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U.S.-RUSSIAN RELATIONS IN A NEW ERA

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The article looks into the current state of Russian-American relations, which have entered a new period after the events of 2014 in Ukraine. Many experts compare the situation with the Cold War, but the actual state of international relations is very different. Russia and the U.S. are no longer ideological opponents; their relations are no longer decisive to global affairs. U.S.-Russian relations have remained highly competitive in nature since the end of the 19-th century. Both countries employ contradictory ways of national expansion and providing national security. They also have differing values, which define competing forms of exceptionalism and universalism. This leads to incompatibility of their views on the world order: Russia aspires to a Westphalian world with spheres of influence ruled by the great powers united by mutual interest and understanding, whereas the U.S. prefers an open rules-based order with no spheres of influence. Russia is also deeply concerned about America's inclination towards a unipolar world, dominated by the United States.

In the short term, the main challenges in the bilateral relations will remain European security, the Middle East, strategic stability and sanctions. In the long term they will be shaped by certain global trends, such as power shift from the West to the East, technological advancement, raise of transnational challenges, such as extremism, international crime, proliferation of dangerous technologies, climate change and the raise of the multipolar world, with the U.S., China, Russia, India, Japan, and some European powers as key players.

The key challenge for Russia remains its lagging behind the world leaders in crucial areas of development. For the U.S., it is its tiredness of the burden of global leadership. In the future, America will likely to perceive itself as just one of the world leaders. Its grand strategy will remain U.S. preeminence in the Western hemisphere; neither Europe nor East Asia nor the Middle East dominated by a hostile power; safe maritime trade routes. Russia's grand strategy is likely to include Russian preeminence in the former Soviet space; the prevention of the emergence of a unified Europe balancing economic ties between Europe and East Asia; the erection of a reliable barrier against Middle Eastern extremism; and resistance to the rise of a single dominating power in global affairs. There is a strong need for U.S.-Russian cooperation in dealing with the rise of China, European affairs, the Middle East, the Arctic as well as strategic stability issues.

The future world order is likely to shift towards a concert of great powers, preferred by Russia.

Keywords: U.S.-Russian relations, world order, exceptionalism, universalism, expansion, values, national security, strategic competition, global leadership, Cold War, multipolar world, global trends.

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The post Cold-War period in US-Russian relations ended abruptly in March 2014 with the eruption of the Ukraine crisis. The United States finally abandoned the waning aspiration to slowly integrate Russia into the Euro-Atlantic community that had driven its Russia policy since the end of the Cold War. Russia demonstrated its willingness to flout the norms that had governed European security since the signing of the Helsinki Accords in 1975 to protect its vital national interests. Talk of partnership vanished; channels of communication were severed. Each country now clearly viewed the other as a strategic competitor. That point was made explicit in the US *National Security Strategy* released in December 2017. Russian President Vladimir Putin had repeatedly made it with increasing vehemence since his remarks at the Munich Security Conference in February 2007.

This does not mean, as many commentators argue, that a new cold war has broken out, even if relations are at their lowest ebb since the early 1980's, one of the darkest periods of the original Cold War. The international context and the nature of relations are radically different. The distribution of power in the world is no longer bipolar as it was during the Cold War. Rather, the contours of an inchoate multipolar system are emerging. The two countries are no longer engaged in a global existential struggle of two diametrically opposed philosophies of man and the state. Rather, both countries oversee variations of a capitalist economic system and profess adherence to democracy. US-Russian relations no longer structure the international system or dominate the global agenda. Rather, they are among many other bilateral and multilateral relationships that shape the system and agenda, and not necessarily the most consequential. And Russia no longer lies at the center of American foreign policy, even if the United States remains a top priority for Russia. Rather, the United States is focused on other matters, including China and international terrorism. The new *National Security Strategy* does not change the picture, even if it identifies Russia as a revisionist power and strategic competitor, for the strategy also identifies China in the same terms and names Iran, North Korea, and international terrorism as major threats.

As in the Cold War, however, relations will remain troubled for a considerable period, defined more by competition, at times verging on outright confrontation, than co-operation. In the near term, there can be no return to the hope for partnership of the immediate post-Cold War years, no new reset, and no rapid improvement in relations even if the intensity of estrangement might abate. The differences - over the principles of world order, the essence of regional conflicts, and the fundamental values that should inform political affairs - are too profound for it to be otherwise.

How long this period of strategic competition will last is an open question, as is the evolution of US-Russian relations to mid-century. Much will depend on domestic developments and global trends. The future could bring indifference - because one or the other country ceases to figure large in world affairs - or, if both countries continue to matter, permanent confrontation, strategic competition, or strategic cooperation with far-reaching global implications.

The Burden of History

That US-Russian relations are competitive should not come as a surprise. That has been their prevailing character since the United States emerged as a global power at the

end of the 19th century. Then, the United States and the Russian Empire, along with Japan, were competing for influence in Manchuria. In 1904, in the early phases of the Russo-Japanese War, the United States in *Realpolitik* fashion tilted toward what it thought was the weaker power, Japan. It shifted position only after Japan humiliated Russia on both land and sea, mediating a peace to create a favorable balance of power in Northeast Asia. After the First World War, the United States refused to recognize the new Bolshevik regime because of its subversive, anti-capitalist foreign policy, relenting only in 1933, as the Nazi storm clouds were gathering over Europe and Japanese imperialism began to threaten US interests in East Asia and the Pacific. After the Second World War, the United States and the Soviet Union engaged in a bitter cold war, which brought them to the cusp of thermonuclear conflict during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962.

Even the rare times of cooperation were less compelling than might appear at first glance. The victorious alliance against Nazi Germany, for example, was laced with deep suspicion. Russia and the United States fought not so much in common as in parallel on the eastern and western fronts, respectively. The post-war settlement divided Europe into two opposing camps that quickly found themselves in the grips of a cold war. More recently, the cooperation in the first post-Soviet decade was grounded less in common strategic interests than a weak Russia's timid acquiescence in US actions it found objectionable, such as the US intervention in the Balkan wars and NATO expansion. Any pretense of cooperation began to wither away as Russia regained its strength under Putin in the 2000's, to be ultimately replaced by the present profound estrangement.

Security and Exceptionalism

The reasons for this troubled history are many. At the most elementary level, competition between great powers is an inherent condition of international relations. That is all the more true for dynamic expansionist powers with major interests in both East Asia and Europe, as America and Russia have been for at least the past 150 years.

Nevertheless, the competitive nature of great-power relations alone does not suffice to explain the depth and endurance of the antagonism, which greatly exceeds that of America's - and for the most part Russia's - relations with other great powers, such as Great Britain, France, Germany, Japan, and China. Other factors - different approaches to the fundamental questions of national security and prosperity, incompatible value systems embedded in competing forms of exceptionalism and universalism - have had greater influence because they cut to the core of national purpose and identity.

With regard to security and prosperity, Russia has long been preoccupied with the challenge of securing, against external foes and internal unrest, a vast, sparsely populated, multi-ethnic territory with few physical barriers abutting powerful or unstable neighbors. To that end, Russia has taken refuge in strategic depth, pushing borders outward as far as possible from the Russian heartland and limiting foreign influences inside Russian-controlled territory. The United States, by contrast, once it established its dominant position in North America in the middle of the 19th century, has been physically secure, with weak neighbors to the North and South and vast oceans to the East

and West. As a trading nation, it has, with rare exception, looked abroad not to physically control territory but rather to open up markets for American goods and secure resources for robust economic growth and well-being at home.

In time, Russian expansion in search of security ran up against American expansion in search of markets, first in East Asia and subsequently in Europe. The tension grew most acute during the Cold War, pitting Soviet autarky seeking to extend its sway against American economic dynamism seeking to expand the reach of free markets. American prosperity jeopardized Russian security, and vice versa. For that reason, since the end of the 19th century, each country has pursued a policy of containment vis-a-vis the other - Russia to constrain American commercial advance, America to limit Russian territorial expansion - although the United States formally acknowledged that only during the Cold War, and Russia has never done so, preferring to rail against alleged American imperialism or hegemonic designs since the Bolshevik Revolution.

The differing requirements for security and well-being have also fostered a fundamental divide in ideas of world order. A pure Westphalian view of sovereignty (at least for great powers), a predilection for spheres of influence, and global management by a set of understandings among great powers has accorded well with Russia's search for security. The United States, by contrast, has preferred a global order conducive to commercial penetration - thus, no exclusive spheres of influence - and agreed rules to manage commercial, and ultimately geopolitical, competition with collective responsibility for adjudicating disputes and enforcing rules.

Like these different approaches to security and prosperity, opposing systems of values - American republicanism and democracy against Russian authoritarianism based on religious, then Marxist, and now nationalist principles - embedded in competing forms of exceptionalism and universalism have reinforced strategic competition.

Over the years, American exceptionalism has evolved from the idea of a nation founded on a set of democratic ideals, not on ethnicity or territory, in contrast to the leading European nations. As America emerged as a great power, the conventional realist approach of President Theodore Roosevelt quickly gave way to the idealism of President Woodrow Wilson, who insisted that the United States acted like no other great power. It did not pursue narrow national interests, but worked for the betterment of all, entering the great-power struggle of the First World War to put an end to war by making the world "safe for democracy." With the end of the Second World War, global leadership became a central element of exceptionalism, and, with the end of the Cold War, America fancied itself not simply as *a* leader but as *the* leader, the "indispensable nation," that set the international agenda and anchored the liberal global order to the benefit of all countries and peoples. American exceptionalism thus beckons toward a unipolar world.

Russia, by contrast, has seen its exceptionalism in the pursuit of a just world order, based on religious principles during the Tsarist period and on Marxist ones in the Soviet era. Alexander I's Holy Alliance of European powers grounded in Christian faith or Nicolas I's tenacious defense of divine monarchical legitimacy up to the Crimean War were the early manifestations of that exceptionalism. As Dostoyevsky put it in his Pushkin Speech in 1880, Russia was unique in its aspiration "to reconcile the contradictions of Europe ..., to pronounce the final Word of the great general harmony, of the final brotherly communion of all nations in accordance with the law of the gospel of Christ!"

Soviet Communism overthrew the Tsarist religious vision of a just order, only to replace it with a Marxist one with global ambitions. Today, in line with his predecessors, Putin poses as the leading advocate of a just, democratic world order based on the equality of sovereign states against America's unipolar designs.

Taken to the extremes, American and Russian exceptionalism are mutually exclusive. America's has no room for other great powers - there can be only one truly global leader - while Russia's has no place for American leadership as it tends towards a concert of great powers as a kind of global directorate.

Near-Term Troubled Relations

The competitive nature of US-Russian relations thus has a traditional, enduring quality grounded in deeply-held beliefs of national identity and destiny. What does that portend for the future? Are the only questions the intensity of the strategic competition and the threshold at which it tips over into perilous confrontation? Or can one imagine a future that inclines toward strategic cooperation? And whether it is confrontation, competition, or cooperation, will it matter? Will both the United States and Russia remain important enough to the global balance of power for other countries to care about the state of US-Russian relations?

For the near term, the answers are clear. Relations will remain troubled, and they will matter. They will remain troubled because there are no easy solutions to issues that now divide the two countries. The Ukraine crisis is embedded in radically different views of the appropriate architecture for European security, with the United States still supporting NATO expansion and Russia adamantly opposed. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, with Russian support, may be on the verge of eliminating his domestic opposition and ISIS may have been defeated, but the crisis has now broadened into a question about the balance of power in the Middle East, which pits Israel and Saudi Arabia, America's traditional partners, against Iran, which has worked closely with Russia. The United States and Russia are both modernizing their nuclear arsenals and developing advanced conventional and cyber weapons, which complicate agreement on the requirements for strategic stability. Russian meddling in the 2016 US presidential election has roiled the American public and led the US Congress to mandate anti-Russian sanctions that cannot be lifted without its approval. American leaders are moreover convinced that this interference is continuing despite repeated Russian denials. Meanwhile, leaders in both countries have found it politically convenient to have a foreign enemy, to demonize the other side, in order to deflect attention from their own failure to deal responsibly with major domestic issues.

This troubled relationship will continue to matter for obvious reasons. Russia and the United States control some 90 percent of all nuclear weapons in the world. They each have vast natural resources, including oil and gas, and a proven talent for developing the military applications of advanced technologies. They each wield vetoes on the UN Security Council. The United States has acknowledged global reach, while Russia has demonstrated capability to project power along its entire periphery into Europe, the Middle East, South and East Asia, and the Arctic. No less important, the elites in both countries have the attitudes and mindset of a great power and the determination to exercise what they see as their rightful prerogatives on the world stage.

Long-Term Possibilities

The long term, out to mid-century, does not yield easy answers, however. Each country's domestic developments as well as global trends could lead one or both countries to recalibrate the priority of their relations. They could provoke new thinking about the requirements for security and prosperity and reinterpretations of exceptionalism and thereby reinforce or erode the traditional grounds for competitive relations. They could raise challenges that spark confrontation, sharpen competition, or encourage cooperation. In short, the future is open. The best one can do is identify the key trends and choices that will shape it.

Key Global Trends

The world stands at a historic inflection point, one of more consequence than the demise of the Soviet Union a generation ago. Four trends in particular bear watching for the impact they will have on US-Russian relations.

First, global dynamism is shifting from Europe to East Asia, from the North Atlantic to the Asia-Pacific region. China's influence in particular is growing rapidly across the globe, witness the Belt and Road Initiative, even if Chinese growth rates are likely to decelerate, perhaps even dramatically, in coming years. China's global presence is of such dimensions now that a major set-back, a prolonged recession, for example, would have far-reaching consequences for the global economy and balance of power.

Meanwhile, Europe will remain a major source of economic activity, but its political influence will depend on whether it moves further toward consolidation, particularly in foreign and defense policy, or nation-states recapture their sovereign authority and renationalize security matters on the continent. The Middle East will likely figure much less in the global energy mix, and thus decline in strategic importance, as shale gas and tight oil deposits, as well as renewable energy technologies, are developed and brought on line. By contrast, global warming and the concomitant melting of polar ice will raise the strategic importance of the Arctic, as its abundant natural resources become accessible and lucrative maritime routes open up linking Europe, East Asia, and North America.

Second, technological advance - in artificial intelligence, robotics, computational techniques, methods of communication, and biogenetics - will have a dramatic impact on all aspects of human endeavor. Most important for our purposes, it will redefine the nature of power in the modern world and make technological competition a central focus of great-power relations. New technologies will also have far-reaching consequences for power relations between the state, society, and the individual, thereby triggering a sharp global debate on fundamental values and civic and human rights.

Third, the world will likely remain interconnected, even if globalization is attenuated as countries seek to reassert their sovereignty through the reinforcement of borders in both the physical world and cyberspace. This interconnectedness will inevitably come with a degree of interdependence among major powers, and those states that prove most adept at manipulating that condition will rise toward the top of the global hierarchy. At the same time, this interconnectedness will raise transnational challenges

- notably, the spread of extremist ideologies and groups and criminal organizations, the proliferation of technologies that can wreak enormous destruction in malevolent hands, and climate change - that will figure large on the global agenda. Meeting them will require a modicum of collective action by the great powers and other states.

Fourth, uneven economic and technological advance will create a new global distribution of power. The system is unlikely to become unipolar or bipolar. More likely will be the emergence of multiple centers of power of greater or lesser capabilities, which will eventually arrange themselves in a more or less durable global hierarchy. From today's vantage point, China and the United States appear to have the best chances of standing at the top, while a handful of other countries, including Russia, India, Japan, and, perhaps, some European powers, could rank high. Regional powers will emerge in the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. Added to the mix will be numerous transnational actors, including terrorist and criminal groups, some of which could wield major influence on global affairs.

Power Potential and Political Will

Whether the United States remains at the top of the global hierarchy and Russia a key player - and by extension whether US-Russian relations will matter in the global context - will be determined in large part by the relative power potential and political will of both countries.

With regard to Russia, the questions concern more power potential than political will, about which there should be little doubt. Being a great power lies at the core of Russian identity. Throughout history, Russia has been willing to endure great deprivation and exert extraordinary effort to catch up to the leading powers of the day and assert its prerogatives in world politics, witness Peter the Great's forced Europeanization of Russia at the beginning of the 18th century, Alexander II's Great Reforms after the humiliation of the Crimean War in the middle of the 19th century, and Stalin's forced industrialization in the 1930's as war approached in Europe and East Asia.

But the effort was only needed because every time Russia caught up, it soon found itself lagging behind again. Such is the case today, as Russia competes with the world's leading powers. In nominal terms, Russia's economy is one-twelfth the size of the United States' and one-eighth the size of China's (In purchasing power parity terms, the figures are one-fifth and one-sixth, respectively).¹ At the same time, Russia is being outpaced by India, while it remains far behind Japan and major Europe states even if it is closing the gap. Perhaps more important, Russia is lagging in R&D, which will prove critical to economic competitiveness as new technology drives productive capabilities.²

¹ For World Bank GDP data, see <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=CN-RU-US> and <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.PP.CD?locations=CN-RU-US>.

² See "Raskhody na NIOKR vyshli tol'ko summoy" [R&D expenditures are insufficient], *kommersant.ru*, July 26, 2018 (<https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/3695542>).

The challenge is only likely to grow: even official Russian projections foresee economic stagnation for the next decade, absent major structural reform.³

Russian leaders understand the need for reform but see significant risk. Because economic and political power remain closely intertwined in Russia, as they have been throughout history, economic reform requires political adjustment that can have far-reaching consequences for the configuration of political power and, at the extreme, erode the foundations of the state itself. That indeed is what happened during the last great period of reform under Soviet leader Gorbachev in the 1980's, which ended in economic depression and the collapse of the state. That cautionary tale acts as a serious psychological barrier to reform today. Whether Russia can overcome it and successfully reform, and thereby generate in the long term the power needed to sustain great-power ambitions, remains to be seen.

With the United States, the situation is reversed. There should be no doubt about its power potential. It is today the world's preeminent power by almost any measure, even if China is narrowing the gap. Deep capital markets, a political and business climate that fosters innovation and creativity, and a vast domestic consumer market continue to fuel an unparalleled socio-economic dynamism. The United States is home to the lion's share of the world's leading universities and centers of scientific learning. It outspends China, the European Union, and Russia on R&D, both absolutely and as a share of GDP.⁴ Its technological prowess supplies its military with unique capabilities that outclass those of any other military in the world.

But in recent years serious questions have surfaced about the country's willingness to bear the burden of global leadership. The retrenchment began under President Barack Obama, as the American public wearied of the activist - and less than successful - foreign policy of President George W. Bush. President Donald Trump's America-First approach, most notably his protectionist economic policies and questioning of the value of alliances, has taken this retrenchment to another level. Although these policies have encountered considerable elite resistance, they enjoy support from a substantial part of the public, which finds appealing the isolationist attitudes that prevailed in the United States before the Second World War.⁵ A return to pure isolationism is unlikely - the world has become too interconnected for that - but a less active role in global affairs and a deepening preference for bilateralism over multilateralism are well within the realm of possibility. Nevertheless, the United States would remain a major influence on global affairs, even if it forfeited its role at the pinnacle of the global hierarchy, given its power and integration into the global economy.

³ See Olga Kuvshinova and Aleksandra Prokopenko, "Yeshche 20 let stagnatsii prognoziruyet Minekonomrazvitiya" [The Ministry of Economic Development forecasts a further 20 years of stagnation], *Vedomosti*, October 20, 2016 at <https://www.vedomosti.ru/economics/articles/2016/10/20/661689-20-let-stagnatsii>.

⁴ See <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/GB.XPD.RSDV.GD.ZS?locations=CN-RU-US-IN>; <http://uis.unesco.org/en/news/rd-data-release>; and <http://data.uis.unesco.org>

⁵ See Pew Research Center, "Public Uncertain, Divided Over America's Place in the World," May 5, 2016 (<http://www.people-press.org/2016/05/05/public-uncertain-divided-over-americas-place-in-the-world/>).

Grand Strategy

The geopolitical trends and the domestic challenges will inevitably influence American and Russian views on the requirements for security and prosperity and on their own forms of exceptionalism.

The United States will be confronting a multipolar world for the first time since the end of the Second World War. It will be impossible for the United States to identify, as it has in the past, an overwhelming existential threat, such as the Soviet Union, around which it can fashion its foreign policy into a Manichean struggle between good and evil. The United States will also find it increasingly difficult to forge the domestic consensus needed to mobilize the resources to play the role of the sole leader in global affairs. The situation calls for a more subtle balancing of interests among competing powers in setting the global agenda, maintaining stability, and advancing national interests than America has been accustomed to for the past 70 years. As a result, the United States is likely at a minimum to fall back to seeing itself as *a* leader rather than *the* global leader. And if Trump's America-first mentality endures, the United States will have abandoned the pretense of working for the benefit of the global community, and not simply for the promotion of its own parochial interests.

But these evolving conditions should change little in America's long-standing grand strategy for advancing its security and prosperity and preserving liberty at home. The geopolitical requirements will remain the same as they have been historically: US preeminence in the Western hemisphere; neither Europe nor East Asia - the two major zones of productive economic activity outside of North America - dominated by a hostile power; and reliable, safe maritime trade routes. In addition, a more recent requirement - that the Middle East as a vital source of global energy supplies not be dominated by a hostile power - will continue to be relevant to the United States' global position, even as that region's relative strategic importance declines.

Beyond these geopolitical goals, the United States will also seek to secure and preserve strategic stability in the broadest sense, to encompass nuclear, advanced conventional and cyber weapons and the growing number of countries with significant capabilities in those areas in addition to the United States and Russia. Because it will remain a trading nation, America's security, prosperity, and liberty will also require building coalitions to deal with international terrorism, climate change, and other major transnational threats. Finally, the United States will continue to promote democratic development abroad, in the belief that democracy strengthens the forces of peace in the world, as well as opens up regions for beneficial commercial interaction. The only issue is how, by active proselytizing or by offering an attractive model for emulation.

For Russia, the breakup of the Soviet Union was a geopolitical and psychological cataclysm that undid three centuries of geopolitical advance and cast in doubt Russia's standing as a consequential power. But, if anything, the breakup, along with the broader geopolitical trends, has reinforced traditional Russian views on security and prosperity, witness the continuing efforts to maintain Russia's preeminence in the former Soviet space, its security buffer, against encroachments by the West and China. At the same time, Putin has continued to portray Russia as a leading advocate of a just world order in line with traditional notions of exceptionalism as a way of enhancing Russia's global appeal.

In this light, there is little reason to expect significant change in Russia's grand strategy to ensure its security and to protect its unique way of life. The geopolitical goals include Russian preeminence in North Central Eurasia, roughly the former Soviet space; the prevention of the emergence of a unified Europe that would dwarf Russia in population, wealth, and power potential as the United States does today; economic integration with both Europe and East Asia while seeking to balance between those two regions commercially and strategically; the erection of a reliable barrier against the spread of extremists ideologies out of the Middle East into Russia; and resistance to the rise of a single dominating power in global affairs.

Beyond these geopolitical goals, Russia, like the United States, needs to create and sustain the conditions for strategic stability. But, less integrated into the global economy than the United States, it will not have a similar stake in joining coalitions to manage transnational problems. In this regard, its strategic need lies only in coalitions to deal with those transnational problems that have direct negative consequences for Russia. It is not necessarily in Russia's interest, for example, to counter climate change (which could bring some benefit to Russia by opening up the Arctic for exploration and exploitation) or to counter terrorists organizations that do not operate directly inside Russia.

Competition or Cooperation

Assuming that both the United States and Russia will continue to matter in global affairs, do the dominant global trends and the challenges they pose to the two countries reinforce today's strategic competition or forecast a shift toward strategic cooperation? A definitive answer is hardly possible, but a review of the strategic issues that now face the two countries - geopolitical challenges, world order, and values - offers a sense of the possibilities.

Geopolitical Challenges: At the top of the list is China. Both the United States and Russia have an interest in ensuring that its rise does not undermine their global positions. The immediate challenge for the United States is in the Western Pacific, for Russia in Northeast and Central Asia. Beyond that, both countries will monitor closely the growing Chinese presence in the Middle East and Europe, and the United States will be concerned by Chinese commercial penetration of the Western Hemisphere.

Strategically, both countries would benefit from closer relations that would enable the formation of coalitions with other countries along China's periphery that could give each one of them greater leverage in dealing with China. This is not a policy of containment - which is neither possible nor desirable - but of fostering Chinese restraint. Indeed, both Russia and the United States would seek constructive relations with China from, they would hope, an enhanced bargaining position. At the same time, the United States does not have an interest in pushing Russia into a strategic alliance with China and thereby strengthening a strategic competitor. Nor does Russia have an interest in close partnership between the United States and China, which would diminish its influence in global affairs.

The second priority is Europe. Its impact on the United States and Russia will depend on the direction in which it moves, toward greater cohesion or greater fragmentation. If it moves toward greater cohesion, Europe will threaten to overshadow Russia as a great power by an order of magnitude. But it will also inevitably gain a degree of

strategic autonomy from the United States, and ironically a values gap of some dimensions will open up with regard to not so much the foundations of political systems as socio-economic matters, akin to the cultural war now raging in the United States. In this situation, the United States and Russia will both have some interest in working together to balance European ambitions.

If Europe fragments, Russia will likely seek to enhance its influence in the eastern part. Whether that poses a threat to the United States will depend on the ability of Germany, France, and Great Britain to resist Russia's advance alone or collectively. If these countries can mount a credible resistance, the situation will resemble 19th-century Europe. The United States will have no need to intervene, although it will monitor the situation closely. One development it will want to impede in particular is a German-Russian rapprochement that would create an entity capable of dominating Europe to America's detriment, while helping Russia counterbalance the rise of China. If on the other hand the big European powers prove incapable of resisting Russia's advance, the United States will probably have to play an active role in containing Russian influence on the continent, as it does today.

After Europe comes the Middle East. Its strategic importance for the United States, as noted earlier, will likely diminish over time. For Russia, however, the region will remain of high strategic importance because of the threat extremist forces in the region pose to Russia itself through the radicalization of its Muslim population and because the region's energy exporters are direct competitors for lucrative markets in Eastern Europe. Despite the different strategic priorities, both the United States and Russia will have an interest in stability in the Middle East, the United States to ensure the reliability of energy supplies for global markets; Russia to contain extremist forces. For that reason, both countries will favor the formation of a stable equilibrium among the major regional powers, including Egypt, Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey. But they will support the equilibrium for different reasons: The United States to prevent the emergence of a regional hegemon that could control the flow of energy resources out of the region; Russia to reduce the risk of widespread conflict and instability. Consequently, the two countries will have a common strategic goal in the Middle East, but they might find themselves competing for influence with the regional powers as they seek to support a stable equilibrium.

Finally, as the ice cap melts, the Arctic will rise in strategic importance for both countries. They will both have an interest in developing its abundant resources, and Russia will have a direct interest in the opening up of the potentially lucrative Northern Sea Route. Given that the vast share of the known resources are located within the boundaries of the well-defined economic zones of the five Arctic littoral states (Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia, and the United States), there should be little reason for sharp competition for those resources. Rather, the harshness of the climate should encourage the formation of multinational consortia to develop them. As a result, the Arctic has good chances of remaining a zone of strategic cooperation.

World Order: There will continue to be tension between the US support for a rules-based order and Russia's desire for a concert of great powers that works on the basis of understandings. But a multipolar world, particularly one consisting of powers grounded in different value systems, will inevitably erode a rules-based order because there will be no widely accepted authority capable of reliably adjudicating disputes and

enforcing the rules. In these circumstances, global order will grow out of understandings among the most powerful countries, which may or may not be formulated in the guise of rules, sustained by a balance of power. Such an arrangement does not preclude the emergence regional subsystems, some of which might operate as rules-based orders, as the Transatlantic Community has since the Second World War. Nevertheless, the overarching global order as a whole would shift toward Russia's preferred construct.

Values: History and tradition suggest that there will continue to be a values gap between Russia and the United States. Although a democratic breakthrough is unlikely, a liberalizing trend could emerge in Russia that would perhaps ease the tension, but not eliminate it entirely. Russia, for its part, is prepared to allow different systems of values to coexist. The question is whether the same is true for the United States, but it is possible that the United States will revert to the position it held before the First World War, whereby the United States supported the spread of democracy but was ultimately prepared to defend only its own. Such a policy would diminish tensions with Russia.

A Matter of Choice

Although US-Russian relations today verge on a confrontation that has not been seen since the early 1980's and competition has been the norm for the greater part of the past 150 years, global developments during the next three decades could slowly erode the historical foundations of the competitive relationship and create opportunities for strategic cooperation. In particular, the emergence of a genuinely multipolar world could ease the tensions that have long existed between the United States and Russia over issues of world order. By moderating the claims of American exceptionalism and diminishing the role of rules in regulating international behavior, it would encourage the emergence of a concert of great powers and the coexistence of different value systems as the way of creating order and fostering peace. The United States could still seek to established rules-based sub-systems where its authority predominated, and it would, consistent with its traditions, still advocate for the advance of democracy, but a space would be carved out for Russia where it could feel psychologically secure from American activism. Such conditions would make it easier to cooperate on geopolitical matters.

Indeed, some US-Russian geopolitical cooperation would be needed to maintain a balance of power, the prerequisite for order and stability in a multipolar world. Such cooperation would be needed to forge a regional balance in Asia, as China's power accumulates. The two countries could find themselves in a similar situation in the Euro-Atlantic region, should a more or less unified Europe slowly emerge in coming decades. And should Europe eventually fragment into nation-states, the United States, as the off-shore balancer, would likely keep open the option of cooperating with Russia to maintain the balance (much as Great Britain did in the 19th century). In the Middle East, the United States and Russia could work together in maintaining a regional balance that would serve both their interests. Last, the two countries would be compelled to work together, along with other major powers, to create and sustain strategic stability. The multipolar nature of the strategic equation should diminish the tension that has accompanied US-Russian efforts to maintain stability in the bipolar context that has so far prevailed in the strategic realm.

Such cooperative undertakings would represent a marked change from the current situation. But US-Russian relations would still fall far short of the strategic partnership to which the two countries once aspired. Competition would still claim a large share of each country's attention and resources.

Where will the balance be drawn between the inevitable competition and possible cooperation? In the end, that is a matter of political choice. Competition requires little imagination from leaders for it is just a continuation of the present course. Their task is managing the competition responsibly to reduce the risk of a violent confrontation neither side wants. In this sense, continued competition is the easy choice. Shifting the balance toward cooperation requires much more effort, and bears greater political risk, because it entails overcoming the deep estrangement and mistrust that prevails today. To move in this direction, leaders would need to see clearly the critical global trends and the implications for their countries, as well as the possibilities of cooperation. It would require them to elaborate a new vision for US-Russian relations and then to persuade today's skeptical publics and elites of its viability. Today leaders with such a talent are lacking; consequently, strategic competition will continue to define US-Russian relations. Whether leaders with the requisite imagination will emerge in the future remains to be seen.

Opinion

Американо-российские отношения в новую эпоху

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В статье рассматривается современное состояние российско-американских отношений, вступивших в новый период после событий 2014 г. на Украине. Многие эксперты сравнивают эту ситуацию с холодной войной, однако современное состояние международных отношений сильно отличается от того периода. Россия и США перестали быть идеологическими противниками, их двусторонние отношения больше не являются определяющими для мировой политики. Американо-российские отношения носят характер соперничества с конца XIX века. Обе страны используют противоречащие друг другу пути национальной экспансии и обеспечения национальной безопасности. Россия и США – носители различных ценностей, которые определяют взаимоисключающие формы универсализма и исключительности. Это приводит к несовместимости их взглядов на миропорядок: Россия стремится к Вестфальскому порядку, где присутствуют сферы влияния, а миром управляют великие державы, объединённые взаимными интересами и общим пониманием процессов, тогда как США предпочитают открытый, основанный на правилах миропорядок, без чётких сфер влияния. Россия также глубоко обеспокоена склонностью Америки к однополярному миру, в котором доминируют США.

В ближайшей перспективе основными вызовами в двусторонних отношениях останутся европейская безопасность, Ближний Восток, стратегическая стабильность и

санкции. В долгосрочной перспективе они будут определяться рядом глобальных тенденций, таких как ослабление западных стран при усилении Востока, технический прогресс, рост транснациональных вызовов, таких как экстремизм, международная преступность, распространение опасных технологий, изменение климата и возникновение многополярного мира, ключевыми игроками среди которых станут США, Китай, Россия, Индия, Япония и некоторые европейские державы.

Ключевым вызовом для России остаётся отставание от мировых лидеров по важнейшим направлениям национального развития. Для США это усталость от бремени глобального лидерства. В будущем Америка, скорее всего, станет воспринимать себя лишь одним из мировых лидеров. Её геополитическая стратегия будет включать такие элементы, как главенство США в Западном полушарии; отсутствие доминирующей враждебной державы в Европе, Восточной Азии и на Ближнем Востоке, безопасность морских торговых путей. Стратегия России, вероятно, будет включать в себя российское превосходство на постсоветском пространстве; предотвращение возникновения единой Европы, баланс экономических связей между Европой и Восточной Азией; возведение надежного барьера против ближневосточного экстремизма; противодействие появлению единой доминирующей мировой державы. Существует острая необходимость в российско-американском сотрудничестве в решении таких вызовов, как усиление мощи Китая, европейская безопасность, Ближний Восток, Арктика, а также вопросы стратегической стабильности.

Будущий миропорядок, скорее всего, сместится в сторону концерта великих держав, предпочтительного для России.

Ключевые слова: американо-российские отношения, мировой порядок, исключительность, универсализм, экспансия, ценности, национальная безопасность, стратегическое соперничество, глобальное лидерство, холодная война, многополярный мир, глобальные тенденции.