

Under Western Eyes. How meta-narrative shapes our perception of Russia – and why it is time for a qualitative shift

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The Great European War, from: *A Humorous Atlas of the World* (Japan 1914)

Taking a social-constructivist perspective, the article profiles the impact of cognition on Western interpretations of Russian historical development. The starting point is the tenacity of particular Russia memes; the empirical basis for the article is provided by the output of influential thinkers, scientists and practitioners that dominates discourse. Since the nineteenth century this ideological output has situated Western-Russian relations within a meta-narrative of freedom and democratization. This meta-narrative has alternated between two operating modes: an Orientalist search for a Russian civilizational “black box”, on the one hand, and a missionary vision, driven by an aspiration to recreate Russia in the Western image, on the other.” During the Cold War era the meta-narrative was enriched by new scientific narratives, “path dependency” and “patrimonialism”. The article stresses the need for “competing narratives” and concludes with suggestions as to what agenda might replace superseded Russia narratives, as well as the wider “super-story”.

Introduction

Once upon a time an American president could advocate the long-term goal of Russian EU membership.^[1] Following a promising start in the 1990s – and accompanied by a number of symbolic shifts such as Russian G8 membership – over the past decade political relations between Russia and the West have continued to sour or stagnate, or both. The general level of distrust can be gauged from any review of recent literature on Russia and the West, but also from the public framing of Russian-Western relations. Thus, twenty years after the end of the Cold War, one could argue that there is more that separates than unites Russia and the West, regardless of how many

times the “reset button” is pushed. Remarks on Russia by Mitt Romney, Republican candidate to the US presidential election in 2012 (“Russia is our geopolitical foe no. 1”, March 2012), could count on a long illustrious lineage. Although Romney was countered by Colin Powell and other prominent Republicans, poll results[2] and anecdotal evidence would indicate that mainstream US thinking leans towards Romney’s rather than Powell’s line. The issue then is not a simple case of one opinion against another within the pluralist marketplace of ideas, but a case of certain strands tending to dominate.



The traditional approaches to account for this situation are threefold: a staple of many Western Russia watchers is to “blame” the Russian leader for the bad relations, in this case Vladimir Putin: “If only Russia had a more liberal president, then things would be that much better”. The fixation on the man at the top, and his identification as the principal source of the country’s ills, takes pride of place in the travelogue of the nineteenth century French writer Adolphe de Custine, but can look back onto a much longer history. “Putin fixation” (as previously “Yeltsin fixation”) is also at work in many contemporary accounts.[3] Besides lacking empirical credibility, it is a simplification of the stakes.[4] As Putin biographer Allen C. Lynch makes clear, there is no evidence that Putin is anti-Western *per se*, but rather a *Realpolitiker* who knows how to vary his genre. If it suits his domestic agenda he will play the anti-Western card. If it doesn’t, then he will do the opposite. Cautioning us against generalizations, Lynch reminds us that, in the wake of 9/11, Putin’s Russia was the most valuable U.S. ally in the “War on Terror”. [5]

More adequate than blaming the Russian leadership (or Russians *tout court*) are analyses that point to structural imbalances or geopolitical rivalry as underlying causes of tension.[6] Some of these focus on the widening value gap: Russia under Putin has back-pedaled on democracy and economic reform[7]; and the Russian political system remains unstable, and thus unable or unwilling to commit strategic resources to the long-term planning necessary to build a common Russian-Western future.[8] The current author sees little reason to fundamentally challenge the plausibility of these interpretations, without, however, endorsing their totalist explanatory claims. The reasons are similar to the ones named before: the consistency that would be necessary to throw this sort of challenge to the West is a mirage. There is nothing inevitable about anti-Westernism in current Russian politics and society.

The third interpretive option is to go for plain stereotyping. And, indeed, Russophobia has had a lot to answer for during its long and checkered history.[9] Typically, it emerges in the form of essentialist and culturalist discourses claiming incompatibility between Russia and the West. Indicative of its continuing vigor is a “New Cold War” narrative[10], in a situation where a “New Cold War” between Russian and the West is anachronistic. However, pointing the finger at Western Russophobia is as one-sided as citing geopolitics or asymmetric vision. The problem with stereotyping emerges in Tsygankov’s attempt to “right the balance”, by putting the blame on a US lobby which he blames for Russophobia[11]; quite beside the fact that such a unified lobby does not exist in the described form[12], Tsygankov’s model is undynamic and unidirectional. The actual history of relations invalidates negative stereotyping as an explanatory *passe-partout*. One of the foremost historians of East-West relations presents no evidence that Russophobia was ever unanimous.[13] The same could also be said about Russian anti-Westernism. Thus, periods of intense engagement and exchange have alternated with periods of disengagement or mistrust.[14] And contrary to Tsygankov’s unidirectional model, relations have been both multidirectional and dynamic. If modern neuroscience tells us that what people think is often more important than what *is*, then focusing on mechanisms of conscious stereotyping ignores the fundamental importance of cognitive barriers. The lacunae of traditional approaches to relations between Russia and the West point to the need for a different type of conceptual framework.

The starting point for this article is the 2008 South Ossetia war between Russia and Georgia, the nadir of recent East-West relations. This conflict drew out in particular detail certain paradoxes in the Western reception of post-Soviet Russia. It also demonstrated the presence of a strong storyline (or “narrative”), dominating the manner in which Russia was discoursed. The conflict itself involved a small territory that is, *de iure*, part of the sovereign republic of Georgia. *De facto*, however, it has been a Russian client regime for two decades, following secession from Georgia and a civil war in 1991-92. Under UN mediation, and in accordance with international law, all stakeholders had agreed to find a solution to the problem without recourse to force. In the interloping fifteen years, however, Moscow created new facts on the ground, most controversially by issuing Russian passports to South Ossetians.

One of the many “dormant” conflicts of the post-Soviet space, the conflict became “hot” in 2008. Following many months of mutual provocation, Georgia attempted to recover South Ossetia by force, on the night of 7 August. This attempt to restore the territorial integrity of Georgia began with a coordinated Georgian artillery barrage on military and civilian targets in the South Ossetian capital Tskhinvali. It has been suggested that this tactic was designed to create a panic that would cause a mass flight northwards, thereby blocking access routes to any intervening Russian force, but that it failed.[15] Once Moscow succeeded in getting its troops onto the other side of the mountainous border separating South Ossetia from the Russian republic of North Ossetia, the Georgian military were routed. Russian military operations were not limited to South Ossetia, but extended into core Georgia. The most notable of these was the bombing of the city of Gori. Seizing on the opportunity, the Georgian government appealed to the outside world with a storyline that portrayed Georgia as the victim of unilateral Russian aggression. Georgia deployed considerable skill in feeding its own version into the international news channels, unchallenged by Russian counter-efforts which, by contrast, were amateurish, if not downright counterproductive.[16] Georgian media mastery was best demonstrated by the live interviews Georgian president Mikheil Saakashvili provided to international news media, in fluent English, during the most critical days of the crisis. Nothing even vaguely similar was attempted by the Russian side until a fortnight *after* the ceasefire, when Prime Minister Vladimir Putin gave interviews to CNN and German news channel ARD. Many Eastern European nations immediately sided with Georgia and demanded swift NATO and EU retaliation against Russia. They were supported by a consensus within the political class in the US, Britain and other countries, such as Sweden. Media reporting in these countries complemented rather than challenged this public disposition. Many of the reflexes one could see at work derived their force from an already existing arsenal of intellectual war, and this reinforced the willingness to believe the Georgian version of events and the perception of unilateral Russian aggression.[17] A spot check survey of media activity during the August crisis confirms a particular lack of balance in the US and UK media landscape. This went as far as discounting or censoring evidence that countered the consensus view of unilateral Russian aggression.[18] A comparison with French and German media reporting shows that in these countries equal credit was given to Russian and Georgian perspectives.[19] The South Ossetian perspective was only taken up by Russian media, and in an expectedly slanted manner.

The skewed initial perceptions were put to the test, when, some weeks later, more rigorous analysis became available.[20] This new evidence challenged the consensus and established Georgia as the initial assailant. In the wake of these findings only one major British media organization, the BBC, backtracked on its initial lack of focus[21], by airing a feature openly critical of the Georgian version of events, in the 28 October 2008 edition of “Newsnight”. [22] The New York Times adopted the same stance one week later.[23] When a high-level fact-finding mission mandated by the Council of Europe and headed by a Swiss career diplomat published its final report in September 2009, the conclusions were very similar.[24] None of this changed very much about Russia’s image as the aggressor. As media professionals know only too well, all communication is subject to “threshold dynamics”, where first impressions are critically important. Once media saturation sets in, a potential disclaimer will find it impossible to dislodge the initial images that will have meanwhile solidified into opinions. Cognitive filters will have closed for good.

1. Narratives, meta-narratives and competing narratives

Western public opinion making during the 2008 crisis points towards the important role of narratives. A loan from literary theory, narratives (like discourse – to which they are related) entered social science via the work of the French poststructuralists. In their most basic attire they represent compelling story-lines that follow literary conventions. These structure and explain sequences of events, and allow inferences to be drawn.[25] They are not necessarily analytical or evidence-based, can be more or less virtual, and correspond to a “telescoping’ of logic and temporality”. [26] All narratives rely on deliberate or inadvertent omissions and they fashion collective blind spots.[27] While common usage of the term suggests binomial “false” and “true” narratives, the scientific understanding insists on the notion that all narratives are conditioned representations, or facets of reality. Thus the search for a “true narrative” is as absurd as the quixotic search for truth itself. Clothing narratives in negative terms, as “manipulation devices”, is therefore inappropriate. The more or less limited epistemic validity of narratives clashes with their longevity and tenacity, attributes they owe to their vital role in the formation and formulation of collective identity (*Identitätsstiftung*). Story-telling responds to an elementary human need for the creation of meaning (*Sinnstiftung*); it also helps structure the human response to ongoing developments.[28] For these reasons, the disconnect (*Los-lösung*) from narratives urged by postmodern thinkers[29] is impossible. As much as one may deplore the

de-formation (or representation) of reality by narratives[30], in one form or another, narrativity always prevails.

Narratives and memory may seem anodyne to hard-nosed rationalists arguing that the cost-benefit considerations of utility maximization, opportunity and transaction costs are the only things decision-makers need taken into consideration (and that cognitive wiring is inconsequential). However, a burgeoning literature in cognitive and evolutionary economics provides counter-indication. Thus a study of tax policy making in the German *Bundestag* demonstrated the practical impact of cognitive framing (i.e. ideas and ideology) on decision-making.[31] The fact of the matter then is that narratives are highly charged in social, political and cultural significance. They are crucial in making sense of the post-Soviet historiographical space, whether it be the controversy caused by a new official history manual in Russia[32] or the dynamics of conflict over *lieux de memoire* in the borderlands. One such conflict was the Russo-Estonian dispute following the removal of a Soviet war memorial in Tallinn (“War of Monuments”), in May 2007 (Smith, 2008, 419-30). While the latter had the superficial look of yet another building block in a budding ‘New Cold War’, the real issue at stake were competing (and conflicting) narratives over identity, identity construction, occupation and the sway of twentieth century history in the Baltic rim.

The particular focus of this article are meta-, master or grand narratives. These describe historiographical or cultural output advocating a coherent and unequivocal perspective, which then goes on to become the dominating public orthodoxy, or the “politically correct” version of history. As narratives, they have an identity building function, but on a vaster level of social organization.[33] They remain valid as long as they maintain their integratory force, and they are cyclically replaced by others.[34] Meta-narratives then are the “super-stories” (or modern myths) that human societies tell about themselves, and others. Hayden White argued that the latter can be categorized as tragedies, comedies, romances or satires[35], but his attempt to apply literary theory to the study of history has never been unanimously accepted.[36] More immediately accessible (and empirically valid) are taxonomies indicated throughout national historiographies, such as failure, success, survival, sublimation and victimization.[37] Many meta-narratives have Orientalist bearings, in the sense that they are less correlated to the object of inquiry than to the identity constitution of the subject. Aware of this pitfall, critical historians try to avoid explicit or implicit meta-narratives and replace them by a focus on plurality and competing narratives.[38]

It will be argued here that, since the nineteenth century, the Western meta-narrative of Russian historical development is driven by the ideological notions of liberty, freedom and, recently, democratization. The role of academia in the constitution and maintenance of the meta-narrative is crucial, as many of the media, entertainment industry, government and think-tank memes dominating public discourse can be traced back to the ideas of area experts and public intellectuals. This follows Foucault’s discourse model: the distribution of knowledge has power effects; these are channeled through institutions and have practical implications. The meta-narrative itself has never developed in a straight functional line, but, as indicated by Malia[39] and Foglesong[40], in cyclical movements of indifference-engagement-disengagement. Naturally, as befits a pluralist and democratic public opinion, the meta-narrative has never been uncontested; neither is it unanimously shared across the board by all. However, the fact that some academics or politicians (such as Colin Powell) may not “tell” this super-story does not invalidate its impact. As concerns Western policy and opinion making, the democratization meta-narrative has maintained itself as the towering intellectual framework for discoursing historical and current relations between Russia and the West. The evidence generated by the South Ossetia crisis broadly confirms this premise. Practically none of the area studies experts, think-tankers or public intellectuals usually at the frontline of Russia watching – and this concerns in particular the US and the UK – came forward to emit early warning signals, challenge the August consensus, and thereby take the wind out of the most serious crisis in Russian-Western relations since the end of the Cold War.[41]

2. Freedom and democratization

The presence of a Western super-story emerges from an analysis of engagement with post-Soviet Russia. Stephen Cohen sustains that the Western narrative of the Russian 1990s was that of a purported clash between “liberals” or “democrats” (supported by the West) and “reform opponents” (lumped together with neo-Soviet “reactionaries”). “Democratization” was its central tenet. According to this narrative, President Yeltsin’s liberal policies as well as the efforts of Western governments, NGOs and international organizations were motivated by a concern for “promoting freedom”. [42] When Vladimir Putin arrived at the helm of the Russian state in 2000, his succession was at first hailed as the continuation of the “democratic legacy” of his predecessor. In the aftermath of 9/11 Russia became, to all practical intents, a US coalition partner. Western opinion then operated a U-turn toward the end of Putin’s first

term. This U-turn entailed re-casting Putin's rule as the return of the "Old Guard", in the guise of the security service personnel. The standard rationalization for doing so was Putin's "clampdown" on democracy at home and "freedom" beyond Russia's borders, in addition to a more assertive foreign policy that now started to clash with Anglo-American interests. The latter reorientation was notable in Moscow's decision to join a temporary opportunistic alliance (with Paris and Berlin), that opposed the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Finally, the "Colour Revolutions" were cast as the point-of-no-return in relations between Putin's Russia and the Anglo-Americans.

The decriers of this narrative have tended to insist on the continuity between the Yeltsin and Putin presidencies. They have stressed the cronyism and illiberal seeds of managed democracy of the Yeltsin years, and they have criticized the framing of the Russian 1990s, as a clash between "democrats" and "reactionaries", as a reductionist caricature. These same critics date the principal watershed in relations to the failure of Anglo-American energy interests in Russia. This failure became apparent through the YUKOS affair, which unfolded from 2003.[43] The period that followed witnessed the massive redeployment of the dormant intellectual arsenal of the Cold War, in infrequent use since 1991. This was relatively easy to accomplish: the two decades since the fall of the Iron curtain counted for little compared to the eighty years of walling between Russia and the West, which had preceded them and which had erased all prior historical memory. Cold War filters were the only thing to fall back onto in the event of a cooling of relations. At the same time, the new framing reflected the need for strategic narratives (Freedman, 2006), to underpin NATO and EU enlargement.

The democratization framing has continued into the present decade, with Richard Sakwa describing the current politological debate on the Russian transition as two opposing narratives, "failed democratization", on the one hand, and "democratic evolutionism", on the other.[44] The most powerful narrative strain within the failed democratization school is the "New Cold War". This came into its own in the mid-2000s, nurtured by the Colour Revolutions, the unexplained deaths and assassinations of prominent journalists, lawyers or Kremlin opponents, and the cyber attacks in the wake of the Estonian War of Monuments (to name but a few such incidents). These events, in turn, fed a string of polemical publications and public debates. Far from being simply the handiwork of media pundits and think-tankers, academics often joined the ranks: Norman Davies, a historian with a masterpiece of competing narratives to his credit, *Microcosm: Portrait of a Central European City* (2003), was not immune to the one-dimensional charms of Edward Lucas' polemic *The New Cold War* (2008), for which he drafted the foreword. The New Cold War strain first peaked during the 2006 Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute. Dominated by a Manichean political reading, hardly a word was lost in the public debate on the murky financial shenanigans of intermediaries, such as RusUkrEnergo, and the vested interests of transnational energy mafias skimming value from differential pricing between Central Asia, Russia, Ukraine and Europe.[45] EU condemnation of Gazprom (and Russia) added significantly to the media flak and virtually drowned out dissenting voices.[46] The pinnacle was reached during the Georgian war of August 2008, built up by a majority of Western opinion-makers as an example of neo-imperial muscle-flexing, and a foretaste of things to come. The West, it was suggested, had better find ways of checking an increasingly assertive and aggressive Russia, capable of projecting power once more beyond her national boundaries.[47]

3. Missionary cycles and Orientalist framing

What are the exact underpinnings of a meta-narrative that frames Western engagement with Russia in terms of freedom and democratization? An important part derives from European attempts to position the country as its "Other", a status the country shares with that other classical Orient, Islam and the Arab world. Iver Neumann reminds us that current European-Russian relations are colored by past representations of Russia as Europe's Other, and that these stretch over at least half a millennium.[48] One cognitive habit resulting from this disposition has been to attribute the considerable oscillations in the Western appreciation of Russia to Russian action alone. Martin Malia infers this type of Othering, by pointing to the cyclical nature of Russia's relations with the West since Peter I. According to Malia the variation in the oscillating Western appreciation of Russia, especially in the nineteenth century, had less to do with Russian social reality than with the deep mutations that Western society itself was undergoing. Russia served as a foil for European intellectual development, and at the same time as the "dark double".[49]

A similar cognitive pattern emerges from David Foglesong's anatomy of the last one hundred years in US-Russian (and Soviet) relations.[50] In fact, the self-assumed US (and Western) prerogative to "meddle" in Russian affairs

underpins a “missionary cycle” of engagement. In the late nineteenth century the prerogative itself was premised on narratives of the inferiority of Tsarist Russia and the Orthodox Church as systems of political, social and religious organization – a variation on “white man’s burden” imparting the United States with a moral obligation to support revolutionary and democratic change. However, when the long-awaited change materialized in 1917, Americans were handicapped by their slanted representations. A combination of Jeffersonian model and Whig interpretation of history led to false assumptions on the reach of Russian “democrats” and overblown trust in “people power”. Demanding that Russia remain in the war effort against Germany, they disregarded genuine popular aspirations for peace and the fact that the people were easy prey to demagoguery. To rising Bolshevik popularity, the US “missionaries” reacted with irritated disbelief. Newly raised false expectations – that Russian democracy would prevail over the “usurpers” in the Civil War – were soon followed by disappointment and, eventually, disengagement. At this point the emancipatory edifice of the mission collapsed into an essentialist discourse of Russian cultural incompatibility with democracy and Western values. It was then abandoned, to be picked up by new sets of missionaries willing to recommence the cycle later.[51] While this US mission continued throughout the life-span of the Soviet Union, it resumed in earnest in the wake of Perestroika. Paralleling the situation before the Revolution, the old type of missionary thinking re-emerged, this time in the form of overblown expectations in the democratic reform credentials of the post-Soviet elites. It was also present in the persistence of relativistic and paternalistic arguments according to which Westerners knew what was best for Russia.[52]

Foglesong’s description of American paternalism shares some affinity with European representations of Russia, as studied by Iver Neumann. Whereas the American trope was the “mission”, its Western alter ego cultivated a metaphor of Russia as an “irregularity”, “perpetually [...] in [...] transition to Europeanization.” The overriding image, in operation since the Early Modern Age, was that of the “barbarian at the gate”; a barbarian who, at most times, had only just been “tamed” and “civilized”, and was now ready “to participate in European politics”. This status was associated with the topos of Russia as the eternal apprentice, learner or pupil: a successful or misguided one (the dominant and alternative versions of the Enlightenment); “a laggard who should learn but refuses to do so” (the nineteenth century version), “a truant” (the twentieth century version), the “gifted but somewhat pigheaded one” (the version of the 1990s).[53]

The motherboard of the current Western meta-narrative of Russia – Martin Malia refers to it as the “prototype of black literature”[54] on Russia – is Adolphe de Custine’s *Russia in 1839*. [55] In that year de Custine, a French anti-revolutionary and legitimist aristocrat travels to Russia, in the hope of discovering a form of political organization superior to the 1830 July monarchy, which he opposes. De Custine is rapidly disappointed by what he finds there and it does not take long before the cultural reflexes of the sophisticated Frenchman that he is lead him down the path of the outright rejection of all things Russian. The result of this struggle is the perhaps classic grand narrative of Russian “tragic failure”; premised on a rationalistic interpretation of “unfettered despotism”, which itself is nurtured by an “eternal” and “immutable” Russia.

De Custine was not the first, nor was he the last Russia watcher communicating his ideas to a wider audience.[56] What makes his travelogue stand out from the crowd is the influence it exerted during his life-time, as well as the astonishing second lease of life it was given during the Cold War.[57] De Custine’s key motif, the enduring meme of an essentialist Russia, rendered enigmatic by its idiosyncratic “system” inspired George F. Kennan’s *The Sources of Soviet Conduct* (1947).[58] Kennan was not alone in his appreciation of the text. In 1951 a US ambassador qualified it as “(p)enetrating and timeless [...] the best work so far produced about the Soviet Union” (sic!); and “a great help in [...] unraveling the mysteries of Russia”.[59]

Three decades on Zbigniew Brzezinski would argue that “(n)o Sovietologist has done better than this.”[60] This “star status” is partly owed to the fact that the text catered, and continues to cater, to enduring representations of Russia. The other part of its attraction is based on its merit, as it constituted one of the first genuine attempts at providing a “thick” account of Russia through Western eyes. In this regard de Custine’s ways were similar to those of his contemporary Alexis de Toqueville in the New World. What de Custine lacked, however, was the scientific approach of his countryman.[61] His method, which has a tendency to tailor evidence to suit preconceived ideas, is no match for the dilemmatic environment of Russia, and the coping mechanism that any solution would have to entail. One can apprehend this feebleness in de Custine’s remarks on “republicanism”, of which he is a staunch supporter. The term, as used by de Custine, denotes a political system where a preponderant role in decision making is allocated to the aristocracy, on the model of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. Naturally, he must therefore agree with the

opinion of a Russian nobleman he meets early into his journey, who claims that all Russia's ills are down to the emasculation of the Russian aristocracy (Custine, 1843, 110-112). The greatest weakness of the argument, however, is that de Custine bestows upon his Russian "images" a self-referential, straightforward and totalist meaning that these do not have. Thus, he takes the various trappings of autocracy at face value, deluding himself into considering the Tsar personally responsible for all that is happening in his realm.[62] Related to this is the confusion of the image of omniscience and omnipotence of the Russian state, and its political and administrative expression in hyper-centralization and hypertrophy, with the reality of an often ineffective power vertical.[63] De Custine also has no time for the manifest incongruities in the exercise of power, such as the contradiction between sharp rhetoric and laxist practice. Yet the perceived ruthlessness and harshness of a regime is a function of its varying degrees of weakness.[64] Finally, de Custine sets the pattern for the simplification of the dilemmas of reforming autocracy: how to devolve without, at the same time, opening the floodgates of anarchy? He has no answer for the dilemma of Tsar Nicholas I, entrapped in a double bind between the need to "catch up", in order to maintain Russia's place in the world, and the dislocation of modernization.[65] What renders the confusion of image and reality truly problematic is the lack of scholarly balance. While de Custine remains open to heterogeneous, conflicting and plurivalent evidence during his material collection effort, he later skips genuine synthesization in favour of a skewered and one-sided rationalization of Russia. On other occasions, for example when he shows his ignorance of the palpable rumblings at the Russian grassroots or of the impact of Pushkin, he is simply "out of the loop".[66]

Many Custinian memes smack of outright Orientalism. According to Edward Said, Orientalism functions as a discursive practice that has informed the mental models of key cultural, scientific and political figures in the West since the nineteenth century. It relies on representations of incapability, intellectual sterility and aversion to change that are attributed to Orientals. Applying this framework to the Western relationship with Russia and casting Russia as the object of the Orientalist gaze is not entirely straightforward; for Russia was also "mimicking" the West, by cultivating a home-grown brand of Orientalism in her own empire.[67] And this imperial past could be thought to disqualify Russia. On the other hand, Russia's hybrid Eurasian identity made her own version of Orientalism less noxious in terms of Othering than that of her Western counterparts.[68] Also it never was Said's intention to devise a hierarchy of victimhood that would disqualify certain groups from appealing to his method. In his 1995 afterword to *Orientalism* he says that he is not there to "defend Islam".[69] Had he wished to devise such a hierarchy, then this would have automatically amounted to excluding former "colonizers" or Empire builders, such as Arab and Islamic civilization. Russian representations of Poland, Ukraine, the Caucasus or Central Asia are therefore as deserving of examination under the critical eye of post-colonialism, as are French, English or American representations of Russia. This view is bolstered by Larry Wolff's magisterial *Inventing Eastern Europe* (1994) and Maria Todorova's equally brilliant *Imaging the Balkans* (1997). While Wolff concedes that "Eastern Europe never attained the definitive otherness of the Orient"[70], there is no doubt that the amount of othering was substantial. In the end Western attitudes to Russia had more in common with Balkanism, in as far as the latter could be distinguished from outright Orientalism on a number of counts (such as the fact that the Balkans are concrete, whereas the Orient is an amorphous concept).[71]

The analogies re-emerge, however, when we consider the epistemological foundations of Said's critique of Orientalism: "insufficient regard towards framing within a phenomenological search of social reality"; "absence of open-ended, tolerant and flexible discourse of multiplicity"; and "subordination of Othering to Western logics that display a deep ambivalence or uneasiness about the subject under enquiry".[72] While classical Orientalist representations may be hard to maintain in the face of the Russian ability to "bounce back", Western engagement with Russia (and the Soviet Union) has often had essentialist, patronising and proto-imperialist underpinnings.[73] What one therefore finds in abundance is a minimization of historical merit. Traces of such framing can be pursued into the work of many mainstream historians who neglect the all-decisive Russian contributions to the demise of a Napoleon or Hitler.[74] In a review of Dominic Lieven's *Russia against Napoleon* (2010), Mark Mazower deplores the blanking out of "Private Ivan" by Hollywood and the erasure in Western historical memory of the Soviet 1944 summer offensive (Operation Bagration) by the Normandy landings (Operation Overlord).[75] The inevitable result of these blind spots is that no space exists in Western representations for casting the Red Army soldier in a role commensurate to his historical merit.[76] Although the latter realized the lion's share in ridding Europe of Nazism, contemporary European accounts are more likely to cast him in the role of yet another "occupier" than of "liberator".[77]

4. Patrimonial matrix and path dependency

Custinian motifs still set the tone among Western policy-makers, think-tankers, media and academics. Its features appear in geopolitical and path dependency models, or throughout the dominating international relations paradigms, realism and liberalism.

Custine's most influential twentieth century epigone is Richard Pipes, the historian who developed the peculiar model of Muscovite patrimonialism as the matrix for Russian historical development.[78] At first sight the idea of probing the continuity between Imperial, Communist and post-Communist Russia is an attractive one. Patrimonialism is a concept loaned from Weberian theory, where it refers to a system uniting economic and political power in one single authority and which results in severely contested notions of property and property rights. In Pipes' interpretation Russian patrimonialism is founded on the Custinian notion of a particularly unassailable, unfettered and unmitigated form of despotism that is to have reached its apogee during the reign of Tsar Peter I. The reform era from the reign of Catherine the Great until 1917 is interpreted as a failure to "break out" from patrimonialism, and the establishment of the Soviet Union as the full return to the original Muscovite matrix, and a "second serfdom".[79] The "full patrimonial return" argument interpreted October (and the ensuing Sovietism) as an authentic emanation of "eternal Russia". It apprehended a path dependency in this fulfillment of a program of Russian historical development – in a way more typical of Russia than the preceding two centuries of constitutionalist effort.

Seemingly straightforward and plausible, Pipesian patrimonialism has several serious flaws.[80] His assertion that a Russian autocratic ruler need submit to nothing and nobody seriously piqued fellow historians. These argued that Muscovite autocracy was absolute only in rhetoric, while in practice it had to reconcile and accommodate powerful elite interests. The Harvard School popularized the idea of a political system run by a "clan-based elite", with a "figure-head tsar" at the top.[81] Rather than simply lording it over his subjects, the tsars had a consensus-building task on which they were assessed by their subjects.[82] One good example of how partisan interests could prevail over autocratic control is serfdom, introduced at the behest of the Russian aristocracy.[83] In another significant departure from Pipes, Geoffrey Hosking relies on a "patron-client relations" framework rather than "autocratic patrimonialism"[84] as a way of approaching Russian historical development. In this reading the role of Russian leaders was not to lord it over their "slave subjects", but to adjudicate conflicts of interest between often very self-assertive and self-assured client networks. Hosking also contests Pipes' initial assumption of the Western path as the only feasible path to modernization. [85] Hosking calls Russia a case of "archaizing modernization": state-imposed modernization, along the lines of Western blueprints, eliminated authentic institutions and practices that might actually have allowed Russian society and state to develop more benign forms.[86]

This debate on the nature of Russian political culture is far from settled, but, on balance, the evidence is starting to weigh against Custinian despotism and Pipesian patrimonialism. The path dependency argument is equally contestable as patrimonialism. Departing from the truism that Russia is burdened by its history, it is, first of all, teleological. Pipes' perspective of history argues contemporary Russia backwards, with the benefit of hindsight, and from the vantage point of Cold War confrontation. It is compounded by the patronising Orientalist argument of a "divergent" path, a reference to the Russian adoption of Orthodoxy and Byzantine Caesaropapism, and the caesura of Mongol rule. By cutting off Russia from Europe influences, most notably Roman law, both are supposed to have set a precedent for the future development of the Russian state and society. The tradition is supposed to have continued under Ivan the Terrible, when the latter crushed the only polity capable of providing an alternative democratic template for Russian development, the city-state of Novgorod. This argument, also known as the "deprivation hypothesis", has never convinced entirely. Many noted historians, such as Carsten Goehrke, discount the impact of the Mongols and of Ivan. Instead Goehrke allows for only four critical junctures in Russian history, all associated with personalities rather than structure: Vladimir I, Alexander II, Lenin, and Gorbachev.[87] This points to the key problem with path dependency, the issue of "contingency". Both notions are mutually self-exclusive; in order to apply, path dependency must trump contingency.[88] The crux lies in knowing whether key historiographical battlegrounds, such as 1917 and the ascent of Soviet power, or Perestroika and 1991, were more contingency or continuity. It can be no surprise, therefore, that tenants of path dependency seek to minimize contingency. Pipes himself argued that October 1917 was hardly perceptible, and that Bolshevism was more continuity than rupture, as a prerequisite for arguing a path dependency – Sovietism's full return to the Muscovite fold.[89]

Despite a certain number of incongruities, such as the downplaying of agency, or the fact that there was no equivalent in Imperial Russia to the brutality of Cheka terror or the level of control practiced within Soviet Russia, it was possible to pull off a path dependency argument of this type at the height of the Cold War. This context favoured “pessimists” arguing the inevitability of radical revolution, founded on Russia’s inability to reform. They held the upper hand over “optimists” arguing that pre-1914 Russia was making progress, and that only the severe dislocation caused by the revolutionary nature of the First World War derailed the process.[90] This downplaying of the immediate impact of the First World War on European societies is a product of the 1960s German *Sonderweg* controversy. Up until then the First World War had always been referred to as the “Great War”, but thence it became fashionable to point to Braudelian structuralism to explain the twentieth century as a spiral of escalating violence. The idea that contingency might have played a role in all of this was anathema, just as *histoire événementielle* became a byword for sloppy and suspicious scholarship. A particularly salient role was played by the Holocaust, which only now began to dawn on Europeans in all its monstrosity. This eclipse of the drama of the First World War by the trauma of the Second World War impeded any suggestions that mass violence and genocide may have been the result of an earlier *Zivilisationsbruch* (rupture in civilization) that commenced in the trenches.[91]

5. 1917 – Contingency of continuity?

While it is only fair to say that there probably is no definitive answer to the question of continuity or contingency between Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union, recent historical work has done anything but minimize the contingent impact of the First World War (indicatively Stevenson, 2004). One typical example states unequivocally that the “First World War led to the downfall of Tsarism” (Smith, 2002), and a majority of scholars insists that the Bolshevik putsch was a more close-run, contingency-driven operation than previously thought. The narrative of “a structural catastrophe waiting to happen” therefore looks increasingly untenable (Carrère d’Encausse, 1996; Lieven, 1996; Mulligan, 2010). This is a mirror image of the thoughts of the arguably most lucid and clairvoyant observer of 1917, Lenin himself. Lenin realized that the historical contingency opening itself up in that year was *unique* (and would perhaps not repeat itself again). He was only too aware that the principal attraction of his political proposition was based on a contingency itself, the fact that a weak provisional government remained dedicated to the war effort against the Central Powers, but that the majority of the people wished for peace. Throughout 1917 he also apprehended that the conditions favourable to a radical Bolshevik take-over were volatile and could change direction overnight. It is with this in mind that he whipped his party into action, often against considerable resistance from the rank-and-file (Carrère d’Encausse, 1996). During the first months of the Revolution practically nobody had even considered that the Bolsheviks would prevail. If this denouement materialized, in the face of overwhelming odds, then this was not the result of path dependency, but of a unique combination of contingent and non-contingent factors: Lenin’s superior tactical skills and keen sense of timing, the weakness of liberalism, and a drawn-out and bitter civil war whose outcome, again, was *not* decided in advance.

The argument that Russia was rife for radical revolution is further relativized by the fact that all belligerents were shaken to their core by the revolutionary genie during or after the Great War. How powerful a contingency revolution and civic strife were is attested by the fact that it concerned both victors and vanquished.[92] One “new historian” is adamant in writing that the First World War was “the cause, catalyst and accelerator of revolutionary change on an unprecedented scale”. [93] Significantly, Russian civilian and military morale did not collapse after the initial disaster at Tannenberg, in late 1914. Russia was also able to withstand the strain and fight a modern war, even mounting an offensive in summer 1916 that turned the Austro-Hungarian army into a spent force – albeit at the cost of self-exhaustion.[94] As Norman Stone writes the problem was not one of war production, but of organization and management.[95] Had the war been shorter, or less totalising, then the collapse of late 1916 would have not materialized.

George F. Kennan once described the First World War as “the great seminal catastrophe of this century”[96], a view bolstered by Hobsbawm’s linkage of the First World War and later catastrophes. The latter also characterized 1917-1991 as a “century of massacres”[97], and this radical repositioning reverberates in the work of younger scholars.[98] Thus, even though the intellectual seeds lay in the period before 1914, Fascism and Communism were not exclusively endogenous to German, Italian or Russian political and social culture, but also bore an exogenous link to the radicalization, brutalization and de-civilising experience of the First World War.[99] In Russia, the horrors of the Great War were compounded by the savage escalation of the Civil War, which made Communism into what it was to become eventually; no wonder then that many historians treat the period as a Seven Years’ War.[100]

An early advocate of the First World War as the original rupture in civilization was the philosopher Ernst Bloch. According to Bloch the mass slaughter in the trenches gave a glimpse of what was to follow two decades later. Being exposed to extermination brutalized individuals and provided a breeding ground for anti-Semitic agitation. Bloch also saw the reverberations of the Great War in the threats of mutual destruction during the Cold War.[101] This barbarization case is stated even more explicitly in Omer Bartov's *Murder in our midst* (1996).[102] In Bartov's view the Holocaust is the perfection of the concept of "total war" that first emerged during the First World War. Total war replaced the notions of heroism and chivalry still present in nineteenth century military culture with notions of systematic mechanized and technologized enemy annihilation. The war created a new elite with a new moral code for whom "industrial killing", a killing that protected the executors and had to be perfectly lethal for the victims, became a duty.[103]

These new contributions reinforce a periodization of the two World Wars and the interwar period (1914-1945) as a Second Thirty Years War or a European Civil War[104], with some even arguing that this conflict continued to simmer until 1991, and beyond.[105] The role of the First World War in all this was that of a critical juncture, a "black swan event"[106] that threw Russia off her trajectory and onto a course more radical than would have materialized otherwise.[107] This has important implications: if 1991 characterizes the end of a parenthesis that started with 1917, then the conditioning of the current perspective by the sole experience of this "short twentieth century" is a highly problematic extrapolation. In order to "understand" present-day Russia one must disconnect from the bias induced by an over-focus on the seventy years of Sovietism and re-connect to Russia and relations between Russia and the West prior to 1914. Neither should too many conclusions be drawn from the experience of the last twenty years of transition. Decontextualized, both periods – Sovietism and Transition – are unrepresentative and misleading.

In the light of two recent contributions on the flowering of the Russian arts, culture and business that climaxed in the last pre-war year of 1913 (also called "the Silver Age"), one may indeed ask what alternative futures Russia could have had, but for the cataclysm of war, revolution and civil war.[108] Has Russia now come full circle and returned to the "square one" of 1913? Is this the point where one globalization meets another? Such questions can only ever emerge from a "situational analysis"[109] or from an alternative history framework[110], both of which contextualize events and interaction, and profile the alternative paths along which history could have travelled. By contrast, deterministic, a-historical and static ex post facto retrospectives are more likely to reinforce the type of essentialism that underpin patrimonial path dependency arguments.

6. Narratives of economic transition as a Foucauldian practice of power

The debate on the economic transition of post-Soviet Russia is dominated by three narratives, all of which tally with the democratization super-story. First the neoliberal story-line, supported by foreign governments and international institutions in the 1990s, which embraces market orthodoxy. According to this narrative, "shock therapy" and market transition were a success, and have allowed Russia to become a "normal" middle income country.[111] This narrative held some sway until the early 2000s, but has since collapsed under the weight of its internal contradictions. Second, there is the gradualist narrative which contests the previous one as wishful thinking, motivated by political considerations, and claims that the Russian transition was a failure. Shock therapy, macro-economic stabilization policies and privatization led to flawed institutions and predatory capitalism, and this could have been avoided through a more gradual approach to building a market economy. This failure is attributed to the crude application of the Washington consensus and the flaws in global institutions and in global governance. The champion of this group of economists is a Nobel prize winner and former chief economist of the World Bank, Joseph Stiglitz.[112] One particular target is neoclassical doctrine, with its Smithian economic man and invisible hand. These constructs were virtually absent in the post-Soviet context, where private interests routinely trumped (an undefined and indefinable) public interest, and where win-win orientation was viewed with suspicion, if not outright contempt. Gradualists therefore accused economists approaching their discipline as an exact science and urging – often with religious-like zeal – the universal applicability of economic "laws" as being "market Bolsheviks". The counter-argument to this stance is that time was of the essence. It was indispensable for reformers to rapidly create new realities on the ground in order to de-communize Russia.[113] This left no choice other than to encourage the emergence of a new class of stakeholders through market liberalization and the privatization of state assets. Gradualist policies risked getting caught up in technical minutiae and would not survive the inevitable political backlash, once reforms started to bite. All in all, opting for gradualism would have amounted to missing a unique

historical opportunity. Also, gradualists only focused on the method, but did not question the fundamentals, such as whether Russia was capable of accommodating democracy and market economy in the first place[114]; a typical error would be to insist on legislation gaps for the resolution of problems, but to not check whether the appropriate implementation environment exists). This criticism was taken on board by neo-institutionalists who argued that the divergences of neo-classical economists and gradualists were beside the point. They not only found that Russia lacked formal institutions to accommodate a market economy, but that she also lacked an understanding of the concepts and norms (informal institutions) that underpin the latter. Once Russia stabilized and grew after a decade of economic turmoil they would ask why this economic growth entailed a congruent growth in corruption, which countervails neoclassical theory. Was corruption a problem accessory to development that would disappear one day, or was this specific to Russia, and therefore the result of a particular historical experience?[115] Economists asking these types of questions drew on the considerable prestige of another Nobel Prize laureate, Douglass North, who pioneered new methods in order to understand economic change.[116] They could also rely on the previous work of venerated economic historian Alexander Gerschenkron on “catch up” economics.[117]

In principle, the sophisticated use of historical material improves significantly on the limitations of previous models whose time horizon does not extend beyond 1991 and whose historical grounding is limited to occasional references to the Soviet planned economy. Neo-institutionalists, such as Stefan Hedlund and Stephen Rosefielde, made attempts to promote precisely such an agenda.[118] They sustain an argument that Russian historical development is constrained by an institutional lock-in that leads to suboptimal economic performance, due to higher transaction costs. The path dependency is based on the patrimonial nature of a Russian state whose attempts to create a contract regime proved a failure and which therefore retained a predatory character throughout its history. This resulted in the misallocation of property rights, rent-seeking behavior, absence of rule of law, and corruption. A self-serving elite exploited every opportunity to privatize public resources and enrich itself, while it was equally impossible to put in place an honest and efficient state apparatus, to provide compulsion and collect revenues. Russian rulers responded to the situation with a particular behavioral pattern, by using their arbitrary discretion to allocate resources and justice to “buy the responsiveness of [economic] agents or to punish them”.[119] The other feature is the imposition, from above, of cycles of attempts to break out, in order to catch up with more competitive rivals.[120]

Hedlund and Rosefielde pick up the narrative thread where Pipes dropped it – the Communist regime – by characterising Yeltsin’s 1990s as a renewed attempt (and subsequent) failure to “break out”, and Putin as the (probable) new return to the original Muscovite matrix of patrimonial power. As a consequence, political and economic power has, once again, ended up in the hands of an autocrat (now called president), who enforces the loyalty of his “boyars” through carrot-and-stick: the redistribution of assets, and the combined threat of alienable property rights and selective punishment.[121] The main support mechanisms to achieve these political ends are repression and fear; but also a logic of rent-conceding (which replaces rent-seeking). This “program” is inherently instable. It compels Russian leaders to engineer frequent political “turnabouts” and “games”, to accommodate the shifting alliances of diverse stakeholder groups, and it alternates periods of crisis with periods of power reconsolidation. The unresolved issue of a peaceful leadership succession remains a threat to stability.[122]

Applied with moderation, an institutional approach of this type is certainly not without merits. However, this particular attempt collapses under the weight of an overweening ambition to determine the “double helix” of Russian political and economic development. The greatest flaw, in this respect, is the authors’ inability to seek a respectful distance from the Pipesian narrative of patrimonialism. By borrowing too extensively from Pipes they allow their own argument to be hijacked by the latter’s questionable assumptions. The analysis of Russian political and economic development in the exclusive light of a single and contested path dependency narrative, and the bestowing upon this historical interpretation of the label “objective”, betrays a troubling positivism. It also clashes head-on with the post-positivist postulate for multiple competing narratives, and with the general debatability of historical “facts”. The inevitable end result is a recast of Pipes and Gerschenkron, enriched by the added value of some economic jargon.[123] And as in the Pipesian precursor, the infeudation to the value categories of freedom and liberty provides an ideological undercurrent that muddies the scientific waters.

The question why Western economists rely on a narrative that has so many drawbacks is unavoidable. One answer is the focal position occupied by Pipes (and followers) in the Cold War and post-Cold War scientific establishment. Another is that path dependency economics bears all the characteristics of a Foucauldian truth regime: certain

narratives are selected as representations of truth; these are connected to knowledge-power discourses that are institutionalized and have effects as a practice of power.

Equally deplorable as the exaggerated positivism is the oversight of the impact of globalization. A burgeoning new research literature describes globalization as an unprecedentedly novel “transformation” and a complex process whose outcome cannot be anticipated.[124] This leaves room for contingency and new paths of development. How much manoeuvring space there still is in Russian politics emerges from Richard Sakwa’s poignant “dual state” approach.[125] This acknowledges that the current Russian regime is neither fully-fledged normativo-constitutional order nor entirely administrative informality, but a crossover of the two. A paradigm such as the dual state negotiates the fact that much of politics takes place in the interstices between both.[126] If we factor into this unpredictability Russia’s substantial involvement in the global economy (including a WTO membership), then any author debating Russia’s future direction must leave the door wide open to, at the very least, the potential of globalization impact.

A final critique of path dependency is that it misses the point; for the overemphasis on cultural and institutional factors has led to a neglect of the basic environmental factors that forge the former in the first place. Although many new histories of Russia stress the importance of these fundamentals, the discussion rarely goes beyond the commonplace of “geography matters”. [127] This is an important oversight.

The handful of exceptions that explore the impact of physical geography on economic development in earnest sustain an argument that the triple constraint of climate, distance and reliance on overland transport severely impacts Russian costs of production; in a way that even many raw materials extractions in Russia are not profitable under free market conditions.[128] The current raw materials bonanza is not sustainable, as the sources of supply went on-stream during the Soviet period, when investment was not an issue. Current-day Russia is living off this substance: once the supply dries up, the shortfall may not be replaced, as the prohibitive start-up investments required for new development projects make these uncompetitive under market conditions. This has important implications. If the Western meta-narrative ended the story with the platitude that Russia is handicapped by her history (culture), then in a revised geopolitical reading history emerges as a mere function of geography. For Russia to be sustainable at all, it must grow organically, clustering in pockets of prosperity and excellence; first, however, it needs to contract, and this includes the de-urbanization of parts of Siberia where human settlement is unsustainable.[129] What is at stake here is the liberal assumption that free market economics are universally applicable, regardless of context. As we have seen, where illiberal geography prevents the invisible hand of the private market from allocating, someone or something else must intervene to provide the wherewithal. Liberalism may then be something a downsized Russia could live with quite well. However, the structurally distorted and unsustainable Russia of today will find a greater need for the very visible hand of the state. The catch (or tragedy) is that this contention holds *despite* the massive levels of predation by Russian bureaucrats; the medicine is part of the rather intractable problem.

Conclusion

This article gives some indication as to the role of cognitive framing (narratives) in shaping the practice of East-West engagement. It defines the Western meta-narrative of relations with Russia since the nineteenth century as a super-story of engagement that is driven by the ideological notions of liberty, freedom and, recently, democratization. This meta-narrative has alternated between, on the one hand, a quixotic Orientalist search for a Russian civilizational “black box” and, on the other, missionary visions oscillating between a determination to recreate Russia in the Western image and claims of essentialist incompatibility. During the Cold War era these memes were enriched by the new scientific narratives of “path dependency” and “patrimonialism”. The New Cold War strain is a recent addition to the meta-narrative. It insists on Russia’s obligation to “come clean” on a number of issues considered critical, such as human rights and civic rights, before being admitted to the “club” of full members of the Western community of destiny. This Western meta-narrative is now redundant. Not only does it downgrade the importance of environmental and geopolitical factors, but it also trivializes the present situation, framing the latter within a reductionist dichotomy of democracy and despotism. Yet, the current deadlock of Russian society points to a profounder dilemma, which is itself the result of geographic destiny and historical development: while Russia needs change, too much change – and nobody knows where the breaking point is – may lead to the disintegration of Russia (witness the 1990s). To understand the mainstay of this dilemma one requires an alternative meta-narrative. This exists within the debate on the impact of physical geography on economic and political

development, and the geopolitical dilemma of liberal economics and illiberal democracy.[130] A corollary is to replace the patrimonialist gaze with a more adequate focus on patron-client relations.[131] A progressive agenda must recognize Russia as a radical category defier. This involves abandoning the centuries-old attempt, in both Russia and the West, to fit Russia within spatial dichotomies of East-West or Europe-Asia.[132] Instead one might opt for altogether more timely frameworks, such as Ingold's thesis of culture transfer via imitation, appropriation and redefinition.[133] Ideally, we should heed Wittgenstein's counsel that "whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent". And wherever the stakes are too high to allow us an escape from tackling Russia, we would do good to tread in the knowledge that whatever we do or say may be derived from centuries of framing.

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[10] The New Cold War narrative is widespread, with entire issues of academic journals dedicated to this, s. *Outre-Terre: Revue française de géopolitique*, 19, 2008; Edward Lucas' *The New Cold War: How the Kremlin Menaces Both Russia and the West* (London: Bloomsbury, 2008) became an instant "classic", topping bestseller lists and being translated into several languages, including Russian.

[11] Tsygankov, *Russophobia*, 53-58.

[12] Andreas Umland, "Review of Russophobia: Anti-Russian Lobby and American Foreign Policy (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), by Andrei P. Tsygankov," *Europe-Asia Studies* 62 (2010), 853-854.

[13] Martin Malia, *Russia under Western Eyes – from the Bronze Horseman to the Lenin Mausoleum* (Cambridge MA & London: Belknap, 1999).

- [14] Felix P. Ingold, *Die Faszination des Fremden: eine andere Kulturgeschichte Russlands* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2009).
- [15] Jacques Sapir, "La guerre d'Ossétie du Sud : 1 – Qui a piégé qui ?," (Paris: Institut de Relations Internationales et Stratégiques IRIS, 2008).
- [16] "Interview with Seamus Milne, of The Guardian," *Russia Today*, 15 August 2008, <http://rt.com/politics/interview-with-seamus-milne/> (accessed 25 March 2013).
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- [30] Barthes, as cited in Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2003), 273.
- [31] Friedrich Heinemann, and Eckhard Janeba, “The Globalization of Tax Policy: What German Politicians Believe,” in *Discussion Paper 07-057*, Mannheim University, Centre for European Economic Research, 2007.
- [32] The issue here is Alexandr Filippov’s *Noveishaya istoriya rossii 1945 – 2006 gg – Kniga dlya utchitelya*, s. Nikita Sokolov, “Poutine, Professeur d’histoire,” *Books 3* (2009), 40-42.
- [33] Progress, and in particular “material progress”, takes pride of place in contemporary meta-narratives and underpins Western sense of purpose (together with a more muted meta-narrative of hegemony), s. Patrick O’Brien, “The Deconstruction of Myths and Reconstruction of Metanarratives in Global histories of Material Progress,” In Benedikt Stuchtey, and Eckhardt Fuchs, eds., *Writing World History, 1800-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 67-90.
- [34] Konrad Jarausch, and Manfred Sabrow, „‘Meistererzählung’ – Zur Karriere eines Begriffs“, in Jarausch & Sabrow, *Die Historische Meistererzählung*, 16.
- [35] Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1973).
- [36] For a criticism of White, s. Keith Windschuttle, *The Killing of History: How a Discipline Is Being Murdered by Literary Critics and Social Theorists* (Paddington: Macleay, 1996), 227-251.
- [37] Konrad Jarausch, and Manfred Sabrow, „‘Meistererzählung’ – Zur Karriere eines Begriffs“, in Jarausch & Sabrow, *Die Historische Meistererzählung*, 9-32.
- [38] Steve Ellis, “Revisionismus,” in Joachim Eibach, and Günther Lottes, eds., *Kompass der Geschichtswissenschaft* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 342-354; Jarausch, „Die Krise der nationalen Meistererzählungen“, in Jarausch & Sabrow, *Die Historische Meistererzählung*, 140-162. An application of these principles to the regional context is the transversal reading of Central European history in Norman Davies and Roger Moorhouse, *Microcosm: Portrait of a Central European City* (London: Pimlico, 2003); Richard Sakwa’s contribution on the dual state in Russia responds to the same need for competing narratives, Richard Sakwa, “The Dual State in Russia,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 26 (2010), 185-206.
- [39] Martin Malia, *Russia under Western Eyes – from the Bronze Horseman to the Lenin Mausoleum* (Cambridge MA & London: Belknap, 1999).
- [40] David Foglesong, *The American Mission and the Evil Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
- [41] Comparatively, media discourse in France and Germany, to take an example, was more dissonant; Jean Radvanyi drew attention to the geopolitical context, ruling out that Washington could have been unaware of the Georgian move, s. “Jean Radvanyi revient sur l’intervention en Géorgie,” *Télérama*, 20 August 2008, <http://www.telerama.fr/monde/a-quoi-jouent-les-americains-en-georgie,32606.php> (accessed 10 October 2013); also Klaus Segbers, “Osteuropa-Experte Segbers zum Georgien-Krieg ‘Saakaschwili hat sich verkalkuliert’,” *Der Spiegel*, 11 August 2008, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/osteuropa-experte-segbers-zum-georgien-krieg-saakaschwili-hat-sich-verkalkuliert-a-571256.html> (accessed 10 October 2013); an outright, point-by-point refutation of the Georgian story-line was provided by Jacques Sapir, as early as the beginning of September 2008, s. Jacques Sapir, “La guerre d’Ossétie du Sud : 2 – Une sale petite guerre,” (Paris: Institut de Relations Internationales et Stratégiques IRIS, 2008); Jacques Sapir, “La guerre d’Ossétie du Sud : 1 – Qui a piégé qui ?,” (Paris: Institut de Relations Internationales et Stratégiques IRIS, 2008).

- [42] Stephen Cohen, *Failed Crusade: America and the Tragedy of Post-Communist Russia* (New York: Norton, 2001), 5-20.
- [43] Jean-Robert Raviot, "Moscou et la question démocratique: mythes et réalités de la 'nouvelle guerre froide'," *Hérodote – Revue de géographie et de géopolitique* 129 (2008), 193-209 ; Richard Sakwa, *The Quality of Freedom: Khodorkovsky, Putin and the Yukos Affair* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) ; Tsygankov, *Russophobia*.
- [44] Richard Sakwa, "Two Camps? The Struggle to Understand Contemporary Russia," *Comparative Politics* 40 (2008), 481-499.
- [45] "It's a Gas. Funny Business in the Turkmen-Ukraine Gas Trade," *Global Witness*, 2006, <http://www.globalwitness.org/library/its-gas-funny-business-turkmen-ukraine-gas-trade> (accessed 10 October 2012).
- [46] Philip Hanson, one of the foremost experts on the Russian economy, stated that the Kremlin's willingness to manipulate gas deliveries as a tool of political blackmail toward the EU had been exaggerated, and that the dent in Russian-European relations was collateral damage from a commercial dispute between Russia and Ukraine, Phil Hanson, 2008, "Russia and Europe Are Doomed to Cooperate," in *Russia in Global Affairs*, <http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/numbers/22/1179.html> (accessed 17 May 2011).
- [47] Indicatively, Ronald Asmus, *A Little War That Shook the World: Georgia, Russia, and the Future of the West* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
- [48] Iver Neumann, *Uses of the other: the East in European Identity Formation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).
- [49] Malia, *Russia under Western Eyes*.
- [50] David Foglesong, *The American Mission and the Evil Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
- [51] Foglesong, *The American Mission*, 35.
- [52] Allen C. Lynch, *How Russia Is Not Ruled: Reflections on Russian Political Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
- [53] Neumann, *Uses of the other*, 110-111.
- [54] Malia, *Russia under Western Eyes*, 95.
- [55] Adolphe de Custine, *La Russie en 1839* [1843], (new edition, Arles: Actes Sud, 2005).
- [56] Good surveys of this output are Marshall Poe, *'A People Born to Slavery': Russia in Early Modern European Ethnography 1476-1748* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000) and Neumann, *Uses of the Other*.
- [57] Figes describes *Russia in 1839* as "(t)he most popular work of any foreigner on Russia prior to the Crimean War", which "did more than any other publication to shape attitudes", Orlando Figes, *Crimea: The Last Crusade* (London: Allen Lane, 2010), 86-88; s. also Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 365.
- [58] Carrère d'Encausse, "Preface," in de Custine, *La Russie en 1839*, 10 ; Foglesong, *The American Mission*, 112-113.
- [59] Gen. Walter B. Smith, as quoted in Wolff, *Inventing*, 365.
- [60] Ibid.
- [61] De Custine has been heavily criticized in the literature, s. Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, "Preface," in Adolphe de Custine, *La Russie en 1839* [1843], Arles: Actes Sud, 2005); Figes, *Crimea*; Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*.
- [62] Figes and Pipes are very Custinian in their remarks on Tsar Nicholas II, s. Orlando Figes, *A People's Tragedy: The Russian Revolution: 1891-1924* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1998), 810; Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Old*

Regime (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1974), 55; this is also reflected in George F. Kennan's remarks that Nicholas would have made a good constitutional monarch, but was no good in the role of the absolute ruler he wanted to be, s. George F. Kennan, *The Decline of Bismarck's European Order: Franco-Russian Relations 1875-1890* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 1-15. Nicholas' biographers have been kinder, detailing what a thankless task the last tsar had inherited, s. Dominic Lieven, *Nicholas II: Twilight of the Empire* (London: St. Martin's Griffin, 1996); H el ene Carr ere d'Encausse, *Nicolas II – La transition interrompue* (Paris Fayard, 1996). In leading Russia into the twentieth century many an abler man would have been out of his depths.

[63] Historians remind us that well into the nineteenth century Russia was under-administrated, Charles J. Halperin, "Muscovy as a Hypertrophic State: A Critique," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 3 (2002), 505; Carr ere d'Encausse, "Preface," in de Custine, *La Russie en 1839*, 16); the tradition of weak administration continues until today, Marie Mendras, *Russian Politics. The Paradox of a Weak State* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

[64] Examples of how this disposition translated into practice are the relatively lenient treatment of nineteenth century professional revolutionaries, Tsarism's most dangerous and determined enemies, or the provisional government's haphazard approach to Lenin, in 1917, s. H el ene Carr ere d'Encausse, *L enine* (Paris: Fayard, 1998).

[65] Malia, *Russia under Western Eyes*, 142.

[66] Carr ere d'Encausse, "Preface," in de Custine, *La Russie en 1839*. George F. Kennan made similar criticisms, s. Foglesong, *The American Mission*, 112-13.

[67] Madina Tlostanova, "The Janus-Faced Empire Distorting Orientalist Discourses: Gender, Race and Religion in the Russian/(Post)Soviet Constructions of the 'Orient'", in *Worlds and Knowledges Otherwise*, 2008, 1-2; 10.

[68] David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Russian Orientalism: Asia in the Russian Mind from Peter the Great to the Emigration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

[69] Said, *Orientalism*, 329.

[70] Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, 358.

[71] Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[72] Edward Said, "Islam through Western Eyes," *The Nation*, 26 April 1980, <http://www.thenation.com/article/islam-through-western-eyes> (accessed 25 March 2013).

[73] Foglesong, *The American Mission*.

[74] The framing works despite the accessibility of numerous excellent accounts, s. John Erickson, *The Road to Stalingrad* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975); John Erickson, *The Road to Berlin* (London: Westview, 1983); Richard Overy, *Russia's War* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1999); Alan Clark, *Barbarossa: The Russian German Conflict, 1941-45* (London: Cassell, 2001); Antony Beevor, *Stalingrad* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2007); Dominic Lieven, *Russia against Napoleon: The True Story of the Campaigns of War and Peace* (New York: Viking, 2010).

[75] Mark Mazower, "'War and Peace': The Fact-Check," *New York Times*, 20 June 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/20/books/review/Mazower-t.html?ref=books> (29 March 2013); for an illustration of the wider issue s. D. Glantz, "American Perspectives on Eastern Front Operations in World War II," *Foreign Military Studies Office*, 1987, <http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/e-front.htm> (29 March 2013)

[76] Natalia Narotchnitskaia, *Que reste-t-il de notre victoire ? Russie-Occident, le malentendu* (Paris:  ditions des Syrtes, 2008).

[77] The only access the Western public has to alternative narratives are the memoirs of Jewish Red Army soldiers, such as *My Just War* by Gabriel Temkin (New York: Presidio Press, 1998). German readers also have access to an alternative wartime narrative through Lew Kopelew's autobiography, *Aufbewahren F ur Alle Zeit!* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1976).

[78] Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1974).

[79] Stefan Hedlund, *Russian Path Dependence: A People with a Troubled History* (London & New York: Routledge, 2005); Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution 1899-1919* (New York: Vintage, 1991).

[80] Solzhenitsyn is reputed to have called Pipes's historiography the "Polish version of Russian history," s. D.M. Thomas, *Alexander Solzhenitsyn: A Century in His Life* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 490. What weighed heavier than his origins was the fact that Pipes, an active promoter of "rollback," was at the center of Cold War planning during the first confrontational years of the Reagan administration. David Foglesong contrasts Pipes with Suzanne Massie, an art historian who positioned herself at the other end of the spectrum and shaped Reagan's more conciliatory stance during his second term (Foglesong, *The American Mission*, 178, 180, 182, 189-90).

[81] Marshall Poe, "The Truth About Muscovy," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 3 (2002), 477-78.

[82] Edward L. Keenan, "Muscovite Political Folkways," *The Russian Review* 45 (1986), 115-181; Charles J. Halperin, "Muscovy as a Hypertrophic State: A Critique," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 3 (2002), 501-507; Valerie A. Kivelson, "On Words, Sources, and Historical Method: Which Truth About Muscovy?," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 3 (2002), 487-499; Nancy S. Kollmann, "Muscovite Political Culture," in Gleason, *A Companion to Russian History*, 89-104. What happened to monarchs who failed in consensus-building can be seen in the fate of Tsar Paul I, assassinated in a palace coup in 1801.

[83] Halperin, "Muscovy as a Hypertrophic State," 506.

[84] Geoffrey Hosking, *Russia and the Russians: A History from Rus to the Russian Federation* (London: Allen Lane, 2001), 91-95; Stephen Lovell, "Review of Russia and the Russians: A History from Rus to the Russian Federation, London: Allen Lane, 2001, by Geoffrey Hosking," in *Reviews in History* 257 (2002), <http://www.history.ac.uk>, (accessed 22 May 2010).

[85] Ibid; the rejection of the idea of market democracy as the "natural order of things", and of Russian path dependency, also emerges in Alex Pravda, ed. *Leading Russia: Putin in Perspective. Essays in Honour of Archie Brown* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[86] Joseph de Maistre, the Sardinian representative in St Petersburg (1803-1817), and a conservative, voiced a very similar opinion in 1822, s. Neumann, *Uses of the other*, 93.

[87] Carsten Goehrke, *Russland: Eine Strukturgeschichte* (Zürich: Verlag Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 2010), 309-312.

[88] James Mahoney, "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology," *Theory and Society* 29 (2000), 511; Anne Wetzel, "Das Konzept der Pfadabhängigkeit und seine Anwendungsmöglichkeiten in der Transformationsforschung," in *Arbeitspapier 52* (Berlin: Osteuropa-Institut der Freien Universität Berlin, 2005), 31-33.

[89] Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime* (London: Fontana, 1995), 490-512.

[90] For the debate, s. Theophanis G. Stavrou, "Introduction," in Theophanis G. Stavrou, ed. *Russia under the Last Tsar* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), 1-12; Mendel, Arthur, "On interpreting the fate of Imperial Russia," in Stavrou, *Russia under the Last Tsar*, 13-41; Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime*; Lieven, *Nicholas II: Twilight of the Empire*; Carrère d'Encausse, *Nicolas II – La transition interrompue*; Felix P. Ingold, *Der Große Bruch. Russland im Epochenjahr 1913. Kultur – Gesellschaft – Politik* (München: Beck, 2000) ; Felix P. Ingold, *Die Faszination des Fremden: eine andere Kulturgeschichte Russlands* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2009) ; Wayne Dowler, *Russia in 1913* (De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010); the economic history of Tsarist Russia is inconclusive and follows the divide into "pessimists" and "optimists", s. Alexander Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge MA & London: Belknap, 1962); Peter Gatrell, *The Tsarist Economy 1850-1917* (London: Batsford, 1986); Werner E. Mosse, *An Economic History of Russia, 1856 – 1914* (I.B. Tauris: New York, 1996).

[91] Characteristic for the impact of continuing political exigencies on historical argumentation is a contribution that concedes a brutalization of society through the First World War, while at the same time denying individual

brutalization, s. Andreas Wirsching, and Dirk Schumann, eds., *Violence and Society after the First World War* (München: Beck, 2003).

[92] See e.g. the 1917 mutiny in the French army, the civil war in Ireland, postwar unrest in Italy, Hungary, Germany and many other parts of Europe.

[93] Lawrence Sondhaus, *World War One: The Global Revolutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[94] Timothy Dowling, *The Brusilov Offensive* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008).

[95] Norman Stone, *The Eastern Front, 1914-1917* (New York: Scribner, 1975).

[96] George F. Kennan, *The Decline of Bismarck's European Order: Franco-Russian Relations 1875-1890* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 3.

[97] Erich J. Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes. The Short Twentieth Century* (London: Pantheon, 1994).

[98] Niall Ferguson, *The War of the World: Twentieth-Century Conflict and the Descent of the West* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2006).

[99] Ibid. ; François Furet, and Ernst Nolte, *Fascisme et Communisme* (Paris: Hachette, 1998), 66-67 ; Malia, *Russia under Western Eyes*, 235-36.

[100] Melissa Stockdale, The Russian experience of the First World War, in Gleason, *A Companion to Russian History*, 311-334.

[101] Bruno Schoch, „Ernst Bloch: Hoffnung – aus Verzweiflung“, in Dan Diner, ed. *Zivilisationsbruch: Denken nach Auschwitz* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1988), 69-87.

[102] Omer Bartov, *Murder in Our Midst: The Holocaust, Industrial Killing, and Representation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

[103] Delphine Bechtel, “Review of Omer Bartov, *Murder in Our Midst. The Holocaust, Industrial Killing and Representation*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996,” *Vingtième Siècle Revue d'histoire* 54 (1997), 140-141; Daniel E. Rogers, “Review of Omer Bartov, *Murder in Our Midst: The Holocaust, Industrial Killing, and Representation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) and Daniel J. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Knopf, 1996).” *National Forum* 1997, 44-45.

[104] Ernst Nolte, *Der Europäische Bürgerkrieg: Nationalsozialismus und Kommunismus* (Berlin: Propyläen, 1987); Arno J. Mayer, *Why Did the Heavens Not Darken? The Holocaust in History* (New York: Pantheon, 1988); James Joll, *Europe since 1870: An International History* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990); Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes*; Paul Preston, “The Great Civil War: European Politics, 1914-1945,” in Tim Blanning, ed. *The Oxford Illustrated History of Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 148-181; Hans-Ulrich Wehler, “Der Zweite Dreißigjährige Krieg. Der Erste Weltkrieg als Auftakt und Vorbild für den Zweiten Weltkrieg,” *Spiegel Special*, March 2004, <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/spiegelspecial/d-30300048.html> (accessed 17 May 2011); other historians adopting a *moyenne durée* perspective on the twentieth century are John M Roberts, *A History of Europe* (London: Allen Lane, 1997); Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (London: Allen Lane, 1998); William I. Hitchcock, *The Struggle for Europe: The Turbulent History of a Divided Continent, 1945-2002* (New York: Anchor, 2004).

Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2006).

[105] Ferguson, *The War of the World*.

[106] Nassim N. Taleb, *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable* (New York: Random House, 2007).

[107] Stockdale, “The Russian experience of the First World War,” in Gleason, *A Companion*, 311-334; Mark von Hagen, “From the First World War to Civil War, 1914-1923,” in Gleason, *A Companion*, 337-352; also Hedlund, *Russian path dependence*, 265; Lynch, *How Russia Is Not Ruled*, 11; 30.

- [108] Dowler argues that there was more connectivity – and less division – in pre-war Russia than historians (such as Pipes) have argued. In his interpretation 1913 stands for a missed (and misinterpreted) opportunity, Dowler, *Russia in 1913*, vii-viii, 12-17; s. also Ingold, *Die Faszination des Fremden*.
- [109] Alexei Miller, *The Romanov Empire and Nationalism: Essays in the Methodology of Historical Research* (Budapest: Central European University, 2008), 18.
- [110] Niall Ferguson, ed. *Virtual History: Alternatives and Counterfactuals* (London: Pan, 2003).
- [111] Andrei Shleifer, and Daniel Treisman, “A Normal Country,” in *Foreign Affairs* 83 (2004), 20-38.
- [112] Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York: Norton, 2002).
- [113] William Odom, “Russian History and the Future of Russia,” in Gleason, *Companion*, 491.
- [114] Stefan Hedlund, “Slaves of the Tsar: Putin’s Boyars and the Problem of 2008,” *Working Paper 105* (Uppsala University, Department of Eurasian Studies, 2006).
- [115] Hedlund, *Russian path dependence*.
- [116] Douglass C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change, and Economic Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
- [117] Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective*.
- [118] Hedlund, *Russian path dependence*; Stefan Hedlund, “Professor Gerschenkron Goes to Brussels: Russian Catch-up Economics and the Common European Space,” *European Journal of Comparative Economics* 3 (2006), 51-74; Hedlund, “Slaves of the Tsar”; Stefan Hedlund, “Vladimir the Great, Grand Prince of Muscovy: Resurrecting the Russian Service State,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 58 (2006), 775–801; Steven Rosefielde, “Illusion of Transition: Russia’s Muscovite Future,” *Eastern Economic Journal* 31 (2005), 285-299; Steven Rosefielde, “Russia: An Abnormal Country,” *The European Journal of Comparative Economics* 2 (2005), 3–16; for a critical assessment of Hedlund and Rosefielde, H. Appel, “Review of Russian Path Dependence by Stefan Hedlund,” *Slavic Review* 65 (2006), 393-394; Don K. Rowney, “Review of Russian Path Dependence: A People with a Troubled History (London & New York: Routledge, 2005), by Stefan Hedlund,” *The Russian Review* 65 (2006), 162-163; also Anne Wetzel, “Das Konzept der Pfadabhängigkeit und seine Anwendungsmöglichkeiten in der Transformationsforschung,” in *Arbeitspapier 52* (Berlin: Osteuropa-Institut der Freien Universität Berlin, 2005), 33.
- [119] Odom, “Russian History and the Future of Russia,” 495.
- [120] Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective*; North, *Institutions*.
- [121] Hedlund, “Slaves of the Tsar”.
- [122] Odom, “Russian History and the Future of Russia,” 490-504.
- [123] The Pipesian path dependency imprint is manifest in the fact that Hedlund dedicates a mere 21 pages in his *Russian path dependence* (239-260) to the seventy years of Sovietism.
- [124] John W. Burton, *World Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972); Antony Giddens, *Runaway World: How Globalization Is Reshaping Our Lives* (London: Profile, 1999); David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt, and Jonathan Perraton, *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003); Dhammika Herath, “Development Discourse of the Globalists and Dependency Theorists: Do the Globalization Theorists Rephrase and Reword the Central Concepts of the Dependency School?,” *Third World Quarterly* 29 (2008), 819-834; James N. Rosenau, *Distant Proximities: Dynamics Beyond Globalization* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Helmut Willke, and Gerhard Willke, “Corporate Moral Legitimacy and the Legitimacy of Morals: A Critique of Palazzo/Scherer’s Communicative Framework,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 81 (2008), 32-35, 37.
- [125] Richard Sakwa, “The Dual State in Russia,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 26 (2010), 185-206.

[126] Ibid, 185.

[127] Goehrke, *Russland: Eine Strukturgeschichte*; Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*; Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime*.

[128] Clifford Gaddy, and Fiona Hill, *The Siberian Curse: How Communist Planners Left Russia out in the Cold* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003); Lynch, *How Russia Is Not Ruled*; Thane Gustafson, *Wheel of Fortune – The Battle for Oil and Power in Russia* (Cambridge MA & London: Belknap, 2012).

[129] Gaddy and Hill, *The Siberian Curse*.

[130] Lynch, *How Russia Is Not Ruled*, 195.

[131] One of the common blind spots appears in the treatment of a concept as crucial to the understanding of Russian culture as *krugovaya poruka* in many grand histories of modern and contemporary Russia. Its serious effect emerges from Alena Ledeneva's comments on the work of Gerald Easter, one of the few Western historians to place personalistic relations center-ground in order to "make sense of" Russia: "The reason that comparative theorists and area specialists were caught off guard by the collapse of the twentieth century's most feared state could in part be found in their lack of attention to this underworld of personalistic relations", Alena Ledeneva, *How Russia Really Works: The Informal Practices That Shaped Post-Soviet Politics and Business* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 104. Snippets of *krugovaya poruka* are strewn across the work of Richard Pipes, but there is no attempt to integrate the concept; Geoffrey Hosking does somewhat better, but his translation, as "joint responsibility", disappoints, Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, 34-35. In order to get to the bottom of this untranslatable concept one must turn to the work of younger Russian sociologists, Ledeneva, *How Russia Really Works*, 91-114; also Vadim Volkov, *Violent Entrepreneurs: The Use of Force in the Making of Russian Capitalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).

[132] In the light of his own work, Neumann does not define the issue of Russia's Europeanness as a geographical issue at all, but as one shaped by the history of representations, s. Iver Neumann, "Russia as Europe's Other," (Florence: European University Institute & Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs), abstract.

[133] Ingold, *Die Faszination des Fremden*.

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