March 20, he said:

Over the last several days, we've continued to be deeply concerned by events in Ukraine. We've seen an illegal referendum in Crimea; an illegitimate move by the Russians to annex Crimea; and dangerous risks of escalation, including threats to Ukrainian personnel in Crimea and threats to southern and eastern Ukraine as well. These are all choices that

⁴³ Barack Obama, "Statement by the President on Ukraine," March 17, 2014, https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/03/17/statement-president-ukraine.

⁴⁴ Barack Obama, "Statement by the President on Ukraine," March 20, 2014, https://www.whitehouse.gov/node/265941; "Ukraine Crisis: Russia and Sanctions," *BBC News*, December 19, 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26672800.

the Russian government has made -- choices that have been rejected by the international community, as well as the government of Ukraine. 45

The wording here is important. In both statements, Obama says again and again that Russia's actions are "illegal," or "illegitimate." He asserts that Russia has lost the support of the international community, and that it will be isolated for its actions.

The rhetoric from the European Union, though somewhat more measured, made the same basic assumption. On March 13, 2014, the European Parliament demanded that Russia withdraw all its troops from Ukraine, and condemned the Russian presence in Crimea as "a breach of international law." It was initially harder to agree on sanctions in Europe, in part because European economies have much stronger ties with Russia than does the U.S. economy. However, following Crimea's secession and absorption in Russia, the EU followed the U.S. example. As the crisis continued unabated, and devolved into armed conflict in Ukraine's east, both the United States and the European Union passed successively harsher and more wide-ranging sanctions. These have included bans on travel for top Russian officials, sharply restricting access to capital for Russian companies and banks, and limiting Western exports of dual use technology imports and some oil industry technology.

⁴⁵ Obama, "Statement by the President on Ukraine," March 20, 2014.

⁴⁶ "European Parliament Calls on Russia to Withdraw Military Forces from Ukraine," *European Parliament*, March 13, 2014, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20140312IPR38707.

⁴⁷ "Ukraine Crisis."

⁴⁸ Ibid.

Fierce as they may be, however, U.S. and EU sanctions are not representative of a wider trend. Contrary to President Obama's press statements, the whole international community did not reject Russia's actions outright. On March 27, 2014, the United Nations General Assembly passed UN Resolution 68/262, titled "Territorial Integrity of Ukraine," which declared Crimea's secession from Ukraine invalid. ⁴⁹ Of the 193 members of the UN General Assembly, 100 voted in favor of the resolution, 11, including Russia, voted against it, and 58 members abstained (24 countries were absent). ⁵⁰ All four other BRICS countries numbered among the abstentions. ⁵¹ In aggregate, only slightly more than half of United Nations member states supported the resolution. This is hardly a basis for Obama's assertion that the international community as a whole had rejected Russia's actions in Ukraine.

The BRICS countries' abstentions on Resolution 68/262 and unwillingness to condemn Russian actions in Crimea should have come as no surprise to anyone paying attention to the group. Three days before the UN vote, at the Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague, BRICS had offered a quiet rebuke to those countries trying to isolate Russia. In response to rumored efforts by the Australian foreign minister to ban President Putin from the November 2014 G20 Summit in Brisbane, the BRICS foreign ministers issued a joint

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⁴⁹ United Nations General Assembly, "68/262. Territorial Integrity of Ukraine," March 27, 2014, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/68/262; The United States was unable to push through a UNSC resolution affirming Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity because Russia vetoed the attempt. China abstained from the vote. See Bill Chappell, "Russia Vetoes U.N. Security Council Resolution On Crimea," *NPR.org*, March 15, 2014, http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2014/03/15/290404691/russia-vetoes-u-n-security-council-resolution-on-crimea.

⁵⁰ "United Nations General Assembly Resolution 68/262," *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*, May 3, 2015, http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=United_Nations_General_Assembly_Resolution_68/262&oldid=660562493.

⁵¹ Stuenkel, *The BRICS and the Future of Global Order*, 148.

statement reminding observers that no G20 member has the authority to exclude another unilaterally.⁵²

Silence is not the same thing as support. Indeed, outright support for Russia has been meager at best. It has come mainly from client states, such as Belarus or Armenia, or states that are themselves very isolated from the rest of the world, including Syria and North Korea. 53 Silence does, however, give room for maneuver. The breathing room this silence provided, combined with worsening political relations with the West and tightening economic conditions, has changed how Russia talks about and interacts with the group.

Intra-BRICS Practicalities After Ukraine

Some Caveats

Up to this point, the main argument of this dissertation has been that Russia's top leadership found the idea of BRICS politically and rhetorically useful only within a narrow set of parameters. In some ways, it is still too soon to know the extent to which the crisis in Ukraine has changed that calculus. This is both because the crisis in Ukraine is still ongoing, and because of three distinct factors that confound the analysis. These are the economic downturn in Russia and other BRICS, path dependence of ongoing

⁵² Lisa Cox, "Russian President Vladimir Putin May Be Banned from G20 Summit in Brisbane," *The* Sydney Morning Herald, March 20, 2014, http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/russianpresident-vladimir-putin-may-be-banned-from-g20-summit-in-brisbane-20140320-353t9.html; BRICS Foreign Ministers, "BRICS Ministers Meet on the Sidelines of the Nuclear Security Summit in the Hague" (The Hague, March 24, 2014), http://www.brics.utoronto.ca/docs/140324-hague.html. ⁵³ "United Nations General Assembly Resolution 68/262."

institutionalization before the crisis, and the confluence of Russia's chairmanship of BRICS with the crisis. I address each in turn below.

On the economic side, early reports on Russia's trade in 2014 do not show a significant increase in trade with other BRICS. However, the numbers are still preliminary and this may also be because of the overall downturn in the Russian economy. Western sanctions, a precipitous drop in the price of oil, and capital flight effectively stalled growth in the Russian economy in 2014. According to the World Bank's September 2015 report *Russia Economic Report 34: Balancing Economic Adjustment and Transformation*, the Russian economy is expected to contract by 3.8 percent in 2015. Combined with weaker economic performance in the other BRICS, it would be unrealistic to see a sharp increase in intra-BRICS trade and economic activity in 2014 when the final numbers are known. A discussed in the third chapter, intra-BRICS economic relations are in general a poor proxy for the strength of the group. However, since the Ufa Summit produced an agreement on intra-BRICS economic cooperation, it is worth noting that slow fulfillment of those goals may be more indicative of global economic trends than lack of commitment on the part of BRICS countries.

⁵⁴ Data from the Direction of Trade database at data.imf.org

⁵⁵ World Bank Group, "Global Economic Prospects, January 2015: Having Fiscal Space and Using It" (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, January 2015), 26, doi: 10.1596/978-1-4648-0444-1.

³⁶ "Balancing Economic Adjustment and Transformation," Russia Economic Report (Moscow, Russia: World Bank, September 20, 2015), fig. 44, http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2015/10/09/090224b083135111/1_0/Rendered/PDF/Russia0economi0t0and0transformation.pdf.

⁵⁷ Erich Follath and Martin Hesse, "Troubled Times: Developing Economies Hit a BRICS Wall," *Spiegel Online*, February 7, 2014, sec. International, http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/economy-slows-in-brics-countries-as-worries-mount-a-951453.html.

The second confounding factor in establishing how Russia's approach to BRICS has changed as a result of the conflict with Ukraine is the group's previously existing movement towards institutionalization. The deliverables from the 2014 summit in Fortaleza provide a perfect example. The BRICS Contingency Reserve Arrangement (CRA, discussed in more detail in chapter 3) gives Russia a theoretical alternative source of capital. This could prove quite useful considering Western sanctions make it hard for Russian banks to get short term financing in the West. However, the agreement on the CRA, as with the agreement on the BRICS bank, was in process long before the situation in Ukraine exploded. If, once the CRA is up and running, Russia makes use of it, then this would be evidence that BRICS has become more practically useful in Russian policy. Until then, the simultaneous agreement on the CRA and the exclusion of Russia from Western markets is at best an interesting coincidence.

The same can be said of the myriad new forums and groups that emerged over the course of 2014 and 2015. These include the BRICS Parliamentary Forum, the BRICS Civil Forum, and the BRICS Youth Forum. ⁵⁸ On the one hand, as President Putin asserted in his welcome to the parliamentary delegates in Moscow in June 2015, contact between lawmakers of the BRICS countries is a substantive step in the development of the BRICS group as an international association. He also said that the Parliamentary forum "opened a qualitatively new level of engagement among the countries." Similarly, the other forums all advance the goal of strengthening ties between the countries beyond the

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⁵⁸ www.nkibriks.com; @BRICS2015/@БРИКС2015 on twitter.

⁵⁹ "Vladimir Putin napravil privetstvie uchastinkiam i gostiam parlamentskogo foruma BRIKS," BRICS2015, (June 8, 2015), http://brics2015.ru/news/20150608/155027.html.

governmental level and push the group toward institutionalization. Putin and his government have been strongly supportive of these efforts.

On the other hand, however, many of the seemingly new forums have long histories. The idea for the BRICS Youth Forum, for example, is in BRICS action plans as far back as the 2012 summit in New Delhi. 60 Similarly, though the Ufa Summit saw the first adoption of a formal strategy for economic partnership, the Fortaleza Declaration proclaimed that it was time to create such a strategy, suggesting work began under Brazil's BRICS presidency. 61 Further, some ideas that Russia is pushing hard under its chairmanship, such as cooperation on energy, have been included in statements from the very first summit in Ekaterinburg. 62 The agreements and groupings that are emerging in the midst of the Ukraine crisis have had a long lead time. The combination of Russia's chairmanship with the flurry of activity can make it seem as though after years of neglect Russia is working hard to make BRICS a true alternative to the West. Drawing that conclusion, however, neglects the reality that many of these projects were already in process before the crisis in Ukraine began.

The final confounding factor in understanding how the Ukraine crisis has impacted Russia's approach to BRICS on a practical level is the very fact of Russia's chairmanship.⁶³ There are two issues here: one external and one internal. From the

⁶⁰ BRICS Leaders, "Delhi Declaration."

⁶¹ "The Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership" (Ufa, Russia: BRICS, July 2015), 3.

⁶² BRIC Leaders, "Joint Statement of the BRIC Countries Leaders" (First BRIC Summit, Ekaterinburg, Russia, June 16, 2009), para. 8, http://www.brics5.co.za/about-brics/summit-declaration/first-summit/. Russia formally assumed the BRICS presidency on April 1, 2015.

⁶³ The chairmanship began in April 2015 and concludes in April 2016.

external perspective, the political rupture between Russia and the West means the latter will likely perceive everything Russia does vis-à-vis its BRICS chairmanship as essentially anti-Western. Russia would have hosted the BRICS Summit in 2015 regardless of its other international entanglements; to interpret what happens under its chairmanship as strictly a reaction to Ukraine would be incorrect. This is not to argue that Ukraine and the rupture with the West has not affected how that chairmanship is administered or what proposals Russia puts forward (see below), but rather to offer the corrective that BRICS would likely have been a major feature in Russian politics in 2015 even without the extra pressures the crisis exerts.

This leads to the internal aspect of Russia's chairmanship. Russian leaders tend to be event driven; for example, in the lead up to hosting the 2012 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Vladivostok, the leadership spent a lot of time and money speaking about the importance of Russia's attachments in Asia. After the summit concluded, however, the focus shifted to the upcoming Olympics in Sochi, and the emphasis on relations in the East receded. By the same token, the way Russia approaches BRICS in a chairmanship year is different from the approach in a non-chairmanship year. Just as it would be dangerous to read too much into Russia's emphasis on BRICS as a straight rejection of the West, it would be incorrect to see the sudden surge in interest in the group as a total pivot in Russia's foreign policy without accounting for the extra interest driven by its hosting duties. Put differently, while the crisis in Ukraine has changed the role of BRICS in Russian foreign policy, the crisis and

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65 Gabuev, interview.

⁶⁴ Timofei Vyacheslavovich Bordachev, interview by Rachel S. Salzman, Personal Interview, December 14, 2014, Moscow, Russia.

its effect on relations with the West are not the only reason Russia is investing so heavily in its BRICS membership in 2015.

The Importance of Optics

The above caveats notwithstanding, BRICS has become operationally useful for Russia since the start of the Ukraine crisis. The BRICS countries' continued willingness to engage in both business and summitry with Russia is a powerful counter to the West's attempt to isolate the country politically and economically. ⁶⁶ This is not just about the symbolic international gestures discussed above, such as the vote on UN resolution 68/262 or the statement in The Hague about excluding Russia from the G20. Gestures like these are good for short-term boosts, but they do not offer sustainable relief. More important are things like the May 2014 \$400 billion gas deal between Russia and China, or the possibility of substituting meat imports from Brazil instead of the EU meat banned by Putin's "anti-sanctions." The succession of BRICS-related events in Moscow over the course of 2015 is no less important: they are high-profile demonstrations that Western rhetorical censure and economic sanctions have failed in their objective to isolate Russia.

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⁶⁶ Dmitri Trenin, "Moscow Takes BRICS Summit as New Launch Pad for Global Influence," *Global Times*, January 26, 2015, http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/904034.shtml#.VMgCL_NSAds.twitter.
⁶⁷ Lucy Hornby, "China and Russia Set to Finalise Gas Deal," *Financial Times*, March 8, 2015, http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/c0c385ea-c55f-11e4-bd6b-00144feab7de.html#axzz3cavrbqxI; Kenneth Rapoza, "Putin's European Food Ban Bad For Russia, Good For Brazil," *Forbes*, August 8, 2014, http://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrapoza/2014/08/10/putins-european-food-ban-bad-for-russia-good-for-brazil/; Kenneth Rapoza, "Following Food Ban, Russia Moving On From Europe," *Forbes*, August 18, 2014, http://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrapoza/2014/08/18/following-food-ban-russian-moving-on-from-europe/; "Turkey, Latin America Seen as Main Winners from Russia's Food Import Bans," *Reuters*, August 8, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/08/ukraine-crisis-russia-food-idUSL6N0QE2HD20140808. In response to Western sanctions, Putin banned agricultural imports from the United States, most of Europe, and Australia. Given persistent low commodity prices, the gas deal between Russia and China is stalled.

A June 2015 tweet from Ian Bremmer, president of the consulting firm Eurasia Group, summed up the situation nicely. Bremmer tweeted the following map, with the caption "The World is isolating Russia. If the World looks like this." 68



Figure 6: The World is Isolating Russia

The map Bremmer tweeted is missing all of Africa, most of Asia, and everything south of Texas on the American continent. Indeed, it is basically a map of NATO, with a few additions. The world is not isolating Russia; the West is, and it has not attracted non-Western countries to its cause.

The sanctions have had an impact on the Russian economy, and trade with BRICS is insufficient to make up the budget shortfall created by the sanctions and the falling oil price. Further, the expected increase in trade with China has not materialized. This is partly because of some hesitation in China to engage in projects that directly contravene

⁶⁸ Ian Bremmer, "The World Is Isolating Russia. As Long as the World Looks like This.," June 8, 2015, https://twitter.com/ianbremmer/status/607892648460972032.

the sanctions.⁶⁹ It also, however is a byproduct of the collapse in commodity prices, turmoil in Chinese markets, and the overall economic slowdown in emerging markets.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, as Bremmer's map vividly demonstrates, Russia is not without partners. Considering that Russia's interest in BRICS has historically been primarily about the optics of the group, it is fitting that these optics of ongoing political and economic partnership are now so operationally important for the country.

The Concretization of Russia's Goals Toward BRICS

The change has been more than just about image. Whether as a result of the crisis or a result of its chairmanship, the Russian approach to BRICS, at least at the policy level, is far more concrete than it was even two years previously. The best evidence of this concretization is a comparison between the "Concept of participation of the Russian Federation in BRICS" approved in 2013, and the "Concept of the Russian Federation's Presidency in BRICS in 2015-2016," released on March 1, 2015.⁷¹ As discussed in the previous chapter, the 2013 concept outlines a long list of areas where Russia would like to see BRICS cooperation, but displays little interest in either firm institutionalization or pushing the boundaries of how BRICS could evolve.

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⁶⁹ Alexander Gabuev, "Russia Has a China Problem, Too," *The Diplomat*, September 4, 2015, http://thediplomat.com/2015/09/russia-has-a-china-problem-too/; Alexander Gabuev, "Sino-Russian Trade After a Year of Sanctions," Carnegie Moscow Center, *Eurasia Outlook*, (September 11, 2015), http://carnegie.ru/eurasiaoutlook/?fa=61240&mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRonva3NZKXonjHpfsX57%2 B8qUKSg38431UFwdcjKPmjr1YIERMV0aPyQAgobGp515FEIQ7XYTLB2t60MWA%3D%3D.

On the slowdown in emerging markets, "World Economic Outlook Update," World Economic Outlook (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, July 9, 2015),

http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2015/update/02/pdf/0715.pdf.

⁷¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Concept of Participation of the Russian Federation in BRICS"; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Concept of the Russian Federation's Presidency in BRICS in 2015-2016," *Official Website of Russia's Presidency in BRICS*, March 1, 2015, http://en.brics2015.ru/russia and brics/20150301/19483.html.

The 2015 Concept, by contrast, is much more direct. The beginning of the Concept declares:

A long-term objective of the Russian Federation in BRICS and, accordingly, a consistent goal of its presidency of the association is the gradual transformation of BRICS from a dialogue forum and a tool for coordinating positions on a limited range of issues into a full-scale mechanism for strategic and day-to-day cooperation on key issues of world politics and the global economy. This objective will be achieved by consistently expanding the range of cooperation areas, actively promoting the common interests of BRICS countries on the international scene, and creating an extensive system of mechanisms for cooperation, primarily in the financial and economic sphere, which will gradually evolve into concrete institutions. All this is intended to raise BRICS to the level of an important element of the global governance system in the 21st century. 72

As noted in the previous chapter, the 2013 Concept does include the goal of making BRICS a "full-fledged mechanism of strategic and ongoing cooperation on key international issues." ⁷³ That statement, however, is buried at the very end of the document. In 2015, the goal is in the second paragraph, setting the stage for the proposals that follow. As if to underscore the new commitment to making BRICS strong and permanent, the 2015 Concept lists enhancing "the efficiency of BRICS by improving the reporting process for previous commitments assumed by member countries" as one of the core objectives of the Russian presidency.⁷⁴

There are other departures, especially in terms of how BRICS acts as a sub-forum within larger organizations. For example, the 2013 Concept speaks generally of coordination in

⁷² Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Concept of the Russian Federation's Presidency in BRICS in 2015-2016."

⁷³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Concept of Participation of the Russian Federation in BRICS."

⁷⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Concept of the Russian Federation's Presidency in BRICS in 2015-2016." Georgii Toloraya, Director of NKI BRIKS, underscored this objective when he spoke at an event hosted by the Center for Global Interests in Washington, DC on June 12, 2015.

forums such as the United Nations "on the basis of common interests."⁷⁵ The 2015 Concept calls for "developing comprehensive cooperation in the UN."⁷⁶ The later document also pares down the goals, offering fewer potential areas of cooperation, but each with more detailed and implementable proposals. This is likely in part due to the differing objectives of each concept: one is long-term and the other is specifically related to Russia's chairmanship. It is also evidence, though, of clearer thinking about the realm of the possible in BRICS, and which areas best serve Russia's immediate objectives.

As a case in point, the 2015 Concept specifically references Western sanctions on Russia as an impetus for strengthening intra-BRICS economic cooperation.⁷⁷ Indeed, many of Russia's suggestions for the BRICS are aimed at creating a parallel system to that controlled by Western states, perhaps as a way of circumnavigating the West's attempted isolation of Russia. One of the proposals Russia put forth as chairman is to replace the U.S. government with the UN International Telecommunications Union (ITU) as the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) overseer.⁷⁸ During his statement at the Fortaleza Summit, Putin suggested that BRICS use Russia's GLONASS navigation system, which is an alternative to the U.S. Global Positioning System (GPS).⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Concept of Participation of the Russian Federation in BRICS."

⁷⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Concept of the Russian Federation's Presidency in BRICS in 2015-2016."

⁷⁸ Oliver Stuenkel, "The Politics of next Year's BRICS Summit in Russia," *Post Western World*, October 31, 2014, http://www.postwesternworld.com/2014/10/31/politics-summit-russia/?utm_source=Post-Western+World+Monthly+Newsletter&utm_campaign=b045d9cfff-

November+1%2C+2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_7e6d794d4a-b045d9cfff-338006521.

⁷⁹ Vladimir Putin, "Speech at BRICS Summit Plenary Session" (Speech, VIth BRICS Summit, Fortaleza, Brazil, July 15, 2014), http://eng.kremlin.ru/transcripts/22677.

In May 2015, the Central Bank of Russia suggested that the BRICS discuss creating their own version of the SWIFT system.⁸⁰

Some of these suggestions are likely to be controversial. Brazil, for example, is unlikely to support the plans to challenge internet governance. ⁸¹ The SWIFT proposal, though, could find support from China, which is preparing to launch its own alternative system. ⁸² Whether or not these proposals come to fruition, however, they are indicative of two important developments. First, they show that the combination of the Ukraine crisis and the chairmanship have forced those involved in making Russia's BRICS policy to think seriously about how the forum can help Russia navigate its new global context. Second, the efforts to create a parallel system indicate that the rhetoric of building a new world order is now translating into Russia's operational approach to BRICS, at least as long as it is at the helm of the organization.

The Concept for Russia's BRICS presidency does not only show an evolution of Russia's approach to BRICS in its policy relevant proposals. It also attempts to weave the group more closely into one of Putin's main regime legitimation efforts: the veneration of World War II. The eighth section of the BRICS presidency concept is "Awareness-raising during Russia's Presidency," and the goals it lists are all aimed toward increasing

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⁸⁰ "Tsentrobank Rossii Predlagaet Obsudit Ideiu Sozdaniia Analoga SWIFT v Ramkakh BRIKS," *Vedemosti*, May 29, 2015, http://www.vedomosti.ru/finance/news/2015/05/29/594387-tsentrobnak-rossii-predlagaet-obsudit-ideyu-sozdaniya-analoga-swift-v-ramkah-briks. SWIFT helps coordinate international financial transactions. Although Russia has not been excluded from SWIFT, it has been mentioned as a possible penalty for Russia's continued interference in Ukraine. However, since SWIFT is private rather than government-owned, it is not clear whether Western governments could follow through on this threat. ⁸¹ Stuenkel, "The Politics of next Year's BRICS Summit in Russia."

⁸² Michelle Chen and Koh Gui Qing, "Exclusive: China's International Payments System Ready, Could Launch by End-2015 - Sources," *Reuters*, March 9, 2015, http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/09/us-china-yuan-payments-exclusive-idUSKBN0M50BV20150309.

awareness of BRICS on the international stage.⁸³ One of the proposed methods of doing so is:

[T]o hold, together with the BRICS partners, a number of publicity campaigns devoted to the 70th anniversary of the victory in WWII. In political terms, the events are aimed at promoting the ideas of friendship and mutual understanding among the peoples of the BRICS countries; stiff resistance to attempts to revive the ideology and policies of Nazism, racism, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia in all their manifestations; and preventing the falsification of history, which seeks to undermine the foundations of the post-war world order.⁸⁴

This brings the BRICS directly into a major part of Russian policy and national identity.

Given how Putin has framed the reasons for Russia's involvement in the Ukraine crisis, it also sets the BRICS directly against the West.

BRICS vs. the West in Post-Ukraine Russian Political Rhetoric

While the approach to BRICS became more multifaceted at the policy level, that change did not translate into more nuanced rhetoric at the highest political levels. Instead, the crisis in Ukraine did not so much change Putin's rhetorical approach to BRICS so much as it removed its veil. As argued previously, from the very beginning Putin primarily deployed Russia's membership in the group as a theoretical alternative option to the West. A level of anti-Westernism was inherent in this approach, but it was framed in the context of creating a more fair and balanced world order. The initial anti-Westernism was at the mild end of the anti-Westernism continuum outlined in the first chapter. Though

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⁸³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Concept of the Russian Federation's Presidency in BRICS in 2015-2016."
⁸⁴ Ibid

that framing remains in official group statements, in much of Putin's rhetoric BRICS is now an explicitly anti-Western project, moving it to the more extreme end of the anti-Westernism spectrum.

In terms of evaluating anti-Western rhetoric after the Ukraine crisis, three Putin speeches are particularly telling. The first is the March 2014 speech discussed above, which announced the annexation of Crimea. The second is Putin's speech and question and answer session at the annual Valdai International Discussion Club in October 2014.85 The third is the annual address to the Federal Assembly in December 2014. 86 These speeches are explicitly, angrily, anti-Western, as demonstrated below.

At Valdai, as in the March speech on Crimea, Putin accused the United States of being the source and cause of global instability. He stated:

[T]he United States, having declared itself the winner of the Cold War. saw no need for [creating a new world order]. Instead of establishing a new balance of power, essential for maintaining order and stability, they took steps that threw the system into sharp and deep imbalance.⁸⁷

The result of these steps, in Putin's estimation, is a world where "[i]international law has been forced to retreat over and over by the onslaught of legal nihilism."88 During the December address to the Federal Assembly, he sounded similar themes. In what was

⁸⁵ Vladimir Putin, "Address to Valdai International Discussion Club" (XI Valdai International Discussion Club: The New World Order: New Rules or a Game without Rules, Sochi, Russia, October 24, 2014), http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/46860. The Valdai International Discussion Club is an annual gathering of international Russia experts sponsored by the Russian government.

⁸⁶ Putin, "Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation," December 4, 2014.

⁸⁷ Putin, "Address to Valdai International Discussion Club." Putin here is speaking of political rather than economic imbalances. ⁸⁸ Ibid.

ostensibly a section about the need to cooperate on fighting international terrorism, the speech takes a tangent onto the lingering ill effects of the 2002 U.S. abdication of the ABM Treaty (discussed in a previous chapter) and subsequent plans to build missile defense installations in Europe. ⁸⁹ Earlier in the speech, he asserted that Europe and the United States would have devised another reason to levy sanctions even in the absence of a crisis in Ukraine, because the real aim was "to contain Russia's growing capabilities, affect our country in some way, or even take advantage of it." ⁹⁰ This phrasing is reminiscent of the warning in Putin's 2004 annual address about the ire Russian growth would incur, but evolved to suit the new context. Putin here displays not only a deep dislike of the West and its policies, but also a fundamental mistrust of its motives, making the possibility of cooperation, which he raises later in the speech, seem almost unimaginable.

In the Valdai speech, Putin contrasted the behavior of the West with that of the BRICS, the SCO and the other organizations Russia has helped found. Unlike the West, which is actively trying to isolate Russia and acts without regard for international stability, BRICS, the SCO and the Eurasian Union provide stable partnerships that help Russia accomplish its "integration-oriented, positive, peaceful agenda." Putin also framed these three organizations as open and non-confrontational, with the goal of bringing governments together rather than forming exclusionary blocs. 92 The implicit negative parallel with NATO and the EU was unmistakable.

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⁸⁹ Putin, "Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation," December 4, 2014.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Putin, "Address to Valdai International Discussion Club."

⁹² Ibid.

All three speeches also hark back to the theme of sovereignty that Putin developed over the course of his first two presidential terms (discussed in chapter 4). During the question and answer session at Valdai, in an unsubtle rebuke of U.S. hegemonic claims (this time in connection with whether or not Kosovo's independence can serve as a precedent), he drew the following analogy:

You may remember the wonderful saying: Whatever Jupiter is allowed, the Ox is not.

We cannot agree with such an approach. The ox may not be allowed something, but the bear will not even bother to ask permission. Here we consider it the master of the taiga, and I know for sure that it does not intend to move to any other climatic zones – it will not be comfortable there. However, it will not let anyone have its taiga either. I believe this is clear. ⁹³

The meaning is that Russia will do what it feels necessary to protect its own interests. Putin pushes his remonstration even further with the reference to "climatic zones," presumably a reference to Dmitri Medvedev's claim after the 2008 war with Georgia about a sphere of "privileged interests" in Russia's border regions.⁹⁴

Unlike the earlier era's speeches touting Russia's ability and willingness to protect its interests, however, the speeches in 2014 are retrospective. Putin's claims during his March, October, and December 2014 addresses about Russia's willingness to take unilateral action to protect vital interests were made in the wake of the manifestation of that willingness. If then 2007 Munich speech was a warning shot, then these speeches

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⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Charles Clover, "Russia Announces 'spheres of Interest," *Financial Times*, August 31, 2008, http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/e9469744-7784-11dd-be24-0000779fd18c.html#axzz3cavrbqxI.

were the end of the battle. 95 The annexation of Crimea was simply presented as a *fait accompli*; the bear did not ask for permission.

Yet the repeated protestations against Western policies and the persistent anti-Western rhetoric that accompanies them are also somehow hollow. Rather than a clean break from the West, the speeches betray an ongoing focus on justifying Russia's actions in the context of the West's own misdeeds. The speech at Valdai, for example, was supposed to be a programmatic speech. ⁹⁶ Indeed, the theme of the conference was the need to build a new world order. Rather than offering suggestion on that theme, the address was instead a recrimination against both European and American policies since the end of the Cold War. Putin could have used the opportunity to outline his vision for how the different emerging elements of global governance, including BRICS, could be brought together into a coherent and workable system. He did not do that; instead, he spent the majority of the speech rehashing Western reactions to Ukraine, and Russia's right to protect its interests. ⁹⁷

The emphasis on the transgressions of the West, as opposed to on a forward-looking vision, is emblematic of the continued Western orientation of the political elite.

Orientation is not the same as alignment. According to Dmitri Trenin, Russia is now fully outside the Western sphere.

98 Another analyst referred to the break in relations following

⁹⁵ On Munich as a warning shot, see Trenin, interview.

⁹⁶ Lukyanov, interview.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Trenin, interview.

the annexation of Crimea as a "divorce process" of Russia from the West. ⁹⁹ Instead, the orientation is a combination of a continued dominant identity as a first world country and also a deep and ongoing desire for recognition of great power status from the United States. ¹⁰⁰ As Fyodor Lukyanov put it, "the inability to abandon the West is the biggest obstacle to Russia's success in BRICS." ¹⁰¹ In other words, Russia's BRICS policies, and efforts to build BRICS into a major organ of global governance, are hampered by Russia's continued need for Western recognition. As much as Russia may wish to build a new world order, it is still fighting the battles of the old one.

Some of the analyses prepared in advance of the 2015 summit in Ufa bear out this reading. Consider, for example, *Perspektivy i strategicheskie prioritety voskhozhdeniia BRIKS* [*Prospects and Strategic Priorities for the Rise of the BRICS*], a study produced under the auspices of NKI BRIKS. The book purports to be an entire agenda for the future development of the group, including efforts at modeling possible growth patterns and exploring new areas for deepening the partnership. ¹⁰² Much of the introductory section, however, is devoted to a repetition of the traditional litany of the crimes of the West. At one point, it goes so far as to assert that the ongoing crisis in Ukraine is an outright war that the United States and Europe are waging against Russia. ¹⁰³ Introducing what is otherwise a comprehensive qualitative and quantitative analysis of BRICS with the conflict between Russia and the West rather than the BRICS group's achievements to

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⁹⁹ Ibid.; Panova, interview.

¹⁰⁰ On Russia as a first world country, see Panova, interview; On the need for recognition from the United States see Petr Topychkanov, interview by Rachel S. Salzman, Personal Interview, November 20, 2014, Moscow, Russia.

¹⁰¹ Lukyanov, interview.

V.A. Sadovnichy, Y.V. Yakovets, and A.A. Akaev, eds., *Perspektivy i strategicheskie prioritety voskhozhdeniia BRIKS* (Moscow, Russia: SCII-INES-NCR BRICS, 2014).
 Ibid., 38.

date belies Putin's contention in the Valdai address that BRICS is not about forming blocs against other parties.¹⁰⁴

The West is not omnipresent only in official rhetoric and documents. Academics, too, often see conflict with the West as the seed from which BRICS has grown. The response of Boris Martynov, the Deputy Director of the Institute of Latin America of the Russian Academy of Sciences (ILA RAN), to a set of questions about the development of BRICS in Russian foreign policy, is a good illustration. The academic prefaced his response with the following statement:

For the beginning I must say that I do not like the USA (please, don't get offended: nothing personal, only business). When still a young man, I began to hate communists, for they always taught me how to live and what to do. Nowadays it seems that the US are trying to do the same with all the world. Sorry for them, for I knew many fine Americans.

Partly my answers will be connected with that...opinion. 105

It was an honest, and revealing, preface. The answers that followed similarly framed the development of BRICS as a reaction against Western hegemony within the international system. For Martynov, BRICS is a global governance hail Mary, whose goal is to salvage what it can from the current world order, and devise a positive agenda to reverse what will almost certainly be a further descent in "anarchy." But what is perhaps most

¹⁰⁵ Boris Fedorivich Martynov, interview by Rachel S. Salzman, E-mail, January 2015. Communication was in both Russian and English. This response was in English.
¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Putin, "Address to Valdai International Discussion Club." He only mentioned BRICS once in the address, and then only briefly in the same sentence as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Eurasian Union.

salient about the answer is the assumption that in some ways, BRICS began with a profound disappointment in the United States.

If Martynov's answers suggest an almost wistful element to the anti-Westernism in Russia's BRICS policies, others are somewhat more confrontational. An article about an interview on the news station *Pravda* with Vladimir Davydov, the Director of ILA RAN, ran under the headline "BRICS are the main geopolitical enemy of the USA." He said that the BRICS need a common economic and information policy, because the United States is not only trying to undermine Russia; it has designs on all of the BRICS countries. During an interview in Moscow in September 2014, Davydov was less combative, but he was adamant that the United States is no better or smarter than Russia, and that BRICS is a way of counteracting Western encroachment.

This issue of Western encroachment on Russian interests, or potential for encroachment, brings the anti-Western rhetoric down to the realm of the practical, discussed in more detail in the preceding section. In essence, anti-Westernism exists on two levels in Russia's approach to BRICS. The first is the fulminating anti-Westernism of Putin's speeches on U.S. irresponsibility or Davydov's framing of BRICS as a geopolitical foe of the United States. These are high profile, quotable, and likely intentionally inflammatory. The second, represented by Russia's proposals during its BRICS

¹⁰⁷ "Vladimir Davydov - BRIKS: Glavnyi Geopoliticheskii Vrag SShA," *Pravda*, January 14, 2015, http://www.pravda.ru/news/world/14-01-2015/1243757-davydov-0/.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Davydov, interview.

¹¹⁰ This could be for domestic political reasons, since anti-Westernism is a large part of Putin's domestic political strategy.

chairmanship, is anti-Westernism as functionalism. Here, Russia is attempting to make BRICS a bulwark against the West through slow, steady, and low-profile (for the layman) suggestions. Operating together, these two levels make Russia's post-Ukraine approach to BRICS much more comprehensively anti-Western than it was before the crisis.

(Russian) Anti-Westernism and the Rest of BRICS

Russia does not execute its BRICS policies in a vacuum. The responses of the other partners are critical for Russia's long-term success or failure to achieve its objectives in how it would see BRICS evolve. In the case of Russia's increased foreign policy emphasis on the importance on anti-Westernism in the BRICS group, the main question is how supportive the other BRICS countries will be. This brings to the fore an issue with which the group has struggled since its inception: the role and degree of anti-Westernism in BRICS both as a motivator for cooperation and even sometimes a raison d'être.

The role of anti-Westernism in BRICS is unresolved because of competing and contradictory interests within the group. On the one hand, as shown in chapter 3, all of the BRICS have more investment in their relations with Western countries than they do in relations with the other BRICS. Even though China is now the largest trading partner for both Brazil and South Africa, none of the BRICS countries features in China's list of top five trading partners, and all continue to conduct significant trade with both the United

States and the European Union. 111 These strong economic ties are one reason that BRICS documents are so careful to emphasize that the group is not directed at any third parties and is not an anti-Western bloc. 112

There are also political reasons to temper any perceived anti-Western motivations. BRICS's overarching goal is to reshape global governance architecture such that the member countries have a larger voice in existing institutions. The non-Russian members are evolutionary rather than revolutionary in their approach to the current system. 113 What this means in practical terms is that BRICS will need Western acquiescence and cooperation in order to achieve its aims. From that perspective, overt or alienating anti-Westernism would be counterproductive. 114

On the other hand, there is something inherently anti-Western in the group's initial coalescence. As discussed in previous chapters, the beginning of BRICS as a political idea is deeply entwined with the global discontent with the United States that began to emerge in the wake of the invasion of Iraq. 115 While it was also a response to objective trends in the distribution of global economic power, those trends also fueled discontent

¹¹¹ Ekaterina Brancato, "Trends in Economic Development, Cooperation, and Trade: BRICS' Position" (Russian International Studies Association (RISA), MGIMO - Moscow State Institute of Internation Relations, April 25, 2014); G.A Vlaskin, S.P Glinkina, and E.B. Lenchuk, "Sotrudnichestvo so Stranami BRIKS v Interesakh Modernizatsii Rossiiskoi Ekonomiki," in Strategiia Rossii v BRIKS: Tseli I Instrumenty, ed. V.A. Nikonov and G.D. Toloraya (Moscow: Universitet, 2013), 318.

<sup>BRICS Leaders, "Sanya Declaration," para. 6.
Panova, "BRIKS: Mesto Rossii v Grupe, videnie i prakticheskie rezultaty, sovmestnaia deiatelnost</sup> 'piaterki' v ramkakh mnogostoronnikh institutov," 52; Armijo and Roberts, "The Emerging Powers and Global Governance: Why the BRICS Matter," 520. Panova in her analysis argues that all of the BRICS countries are evolutionary rather than revolutionary, but the article was published before the onset of the crisis in Ukraine. At this point, Russia may not want to topple the current order entirely, but its views on the system are considerably less benign that are those of its BRICS partners.

¹¹⁴ Unnikrishnan, interview.

¹¹⁵ Laidi, "The BRICS Against the West?," 2.

with U.S. and European intransigence on the reform of global economic governance. The BRICS countries' recent silence on Crimea has also happened in the context of renewed anger over the revelations of the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) spying programs at home and abroad. ¹¹⁶

Perhaps more importantly, though, there is also an intrinsic Pareto optimality problem with the BRICS demands. ¹¹⁷ The BRICS desire a reorganization of votes in international organizations (most prominently the IMF but elsewhere as well) so that voting weights better represent the current global distribution of economic capacity. ¹¹⁸ However, in demanding that reshuffling, the BRICS are by definition demanding that the shares of other countries, mainly in the EU, decrease. The BRICS hope to gain power through others' loss of power. There is no solution to the demand wherein some EU member states are not geopolitically and geoeconomically worse off afterwards than they were beforehand. ¹¹⁹

It is worth noting that in some ways the particular concerns about the governance structures of international financial institutions are more specifically anti-European than anti-American. While the BRICS countries may not like that the United States has effective veto power in the IMF, the bigger problem is that countries like the Netherlands and Belgium are overrepresented. As noted in the first chapter, several European

¹¹⁶ Oliver Stuenkel, "The G7 and the BRICS in the Post-Crimea World Order," Valdai Paper (The Valdai Club, May 2015), 7, https://www.scribd.com/doc/264366607/Valdai-Paper-14-The-G7-and-the-BRICS-in-the-Post-Crimea-World-Order.

¹¹⁷ In economics, a Pareto optimal solution is one where no one can be made better off without making someone else worse off.

¹¹⁸ Ünay, "Reality or Mirage?," 84.

This is one of the reasons the 2010 IMF quota reforms remain stalled in the United States Congress.

countries that properly received large voting shares when the IMF was created in 1944 have been eclipsed in the intervening seventy years. For example, Indonesia has a larger economy and a larger population than Belgium, but the latter has more weight in the IMF. 120 Some of the motivation for BRICS, therefore, is also about trying to address legitimate concerns about the existing economic order, especially with regard to international finance and international trade. 121

Indeed, the IMF itself takes this view. In an October 2015 report, two IMF economists argued that the world is "on the cusp of an epochal change in terms of economic power, the type of which has not been witnessed in the past 200-250 years." As a result of that coming shift, "changes in global economic governance will have to be more substantive than the current incremental changes envisaged."¹²³ The authors base their claim on 2015 IMF projections that the BRICS share of global GDP will surpass that of the G7 by 2017. 124 They also argue that a revision of votes is ultimately in the interest of advanced economies because it will make global economic governance more stable. 125 Nevertheless, a radical restructure of the IMF Executive Board would require U.S. acquiescence meet the 85 percent threshold for change, and this is unlikely to be forthcoming. 126 Since European states stand to lose the most votes, they also are unlikely to support revision in the near term.

¹²⁰ Conversation with Martin Gilman, August 5, 2015, Washington, DC.

¹²² Rakesh Mohan and Muneesh Kapur, "Emerging Powers and Global Governance: Whither the IMF?," Working Paper (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund, October 2, 2015), 4, http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2015/wp15219.pdf.

¹²³ Ibid. ¹²⁴ Ibid., 7.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 50.

¹²⁶ This is more an issue of intransigence from the Legislative Branch than from the Executive Branch.

The BRICS group therefore walks a very fine line with regard to its relationship with the West. It must be sufficiently oppositional in order to capitalize on the (latent) anti-Western sentiment and dissatisfaction with the reigning system among developing countries that spurred its rise to prominence. However, it cannot become so oppositional that it torpedoes either the main goal of the BRICS group as identified in summit declarations (reform but not revolution in the international system) or the national (economic) interests of BRICS member countries. Further, the group has to make sure that the perception of the group as an anti-Western alliance does not override the image of the group as one whose goal is to fix real and acknowledged problems in global economic governance.

The ongoing standoff between Russia and the West makes this balancing act more delicate, not least because of how it has affected Russia's calculus for participation in the group. Other BRICS countries understand that the Western sanctions on Russia are not an attack on either the BRICS group or the other member countries individually. 127 However, if those sanctions push Russian anti-Westernism to further extremes, and if BRICS continues to grow in importance on the Russian foreign policy docket precisely because it is a grouping of non-Western states and Russia pushes for BRICS statements to reflect that change, it could exacerbate intra-group tensions and knock the equilibrium off balance.

It is in some sense a question of degrees. As noted above, the BRICS (and others) have been happy to try to pick up the market share left by Western sanctions. This suggests

¹²⁷ Davydov, interview.

that there could be a certain amount of flexibility among the other BRICS partners in allowing Russia to make BRICS anti-Westernism more overt. However, if Russian rhetoric (beyond that intended for domestic consumption) goes too far, then it is likely that China, India, and Brazil will push back. These countries will not countenance BRICS becoming an explicitly anti-Western alliance. The open question, therefore, is what the long-term effects of the split between Russia and the West will be on Russia's participation in the BRICS group and whether this crisis will prove the straw that finally breaks an already weak basis for cooperation, or instead will become the trial that brings five strong rising powers into closer accord.

Nearly two years into the crisis, the answer seems to be the latter option, though caveats remain. Ironically, the primary reason for this may the West's reaction to Russia's activities. As the Brazilian academic and BRICS expert Oliver Stuenkel argues:

The BRICS's unwillingness to denounce and isolate Russia may have less to do with its opinion on Russia's intervention in Crimea per se and more to do with its skepticism of the West's belief that sanctions are an adequate way to punish whom it sees as international misfits. 129

Stuenkel does not argue that Russia has won the BRICS's silence (and therefore silent acquiescence) because the leaders of Brazil, India, China, and South Africa agree with Russia's actions in Ukraine. Instead, it is because of the tool employed by the West to

¹²⁸ Unnikrishnan, interview; Stuenkel, interview.

¹²⁹ Stuenkel, "Valdai Paper #14," 6.

express its disapproval. All of the BRICS countries have at one time or another been the targets of Western sanctions. ¹³⁰ All are wary of sanctioning others. ¹³¹

While the other BRICS may take issue with the specific stick employed to bring Russia back into line, however, that is not necessarily a sufficient explanation for the other BRICS countries' silence. Instead, the roots of the silence likely lie in a deeper, and (from an American perspective), more worrying source. Stuenkel explains:

Especially for voices more critical of the U.S., the West's alarm over Crimea is merely proof that established powers still consider themselves to be the ultimate arbiters of international norms, unaware of their own hypocrisy. If asked which country was the greatest threat to international stability, most BRICS foreign policymakers and observers would not name Russia, Iran and North Korea, but the United States. 132

This is a damning statement. It may not be the raw anti-Western sentiment that courses through Vladimir Putin's recent speeches, but it is the same idea and even the same phrase. In this analysis, the United States is not the world's policeman. It has become instead a global bandit, and therefore its power must be constrained. As long as the

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¹³⁰ Ibid. The United States sanctioned Brazil from 1962-1964 to destabilize the Goulart government, from 1977-1984 on human rights grounds, and from 1979-1981 to push the country to obey nuclear safeguards. The United Nations imposed sanctions on South Africa from 1962-1994, and United States and the British Commonwealth imposed separate sanctions from 1985-1991, both to pressure the country to end Apartheid. The United States also imposed sanctions on South Africa from 1975-1982 because of nuclear activity. The United States sanctioned India from 1965-1967 over India's agriculture policies and in 1971 (with Pakistan) over the war in Bangladesh, and then, along with Canada, several times in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s over India's nuclear program. The United States imposed sanctions on China from 1949-1970 because of the Communist takeover of the government and subsequent PRC assistance to North Korea. In 1989, the United States imposed sanctions on China as a result of the Tiananmen Square massacre, and again in 1991 over weapons proliferation. The USSR was under sanctions several times as well, but until the annexation of Crimea, the Russian Federation had never faced international sanctions. It is worth noting that despite their official dislike of the use of sanction as a tool of international politics, most BRICS have also imposed sanctions on others. See Gary Clyde Hufbauer et al., Economic Sanctions Reconsidered (Washington, DC: Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2007), 20–33, http://www.piie.com/publications/chapters_preview/4075/01iie4075.pdf..

¹³¹ Laidi, "The BRICS Against the West?," 3.

Stuenkel, "Valdai Paper #14," 6.

BRICS agree on this basic point, and there is no reason to think positions are shifting, anti-Westernism will serve as a useful and effective rallying point reinforcing group cohesion.

Even as the past year has shown a certain amount of solidarity in BRICS, however, there are tensions over Russia's anti-Westernism. At issue is what Marxism-Leninism called *perekhod kachestvo v kolichestvo* – a change from one of quantity to one of quality. ¹³³ For Russia, politics have always been the dominant motivation for participation in BRICS; for the others, economics (or at most geoeconomics) is a stronger impetus. ¹³⁴ After Ukraine, however, the Russian approach to BRICS, and especially the attendant anti-Westernism that has always been a strong component of that approach, has undergone a shift so large it has become a qualitative shift. That shift has the potential to create a rift between Russia and the other BRICS.

Consider the example of the BRICS Parliamentary Forum. This new assembly is causing friction with the other BRICS partners. India in particular has come out against creating a permanent BRICS parliamentary assembly. The head of the Indian delegation cited the risk of excessive institutionalization as his reason for voting against creating a permanent BRICS parliamentary body. Since even Russian Foreign Minister

¹³³ Thanks to Dmitri Trenin for this reference and idea, though he did not use it specifically in regard to BRICS.

¹³⁴ Unnikrishnan, interview.

Petr Topychkanov, "Politika v usherb ekonomike: kak Moskva mozhet possoritsia s BRIKS," *RBK*, June 10, 2015, http://daily.rbc.ru/opinions/economics/10/06/2015/557816e09a794704c5d016db.

¹³⁶ Polina Khimshiashvili, "Indiia zatormozila rossiiskoi proekt po sozdaniiu assamblei BRIKS," *RBK*, June 8, 2015, http://top.rbc.ru/politics/08/06/2015/55758db99a7947dff14d5646.

Sergei Lavrov is on record as opposing institutionalization, however, this reasoning may be a feint to hide deeper concerns. 137

India and other BRICS may be more worried about how some Duma leaders have framed the forum in terms of analogous bodies elsewhere. Leonid Slutskii, the Chairman of the Duma Committee on CIS Affairs, said the following:

The European Union has its European Parliament. And the Eurasian Union is considering establishing a Eurasian Parliamentary Assembly. Cooperation under BRICS auspices has reached a sufficient level, where it is possible to speak about the necessity of dramatically raising interparliamentary coordination. ¹³⁸

Comparing BRICS to the EU and the Eurasian Union presents a radically different vision for BRICS from what has been put forth thus far. It suggests not just a change in the level of institutionalization of the group, but a qualitative change in how cohesive the group is expected to be with regard to its interactions with the outside world. Slutskii is likely not expressing the direct views of the higher political elite on this issue; he is not a member of United Russia (Putin's party), and does not serve on a committee very involved with BRICS. Nevertheless, Russia has fought hard for the parliamentary assembly. That it was unable to reach agreement on making it a permanent forum even when it holds the

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¹³⁷ Topychkanov, "Politika v Usherb Ekonomike"; Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev has pushed back against the plans to bring political components, including a parliamentary assembly, into the Eurasian Union. For more see Nursha Askar, "Evolution of Political Though in Kazakhstan on the Problems of Eurasian Integration: 'Eurasia-Optimists' and 'Eurasia-Skeptics," Working Paper (Astana and Almaty: The Institute of World Economy and Politics at the Foundation of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan - The Leader of the Nation, 2014).

¹³⁸ Khimshiashvili, "Indiia zatormozila rossiiskoi proekt po sozdaniiu assamblei BRIKS."

BRICS chairmanship is indicative of the limits to which the other BRICS are willing to go in this partnership. 139

The conversation about the role of anti-Westernism in BRICS thus comes full circle. It is a balance between agreeing with the basic contention that the West should no longer be the main arbiter of global norms and not supporting anything so radical it would damage each individual BRICS member country's relationship with Western countries. On the one hand, President Putin may understand those limits and not suggest anything so confrontational that it would fracture the group. ¹⁴⁰ On the other hand, as discussed above, some of what Russia has proposed under its chairmanship already seems to be pushing the boundaries of the acceptable. ¹⁴¹ In addition, Russia has by necessity begun investing more in BRICS because under current circumstances there are fewer options available. ¹⁴² If this brings the conflict between Russia and the West to a boiling point, and BRICS gets caught in the crossfire, it is unlikely that Moscow would retain even the silent support of its BRICS partners.

Chapter Conclusion

In 2006, Dmitri Trenin published an article in *Foreign Affairs* entitled "Russia Leaves the West," in which he argued that, "Russia's leaders have given up on becoming part of the

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¹³⁹ Ibid. Some of the issue may be bureaucratic differences in how the parliaments in the different BRICS countries operate.

¹⁴⁰ Topychkanov, interview.

¹⁴¹ Stuenkel, "Valdai Paper #14," 8.

¹⁴² Lukyanov, interview.

West and have started creating their own Moscow-centered system." Since 2006 was the year BRIC held its first official meeting, Trenin would seem to have been prescient in his observation. However, a retrospective analysis suggests certain nuances. If in 2006 Russia was beginning to build its own solar system, to use Trenin's analogy, then this new system was at least adjacent to the Western one. Indeed, as discussed in the previous chapter, one of Moscow's initial goals towards BRICS was to strengthen its own hand through strategic cooperation with both old and new power centers.

This initial goal coincided with the goals of Russia's other BRICS partners. Although the group has always been something of a Rorschach test for its members, with each country having its own goals and rationale for participating, all used it as a way of maximizing their voice in the international arena without directly challenging the reigning hegemon. Russia has historically been the most willing to paint BRICS with an anti-Western brush, but it has also been cognizant of the limits of that approach. In Russian elite political discourse, BRICS has been the symbol of an alternative to the West, but not more than that. This made managing conflicting views on anti-Westernism within the group easier.

After the Ukraine crisis, however, that balance seems to have disappeared, at least from Russian official formulations (expert views are more nuanced). Instead of Russia as the cord that connects the BRICS and the traditional powers together, the new image is of shackles being broken.¹⁴⁴ BRICS has become Russia's battering ram against the old

¹⁴³ Dmitri Trenin, "Russia Leaves the West," *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 4 (July 1, 2006): 87, doi:10.2307/20032043

¹⁴⁴ Viktor Krestianinov, "BRIKS razryvaet dollarovye tsepi," *Argumenty Nedely*, July 17, 2014, No. 26 (418) edition, http://argumenti.ru/politics/n446/352813.

system. For now, at least, it seems Russia really has left the West. It remains to be seen to what extent BRICS will become part of that exodus, and how much the increase in Russia's anti-Westernism will affect the attitudes of the other BRICS countries towards participation and cooperation within the group in the long term.

What is clear, however, is that the crisis in Ukraine and the collapse in relations with the West have forced Russia to take its BRICS diplomacy more seriously. Whereas before the crisis BRICS existed primarily as a rhetorical weapon, it is becoming an organ whose prospects Russia takes seriously beyond its use for imagery and optics. In part, this is because Russia now has fewer choices of international partners. It is also because BRICS has matured considerably and now has an agenda worth taking seriously. Nevertheless, the increased emphasis on BRICS as a viable focus for foreign policy and foreign economic policy represents a fundamental shift in Russia's approach to the group and a major development in how the country positions itself internationally.

Conclusions: Russia and BRICS in Broader Perspective

In early July 2015, on the eve of the seventh BRICS summit in Ufa, Russia and in the midst of renewed fears over a "Grexit" (Greek exit) from the Eurozone, rumors began to circulate that Greece might seek alternative funding from the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB). 1 The rumors were published in Western and BRICS news sources, and named Sergei Storchak, Russia's Deputy Finance Minister, as one official in favor of the plan.² At the time, the NDB had vet to be formalized; confirmation of leaders and location was on the agenda for the Ufa Summit, and BRICS leaders made clear that the NDB was unlikely to be operational before 2016. Unsurprisingly, the narrative in the press revolved around Russian efforts to break Greece away from the West.³

The rumors about Greek participation in the NDB proved unfounded, and Moscow walked back what appeared to be its earlier support for the idea.⁴ In an interview with the Russian language service of the state-owned news organization Russia Today, presidential advisor Yurii Ushakov stated unequivocally that Greek membership in the

¹ Kerin Hope, "Tsipras Dismisses 'absurd' Creditors' Offer as Greek Markets Slide," Financial Times, June 5, 2015, http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/82aefd0a-0b70-11e5-994d-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3gR15RRN6. ² Sounak Mukhopadhyay, "Greece Can Easily Get Funding From BRICS Bank: Russia," News,

International Business Times, (July 7, 2015), http://tass.ru/en/world/806684

http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/07/emerging-brics-russia-bank-idUSL8N0ZN3S720150707; TASS - Russian News Agency, "Russia's Deputy Finance Minister Encourages Greece to Seek BRICS

Financing," News, Russia Insider, (July 8, 2015), http://russia-insider.com/en/politics/russias-deputyfinance-minister-says-greece-can-easily-receive-financing-brics/ri8581; "Greece Seeks to 'Get Involved' in BRICS Bank," New China, June 18, 2015, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-06/18/c 134338618.htm.

³ Hope, "Tsipras Dismisses 'absurd' Creditors' Offer as Greek Markets Slide"; Jack Moore, "Russia Seeks to 'Sow Division in EU' by Inviting Greece to BRICS Bank," Newsweek, May 12, 2015, http://europe.newsweek.com/russia-seeks-sow-division-eu-by-inviting-greece-brics-bank-327189.

⁴ "Russia Says Has Not Offered Greece BRICS Bank Membership - Finance Minister," Reuters, July 2, 2015, http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/02/eurozone-greece-russia-idUSR4N0ZB00H20150702.

NDB was not under discussion at the time.⁵ Nevertheless, the emergence of those rumors was indicative of a broader truth. BRICS has come to symbolize more than just the activities of the group itself but also the wider phenomenon of an alternative to Western international structures and the general "rise of the rest." In bringing BRICS together, Russia has altered the landscape of global governance and created what Ian Taylor terms "a heuristic device" that symbolizes "the role of emerging economies in the global political economy."

In her article "Building the New World Order BRIC by BRIC," Cynthia Roberts argues that the BRIC initiative was =not an instance of strategic vision on the part of the Kremlin, but rather one of successful opportunism. Indeed, for all the hype from some quarters about Vladimir Putin as a grandmaster chess player, many experts agree that one of Russia's biggest foreign policy weaknesses is precisely its lack of a grand strategy. What's more, when the idea to bring BRIC together as political entity began percolating in Moscow, first with meetings at the Academy of Sciences in 2004, then at the level of deputy foreign minister in 2005, and finally with the first official sideline meeting at the 2006 UNGA, both Russia and the general international context were profoundly different from what they are today. There was no financial crisis either globally or within Russia, and U.S.-Russian relations were cool but stable. Putin had already begun adjusting his

⁵ "Yurii Ushakov v interviu RT: Bank razvitiia BRIKS - vklad v ukrepleniie mirovoi finansovoi arkhitektury," *RT na russkom*, July 7, 2015, http://russian.rt.com/article/101811.

⁶ Ian Taylor, *Africa Rising? BRICS - Diversifying Dependency* (Rochester, NY: James Currey, 2014), 19.

⁷ Roberts, "Building the New World Order BRIC by BRIC," 4.

⁸ Laura Bassett, "Mike Rogers: Putin Is Playing Chess, Obama Playing Marbles," *Huffington Post*, March 3, 2014, http://today.yougov.com/huffingtonpostwidget/live/webpollsmall1.html?topic=politics; Alexander Bolton, "Cruz: Putin Plays Chess, Obama Plays Checkers on Foreign Policy," *The Hill*, January 28, 2014, http://thehill.com/policy/international/196646-cruz-putin-plays-chess-obama-plays-checkers-on-foreign-policy; Lukyanov, interview; Trenin, interview.

rhetoric to reflect the emphasis on Russia's sovereignty and unique civilizational heritage, but these were the only harbingers of the changes to come.

In some ways, therefore, Russia got incredibly lucky with its initial BRIC gambit. The Russian foreign policy establishment was able to capitalize on perceived global power shifts before they became commonly recognized. Russian leaders also played on international discontent with American adventures abroad without scaring the other BRIC partners, as Primakov had done with the original proposal for the Russia-India-China Strategic Triangle. When the global financial crisis erupted in 2008, BRIC, and Russia with it, was already there in the wings, ready to take its place in the spotlight. This was a case of exceptional timing.

Yet the written record of BRICS suggests that even before the extent of the financial crisis was clear, the leaders, with Russia at the fore, were making plans to deepen cooperation within the group. The decision to hold a leaders' summit was taken in July 2008, before Lehman Brothers collapsed and the G20 began to replace the G8. The report of the first meeting of BRIC academic experts in Moscow in 2008 shows the seeds of ideas that would later emerge in fuller form in summit declarations and action plans. While there was no guarantee that BRIC would not fizzle after its moment in the limelight during the acute phase of the financial crisis, there is evidence the group's members were planning for a slow and steady build up before fate and collateralized debt

⁹ Nikonov, *The Awakening of BRIC*, 43.

¹⁰ Nikonov, The Awakening of BRIC.

obligations intervened to make the group much more prominent much sooner than expected.

The rise of BRICS, however, coincided with a dramatic improvement in U.S.-Russian relations. Therefore, while intra-BRICS cooperation increased in the years following the 2008 financial crisis, Russian interest in the group did not expand at a corresponding rate. BRICS remained something Russian leaders referenced as an alternative to multilateralism according to Western norms, and as a method of balancing against American hegemony in the international system. The group did not become a significant element of Russian foreign policy, nor did the conceptualization of the role and prospects of the group expand at the elite political level. The ideas outlined in the slew of reports and books from Russian state universities and research institutions in the years following the financial crisis did not penetrate into official rhetoric.

That changed after the onset of the crisis in Ukraine. Following the ouster of Yanukovych and Russia's subsequent annexation of Crimea, the United States and the European Union put economic sanctions on Russia in an effort to isolate the country from the international system. Those sanctions increased in scope and intensity as fighting in Eastern Ukraine, aided by Russian involvement, continued unabated. Russia had been slated to host the G8 summit in June 2014; instead, it found itself expelled from the

group.¹¹ Russia's pretentions to acting as a bridge between old and new centers of power were over.

In many ways, though, Russia benefited from another moment of exceptional timing in 2014. The same day the G7 countries announced they were suspending Russian membership, the BRICS foreign ministers issued a statement condemning rumored efforts to bar Putin from the November 2015 G20 summit in Brisbane. One month after the aborted G8 summit in Sochi, the BRICS leaders met in Fortaleza and agreed to form and fund the group's first institutions. Just as Russia needed BRICS to be more than a talking point, the group demonstrated its serious intentions to continue building a system somewhat outside the Western order.

The BRICS did not plan that the agreement on the New Development Bank and the Contingency Reserve Arrangement would coincide with Russian political needs. Similarly, many of the new sub-groups and agreements that have emerged during Russia's 2015 BRICS chairmanship have long been brewing on the BRICS agenda. Nevertheless, Russia's BRICS presidency, the solidification of BRICS as an international group, and the unwillingness of the other BRICS leaders to join efforts to sanction or isolate Russia have all helped to catapult the group up Russia's list of foreign policy priorities. In the aftermath of the fallout from the crisis in Ukraine, BRICS has moved from being an important rhetorical device in the Russian arsenal to being an association

¹¹ Julian Borger and Nicholas Watt, "G7 Countries Snub Putin and Refuse to Attend Planned G8 Summit in Russia," *The Guardian*, March 24, 2014, sec. World news,

http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/24/g7-countries-snub-putin-refuse-attend-g8-summit-russia. ¹² BRICS Foreign Ministers, "BRICS Ministers Meet on the Sidelines of the Nuclear Security Summit in

in which the government finds economic and political value. It is no longer just words, but substance as well.

The other BRICS have refused to join the West in condemnation of Russian actions, but not because they find those actions acceptable. Though popular opinion of Russia is less negative in BRICS countries and the developing world than it is in Europe and North America, it still on balance is not good. ¹³ Instead, the collective reticence in BRICS to condemn Russia is indicative of concerns about deeper structural problems in the administration of global governance.

BRICS summit declarations and experts from several BRICS countries maintain that the goal of the group is not to overturn the current system, but to give developing countries more say in its leadership. ¹⁴ The United States is not making this easy. As the U.S. Congress continues to block IMF reform, it has "has only fueled perceptions that the United States is determined to keep down rising powers like the BRICS." ¹⁵ The risk remains that if Western leaders do not make room for BRICS in existing institutions, BRICS will continue to create their own outside the current system, governed by different rules. ¹⁶

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¹³ Pew Research Center, "Opinion of Russia Largely Unfavorable," *Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project*, August 26, 2015, http://www.pewglobal.org/2015/08/05/russia-putin-held-in-low-regard-around-the-world/russia-image-08/.

¹⁴ Oliver Stuenkel, "The BRICS Bank Isn't Challenging the System, Only Western Leadership of It," *The Wire*, September 3, 2015, http://thewire.in/2015/09/03/the-brics-bank-isnt-challenging-the-system-only-western-leadership-of-it-9853/; Shashi Tharoor, "Taking the BRICS Seriously," *Project Syndicate*, June 19, 2015, http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/cooperation-major-emerging-economies-by-shashi-tharoor-2015-06.

¹⁵ Daniel Chardell, "The BRICS: Beyond the Hype," *The National Interest*, July 14, 2015, http://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-brics-beyond-the-hype-13322.

¹⁶ Tharoor, "Taking the BRICS Seriously."

It might seem easy to dismiss the threat as bluster. Indeed, the focus of this study has been almost exclusively on words rather than actions. Further, although rhetoric is an integral part of policy, it is not the same thing as a decision that has measurable impact. For each of the arguments put forth here, a theoretical counterargument exists. Russian rhetoric about its place vis-à-vis the West has unquestionably become more antagonistic over the past fifteen years, and especially since beginning of the crisis in Ukraine. That rhetoric, however, has not yet translated into firm alternative alignments. Similarly, the proposals Russia has put forward as part of its BRICS presidency show a marked increase in appreciation of how BRICS can advance Russian interests, as compared to the narrow rhetorical framing the topic received before the crisis. Nevertheless, these proposals remain mere pieces of paper at the moment; they have not yet been operationalized. Finally, while BRICS has persisted as a force on the global stage for longer than the skeptics predicted, their concrete achievements are few.

The problem with these counterarguments is that they focus on what has not yet happened as opposed to how much of the rhetoric has borne fruit. President Putin's careful redefinition of Russian national identity away from Europe and his repeated calls for respect of Russian interests and sovereignty are now no longer only words. In the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, Russia has taken action to show the steel behind those statements. The rhetorical approach to BRICS as an alternative to accommodation with Western norms and institutions is now being put to the test, as Russia seeks new partners in the wake of Western isolation. Economic downturns across the BRICS and other emerging markets, combined with weak commodity prices, make those new partnerships

less lucrative than Russian leaders hoped. Nevertheless, BRICS has proved itself operationally useful both politically and economically in ways the earlier rhetoric foretold. Finally, while it is too soon to judge the New Development Bank or the Contingency Reserve Arrangement as either successes or failures, their creation demonstrates that BRICS makes good on its promises. After repeatedly failing to convince advanced economies to adjust global economic governance so that voting weights reflect the current distribution of economic power, the BRICS have instead begun to create their own institutions. These developments are all indication of how rhetoric, under certain conditions, can become concrete political change.

This analysis began with the assertion that since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia has had a dual track approach to engagement with the international system. One track has been an effort to bolster the strength of international institutions where Russia already possesses a leading voice. The second has been a tactic of institutional creation, whereby Russia builds rhetorical alternatives to Western institutions in an effort to construct a system where Russia has a say in the legitimating rules and norms. BRICS is an example of the second track, but one that is particularly noteworthy because of the interest it attracted from other major global powers and the imbalance in global economic governance it sought to address. While the BRICS group developed in answer to global trends, however, the roots of the role of the group in Russian policy are in the rhetorical separation of Russian national identity and conception of sovereignty from the West. As a result, political rhetoric about BRICS in Russia developed in an inverse relationship to Russia's relations with Western powers. Until the crisis in Ukraine, the Russian

leadership spoke about BRICS as a balance against U.S. hegemony in the international system. They did not take it seriously on its other merits. After Ukraine, however, rhetoric in Russia about BRICS has become more stridently anti-Western, but it has also begun display a greater depth of thinking about the group as a source of wide-ranging partnership. BRICS, moreover, is better prepared to take a larger role in Russian foreign policy. Working groups have proliferated, and the forum is on the verge of opening its first alternative institutions.

The three main stories of this dissertation, therefore, have come together into a mutually supporting cycle. Increasing antagonism in Russian rhetoric about the West, and Western dominance of the international system, led to the rhetorical construction of BRICS as an alternative option. BRICS, meanwhile, continued to institutionalize because the original sin it sought to address – imbalance in organs of global economic governance – remained unaddressed. Russian rhetoric about the value of BRICS, therefore, has been supported by the group's own development. The alternative option that Russia sought, where it would help shape the rules and norms, has manifested sufficiently to smooth the effects of Western censure in the aftermath of the crisis in Ukraine.

The institutionalization of BRICS and the haven the group has provided for Russia have far wider implications than simply enabling Russia to bypass sanctions or upending global development financing. A key element of concern for Russia and all the BRICS is continued Western ideational control of global governance. In this respect, the crisis in Ukraine is the proverbial canary in the coalmine. Russia's actions in Ukraine since the

beginning of 2014 have violated core norms of the liberal international order. Russia has faced isolation, however, only from the United States and its allies. The silence of the BRICS is evidence that while the other four countries may not agree with Russian actions in Ukraine, they are not willing to stand behind the current system of norms and rules.

The unwillingness of the BRICS nations to defend the principles underpinning the current system is a direct challenge to Western ideational control of legitimating norms of global governance. BRICS has not offered alternative norms beyond non-interference in domestic affairs, nor are they likely to do so. Even without advancing an affirmative normative agenda, however, the BRICS have managed to weaken the Western presumption of being the global norm-setter. BRICS, which began as a Russian tactical gambit of rhetorical balancing, has become an increasingly effective vehicle for splintering the existing international system.

Chronology of BRICS Development into an International

Political Association

1998	Russian Prime Minister Evgenii Primakov proposes triangular cooperation between Russia, India, and China, which continues and is dubbed RIC
Nov 2001	Jim O'Neill publishes paper "Building Better Global Economic BRICs," in which he predicts that over the coming decade the global economic weight of Brazil, Russia, India, and (especially) China will grow such that overtake some of the G7, and this will require a revision of global economic governance
Jan 2003	Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva becomes President of Brazil, and enacts policies that make him very popular with those who are skeptical of globalization. He also pledges to increase Brazil's trade ties with "similar" states, including the BRICs)
Mar 2003	United States invades Iraq without UNSC authorization
June 2003	India, Brazil, and South Africa agree to form the India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA)
Oct 2003	Goldman Sachs analysts Dominic Wilson and Roopa Purushothaman publish "Dreaming With BRICs: The Path to 2050." The paper predicts that by 2050 the list of the world's ten richest countries will look very different, and that by 2025 BRICs may account for over half the size of the G6
2005	At Russian initiative, Deputy Foreign Ministers of the BRIC countries meet
July 2005	The G8 countries invite Mexico, China, South Africa, India, and Brazil to the G8 summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, and the Outreach 5 is born
Sept 2006	At Russian initiative, BRIC foreign ministers meet on the sidelines of the UNGA
Feb 2007	Russian President Vladimir Putin gives a speech at the annual Munich Security Conference condemning the attempt by the United States to create a unipolar world order. Putin specifically mentions the growing economic power of the BRICs, and states "There is no reason to doubt that

	inevitably be converted into political influence and will strengthen multipolarity."
Mar 2008	Dmitri Medvedev is elected Russian president and inaugurated in May. Vladimir Putin becomes Prime Minister.
May 2008	BRIC foreign ministers meet in Ekaterinburg, Russia and agree "that building a more democratic international system founded on the rule of law and multilateral diplomacy is an imperative of our time." (Foreign Joint Communiqué, 2008)
Aug 2008	Russia and Georgia fight a five-day war over Georgia's secessionist territories South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Russia recognizes the independence of these statelets, but fails to win support for the move from any of its partners in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), including China
Sept 2008	U.S. financial giant Lehman Brothers collapses after the U.S. government refuses to bail it out. Later that week, insurance giant American International Group (AIG) is bailed out.
Sept 2008	The oil price falls below \$100/barrel for the first time all year. The Russian stock market plunges, and trading on RTS and MICEX is suspended for several days
Nov 2008	BRIC Finance Ministers hold their first formal meeting in Sao Paolo, Brazil on the sideline of the G20 summit. They discuss reforming international financial institutions (IFIs) and global financial architecture.
2009-2010	Russia experiences the biggest economic contraction out of the whole G20.
Jun 2009	BRIC heads of state hold their first formal summit in Ekaterinburg, Russia
Mar 2010	BRIC Ministers of Agriculture meet for the first time in Moscow.
Apr 2010	The BRIC leaders hold their second summit in Brasilia, Brazil.
May 2010	BRIC health ministers meet for the first time in Geneva, Switzerland
2011	Russia founds the National Committee on BRICS Research, housed at the Russkii Mir Center and formally part of MID
Apr 2011	The BRICS leaders hold their third summit in Sanya, China. At this summit, South Africa formally joins and it becomes BRICS.

the economic potential of the new centres of global economic growth will

July 2011	BRICS Health Ministers meet in Beijing, China and agree to begin coordination and cooperation
Dec 2011	BRICS Trade Ministers meet on the sideline of the 8 th WTO Ministerial in Geneva, Switzerland. They announce the creation of a contact group to increase economic cooperation between the countries.
Mar 2012	The BRIC leaders hold their fourth summit in New Delhi, India. The declaration includes a proposal for a BRICS Development Bank
Mar 2013	The BRIC leaders hold their fifth summit in Durban, South Africa. The declaration announces the agreement to form a BRICS Development Bank. The leaders also agree to establish the BRICS Think Tank Council and the BRICS Business Forum
March 2014	BRICS leaders issue a statement condemning rumors that Australia will exclude Vladimir Putin from the G20 Summit in Brisbane because of Russia's annexation of Crimea
March 2014	Brazil, India, China, and South Africa all abstain in UN/264, the UN resolution condemning Russia's annexation of Crimea
July 2014	The BRICS leaders hold their sixth summit in Fortaleza, Brazil. The groups announces the creation of the New Development Bank and a BRICS Contingency Reserve Arrangement
April 2015	Russia assumes the rotating BRICS presidency
July 2015	Russia hosts a joint BRICS-SCO summit in Ufa. BRICS adopts a program on economic cooperation, names the officials who will run the new BRICS institutions, and agrees to form a virtual secretariat

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Curriculum Vitae

Rachel S. Salzman was born in New York City on May 25, 1984. She received her B.A. magna cum laude with departmental honors from the University of Pennsylvania in 2006. Immediately following, she enrolled at the University of Cambridge, receiving an M.Phil in Russian Studies with high distinction in 2007. Prior to enrolling at Johns Hopkins SAIS in 2011, Salzman worked for Professor Robert Legvold on two track II projects. The first, "Redesigning U.S. Policy Toward Russia," was coordinated through the American Academy of Arts & Sciences in Cambridge, MA. The second, the Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative (EASI), was housed at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, DC. Salzman served as Assistant Director on EASI, working with former senior officials and regional experts from across North America, Europe, and Russia. In 2014, she was awarded a National Security Education Program Boren Fellowship to conduct research in Moscow. Her publications include "A Review of U.S. Policy Toward Russia," (AAAS, 2010); "From Bridge to Bulwark: The Evolution of BRICS in Russian Grand Strategy," (Comillas Journal of International Relations, 2015); and "Debunked: Why There Won't Be Another Cold War" (The National Interest, 2015), co-authored with Matthew Rojansky. Salzman successfully defended her dissertation with distinction on December 11, 2015.