The London School of Economics and Political Science

Russian hegemony in the CIS region: an examination of Russian influence and of variation in consent and dissent by CIS states to regional hierarchy

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Abstract

This thesis studies variation in Russian hegemony in the post-Soviet region. The concept of changing hegemony is used as a starting point to examine how regional hierarchy has changed in the post-Soviet period. Russian hegemony tightens and loosens depending on the time, territory and type of power logic being exercised. This systemic condition characterised by change arises not only because the way that Russia exercises its power changes, but also because the responses of the other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to that power fluctuate. Depending on the consent and dissent shown by the other CIS countries to the attenuation of their sovereignty, Russia's regional hegemony either grows or lessens in intensity. This study uncovers dissent from those who do not fit within or are unprepared to adapt to the status quo of hegemony, and consent from those who accept diminishing sovereignty. Thus, hegemonies in the context of this study are characterised by regular and open-ended dialogue between states that remain independent enough to constantly negotiate the system through their consent and dissent to hierarchy. In making these claims, this study examines concepts such as sovereignty, hierarchy and legitimacy in the context of the CIS region as well as key developments in the CIS region. Specifically, it makes conclusions on how regional hierarchy around Russia is perpetuated, the factors that determine the extent of that hegemony, how bilateral and group relationships have developed between other CIS countries and Russia, and how the CIS system of states is best classified at different periods in time.

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Lastly, I owe a lot to my mother, father and brother for their love and support throughout the years. Their love brings me happiness. And to that handful of special people that illuminate my life, who have been a source of silent strength through these four years: thank you for never letting me forget that there is life beyond work. I love you all, each and every one of you.

Dedication

For Mamaluz, my dear grandmother, who will miss many milestones in my life but whose love continues to guide me.

Chapter 1: Introduction
The post-Soviet region in flux

This is an International Relations (IR) examination of the variation in Russian hegemony in the post-Soviet region. The concept of changing hegemony is used as a starting point to examine how regional hierarchy has changed in the post-Soviet period. Russian hegemony tightens and loosens depending on the time, territory and type of power logic being exercised. This systemic condition characterised by change arises not only because the way that Russia exercises its power changes, but also because the responses of the other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to that power fluctuate. Depending on the consent and dissent shown by the other CIS countries to the attenuation of their sovereignty, Russia's regional hegemony either grows or lessens in intensity. This study uncovers dissent from those who do not fit within or are unprepared to adapt to the status quo of hegemony, and consent from those who accept diminishing sovereignty. Thus, hegemonies in the context of this study are characterised by regular and open-ended dialogue between states that remain independent enough to constantly negotiate the system through their consent and dissent to hierarchy. In making these claims, this study examines concepts such as sovereignty, hierarchy and legitimacy in the context of the CIS region as well as key developments in the CIS region, and it reaches conclusions based on a specific theoretical and analytical framework.[1]

To validate the claim about changing forms of hierarchy, this study is influenced by Adam Watson's work *Evolution of International Society* (1992). Watson expounds his understanding of a multi-level anarchy-hierarchy spectrum, through which international systems move, depending on time and context. Building on relatively recent work by English School theorist Ian Clark, this study establishes that hegemonies move through the Watson spectrum depending on the consent and dissent that other countries exhibit to Russian-led hierarchy - that is, the legitimacy they confer or do not confer (Clark 2003, 2005, 2009, 2010). The theoretical underpinnings offered by Watson and Clark thus serve to establish Russia's potential to be at the regional centre of different intensities of hegemony that are formed through constantly negotiated sovereignty and hierarchy. Post-Soviet hegemony has fluctuated throughout time, in terms of Russia's perceived function, and depending on the country or group of countries under consideration.

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[1] An Area Studies thesis on this topic could focus on primary material and perhaps pay more attention to details (both historical and contemporary) that exemplify the outlined changes.

Arguments about Russia's future based on empire are overly pessimistic, unjustifiably deterministic and take an unnecessary short cut to understanding complex relationships; subtler open-ended studies can provide a more complete outlook on Russia's regional role. For this study, evaluating the constant push-pull dynamic that exists between Russia and other states' sovereignty - the consent and dissent that make up the intra-regional legitimacy process in relation to Russian hegemony - and understanding the balance between different power logics are key to understanding changing relationships. While examining changing Russian hegemony, this thesis also answers the following main research questions:

1. How is hierarchy around Russia perpetuated in the CIS region? Are some methods or power logics more successful than others?
2. What variables determine the extent of that hierarchy? Which actions have served to consolidate hierarchic relationships (and why) and which actions have not (and why not)?
3. How have bilateral relationships between Russia and individual CIS countries as well as intra-regional multilateral relationships changed over the post-Soviet period?
4. How is the system around Russia best classified at different periods in time?

Russia in a time of relational change

This is a study primarily concerned with state actors, in particular, the Russian state and other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States.[2] States attempt to order the international system in self-interested ways, determined by factors that are not solely captured by understanding their material security motivations (Giddens 1991, McSweeny 1999, Huysmans 1998). A comprehensive way to understand state motivations, and a particularly appropriate way to understand Russia, is by analysing how states perceive their interests in relation to others, and how this affects state identity. States' security of the self has been analysed by IR scholars under the term 'ontological security' (Giddens 1991, Mitzen 2006, Steele 2008). Ontological security is achieved by forming relationships with other actors in sustainable and consistent ways, providing a sense of continuity that serves to realise state identity and a sense of agency in relation to surroundings (Giddens 1991: 243, Steele 2008: 3, Mitzen 2006: 342). As ontological security is inextricably tied to self-identity, what drives states is not

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[2] Of course states are not the only actors in the international system. Non-state actors like multinational corporations and non-governmental organisations as well as local forces are increasingly important contenders in the effort to amass power and authority (Higott et al. 2000, Arts et al. 2001, Josselin and Wallace 2001). However, states remain central players that engage in rule-making and framework-setting.

only dependent on material ends, but also on ideational incentives (Steele 2008: 10). This study holds that it is at the junction between security, material power, relational identity and stabilising relationships that Russia and the states of the CIS engage in ordering the post-Soviet region. In the case of Russia, this process began following a massive shake-up of its perceived regional role, of its identity.

A quote from Russian Lieutenant General and popular politician Alexander Lebed underlines the substantial and sudden change that Russia underwent at the fall of the Soviet Union:

> 'Whoever doesn't regret [the Soviet Union's] ruin has no heart but whoever thinks it will be possible to restore it in its old form has no brains.[3] There is something to regret: to be the Citizen of a Great power, albeit with many difficulties but nevertheless Great, or of an impoverished developing country – there is quite a difference.' (Lebed 1995: 409-10)[4]

In 1991 Russia was reduced to its 17th century boundaries, losing control over 5.3 million square kilometres of territory and 139 million citizens. This meant that the heart of the new core state lost a quarter of its territory and 40% of its entire population, including over 17% of the ethnic Russian population under the Soviet Union. 25-30 million Russian citizens now lived across national borders under foreign leadership. Invaluable natural resources, historical and cultural sights, and some of the most advanced Soviet military infrastructure and equipment were also out of Moscow's reach (Smith 1993: 6). As the bipolar Cold War world ended, Russia lost its status as one of two hegemonic powers as well as the international bargaining muscle that came along with its position. As Alexey Gromyko, director of European programmes at the Russkiy Mir Foundation and deputy director of the Institute of Europe at the Russian Academy of Science put it: '1991 was a catastrophe. A catastrophe, not a crisis... in economic, social and security terms, which not many states in the world could survive.' (Personal interview 23 March 2009)

The psychological and strategic crises suffered at the fall of the Soviet Union were also at the heart of foreign policy debates within the Russian administration. The pervasive sense of loss of great power status encountered by policymakers opened many questions regarding how Russian foreign policy could be most effective in establishing the country's new role as a competing international force. The foreign

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[3] The 'has no heart' versus 'has no brain' maxim is a popular saying in Russia and was quoted in Putin's 2000 presidential campaign (Buzan and Waever 2006: 408).
[4] The title of Lebed's book Zaderzhavuobidno can be taken to mean 'it is a pity for a great power' or 'one feels a sense of shame for a great power,' further underlining the message in the passage. This passage is also quoted in relation to the fall of the Soviet empire in Lieven (2003: 396).

policy choices faced by Moscow at the end of the Soviet Union were the debate of many scholars in the 1990s, who identified new actors, domestic politics, governance model, as well as diverse challenges influencing Russia's foreign policy decisions (Arbatov 1993, Dawisha & Dawisha 1995, Kerr 1995, Wallander 1996, Kozhemiakin 1997, McFaul 1997/8). Furthermore, Moscow lacked a well-organised bureaucratic policymaking apparatus; there was little coherence between different officials, and what Russian policymakers announced to the public was seldom synonymous with what was executed (Light 2005: 223). However, consensus revolved around a sense of Russian vulnerability due to the loss of important economic and military capabilities to areas now out of immediate control.

Smith (1993) speaks of a 'Pax Russica' and a Russian 'Monroe Doctrine' to describe Moscow's regional interest. He quotes from the 1992 political programme 'Towards A United, Strong, and Democratic Russia' of the Civic Union, one of the most influential political groups in Russia after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, that argued that Moscow's security interests should focus on the former Soviet republics:

> 'The territory of the former USSR is a sphere of specific vitally important Russian interests. This is based on a number of objective factors: the retained economic interdependence of states; the close scientific and cultural ties; a direct dependence of the security of Russia on the situation in the contiguous regions of the former USSR; the moral and political responsibility of Russia for the fate of the Russian speaking minorities; the exclusive role of Russia in curtailing the distribution of the military arsenals of the former USSR (including nuclear weapons and their delivery systems); the natural status of Russia as the axis of military political stability in continental Eurasia.' (cited in Smith 1993: 10)

In time, Moscow elites tied to the presidency agreed that Russia's best prospect to remain an important player in the international system was to solidify its regional control (Jackson 2003: 69-70, Light 2004: 47, Light 2005, Danilov 2005, Baev 2006).[5] Moreover, noting Russia's perceived responsibilities and continued relative power, an hierarchic relationship with Moscow at the helm seemed almost natural. Though some top officials such as Russia's foreign minister Andrey Kozyrev promoted 'loose hegemony',[6] this camp was outnumbered by advocates of 'tight hegemony' under the leadership of vice president Alexander Rutskoi. Gaining increasing influence from early 1992, the latter argued that economic sanctions and military action against former

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[5]Buzan and Waever (2006: 435) explain the top-down logic behind this general way of thinking that currently persists: 'Because [Russia wants] to be a global power, [it] needs to control [its] own region.'
[6] Initially, Kozyrev argued that coercive threats should not be used to sway other states' behaviour. However, as his opponents in the 'tight hegemony' school gained political ground, Kozyrev also shifted his original position to be more favourable to his critics (Smith 1993: 17).

Soviet states were warranted as assertive means by which to regain a regional stronghold.

After an initial period of adjustment when Moscow had to manage the fallout of collapse, the Yeltsin administration used rhetoric of reintegration of the 'near-abroad' in which Moscow enjoyed an elevated status. The empirical case studies chapters, which follow, show how a perception of exclusive regional influence transformed into a form of interventionist policy doctrine. Although shifting focus towards bilateral relationships under the cover of multilateralism, the Putin[7] administration continued to regard the post-Soviet region as the most effective arena in which to advance Russia's significance (Sokov 2006: 5). The 'scaling-down' process that is argued to have begun with the Soviet withdrawal from Angola, Ethiopia and then closer to home Afghanistan was continued with the closure of military bases in Vietnam and Cuba in Putin's first term (Baev 2003a: 1). This regional focus implied a change in Moscow's self-perception: from uncontested great power to at best regional power. Russia sought to (re)gain relative power in its post-Cold War circumstances. The newly independent states also had to find their bearings. Thus began a constant negotiation of regional hegemony.

How to analyse Russia after 'catastrophe': core hypotheses/points of departure

This thesis' curiosity about the nature of hegemonies in the CIS state system stems from two initial broad research questions arising from Russia's new-found position after the fall of the Soviet Union and Moscow's subsequent policy responses. The first research question comes from the divergent evolutions of CIS countries in relation to Russia. What is interesting about this geopolitical pluralism is the variety of ways by which Russia has exerted its influence and used its resources differently in relation to each country in the region and how that influence has been received and translated into the secondary states' foreign policy. The second research question arises from the contrast between Russia's expectations for the mutual relations of the CIS states and the existing circumstances: Russia's optimistic aspirations to lead an integrated region after the breakup of the Soviet Union are far removed from the present disaggregation. These questions provide entry points for research that considers the peculiarities of the power relationships in the CIS region.

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[7] Putin's re-election in March 2004 gave him a stronghold over foreign policy to execute his drive for geopolitical importance. The December 2003 Duma election in which United Russia (Edinaja Rossija) obtained 223 of the 450 seats (37.6% of the party list vote and 23.5% of the single-member constituencies) also had an important implication for Putin: on top of taking over the chairmanship of the Duma, United Russia, defining itself as being 'together with the president,' also took over the chairmanship of the CIS, effectively consolidating Russia's political dominance in the region (White 2006: 24, 25).

There are three main hypotheses on which this thesis is based, and from which more specific hypotheses are drawn. The first hypothesis is that the CIS region fluctuates between anarchy and hierarchy. Specifically, this study seeks to prove that hegemony vary across time, territory, and type of power logic exercised. The type of constellation of power in the CIS region varied between Yeltsin's and Putin's presidencies, and sub-periods therein. Furthermore, hegemony varies depending on the group of states or individual state that is being studied. The type of hierarchy present also varies between the military, economic, political, and ideological spheres. The resulting system is not imposed from above; it involves constant dialogue between Russia and the other states of the CIS. The second hypothesis is that the CIS region constitutes a system of states. The countries of the CIS share a 'common condition' in that the CIS region is defined by a hegemonic system of power around Russia. Within this system, sub-groups exist that exhibit different relationship types with Russia. Countries that consent to some form of hierarchy around Russia form a relatively tight group, whilst those that dissent engage in relatively anarchical relations with Moscow. The third hypothesis (and the method employed in this thesis) is that justificatory discourse is the most appropriate way to judge fluctuating hierarchy and the consent and dissent shown by other CIS countries to different forms of hierarchy. Russia explains and defends its actions through discourse, and the other states of the CIS respond (either consent or dissent) through similar justificatory discourse. The section that follows discusses the above three hypotheses and sub-hypotheses in detail.

The CIS region as a fluctuating system between anarchy and hierarchy

The core hypothesis and main argument proposed by this work is that Russia and the states of the CIS are constantly in a process of negotiating the type of hierarchy that orders the CIS regional system. By 'negotiating', this thesis means that states of the CIS constantly engage in dialogue with Russia over their relative sovereignty. Through discourse that justifies their actions and/or positions,[8] they either consent or dissent to regional hierarchy around Russia. The other states of the CIS are therefore central in the process of creating the system of hierarchy in the region; they are just as important as the hegemon in determining the type of system that emerges. A variability of hierarchical relationships between Russia and other CIS states exists that changes over time. Post-soviet hierarchy also varies between individual states and groups of states, and depends on the type of power Russia exercises.

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[8] The notion of justificatory discourse is explained in detail below, as the method this thesis uses to identify consent and dissent.

Hegemony is one type of relationship that exists among a group of countries, characterised by some dominance of one actor over others. More importantly, hegemony is characterised by a constant dialogue between actors on just how far sovereignty is acceptably diminished. This study sees hegemony (i.e. some form of hierarchy) as a starting point. Though realists in IR have traditionally regarded sovereignty and anarchy as indisputable through a lens that concentrates on the Westphalian system of states, more recent research shows that the relative authority of states can attenuate sovereignty (Lake 2007: 57, Osiander 2001, Krasner 1999). In other words, when one considers relational power and systemic relationships, systems always embody varying degrees of hierarchy. Osiander (2001: 284) holds that the usual dichotomy between empire and sovereignty (discussed in the theoretical chapter in the context of Waltz 1979) is a false one, and the degree of sovereignty of actors can vary in part by their own choosing. His study shows that trans-border linkages and consent can produce different levels and forms of cooperation and hierarchy. Lake (2007: 58) adds that some states yield little of their sovereignty to other states, some more so, and the extent of yielded sovereignty also depends on the issue and/or purpose at stake. This thesis holds that other states of the CIS show consent and dissent to varying degrees of attenuation of their sovereignty, which means that both the substantiation of sovereignty as well as the extent of hierarchy in the system vary. In this way, hegemony and any form of 'rule' depends on the consent and dissent of the 'ruled.'

The empirical case studies chapters delineate the way by which hierarchy and the attenuation of other CIS states' sovereignty is perpetuated by Russia. The narrative is largely based on Russian actions as well as representations of its policies and reactions thereto through statements, treaties and policies that identify claims about what is perceived as legitimate. The chapters then analyse both Russian agency as well as other CIS countries' agency through the dialectic between consent and dissent of CIS countries. One can discern the hegemonic characteristics perpetuated and consented or dissented to by subordinate states from actions and reactions, both in terms of behaviour as well as discourse (a discussion of sources and method is below). This thesis uncovers dissent from countries that do not fit within or are unprepared to adapt to the status quo of hegemony, and consent from countries that yield their sovereignty to varying extents.

The first task in beginning to address the above hypothesis and argument is to identify other explanations of continuity and variation in forms and intensity of Russian hegemony in the CIS region, and why these explanations that are based on other

theoretical assumptions miss key variables. In answering questions of Russian power, some historical arguments that focus on enduring Tsarist and Soviet trends and political culture have been pessimistic and claim the existence of perennial empire (Pipes 1996, Sakwa 2000, Malia 1999). Pipes (1996) focuses on Russia's imperial identity, and leads an intellectual school that outlines significant chronological continuities that run through – and at times determine – Russian history from the Middle Ages through the Tsarist Empire and the Soviet Union to post-Soviet times. Pipes has now adjusted his point of view to accept that Russia's experience, and thus the future it conditions, lend themselves to comparison with other countries.[9] Some of these narratives (like Pipes' original argument) are based on path dependency arguments (Pierson 2004, Wohlforth 2001), where leaders travel along self-reinforcing paths through several methods and for several reasons, including sustained power asymmetries, the lack of a means by which to clearly point out optimal behaviour, and sustained institutions with hefty set-up costs. This study denies such deterministic claims based on empire by narrowing in on hegemonies that take account of secondary states' agency and sovereignty. The accelerated and at times chaotic change that Russia has undergone over the past two decades suggests that Russia may be assuming a new role in its international relations: one that reflects that for the first time since at least the early 18th century the ultimate drive for territorial expansion has been brought to a sudden halt – in 1991 – and has been reversed, even if the trauma of losing territory remains and many policies may reflect that. Imperialist logic is perhaps tempting to use in hindsight to describe Tsarist and Soviet history; however it is not convincing when applied to post-Soviet times.

There are other explanations based on the concept of empire that are not as deterministic as Pipes' examinations. Some of these use the language of post-imperialism to make their arguments. Spruyt (1997: 330), for example, posits that Russia may have the incentive to unilaterally set the terms of relations with some states of the CIS and seek asymmetric advantages. The reasons for this include the CIS states' relative weakness, problems facing collective action, and Russia's insistence on embedding agreements within broader interests that go beyond immediate gains. He concludes that only a few states will be able to interact with Russia as equals, due to their own material resources or access to alternative markets and/or allies (Spruyt 1997: 332). Dawisha (1997) admits that, at the time of writing, Russia did not have the capacity to pursue large-scale imperial expansion. However,

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[9] Pipes has suggested that Russia's future could look a lot like Latin America's: quasi-democratic, quasi-capitalist state, with an economy that relies heavily on the export of natural resources and cheap labour (for example see Pipes 1998). Anatol Lieven (1999: 370) also compares Russia with Mexico in the early 20th century under Porfirio Diaz as an 'artificial democracy.' Dominic Lieven (2003: 397) compares the post-Soviet elite to that found in Latin America and Nigeria.

she also notes that political culture has in the past quickly transformed from 'the politics of humiliation to the politics of *revanche.*' (Dawisha 1997: 350) Dawisha explores the possibility of mutual interests in any imperial-colonial relationship in the post-Soviet region (what she calls *autocolonisation).* She concludes that a 'central feature' in some Eurasian states' identities is the 'imperative of resistance' to any renewed Russian control (Dawisha 1997: 351). At the same time, there are conditions and factors that favour continued Russia influence, for example, a common history, culture, as well as ethnic ties. Economic and security interests may also motivate other CIS countries to enter into core-periphery relations.

Tsygankov (1997) argues that Russian policy is still open to the influence of ideas that span the political spectrum. Three out of four schools of thought in Russian politics continue to envision a Russian state that is either post-imperial or imperial at its core (Tysgankov 1997: 254).[10] Though Russia has abandoned its revolutionary expansionist ambitions, its foreign policy continues to vacillate between defensive and aggressive realism, both of which identify with some form of core-periphery regional power constellation (Tsygankov 1997: 265). Bugajski (2004) argues that Russian domestic and foreign policy remains infused with imperialism and the 'greatness syndrome.' (Bugajski 2004: 3) Russia's post-imperialist identity is tied to self-proclaimed spheres of influence; the ambiguity of what constitutes as 'Russian' means that these spheres can also expand.

Suny (2007) is also interested in whether Russia has shaken off its imperial past, and provides a more nuanced answer to his central research question. He argues that foreign policy cannot be historically predetermined; instead it is formed by 'national interests' that are made up of perceptions, ideas and identities. Applying a constructivist approach, Suny argues that between 1700 and 1991, Russia identified as some kind of empire, and that this has, at those times, been fundamental to the construction of its interests. Though no longer imperial, Russia post-1991 had to deal with the crises that fractured many of the new republics. Suny calls these crises the 'legacies of empire that present both problems and opportunities for Russia.' (Suny 2007: 64) Another legacy of the Soviet Empire is the integration and interdependencies that continued to exist – cultural, economic, ethnic and political. Furthermore, in its current state, Russia's self-image as a great power means that its desire for greater influence in the world has not diminished. 'Imperial pretensions' remain in Chechnya

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[10] The four schools of thought are: international institutionalism, defensive realism, aggressive realism and revolutionary expansionism. The first school envisions a confederation of nation states; the second a post-imperial state; the third a stable empire with fixed borders; the fourth a constantly expanding empire (Tsygankov 1997: 254).

(Suny 2007: 70). The CIS region also remains in Russia's stated sphere of influence, where Moscow continues to demand a role in policing its neighbourhood and protecting Russians abroad.

Suny's piece points to the existence of subtler social science arguments on the continuity of a persistent strategic culture, which are not framed around empire and with which this study more closely aligns (good examples are Rieber 2007 and MacFarlane 2003). Rieber (2007) accepts the premise of continuity in foreign policy whilst rejecting determinism. There are deeply entrenched societal as well as regime influences that persist that can begin to explain Russian norms, such as the country's pluralist understanding of sovereignty. These influences, such as historic interventions and persistent fears about domestic disorder, both affect Russia's views towards domestic order as well as towards the regional system in which Russia operates. Moscow after the Tsarist empire continued to seek out regional order on its borders, both in the Warsaw Pact and then the CIS (MacFarlane 2003). What are now perceived as behaviours that are inconsistent with Western liberalism (MacFarlane 2003 speaks of the relationship between order and justice), are based on Russia's historical experiences; history and culture are therefore 'formative elements of identity.' (MacFarlane 2003: 176, who accepts this premise from Zimmerman 1969: 6)

Such claims are also reflected in the work of the constructivist camp of social scientists, to which Suny (2007) above also belongs. Ted Hopf (2002, 2007) for example stresses the role of domestic identity in shaping international policies. His 2007 work focuses on different 'waves' of Russian identity (as analysed through political discourse) that have shaped Russia's relationships and position in the world. Policy formation is thus also not solely dependent on international expectations, but also on a set of particularities shaped by domestic historical, cultural and political identity. In studying policies of disarmament, Evangelista (1995) agrees that both transnational relations as well as new domestic structures affected Russian policy formation.

Applying an identity-focused constructivist view to the rest of the CIS region, one could argue that the other states of the CIS states consent to Russian hegemony because of common identities linked to the USSR. This study does not deny such more subtle social science accounts, and instead builds on them by stressing other countries' roles in forming hegemony through their consent or dissent to regional hierarchy and the attenuation of their sovereignty. Other countries' individual sovereignty and the legitimacy they confer (or don't confer) towards Russian hegemony

is equally important in shaping multi-player power relationships as the foreign policy decisions of the dominant country.

The following chapter explains in detail the theoretical underpinnings of this work, inspired by Watson's (1992) logic of a pendulum between anarchy and hierarchy and the notion of legitimacy as a process rather than a characteristic that denotes stability that either exists or does not exist. Watson's pendulum swings across time and exhibits a number of different levels of hierarchy (hegemony, suzerainty, dominion), all which are explained below. This thesis proposes that the regional system around post-Soviet Russia is also one that varies in form and in tightness/looseness. Every international system that Watson analyses displays some degree of hegemony; he therefore holds that hegemony is the usual gravitational core of the sovereignty-empire spectrum. Watson's (1992, 2007) position is therefore that hegemony is 'a matter of degree, not kind.' (Clark 2009: 208) This thesis agrees. Systems of states exhibit different combinations of characteristics as the pendulum swings across time. The system around Russia is also best characterised by different degrees of hegemony. Deyermond (2009), writing about 'multi-levelled' hegemony in Central Asia, implies that that different degrees of hegemony exist. Russia, the U.S., China, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan all claim some hegemonic influence in Central Asia. Hegemons can act at the sub-regional, regional, and global levels: they can be aspiring, emerging, or in decline.

Clark (2009: 40) adds that hegemony is a 'distinctive political arrangement.' This study agrees that hegemonies entail distinct political processes and dynamics. They are social institutions. Specifically, peripheral states show varying degrees of consent and dissent to the attenuation of their sovereignty, and act either to confer or not confer legitimacy on hegemonic relationships. They use or express their sovereignty to shield themselves from Russian hegemonic actions. Because of the consent and dissent exercised by countries in its periphery, Russia has historically experienced regional hierarchies that varied from relative anarchic constellations dominantly characterised by independent states to more hierarchic systems with Russia on top. Hierarchy is not imposed from above, but rather involves constant dialogue between regional players. The post-Soviet experience has been a fluid one, where the production of legitimacy through consent and dissent has dictated varying degrees of hegemony. Indeed, the initial transition out of the Soviet system itself – Metropolitan Russians no longer directly manipulate peripheries in Eastern Europe and the near-abroad – represents a significant change to the regional hierarchy.

A secondary and related hypothesis is that Russia uses different power logics when exercising its hegemony. Individually, these power logics belong to separate sources of social power (either military, economic, political or ideological); they can also overlap or form tense dialectics that shape regional relationships. At different points in time, one or more of these logics is more dominant or important than others in forming the relationship between Russia and the other CIS states. Michael Mann's (1986, 1993, 2006) conception of four networks of social power is introduced to organise this claim on changing power logics. Employing four types of social power has the heuristic function of setting out broad categories around which to structure the subsequent empirical investigation. By analysing Russian military, economic, political and ideological power, the study provides a concrete and well-rounded evaluation of how Russia's relationships with other CIS countries vary, and addresses where on the anarchy-hierarchy spectrum the system around Russia sits at different points in time.

It is also important to discuss how one can be sure that the observed outcomes are the result of consent and dissent and the exercise of different forms of power, so that this study goes from being exploratory to explanatory. The underlying premise is that different forms of hierarchies affect state behaviour, of dominant as well as subordinate states. Varying forms of hierarchy constrain behaviour and prompt cooperation through institutions, agreements, and the like. This is especially true when the hierarchy is legitimate. When dissented to, hierarchies dis-incentivise such behaviour. Other explanations of Russia's regional role do not pay sufficient attention to the political processes between states that affect the development of a regional system and international society therein. This study does not equate legitimacy with stability, but rather regards it as an integral multi-actor political process in the making of hegemony.

The post-Soviet region as a distinct system of states

An underlying hypothesis of this work is that, even after the extensive disintegration of the USSR, the CIS remains a self-contained system of states. To begin to tackle this hypothesis, this study takes a systemic approach, drawing from neorealist assumptions. Kenneth Waltz (1979: 18), reflecting archetypical neorealism, posits that either a reductionist (inside-out) approach or a systemic (outside-in) approach can be taken.[11] Reductionist explanations concentrate on the national or sub-national levels and study the attributes and interactions of the different parts that make up a state (for example, a country's bureaucracies, leaders, financial system,

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[11]Robert Keohane (1984: 25) uses the alternate 'inside-out' and 'outside-in' labels.

etc.), its *innenpolitik*. The claim is that internal factors generate external results (Waltz 1979: 60), so international systems are also seen to be an outcome of internal processes. Conversely, systemic approaches analyse the attributes of the system as a whole. In defending systemic analyses, Waltz (1979: Chapter 4) explains that cause and effect statements are difficult to make when working from the inside-out because of the abundance and significance of certain peculiarities that are difficult to measure (for example, the details of bureaucratic institutions, the personality of leaders, the wider political atmosphere, etc.). It is difficult to capture every state's idiosyncrasies with one single simplifying theory. This is the main problem with parsimony: a broad brush approach sweeps away what can account for variation in state responses to system-level variables. It is also problematic to make generalisations on the basis of such context-specific variables. Waltz forwards that reductionist theories put themselves at risk of overlooking the wider context and structures of power in which state behaviour occurs.

A systemic explanation is particularly valuable in this context because the variables, actors and motivations in a systemic theory are positional and relational, that is, situational (Keohane 1984: 25).[12] Relational or situational positions are also in line with views that move away from Waltz's neorealism as well as proponents of ontological security as a useful starting point for studying state interest. Social constructivist Alexander Wendt (1999) holds that in order to move from talking about needs to talking about the motivation for ontological security (i.e. security of the self, how states perceive their interests in relation to others and how this affects state identity), socialising actions (i.e. relationships) must be taken into consideration. This study thus begins by incorporating a systemic approach and locating different state actors in the post-Soviet region in relation to Russia in terms of their relative power. In this way, how Russia's perception of itself is formed and sustained is not only bound up closely with identity and material power, but is also intrinsically dependent on others in the regional system.

A systemic approach helps to examine why the states of the CIS (not simply the states around Russia, which could include the states of the EU, China and Baltic States) form a system. This thesis holds that in the post-Soviet period the CIS region is indeed distinct. It is distinct because of the processes of hierarchy formation that revolve around Russia; all of the states of the CIS share a common systemic characteristic. The system has varied in tightness, and at times has been disaggregated and highly contested. Buzan (2007) and Buzan and Waever (2006) hold

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[12] In Keohane's (1984: 25) words, they 'refer to the location of each actor relative to others.'

that the region of the former Soviet Union represents a regional system of states because the states within it have common security concerns that differentiate the system from other regions. The national securities from each individual country cannot be considered independently from each other. To use Buzan's (2007) term, a Regional Security Complex with its distinct security patterns can exist whether or not the regional members acknowledge its existence. This thesis agrees that the countries of the CIS constitute a distinct region, though it does not solely concentrate on the security concerns of Russia and the other countries of the CIS and does not intend on contributing to the scientific debate on what constitutes a 'region.' The post-Soviet region is based on a distinct pattern of hierarchy around Russia. Lake (2009: 40) agrees that hierarchies have the tendency to 'cluster' regionally,[13] 'with many states possessing relatively similar levels of subordination to the same dominant state.' Yielding sovereignty at the regional level reinforces and perpetuates some extent of hierarchy, which creates distinct regional systems. States within a region share a 'common condition.' (Lake 2009: 40) This study holds that the different players in the CIS region in both action and discourse acknowledge and respond to regional hierarchy, which fluctuates significantly in tightness. The resultant consent and dissent to different levels of hierarchy and diminishing sovereignty delineates a distinct pattern that is unique to the CIS. This general pattern is one of hegemony. Within this general pattern however, distinctions can be made between groups of countries and individual countries. This thesis therefore also looks for patters in sub-regional clusters (such as Central Asia), individual countries (such as Belarus), and sub-state groups (such as Abkhazia and South Ossetia).

One can also find empirical arguments in both the Yeltsin and Putin periods that point towards a distinct CIS region. The global constellation of power during the Cold War separated the Soviet Union from the rest of Europe. At the fall of the Soviet Union, the post-Soviet region became increasingly systemically distinct from a potentially enlarged European space (Buzan and Waever 2006: 343). Throughout the 1990s, Russia became less and less concerned in joining a European (and trans-Atlantic) security community with the potential for further economic and political cooperation. During Yeltsin's presidencies, some of the observable factors that define the states of the CIS as a system were left over from Soviet times. Russian military infrastructure and military interests for example dictated a region that continued to feel Moscow's presence. In the early 1990s, this interest was sustained not least because at the fall of the Soviet Union Russia had no border defences against the countries that had

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[13]Lake (2009: 41) holds that 'hierarchy tends to cluster by region for three related reasons: positive externalities, scale economies in producing social order, and international legitimacy.'

constituted a part of the Soviet territory. The sustained security and stability (both militarily and politically) of CIS countries was therefore in Moscow's interest early on after the break-up (Page 1994: 789). Moscow, at least in rhetoric, focused on the states immediately surrounding it. Yet Yeltsin did little to bring about an integrated system and disaggregation continued.

Still, relative interconnectedness with Russia continued (in various forms and to varying degrees). Buzan and Waever (2006: 62) call the system a unilateral complex in which countries are centred on the great power of Russia (Buzan and Waever 2006: 62). This label is particularly valid under Putin after 2003, when some of the CIS states increasingly gravitated towards Russia, as this study shows. Russia had a distinct and tangible interest in the countries of the CIS - what Page (1994) calls a 'sphere of vital interest.' Even though the Soviet republics had become increasingly nationalist and sovereignty-oriented, the governance models of some of them throughout Putin's presidencies (in particular Central Asian regimes) continued to reflect Russia's political preferences to some extent. This made Moscow's interest all the more marked, as it could hope to (re)gain some of its lost influence.

Though the above binding factors hold true and Buzan and Waever's classification is tempting, they paint a rather simplistic picture of the region. Moscow soon learned after the fall of the Soviet Union that regional great powers do not necessarily have extensive capacities in all sectors and are not necessarily involved in all regional processes. Particularly in the second half of the 1990s, the countries of the former Soviet Union all consolidated their own statehood and sovereignty at the expense of uncontested Russian regional dominance. Individual shows of dissent as well as unified attempts to form a counter-coalition to Russia (for example, the GUAM Organization for Democracy and Economic Development or GUAM, later GUUAM) exemplifies a counterbalance to absolute Russian dominance, though this too varied as GUAM/GUUAM rose and declined. The continuous exercise of sovereignty shows how the CIS system vacillates in degrees of centredness on the one hand and sovereign state independence on the other. Thus, though the above are some of the factors that have continued to bind the states of the CIS together, they are not what this study sets out to prove. Rather, it is the distinct and fluctuating constellation of power in the CIS region that is under investigation. The above hypotheses provide an undeterministic gateway for the sober study of Russian relationships and lead to interesting questions about how intersubjectivity and the acting out of relational power have changed in the region as systemic arrangements changed too.

How can different levels of hierarchy, variations across time, as well as consent and dissent be identified? Explaining how this study addresses consent and dissent requires discussion on sources, the basis on which the empirical chapters prove their case. This study holds that variability of hierarchical relationships over time occurs and is understandable through how states relate to each other. Specifically, this thesis focuses both on state conduct and behavioural change as well as state discourse, proposing that neither is sufficient in itself. The empirical chapters look consciously at both types of sources, and attempt to find changes over entire time periods.

State conduct is identified and explained mainly through the use of secondary sources. As an IR work, a portion of this study's empirical element (as well as underlying and background research) is written by drawing from the vast literature that already exists on developments in the CIS region. These academic sources help to provide context. Existing literature has also guided the choices I have made on which key areas of Russian hegemonic actions to study. There are some Russian behaviours and actions that have been relatively more influential in promoting hierarchy than others. Secondary sources are therefore mainly used to identify Russian state practices, as well as other CIS states' behavioural changes that suggest consent or dissent to Russian hegemony. The challenge with these resources is to rework and reorganise existing material in a way that highlights the thesis' core hypothesis. That is, secondary material has been reorganised to underline fluctuating hierarchy in the post-Soviet region, which represents an important aspect of the post-Soviet experience with relational power that has not been studied before.

Authoritative and justificatory discourse is identified and used throughout this study to show consent and dissent to Russian hegemony. Primary sources are used in the empirical chapters for this purpose. These sources both identify specific rhetorical formulations of Russian hegemony as well as other CIS states' responses in the form of consent and dissent. For these purposes, I mostly rely on justificatory discourse for action from political elites;[14] that is, the language that elites use to justify consent and dissent to Russian hegemony. Steffek (2003: 249) analyses discourse to study legitimacy in international governance. He argues that the legitimacy of international governance depends on consent to 'the justification of its goals, principles and procedures.' International organisations 'explain' and 'defend' their positions (Steffek

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[14] For examples that use justificatory discourse and the acceptance of norms (especially in relation to humanitarian intervention and multilateralism), see Martha Finnemore's work (Finnemore 2003: Chapters 3 and 4, Finnemore 2005, Finnemore 1996).

2003: 250). Other actors in the system then 'hear' the communicated justifications, and may assent to them through their own discourse. Voeten (2009) posits that justificatory discourse connotes that a state feels compelled to justify its actions on something other than interest (e.g. in order to show political solidarity or to satisfy public opinion) (Voeten 2009: 537). This discourse can serve to trace a long chain of events that reflects actions and reactions. He also holds that justificatory discourse may be the product of the internalisation of norms. Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) stress the role of justificatory discourse in the context of norms acceptance. They hold that because norms by definition 'embody a quality of 'oughtness' and shared moral assessment, they prompt justifications for action and leave an extensive trail of communication among actors.' (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998: 892)

Hegemony and the dialogue on or negotiation of sovereignty (that can be analysed as a foundational norm in the context of Finnemore's analysis) also encourages justificatory discourse from Russia as well as the other countries of the CIS: Russia often justifies and further explains its hegemonic actions publically, and other CIS states justify agreement or disagreement to those actions and ultimately compliance or noncompliance. This type of justificatory discourse can be seen as a form of political communication between political actors as well as between political actors and the public. It often uses normative language (or language that implies normative positions) that suggests consent or dissent to the type of hierarchy in existence or the type of hegemony that Moscow would like to perpetuate. Though normative language is analysed, there is a wider question of how hierarchy and norms relate to each other to which this study does not attempt to provide an authoritative answer. Consent and dissent through discourse rather helps to establish regional legitimacy.

To exemplify justificatory discourse (and consent and dissent), this study largely draws from official or news/press statements that directly express consent and dissent to Russian hegemonic actions and Russian-led regional hierarchy. I have read through many statements and news stories; the examples of discourse that have ended up in the thesis have been chosen as representative statements. Joint treaties, military doctrines and the like are also used. Primary material is also used to fill in the gaps of literature, especially in the two final empirical chapters on regional multilateral organisations and ideological power about which relatively less work has been done. Discourse is analysed not just as 'text' (i.e. the content of what is said), but also in term of context (for example, considering when and why a certain response was given)

(Schmidt 2008: 305). It serves to represent and justify ideas and actions. In this way, discourse is 'versatile' and 'overreaching.' (Schmidt 2008: 309)

This study holds that Russian actions that denote the attenuation of CIS states' sovereignty spur a 'trail of communication' and dialogue with other CIS states that attempt to negotiate the nature of the post-Soviet regional structure. Justificatory discourse from other CIS countries thus exhibits consent and dissent to that attenuation of sovereignty and serves to communicate legitimacy or lack thereof. Discourse therefore reveals what is and what is not appropriate in Russian hegemony across time, regardless of interest and what is occurring in action. Over time then, consistencies and regularities can be identified. At the same time, one can only have indirect evidence of consent and dissent, just as political motivations and interests are difficult to objectively test for.

This study identifies different types of consent. The types of action or discourse that constitute consent are outlined at the beginning of each empirical chapter. Generally, this study finds that consent is shown by other CIS states to Russian-stated goals, Russian means, Russian-led principles, and resulting Russian influence. The cases used in the first two empirical chapters (on military intervention an economic power) largely involve consent or dissent to Russian stated goals and means. The last two empirical chapters (on multilateral organisations and ideological power) largely involve consent or dissent to Russian-led principles. Because of the difficulty in defining norms in the context of hegemony and legitimacy, consent to norms is not singled out as the sole determinant of legitimacy. All of the cases studied (as well as all of the types of consent and dissent that are present) imply a reaction to Russian influence, and ultimately, to regional hierarchy. Indeed, consent and dissent ultimately is a reflection of the extent to which other countries of the CIS are willing to partially give up their sovereignty.

So then, using both primary and secondary sources, this study emphasises both discourse as well as state practice/behavioural change. In terms of balance, this thesis places relatively more importance on justificatory discourse, where it is available, in the identification of consent and dissent.

Explanatory framework: causal operational logic that considers hegemonic systemic fluctuation around consent and dissent

We can now tie the above hypotheses together in an explanatory framework. Mann's four domains of analysis (military, economic, political and ideological)

introduced in the next chapter give this study a clear framework from which to consider different aspects of Russian hegemonies. This study ties Mann's power logics to Watson's notion of a pendulum, where consent and dissent to different extents of hierarchy act to bring systems towards the hegemonic gravitational centre in the following operational logic for evaluating hegemonic behaviour:

Figure 1.1: Operational logic that considers hegemonic systemic fluctuation around consent and dissent
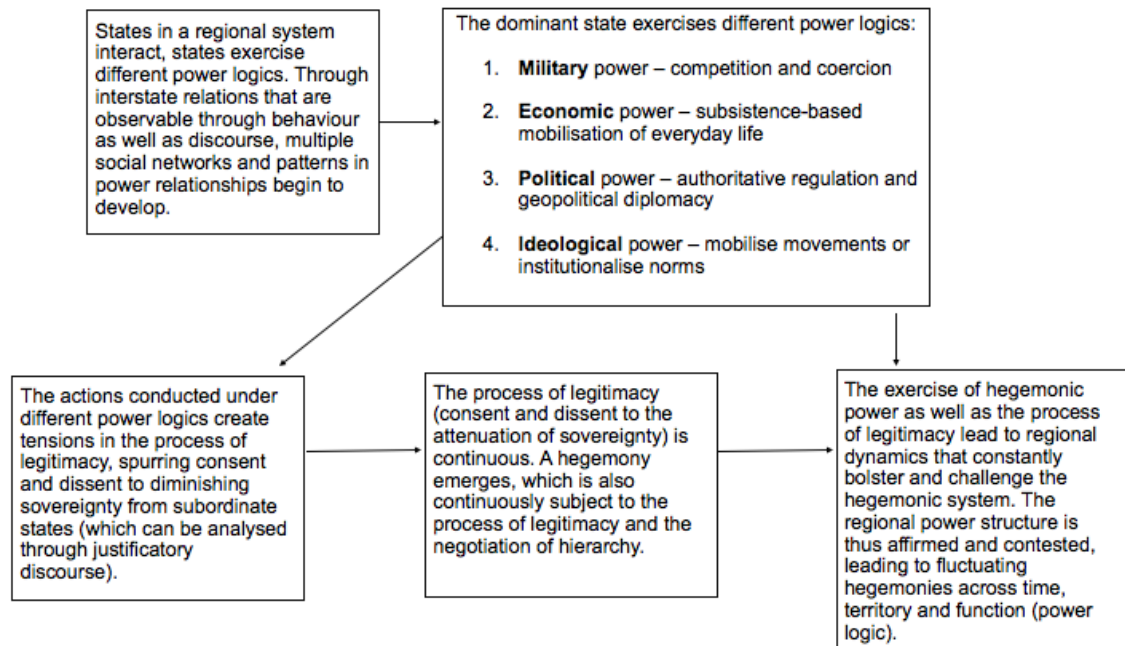
The model is based on both Michael Mann's (1986, 1993) heuristic and analytical application as well as on Adam Watson's (1992) fluctuating international systems with the injection of consent and dissent. Though it is presented in a semi-linear fashion, it can also be seen cyclically, connoting the continuous fluctuation of hegemonies and power logics.

The above figure chooses a starting point on the model where states in a regional system interact. In this interaction, they exercise different power logics – military, economic, political and ideological. Relations begin to develop and interstate networks based on different logics of power are created. Patterns of behaviour and discourse are formed. These relationships and patterns are also acted on by the hegemon's exercise of different power logics. That is, the hegemon uses different power logics to advance its regional hegemony. Subordinate states respond to the hegemon by consenting or dissenting to regional hierarchy; this is the process of legitimacy. Specifically, subordinate states consent or dissent to the hegemon's goals, means, principles, and the type of influence and hierarchical system that is

perpetuated. This process by which states negotiate the 'tightness' or 'looseness' – the extent of anarchy or hierarchy – of a system through consent and dissent engenders tension in the system. The system is thus constantly both supported and challenged by the consent and dissent that subordinate states show to regional hierarchy. The different power logics that are employed in the process result in temporal shifts between military, political, economic and ideological power logics. Applied, the operational model leads to rising and falling hegemonies.

The resulting system in this linear explanation also has the potential to act on the development of an international structure. In this way, the model, when seen cyclically, accounts for feedback loops. A tightly hegemonic system can solidify hegemony and spur increasing consent; it can also spur dissent if it is not based on widespread legitimacy. Similarly, a very loose hegemonic system can act to spur increasingly loose hegemony by encouraging autonomy; it can also leave room for increasing consent if common goals, interests, norms, culture, or other commonalities are perceived.

Chapter outline and arguments

The study is structured in seven chapters, including this one and the conclusions. Every chapter tests the main explanatory framework, whilst also developing specific and self-contained arguments. Chapter two takes the reader through the theoretical background that underlines this work, first dealing with anarchy and hierarchy, then evaluating the process of legitimacy. Developing Watson's (1992) basic premise of a fluid spectrum between an independent system of states and empire, it advances hypotheses about fluctuating hegemony and the way legitimacy is conferred.

Chapters three, four, five and six go on to tackle each one of Mann's (1986) four analytical categories used to examine hegemonies related to each power logic. That is, post-Soviet Russia's military, economic, political and ideological power is examined, whilst considering how such power has been met with consent and dissent from other CIS countries. Within Mann's broader categories, this study has made decisions on what to study in each chapter. These decisions reflect the functional areas in which Russia has most prominently exercised its hegemony; that is, some of the main ways by which Russia promotes regional hierarchy. Consent to these actions therefore implicitly or explicitly suggests consent to at least some form of Russian hierarchy. The military and political chapters are restricted in their content: the military chapter deals

exclusively with Russia's involvement in military conflicts (though other related issues are flagged secondarily through the examination) and the political chapter deals exclusively with Russian-led multilateral projects. The economic and ideological chapters deal with varied issues, but also choose case studies that exemplify Russian power: the economic chapter particularly attends to energy relationships, and the ideological chapter addresses passportisation and citizenship policies, as well as policies aimed at the dissemination of the Russian language.

Two distinct time periods are investigated. Each chapter first explores the post-Soviet Yeltsin period of extended adjustment from the previous system during which various links continued to exist and the goal of some form of re-integration was preserved. Secondly, each chapter considers the period under Putin in which the defence of an ambitious interpretation of Russia's national interest emerged as the single most important factor in policy-making. Although some collective actions continued (for example, in the economic, security and energy fields), the interests of the countries involved were separately defined and Russia sought to attain distinct benefits out of its relationships. Conclusions in each chapter are divided into those regarding Russian agency and those regarding other CIS countries' agency.

Throughout the two periods, security, economic, political and ideational (both social and cultural) factors in the countries of the former Soviet Union were continuously influenced by Russia through power processes that were intended to strengthen Russia's regional position. However, the forms of influence, the tools used as leverage as well as the response to Russian power changed considerably. All of the changes observable in Russia's regional actions and other countries' responses highlight why it is important to speak of Russian relationships and power systems by focusing on fluidity - not to account for exceptions or inconsistencies, but rather to describe the ebb and flow nature of the power that Russia exercises. Only an understanding of an anarchy-hierarchy continuum, which takes account of the back-and-forth nature of Russian power, allows one to fully capture the changing nature of the post-Soviet system.

Finally, the thesis' conclusions speak to the specific method that has been laid out in this chapter and the next, ultimately answering how Russian actions and other CIS states' consent and dissent have shaped the post-Soviet region. By having narrowed in on specific cases in the previous chapters, regional as well as country trends are also discerned. A wider discussion about the nature of hierarchy also ensues, with a focus on variation over time, function and territory. On the basis of the

cases studied, this thesis also identifies some additional variables and elements that are important (though not exclusive) in determining how the sovereignty of other CIS states plays out.

Chapter 2: Theoretical underpinnings
The anarchy-hierarchy spectrum and the process of legitimacy

This chapter proposes that one can begin to explain state behaviour only after understanding that the regional system[15] in which constituent states operate is ordered through a fluid structure where relationships and hard bargaining exist in the drive for agency as well as relational power. Systems can be seen to exist on a metaphorical pendulum, which this study elaborates, based on Adam Watson's (1992) basic premise that systems swing between anarchy and hierarchy. Watson's pendulum is based on his spectrum that ranges from absolute state independence on one end to absolute empire on the other, with hegemony, suzerainty and dominion in between (all concepts that are explained below, see Figure 2.3). For Watson (1992: 131), the gravitational centre of the pendulum lies at the point along the swing with the 'optimum mix of legitimacy and advantage.' This most stable condition has a tendency to exhibit hegemonic relations. Using a fluid spectrum as a starting influence, the study turns to Ian Clark's work on legitimacy (Clark 2003, 2005, 2009) to explore how the pendulum swings: consent and dissent to different degrees of diminishing sovereignty act to pull it towards either anarchy or hierarchy. The response of other states to hierarchic relations is in this way just as central to a system's ultimate characterisation on the spectrum as the actions of the hegemon. In other words, legitimacy as a process (rather than outcome) of consent and dissent to the attenuation of sovereignty is at the core of the argument. Both hegemonic actions as well as other states' responses work to form system constellations of power.

The gravitational centre of the anarchy-hierarchy pendulum on which consent and dissent work lies at hegemony. This position on the spectrum is characterised by the existence of a dominant power, but depends on a regular and open-ended dialogue on the attenuation of sovereignty. The system thus remains in some respects hierarchical with a preponderant power, whose power is conferred through consent; and in some respects an anarchic one, with sovereign states whose independence is solidified through dissent. The post-Soviet system around Russia exhibits some signs of more tightly hierarchical systems (particularly in the cases of the secessionist areas in Georgia and in the cases of Russian relations with the Central Asian countries as well as Belarus and Armenia which largely consent to a relatively hierarchic Russian-led region). However, expressions of individual sovereignty and dissent towards

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[15] A regional system can be considered as being sub-systematic in a three-level categorisation that identifies the state; the region; and the wider system or global level. What I am highlighting here is that the focus is not on the unit, or state level. For a discussion on the importance of studying the regional level see Buzan 2007 (Chapter 5, 157-188) and Buzan and Waever 2003 (480-483).

Russian dominance tend to swing the metaphorical pendulum to some type of hegemony.

This chapter is dedicated to an analysis of systems. It offers a contrasting approach to Waltz's (1979) anarchy-hierarchy dyad and is influenced both by Watson's (1992, 1993) theoretical spectrum of international systems and Clark's (2003, 2005, 2009) work on legitimacy. The rest of the thesis interprets consent and dissent to different levels of regional hierarchy as evidence of a pendulum effect in the post-Soviet system of states. It examines the pattern of variation over the post-Soviet period and addresses the following questions that are based on the theoretical background established by this chapter:

1. How far has the pendulum swung at different points in time and how has it related to different sources of power?
2. To what extent is the system around Russia one that can best be located at the point of hegemony on this spectrum?
3. How has the process of legitimacy (consent and dissent) been involved in forming hegemony?

We proceed to a layered account of Russian hegemony, mapping out the intersection between consent and dissent.

Systems of anarchy and hierarchy

A discussion about the systemic conditions of anarchy and hierarchy must necessarily precede any description of the regional system surrounding Russia and the nature of relations within it; for hegemony only exists if the relationships entered into by states exhibit some form of political authority (Watson 1992). As a matter of rudimentary definition, a relationship between states is anarchic if actors enjoy no authority or power over each other. Conversely, the relationship can be identified as hierarchic when a state(s) possesses the 'right to make residual decisions' (though not necessarily in all areas) while the subordinate members lack this right (Lake 2007: 50, Lake 1996: 7). This study introduces the theme of legitimacy as a process or dialogue, which adds an important dimension to how relationships and power constellations are negotiated and sustained.

The concepts of hierarchy and anarchy have long been present in the study of IR. The basic dichotomy between anarchic and hierarchic relationships in IR theory can

be traced to Kenneth Waltz's (1979) understanding of political structure and his focus on the centrality of structural constraints (that can be either felt or not felt) on state behaviour. Waltz (1979: 91) suggests that international systems are anarchic, formed by structures and the politics of independent 'self-regarding units' (states) that 'coact.' Though the structure is anarchic, the polarity of the system depends on the distribution of capabilities. Waltz (1979: 115), in the name of 'clarity and economy of concepts,' posits that all systems are either anarchic or hierarchic. Although systems are mixed and contain elements of both (i.e. there will be elements of hierarchy in anarchical systems and elements of anarchy in hierarchical systems), only one of the ordering principles will characterise the system at-large. Waltz's systemic explanation is meant to account for the persistence of international systems rather than to explain change. Waltz argues that system transformation can be traced to structures within states and is therefore beyond the realm of his systemic approach.

Along these lines, much of IR theory[16] has been lopsided. Arguing that the international system is anarchic, many IR debates – focusing on topics like international hegemony, international monetary arrangements and international military involvements – have tended to ignore the intricacies of hierarchic relationships as well as the internal mechanisms within states that help to shape them (Ikenberry 2001, Cohen 2004, Liberman 1996).[17] It is exactly because of the limitations in Waltz's and much of IR's analysis (i.e. their failure to discuss hierarchy) that Adam Watson (1992) wrote *The Evolution of International Society*: to place systemic analysis in an historical context and discuss anarchy and hierarchy in the way that they relate to systemic changes. Other related academic disciplines such as Comparative Politics and Historical/International Sociology – focusing on topics like colonial government, multinational states and revolution – have tended to ignore the international level (Halliday 1999, Young 1994, Bunce 1999, Laitin 1998).[18] Focusing on inside-out analyses of processes within countries, the gap that exists in such approaches to the anarchy-hierarchy debate is the opposite to the one that has tended to exist in IR literature.[19]

If one examines the history of international systems (Watson 1992, Buzan and Little 2000: Part III, Part IV) it is unmistakable that systems can shift or transform between anarchic and hierarchic phases. At the most basic level, the anarchy bias of

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[16] In particular, the IR neorealist tradition as well as the IR neoliberal institutionalist tradition (both forceful presences in the discipline). The very definition of neorealism includes the assumption of anarchy.
[17] On international hegemony, see Ikenberry (2001); on international monetary arrangements, see Cohen (2004); on international military involvements, see Liberman (1996).
[18] On revolution see Halliday (1999); on colonial governance, see Young (1994); on multinational states, see Bunce (1999) and Laitin (1998).
[19] This distinction between disciplines and gaps therein is also noted by Alexander Cooley (2005: 9).

IR is unfounded: international systems exhibit hierarchic characteristics to varying levels of intensity. Waltz's neglect of systemic transformation then is also misguided. The section that follows is based on Adam Watson's (1992) account of order in international systems that begins to bridge the gap between IR's focus on anarchy and the focus of Sociology, Comparative Politics and much of Foreign Policy Analysis on sub-national or intra-state forces.

This study is largely informed by the English School[20] assumption of fluidity in and the cyclical nature of international systems that highlights how far IR has come from Waltz's parsimonious take on anarchy and hierarchy. Whilst no single international or global authority exists, an international society with institutional mechanisms can serve to counterbalance anarchy. States, aware of shared interests, voluntarily bind themselves through common rules and institutions (Bull 2002: 13). This is the contention made by members of the English School, who highlight the non-deterministic nature of anarchy in international relations. Buzan and Little (2000: 233) make the English School assumption clear: 'No structural phase is permanent: anarchies are vulnerable to centralisation, and empires are vulnerable to fragmentation.' By admitting that international societies exist (as opposed to international systems where states merely coact in calculation of other states' behaviour), English School scholars can take a comparative approach to the study of international relations, where international systems (in most cases, Europe) can be studied in stages of development.

One can begin to talk about different degrees of hegemony and study a system's ebb and flow only after admitting that systems vary in tightness (i.e. they are bound to neither an anarchy/hierarchy binary nor to one specific form of structure). Such an understanding of inter-state relationships is at the crux of this study. Paying attention to the anarchy/hierarchy ebb and flow of systems means that the focus is now on system transformation, analysing the factors that affect stability and change, rather than on the status quo condition of systems. This study traces how material interests/circumstances as well as legitimacy decide on the type of system that exists. This is where consent and dissent come in, the focus of the later part of this chapter.

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[20] Robert Jackson (1992: 271) explains that the English School is 'a variety of theoretical inquiries which conceive of international relations as a world not merely of power or prudence or wealth or capability or domination but also one of recognition, association, membership, equality, equity, legitimate interests, rights, reciprocity, customs and conventions, agreements and disagreements, disputes, offences, injuries, damages, reparations, and the rest: the normative vocabulary of human conduct.' English School approaches have been espoused by Hedley Bull, Martin Wight, Tim Dunne and Barry Buzan.

In contrast to a dyadic international structure, Adam Watson's *The Evolution of International Society*[21] (1992: Chapter 1) delineates a notional spectrum that ranges from absolute state independence – or absolute anarchy – on one end to absolute empire – or absolute hierarchy – on the other. Lake's (2006: 25) conceptualisation of hierarchy offered above as a system of authoritative relationships implicitly supports this claim of nuance. Authority does not suggest that a state has authority over another in all issue-areas; authority can expand and contract depending on context. As a continuous variable, there is a spectrum between no authority and full authority. The notion that international systems are fluid and can change over time means that competition and hard bargaining can exist between states in their quest for relative power and authority - an important point to bear in mind as the study approaches the topic of legitimacy.

At this point it is important to interject with a central underlying assumption of this study: the regional system around post-Soviet countries lends itself to hierarchic leadership at least to some extent. The breakup of the Soviet Union left power vacuums in many countries as well as economic and security-related instability across the region that necessitated coordinated management. Russia is the most logical actor to exhibit at least some leadership or hegemonic role. The country's relative economic and military weight as well as historical position suggests that it has the potential and interest to create order and sustainable relationships in its drive for ontological security. Beyond these capabilities, international developments traced by this study (for example, different regional organisations, the insistence on special regional status, etc.) suggest that a hegemonic role exists.

Watson takes a comparative approach to support the claim that international structures can be located along a continuum, using historical examples of international systems[22] that reach from ancient times to the present. This study is influenced by Watson's framework as an analytically insightful entry point from which to think about

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[21]Adam Watson's The Evolution of International Society (1992) is an historical account of how international societies developed across the span of world history. It is a discerning merger of history and theory, one that seeks to accommodate different kinds of systems that have appeared. From international systems and international societies, Watson adds an even tighter constellation: empire. He then moves to discount Waltz's dyad by explaining how the different shades of grey that lie between the two extremes deserve more attention in the anarchy-hierarchy debate; they add nuance and context to a crudely dichotomous discussion.

[22] The IR notion of international systems (now usually associated with the English School tradition) normally assumes anarchy, as it describes the relationships of independent states. Therefore, to be able to understand Watson's argument, one must adopt a more fluid definition of the term. Instead of seeing an international system as a static categorisation of state interactions at one point in time, it is important to understand the term as a 'historical phenomenon' that can shift along an independent state – empire continuum. In this way, none of Watson's typologies are permanent; one set of relationships can move through several phases of international systems (Buzan and Little: 1994: 249). Furthermore, international systems are relatively self-contained, meaning that they have 'some kind of frontier at which strategic (but not necessarily economic or societal) interaction ceases or fades away.' (Buzan and Little 2000: 233)

changing forms and intensities of power. This chapter indicates wherever Watson's framework has been developed by this thesis' findings.

Watson proposes the following continuum, where each step to the right denotes an increase in political centralisation and control:

Figure 2.1: Adam Watson's independent state – empire spectrum

Independent states	Hegemony	Suzerainty	Dominion	Empire

← ── →

Independent/sovereign states international system (anarchic)   Imperialistic international system (hierarchic)
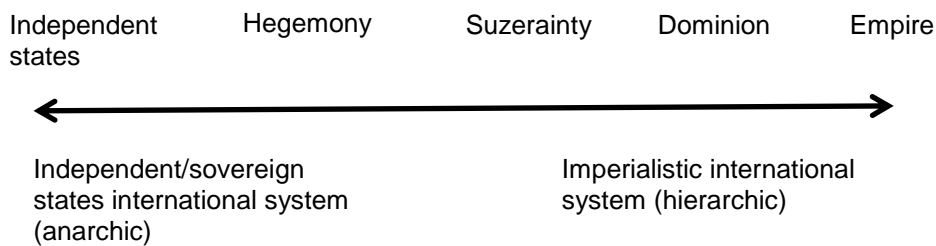
The following figure summarises the key analytical devices that differentiate forms of hierarchies:

Figure 2.2: Key analytical devices differentiating hierarchies

2. Secondary states begin to lose control over external decisions   4. Secondary states begin to lose control over domestic politics

Sovereign states ← ── → Core and periphery imperial centralisation

1. Leader in the system emerges   3. Authority begins to be unchallenged
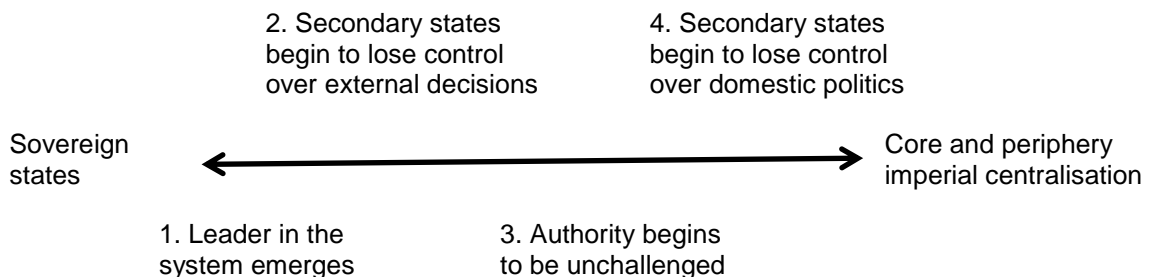
Empire[23] lies at the far end of the spectrum.[24] Empire, like pure anarchic systems, does not exist in absolute form and is therefore largely irrelevant to any study that focuses on system nuances. This study adds that in empire, there is no dialogue present on the extent of hierarchy, because the core dictates the accepted level of control and the standards of behaviour therein. In practice however, even imperial

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[23] At the theoretical level, empires are characterised by direct and at times coercive administration of different communities from a penetrating and controlling core. Political power is highly centralised, forming a discernible order where subordinate units do not retain their independence and are reduced to provinces.
[24] In beginning to further unravel Watson's spectrum, it is useful to begin at the hierarchic end of the spectrum. Reading through Watson's work it is clear that he is less interested in systems in terms of anarchy - rather, his typologies are compared to tightly organised empires, distinguished in terms of the degrees of authority exercised by a leading political community/communities. Buzan and Little, in their introduction to the 2009 reissue of Watson's work, perhaps visualise the spectrum as a series of concentric circles around an imperial core (Buzan and Little 2009: xxvi).

authorities do not have complete control over decision making; involvements with third parties (e.g. other states, multilateral commitments, non-state actors, etc.), direct relationships and bargaining with subordinate actors also affect and modify the authorities' behaviour.[25]

As the imperial core makes concessions, willingly accepting some degree of independence and influence, Watson introduces two fuzzier concepts in which imperial qualities continue to be exhibited. Firstly, there are dominion systems. Such systems include an imperial power that intervenes in subordinate states' external actions as well as domestic decision-making. Although the states maintain their formal independence and state identity, the overarching authority is also perceived as having the coercive capacities to affect internal procedures and decisions. Aspects of a dominion relationship are apparent in the way that Moscow perceives its relationship with the separatist areas in Georgia, analysed in the last empirical chapter. To the dominion typology this study adds that there is little dialogue on the extent of hierarchy present between the dominant power and the subject. The interference from the core is so large that there is little possibility to contest imposed hierarchy.

Secondly, there are suzerainties. When contextualised, suzerain systems can describe a loose 'overlordship' that is more formal (or officially accepted) than it is applied. Martin Wight (1977: 23) further explains that the difference between an independent state system (with or without a hegemonic power) and a suzerain state system is that in the latter there is only one permanent and unchallengeable authority (also discussed in Bull 2002: 10). Conversely, hegemonic systems can be constantly subject to dispute, since all of its units possess juridical sovereignty (Jackson 1990). Suzerain authorities can also be legitimate hegemonic powers in that the societies over which they rule have (explicitly or implicitly) consented to the arrangement (Watson 1990: 103). Here, although each state remains independent, they concede a subordinate position in relation to the dominant player. Consent in the imperial side of the spectrum then, pulls a system towards hierarchy. Aspects of a suzerain system, when defined as legitimate hegemony, are apparent in some cases where regional hierarchy is accepted by regimes that tend to also conform in their behaviours: for example, in the cases of Central Asian countries and Belarus. To the suzerainties typology, this study adds that some dialogue on the extent of hierarchy may be present. In severe cases, suzerainties are so entrenched that there is little contestation.

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[25] A good example of this dynamic is the British Raj. In the 19th century, local Indian counsellors were appointed to advise the British authority. Municipals corporations, provincial councils and district boards all included Indian members. This gave the impetus for further self-government.

In less severe cases, suzerainties are consented to and are therefore relatively legitimate systems.

Based on the effect of consent, Watson notes that international systems that have experience with suzerainty and with dominion are theoretically more likely to move towards hierarchy. Such systems are accustomed to some degree of imperial control, and can therefore more easily accept the loss of independent status, especially when the new system allows for a significant degree of cultural autonomy. In this case, communities perceive added prosperity and security as a result of ceding power to a central authority and therefore consent to the relative loss of sovereignty. However, where subject communities are suppressed, they are less likely to accept political alignment with the core as well as to comply peacefully with the new order; they are more likely to show dissent. This drive to fragmentation (the opposite trend to consent and attained legitimacy) leads Watson to posit that in suzerain, dominion, and empire systems, there is a propensity to autonomy (Watson 1992: 125).[26] This study adds that a system's propensity to autonomy is characterised by increased dialogue on the extent of hierarchy in a system and resultant dissent to hierarchy promoted by the core state. Therefore, dissent in the hierarchic side of the spectrum always implies increasing anarchy.

Next comes the single most important section in Watson's spectrum. Though any number of intermediate positions along the continuum are theoretically possible, Watson remains fixated on hegemony: a position that remains at the independence end of the spectrum where states are sovereign, but where there is a leader (or multiple leaders) with the capacity to influence how states interact with each other to some extent. That is, the external decisions made by subordinate states are no longer absolutely independent, although their internal decisions remain under their own control. To use Lake's terms, the hegemon commands partial authority. Because each state is still formally independent, a system characterised by hegemony remains relatively anarchic. Importantly, hegemony does not imply constant consent or pure voluntary cooperation. This study adds that hegemonies are characterised by regular and open-ended dialogue between states that remain independent enough to constantly negotiate the system through their consent and dissent to different levels of hierarchy.

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[26]The propensity to autonomy in the imperial side of the spectrum 'corresponds to some extent to the more marked propensity to hegemony' in the anarchic side of the spectrum (Watson 1992: 125).

If hegemony is all-important, then independent state systems serve only as a theoretical extreme on which a gravitational pull is exerted.[27] All systems and relationships therein affect a state's absolute freedom of choice; even agreements that states enter into consensually modify state actions in one way or another (Krasner 1995/6). English School notions of interdependence, shared norms and coordination change the way that states think about each other by forming a new order (or international society) based on mutual cooperation and benefit and therefore affect the way that states behave.[28] The actions of independent states are always constrained, even through the implicit pressures of self-imposed interdependence or voluntary choice. Systems always exhibit some form of hierarchy, deflating realist claims of ubiquitous anarchy. This study adds that systems approaching anarchy are ones where the negotiation of sovereignty has shaped system-wide legitimacy that is incongruent with any tight hierarchical form. Continuous dialogue and negotiation of hierarchy and sovereignty in many cases, especially when there is a shared culture or historical experiences, can move such systems closer to hegemony. Russia's post-Soviet experience with certain countries and over certain issues suggests that such relatively anarchic relationships could form (especially with Georgia).

In his concluding remarks about ancient international systems, Watson (1992: 123) posits that a 'central fact' about systems made up of independent states (that is, in the anarchic side of the spectrum) is a 'propensity to hegemony.' This 'fact' acts as the counterbalance to the propensity to autonomy in the imperial part of the spectrum. Together, these two movements create a gravitational centre in Watson's spectrum to which systems are pulled. Watson observes that a propensity to hegemony is especially the case where a shared or dominant culture exists. To use Watson's example, although a hegemony was established in the Sumerian system through coercive measures, the common understanding that the kingship had to be located in one place as well as a shared religion ultimately legitimised hegemonic authority. This study adds that a system's propensity to hegemony is characterised by dialogue on just how far it is acceptable to attenuate sovereignty. Relatively sustainable hegemony implies ultimate legitimacy of some form of hierarchy.

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[27] State actors in a purely independent state system where power is decentralised absolutely have the seemingly unconstrained ability to make their own internal and external decisions. Lake (2006: 26) calls this theoretical condition the 'ideal of Westphalian sovereignty.' Watson's independencies are not merely an academic formality that may or may not be practically evident. For Watson, freedom in decision-making is both official as well as exercised. It is because of this utopian view of state relationships that an extreme form of this first typology cannot be found empirically.

[28] Such a notion of mutual benefit is a feature of what Watson (1992) calls raison système: the notion that a working international system is beneficial for all.

The process by which hegemony is established is far from straightforward, and questions regarding legitimacy and how consent and dissent work to form hegemony are left largely unanswered by only looking at Watson's work. Watson does reflect that hegemonic powers often attempt to ensure that subordinate states conform to their policies by endorsing supportive governments in order to make their hegemony more palpable. During Soviet times too, large sums of money were spent on propaganda campaigns to promote the communist system abroad, and communist leaders in eastern and south-eastern Europe were effectively socialised. Post-1991, Moscow has tried hard to preserve leaders with similar foreign policy outlooks that consent to Russian dominance. The relevance here of preserving legitimacy suggests the importance of evaluating how consent and dissent interact in hegemonic systems.

Moving beyond Watson: negotiating legitimacy through consent and dissent to the attenuation of sovereignty

Though Watson's basic intuition about the changing nature of international systems is heuristically useful, it is not sufficient by itself, as it does not do enough to differentiate how coercion and legitimacy are distributed along the spectrum. Starting from an imperial core and working outwards, Watson's logic focuses on the coercive side of international society and on the whole remains relatively silent on arguments about consent and legitimacy.[29] However, the very notion of vacillating international systems (and the changing role of a relatively powerful state at the core of the system) stresses the relational tension between core and periphery. A Watsonian approach, moving through different stages in a spectrum, suggests that legitimacy cannot be taken for granted. Thus, this study sees all of Watson's types as dialectically formed political relationships. Hegemonies – and all systems of states – are social institutions.

Legitimacy (for a good overview of debate, see Hurrelmann, Schneider and Steffek 2007: Chapters 9 and 10) is important in this study when analysing how and to what extent Russia sustains its relationships with other CIS countries. Often, legitimacy connotes a focus on civil society (or citizens) seeking to overthrow illegitimate governance. However, this study has defined its terms as state-to-state (more specifically, how regimes or state authorities show consent and dissent). In the post-Soviet period many of the new CIS state leaders sought their own domestic level regime legitimacy by appealing to nationalist symbols and sovereignty in efforts to escape the Russian 'big brother.' Later, it became more apparent to some of these rulers that Moscow was helping to confirm their rule and therefore to support regime stability. At the interstate level then, some CIS state authorities viewed as 'legitimate'

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[29] Watson's definition of hegemony discussed below makes this abundantly clear.

the unequal relations with Russia that resulted. At the same time, some leaders continued to show dissent to Russian hegemony at the bilateral as well as multilateral level.

Legitimacy is a crucial analytical concept for this study. A detailed working definition of the concept is developed in the sections that follow. In summary, this study defines legitimacy as a process. It is a process characterised by constant negotiation of different extents of hierarchy that engenders tension in a regional system. In this case, legitimacy is the dialectic between consent and dissent shown by CIS regimes to concentrated Russian power.[30] This may sometimes involve consent or dissent to the goals, means and principles defining a hegemonic relationship. If consented to, these goals, means and principles can endow that relationship with legitimacy. The following discussion explains an understanding of legitimacy in a hegemonic system based on the dialectic between consent and dissent to hierarchy. Also explained below, this study holds that authority structures play a secondary role in the formation of legitimacy; normative principles are more important in determining legitimacy.

Bringing consent and dissent back into hegemony

Legitimacy, which is traditionally seen as a key element in non-coercive compliance (Hurd 1999), is a concept that has often been used polemically. It has been disputed as an analytical tool for serious research by a portion of social science academia because it is difficult to specify using objective criteria (Levi 1988: 17, Beetham 1991: 8). The discipline of International Relations has also traditionally been averse to the concept of legitimacy. For IR, legitimacy seems inapplicable to an anarchic international sphere that lacks a governing leviathan with the right to rule under a set of acceptable rules - a prerequisite for having (or not having) legitimacy (Williams 1998: 2). The 'international' has traditionally been seen as being void of organised communities that would make legitimacy sustainable (Clark 2005: 11). The result is a body of IR literature that has typically neglected the concept (observation made by Vincent and Wilson 1993: 129, Clark 2005: 11).

Clark (2009) examines how the English School has also been generally vague about its treatment of legitimacy in relation to hegemony. Wight (1977) and Bull (1977) are restricted by historic examples that do not take into account American dominance and power analysed more recently (Ikenberry 1989, Ikenberry 1998/9, Haas 1999,

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[30] When this study talks of legitimacy then, it is not in line with more recent normative literature that focuses on the relationship between citizens and governments or international organisations.

Kagan 2002, Hurrell 2005, Agnew 2004, Krahmann 2005, Layne 1993/1998/2006). As noted, Wight (1977: 23) does speak of accepted and unchallenged power in suzerainty, where the suzerain can be a legitimate authority. However, for Wight legitimacy does not factor into his discussion of hegemony, though his conceptualisation of great powers suggests that recognition by others is key in defining a state's power (Wight 1979: 45-6, also referred to in Clark 2009: 211). Bull (1977) underlines the importance of recognition. For him, a spectrum exists with dominance at one end, primacy at the other, and hegemony in the middle. Dominance is characterised by coercion; primacy is consented to by the weaker states and can express 'the recognition by [those states] of the disproportionately large contribution which the great power is able to make to the achievement of common purposes.' (Bull 2002: 207-208). Hegemony for Bull lies between the two extremes (Bull 2002: 209). Hegemons sometimes resort to coercion, and at other times rely on recognition. Again, Bull avoids a clear correlation between hegemony and legitimacy.

Watson too remains on the fence. Even his more recently developed definition of hegemony in *Hegemony and History,* that unlike his 1992 version admits the interference of the hegemon in internal matters, (2007: 90)[31] reads:

> 'By hegemony I mean the material condition of technological, economic and strategic superiority which enables a single great power or group of powers, or the great powers acting collectively, to bring such great inducements and pressures to bear that most other states lose some of their external and internal independence.'

Clark (2009: 208) notes that there is little that is English School about this definition. It reads much like a realist account that favours primacy solely in material sectors. No reference is made to the conferral of power by other states to the hegemon(s); no reference is made to legitimacy. The definition has lost all sense that hegemony constitutes a political arrangement where weaker states also play an important role. This study is not interested solely on a material analysis of hegemony or the sole agency of the hegemon in amassing power; it is also interested in the process by which that power is constituted, that is, the social relationship by which hegemonic status is bestowed. In this way, hegemony is both about material power and social recognition. This notion becomes clearer below where Clark's 2009 work is further explained. Therefore, though this study agrees with Watson in seeing hegemony as a process and

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[31] This thesis does not agree with Watson's initial definition of hegemony, which did not include influence over internal affairs: '[Hegemony implies] that some power or authority in a system is able to 'lay down the law' about the operation of the system, that is to determine to some extent the external relations between member states, while leaving them domestically independent.' (Watson 1992: 15)

that it is a matter of degree rather than a matter of kind, it does not accept Watson's largely material definition.

Moreover, Watson's hegemony envisions some degree of hegemonic control over the internal affairs of subordinate states. Moscow has certainly not been able to determine such relations (indeed, the CIS organisational charter explicitly rejects the idea of central control). Instead, Moscow influences other CIS states through its partiality that can serve to deepen grievances between parties (be they inter-state relations or state-subunit relations). Russia's relationship with other post-Soviet countries has also at times limited their foreign policy choices. At the same time, Russia has been at times more influential for the domestic situation of countries, especially given the case of ethnic Russians living abroad. For example, Russia's military involvements in other post-Soviet countries have at times frozen political structures, affecting the basic framework in which domestic political decisions are made.

Watson delineates the continuous process of exchange that must be present in hegemonic systems, giving solid ground to start working from. In so doing, Watson cues some of the methodological source material that this study relies on. Hegemonies, Watson says, 'involve continual dialogue between the hegemonial authority and the other states, and a sense on both sides of the balance of expediency.' (Watson 2007: 20) Furthermore, he states that 'hegemonial authority... derives additional advantages by making the exercise of hegemony acceptable to other members of the society.' (Watson 2007: 58) Even in his earlier work, Watson (1992: 130) admits that 'time and familiarity legitimise practice.' When he first developed his spectrum, legitimacy for Watson (1992: 17) was the 'acceptance of authority, the right of a rule or a ruler to be obeyed, as distinguished from the power to coerce. It is determined by the attitudes of those who obey an authority.' Note the dyad between coercion and legitimacy. States with relatively influential power are pulled towards the point along the spectrum where the states they influence feel the most comfortable, thus helping to consolidate a long-term structure of relations. In this way, legitimacy can be a source of stability and continuity. Additionally, Watson's analysis of ancient state systems suggests that abrupt movements along the spectrum are made easier or lubricated by legitimate governance. Maintaining established status quo realities can lead to what could be construed as legitimacy, even if the status quo is no longer compatible with the interests of others. Thus, long-standing relationships of legitimacy can enable the system to more easily tighten and loosen along the spectrum. In this way, legitimacy can be 'the oil that [lubricates] the operative machinery of a system.'

(Watson 1992: 131) Legitimacy is thus a key factor in 'determining the stability of a system at any given time.' (Watson 1992: 135)

Adding this push-pull dynamic based on consent and dissent allows this study to complement the conception of a fluid anarchy-hierarchy spectrum. Watson uses the metaphor of a pendulum to describe how systems are constantly 'swinging' between types (see figure 2.3 below).[32] For Watson (1992: 131), the gravitational centre, or resting point of the pendulum lies at the point along the swing with the 'optimum mix of legitimacy and advantage.' This most stable condition has shifted over time, as Watson shows in his comprehensive historical review. At the same time, there is a tendency in systems to exhibit hegemonic relations.

Figure 2.3: A simplified pendulum, showing hegemony as gravitational centre
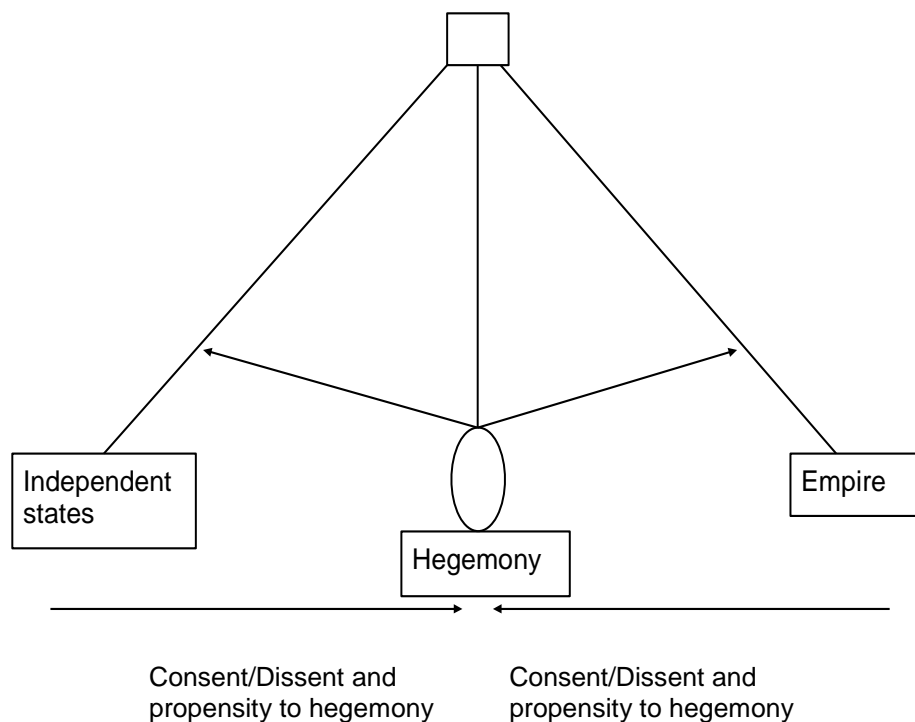
Figure based on Buzan and Little (2009: xxviii)

This study holds that it is the process of legitimacy that swings the pendulum. More specifically, the change in location along the spectrum is defined by legitimacy.

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[32] Watson explains that there are three factors that determine the centre of gravity (1992: 131): the Sein (what is, the balance of material advantage for the ruler and the ruled), the Sollen (the normative 'ought to be', the point of greatest legitimacy for both the ruler and the ruled), and the tendency to swing away from the two extremes of independent states and empire. The Sein and the Sollen, as well as the propensity to hegemony in the independencies half of the spectrum, pull systems towards the most stable condition. Watson notes the 'pull of the pendulum' in the experience of European society. Generalising from the European experience to other systems at the independences end of the spectrum, he posits that there is a tendency for the strongest actor (or actors) to establish a hegemonic order in a system otherwise anarchic. In a dynamic and changing system where constant negotiation of power takes place, the result is a 'succession of hegemonies,' (Wight 1977)[26] where the hegemonies are the leitmotiv of society (Watson 1992: 252).

Fluctuating hegemony and changing systems therefore involve a constant negotiation of different forms of hierarchy. The following section proposes a concrete way by which one can study the process of legitimacy: by examining consent and dissent to the attenuation of sovereignty.

How this study applies consent and dissent: the negotiation of sovereignty in the pendulum effect

Noting the difficulties in conceptualising hegemony and legitimacy,[33] analysing the effect of consent and dissent is paramount (not least in order to apply Watson's pendulum to this study). Consent and dissent from the other countries of the CIS to Russian hierarchy form the most important factors in determining the tightness or looseness of the regional system around Russia. One needs to find a way of understanding this dialectic that makes empirical sense. From an English School perspective, Ian Clark's work (2003, 2005, 2009) provides the most solid account of what legitimacy could mean in terms of international society and, more specifically, in terms of hegemony. Key to Clark's (2009) argument is that hegemony, as a community of states, is an institution of international society based on both material power and social recognition (Clark 2009: 214).[34] In other words, hegemony is not only about material power, but also about the appeal that power represents (Clark 2010). This directly relates to this thesis' rejection of the purely material definition originally offered by Watson. Watson's original definition does not leave room for complex relationships between states that interact in a hegemonic system that are not solely based on material interests and gains. Again, Deyermond's (2009) account of different hegemons in Central Asia also implies that material power alone is not the only defining factor that determines who has ultimate influence in a region. Hegemony involves states interacting on the basis of non-material interests and the hegemon's less tangible power of attraction. This thesis thus studies different degrees of hegemony that also depend on social, cultural and ideational evaluations of hierarchical relationships.

Clark also posits that hegemony is a primary institution, in that it 'designates the distinctive character of international society.' (Clark 2009: 219)[35] Bull (2002: 71) explains that 'institutions' do not 'necessarily imply an organisation or administrative

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[33] In addition to the issues explored above, both realist hegemonic stability theory (Waltz 1979, Gilpin 1981, Kindleberger 1973, Olson 1965) as well as critical Gramscian perspectives (Gramsci 1992, 1996, 2001, Cox 1996) do little in the way of tying hegemony with legitimacy. Clark (2003) touches on these deficiencies.

[34] Bull (1977) identified five institutions: balance of power, the role of the great powers, international law, diplomacy, and war. Clark's argument is that hegemony is also best seen as such an institution.

[35] Conversely, secondary institutions are separate from primary institutions - in this case hegemony - and 'may reflect contingent features through which [primary] institutions are implemented.' (Clark 2009: 219)

machinery… They are rather an expression of the element of collaboration among states in discharging their political functions.' Institutions are based on shared habits, practices and goals (Bull 2002: 71). Seen as an institution, hegemony too is based on shared understandings, in this context conceptualised not only as accepted rules of conduct but also the consent to the appropriateness of the hegemonic system itself (Clark 2009: 220-2).[36] Consistent with the Watson pendulum, institutions change throughout history as international societies develop. So then, hegemony does not describe a dominant country; rather hegemony describes a type of fluctuating relationship based on the process of legitimacy and the acceptance of the system (Clark 2010).

> Clark (2003: 89) notes the difference between two discourses of legitimacy:
>> 'The first is the authority structures of that order and the legitimacy of its systems of rule. The second is the normative principles that define membership and inclusion within that order, and entitlement to consultation and participation, but are not yet (fully) articulated in a system of commands.'

Though this study is particularly focused on the second discourse, authority structures do play a role in the formation of legitimacy. Using this first idea (i.e. the legitimacy of authority/power/command structures of a system), discussion of legitimacy occurs within the context of explicit and specific rules, rule-making and the authority with which rules are implemented. In other words, the first way to think about hegemony treats systems as being made up of rules and the act of ruling. In any hierarchic (or non-anarchic) system, this is not a difficult concept to accept. Legitimacy in this case can be measured by examining 1) the extent of conformity to explicit rules, 2) the extent to which rules can be justified, and 3) the consent to the power dynamic that is perpetuated by those rules (i.e. procedural legitimacy) (Clark 2003: 90). In this way, the legitimisation of authority and of empire is endogenous, a 'subject that produces its own image of authority,' it is 'self-referential and self-validating.' (Hardt and Negri 2000: 33, cited in Clark 2003: 91) This study addresses this first type of legitimacy in the context of CIS states consenting or dissenting to the power dynamic that is perpetuated by Russian-supported rules.

Watson's (1992: 17) definition of legitimacy offered above stresses the acceptance of authority and the 'right' of rules to be obeyed; it takes this first perspective as its starting point. In Watson's definition, systems of rule evoke distinctive forms of resistance to their own type of authority, where the goal is to

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[36] Clark makes the point that seeing hegemony in this way means that hegemony ceases to be conceptualised as evidence of the breakdown of international society (Clark 2009: 220-2).

reshape the system in the image of a counter-hegemonic organisation that retains the original configuration as its starting point. Legitimacy in many of these accounts is seen as a problem related to the authority to rule, and therefore, the solution is often the institutionalisation of procedures for accountability and consent: democracy. The problem of institutionalising democracy in an international society is trying to decipher what increased channels of consent would look like and to whom exactly the dominant power and the policy-makers active in the system would be accountable (Clark 2003: 92). These questions make thinking about legitimacy in this way relatively problematic when applied to international societies. This study therefore gives more weight to the second discourse surrounding legitimacy, discussed below.

It is the second discourse that is of particular interest in this study. This idea about the legitimacy of normative principles concentrates on patterns of activity or appropriate conduct that can exist without explicit rules but rather in principle (i.e. normative legitimacy). Authoritative systems coercively allocate rules, whilst order relies on shared principles that are sustained through practice and institutions. 'If order is a 'pattern' that sustains certain 'goals', it is, in principle, distinct from a system that 'authoritatively allocates' these values, and hence from rule and command.' (Clark 2003: 93)

For Bull (1971), international society may develop the set of shared habits and practices associated with and conducive to hegemony in conditions of unipolarity to serve the role otherwise filled by great powers. The concern for great powers - that can be extended to hegemony - is to make sure that subordinate states have 'enough of a stake' in the system; such states will in turn assent to the system and make it sustainable (Clark 2009: 214). Because coercion is not enough, great powers must '[secure] and [preserve] the consent of other states to the special role they play in the system.' (Bull 2002: 221) States may consent to the hierarchic pattern of the system, and in so doing to the attenuation of sovereignty.

The challenge then is to give a meaningful account of how hegemony is accepted or not accepted in a regional system. Hegemonies are negotiated throughout time; thus legitimacy is a result of political processes characterised by dialogue through consent and dissent on what hegemony constitutes. In other words, legitimacy in hegemony is not an outcome, but intimately linked to the process by which hegemony and the principles upholding it in the international society are constructed. So then, Russian hegemony acts as a starting point from which to evaluate the process of legitimacy and the consolidation of different forms of hierarchy. The various forms of

consent and dissent ultimately construct varying forms of hierarchy and/or sovereignty that govern the CIS region. Importantly, consent to certain types of Russian hegemonic actions can push towards anarchy by promoting norms that favour independence and individual sovereignty; in the Watson scheme then, legitimacy (as a continuous process of consent and dissent) can operate in favour of both hierarchy and anarchy. Legitimacy is therefore the driver that swings the spectrum towards hegemony regardless of whether it is consent or dissent that is being shown. What this study finds is that consent is evident where Russia's ambitions, interests and norms reproduce and perpetuate a particular CIS regime's norms (and many times its own power). Dissent is most evident where the hegemon's ambitions/goals, means and norms/principles clash with an individual regime's acting out of its own sovereignty. Such is the push-pull dynamic in the post-Soviet pendulum that ultimately consolidates hegemony. Because of these conclusions that include a discussion on how Russia can best consolidate hegemony, this thesis also contributes to ES work on hegemony. Clark (2009: 224) holds that:

> '…There is a need to develop a theory [of hegemony] whereby the hegemon contributes to international order in a socially acceptable way. This is the task of a theory of hegemony. When this has been set in place, the project becomes one of policy: developing a set of norms and practices that will turn this into a viable institution of international society.'

Though this work does find some normative consensus that pushes towards legitimacy, the discussion on norms is not central to the study. The problem of how hierarchy, hegemony and norms relate to each other is rather problematic, and has not yet been sorted by Clark, Buzan, or other English School scholars. Rather than opening up the argument to theoretical difficulties, the discussion on norms in this thesis is intended to indicate the possibility of further research. The important take-away argument is that hegemony and any form of 'rule' is intimately tied to the process of legitimacy engaged in by the 'ruled.' In this way, hegemony and all forms of hierarchy are tenuous relationships. For this reason they cannot be taken for granted by either the hegemon or the researcher.

Above, this study offered Watson's (2007: 90) largely realist definition of hegemony. Noting what this chapter has unearthed about the process of legitimacy, this thesis adds: hegemony is an institution of international society that is characterised and depends on the continuous negotiation of sovereignty. Hegemony is the gravitational centre of a fluid pendulum between anarchy and hierarchy across which systems and individual relationships between states move. Consent and dissent to

varying extents of the attenuation of sovereignty - the process of legitimacy - create the pendulum's swing.

So then, this study is fundamentally based on the English School's focus on the institutions and systems that create lasting relationships between states. The process of legitimacy is central to state relationships, as it constructs the fundamental characteristics of the system with which members identify. The dialectic between dissent and consent, core and periphery, quantifiable power and normative persuasion, all contribute to the changing nature of hegemony in the CIS region. Tightening and loosening throughout time, Russian hegemonies are formed by the constant push and pull between these factors. Watson's continuum has thus provided an interesting starting point from which to explore changing relationships and changing types of power, how dominance has been received and digested, and how all of this can be reflected in changing international systems.

The heuristic tool offered in the next section that orders this work stems from the position that both material and ideational power is important when evaluating hegemonic relationships. Michael Mann's four networks of social power are broadly employed to organise our understanding of Russian power.

Structuring the study: Michael Mann's organisational framework for studying Russian regional hegemony

The following chapters compare the Yeltsin and Putin periods to draw broader conclusions about changing Russian hegemonies. Thus, it is appropriate to choose an analytical framework that factors in and shifts between historical development and abstract theory: Michael Mann's theory on social change and how different logics of power have come to weave through history.

In the first chapter of the first volume of *Sources of Social Power*, Mann (1986: 1-33) introduces his IEMP model, an acronym for four sources of social power: ideological, economic, military and political. Ideological power comprises meaning, norms and aesthetic/ritual practices; economic power comes from the satisfaction of subsistence needs; military power is derived from the necessity of defence and the utility of organised aggression; political power depends on techniques of centralised authoritative organisation. Though Mann has theorised less about the international level than the domestic one (Lawson 2005), differentiating distinct sources of power is also useful when thinking about international relations, especially when testing for

fluctuating degrees of hegemony. For the purpose of this work, Mann's model functions as an:

1. heuristic tool that explains and highlights the logics of power in the post-Soviet case;

2. and as an analytical device that suggests a causal pattern between distinct power logics and conjunctural factors that converge at different points in time.

Descriptive relevance

At the basic level of descriptive practicality, Mann's four domains of analysis provide a neat way by which to organise empirical studies. They serve to capture the way that Russia's relationships with other CIS countries work. The usual 'trinity' of power comprises ideological, economic and political power, tying military power to political power (Poggi 2006, see also Poggi 2001).[37] By bestowing military power the same analytical status as economic, political and ideological power, Mann concedes that there are certain aspects of military power that can be methodologically separated from political power. This contention is not one based on capability/capacity, but one based on logic and function. These different logics and functions provide the basis for the organisation of this study and are therefore important to understand (Mann, interview with Lawson 2005: 490-1):

- Military power relations involve competition and enable conquest, based on 'naked organised physical force';

- Economic power relations can mobilise everyday relations because they affect basic needs and activities;

- Political power relations are based on 'authoritative regulation, which is scrutinised and very often legalised';

- Ideological power relations are 'emotionally intense' and can mobilise society, though they are more often conservative in that they seek to institutionalise or advance 'what is already there.'

Mann is explicit about his opposition to fusing any of the power networks together in both theory and practice. However, the specific variables that are examined in this work are at times closely intertwined with and have many implications related to other areas of power to which they have not been methodologically attributed. For

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[37] Weberian and Structural Marxist accounts also use the tripartite scheme. See Poggi (2006) for discussion, who also cites Runciman (1983) and Etzioni (1975) as others that use the trinity.

example, economic power and how it is accepted is directly affected by changes in military power relations; the decision to provide subsidies is affected by hard power relationships and occurrences between states. Similarly, ideological power exercised in ways such as cultural/political socialisation can influence economic-related relationships; if the hegemon's market-related norms are adopted by and embedded into other states' political cultures, it may lead to unified trade standards or rules or even to unified markets. In the case of Russia, the most obvious connection is between military and economic power on one hand and political power on the other. Russia uses military and/or economic measures and structures to wield political power and at times, to exact political alliance. Ideological power is also inextricably tied to political power: Russia uses ideational measures with socio-psychological undertones to encourage political congruence.

Analytical relevance

This study started from the puzzle represented by variation in Russia's relationships with other CIS countries over time and the determinants of this variation. Mann's model provides a good analytical framework with which to assess these determinants. Analytically, none of the four power logics on its own is decisive in explaining all social relationships; and the four logics of power do not necessarily play an equal role in the formation and maintenance of hegemonies. This is reasonable, as it is rarely the case that states have permanent power sources and logics that they can (or choose to) wield steadily throughout time. Rather, at different points in time, certain aspects of the sources of social power have been emergent; at different points in times and in different areas, one or more of these organisational means emerges as the 'primary reorganising force.' (Mann 1986: 28) Some, like the military network that is concentrated and coercive can be relatively short-term, while ideology that is transcendent can be relatively long term. Thus, different properties of a state's power logic emerge and decline, becoming more or less relevant for that state's immediate power and, as a consequence at the international level, for its relationships with other states. They are sometimes relatively deeply connected, and sometimes remain unmistakably independent.

Mann concludes that though there is no general pattern to such processes, research can still make period-specific generalisations. Such a conception of history and power that focuses on changing structural elements explains hierarchies in a way that highlights the insufficiencies of a dyadic anarchy-hierarchy divide and the utility of a Watson-based continuum that suggests different thicknesses of hegemony. The

model is therefore useful in telling a temporal story about Russia's regional role by examining the military, economic, political and ideological sectors of Russian power that have converged at certain times. After the Soviet period, which was dominated and driven by deeply fused ideological and military power sectors, this study suggests that 1991-3 was dominated by a laissez-faire stance towards the CIS where Russian involvement in CIS conflicts was bound up with some hegemonic efforts despite Kozyrev's views. The rationale became clearer after 1993. In the post-1993 period of Yeltsin's rule the focus was on military power and some rather unsuccessful attempts at employing ideological power. Putin's presidencies were driven by economic, political and ideological power, with Moscow attempting to merge political power with all other spheres. There was a re-emergence of greater and distinct reliance on military power in 2008 and beyond.

In the four empirical chapters that follow, each power logic is analysed separately. The balance of consent and dissent across the region is examined chronologically, focusing on factors that account for Russia's role in the post-Soviet region during Yeltsin's and Putin's respective post-Soviet presidencies. Importantly, the empirical case studies chapters are not intended to be exhaustive in their examination of examples of Russian power related to each power source. Rather, they focus on those key issues and relationships that have been identified as being central determinants of how Russian hegemony is advanced. Thus, this work is also not limited to one or two case studies. Instead, it looks at a selection of examples that show how Russian hegemony has moved both through Watson's spectrum and Mann's logics of power. This framework could be used to examine other relevant exercises of Russian power in relation to CIS states that are not included in the chapters that follow.

To sum up, recall the core hypothesis of this work. This thesis seeks to identify variation in the movement of a metaphorical pendulum in the CIS region and where its stable point lies. The tensions created through the process of seeking legitimacy spur constant reinforcement and challenge to Russian-centred hierarchy, resulting in different degrees of hegemony across time. The dynamics of intersubjective power in the CIS region thus work to form a hegemonic structure. A secondary area examined is the way that Russia has followed different power logics depending on the same process of legitimacy. That is, Russia changes its form of hierarchical rule depending on its function, as seen through the type of power logic that it is exercising (military, economic, political or ideological). There is variation in the hierarchical relationships that form over time between Russia and individual CIS countries as well as groups of states.

Every empirical chapter begins by briefly delineating the potential for consent and dissent to Russian-led hierarchy in the specific functional area studied. The analysis of consent and dissent to different levels of Russian-led hierarchy is made by examining reactions of the elite/regimes; the concern is decision-making and response at the state-to-state level. The chapters proceed by analysing the actions that Russia has undertaken in relation to different types of power that perpetuate system hierarchy. Each chapter ends by analysing Russian agency, other CIS countries' agency, and how the dialectic between consent and dissent affects the type of hierarchy in the post-Soviet region. In so doing this study uncovers dissent from countries that do not fit within or are unprepared to adapt to the status quo of hegemony as an institution of international society, and consent from those who accept the attenuation of their sovereignty at least to some extent. In this way, the analysis is largely based on Russian actions as well as representations of Russian policies, and the reactions of other CIS countries through statements, treaties and policies that identify claims about what is perceived as legitimate. It is from these actions and reactions that one can discern the hegemonic qualities perpetuated and consented/dissented to by subordinate states; the other states of the CIS are equally important in shaping the post-Soviet constellation of power as Russia is. On the basis of the individual cases studied in this thesis, the conclusions of this work discuss the nature of hierarchy and its variation over time, as well as the kinds of fluctuations that have taken place. The sovereignty of other CIS states has played out in different ways throughout their post-Soviet experience.

Chapter 3:
Hegemony in the post-Soviet region as examined through Russian military intervention in regional conflicts and the consent-dissent dialectic

The dissolution of the Soviet Union brought on a set of foreign policy issues that were not unfamiliar in Moscow. In 1992, editor in chief of Russian academic journal Etnopolis, Vadim Pechenev, reflected on the two major tasks facing post-Soviet Russia to ensure Russian security. He compared them to the challenges faced by Peter the Great 300 years before the breakup of the Soviet Union: border protection and safeguarding ethnic Russians abroad. Internally weak states with volatile borders were home to a sizeable Russian diaspora over which Moscow 'needed… firm and consistent protection.' (Rossiyskaya Gazeta 21 October 1992: 7) Russian regional military involvement[38] seems like an effective way by which to attain these two foreign policy objectives, as it involves the promotion of stability and, in Russian rhetoric, the protection of Russian societies. Russia's perceived and undertaken regional 'responsibility' to intervene in regional conflicts is considered by this study as a main way by which Russia can perpetuate its hegemony.

There is plenty of IR literature that examines Russian military power in the context of regional conflicts (Allison 1990, Allison 1993, Allison and Bluth 1998, Arbatov et al. 1997, Bennett 1999, Jackson 2003, Lynch 2000, Wilhelsen and Flikke 2005). In examining Russia's involvement in regional conflicts, a main assumption is that Russian intervention is a key way by which Russia can extend its hegemony. The purpose of this chapter is to begin to discern how the post-Soviet regional constellation of power has fluctuated based on consent and dissent to Russian-centred hierarchy based on Russian military intervention. What is uncovered is one case of relatively stable consent to Russian-led hierarchy: Tajikistan. This is a case that also increasingly served as a platform to foster common interests with and support from other Central Asian countries with similar threat perceptions. This consent was to a type of hegemony that perpetuated cooperation that occurred in many ways under Russian leadership. Thus there was increasing relative hierarchy in Central Asia after

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[38] At this point, it is useful to make three qualifications to the applied definition of traditional military security used by this study: firstly, security is understood to relate to both external defence as well as to intra- and sub-state security threats. Secondly, by 'protection of society' it is not implied that the real outcome of such hypothetical protection is favourable to either the inhabitants or to different levels of authority. This second point is particularly important to keep in mind, noting the tension between Russia's integration impulses and efforts of governments and sub-state actors to reinforce their individual sovereignty. Finally, noting the focus on sovereignty in post-Soviet countries, some of the implications of Russian military involvement explored admittedly cross over into the political sector. It is only by doing so that one can begin to get the full picture of consent and dissent to Russian military dominance.

September 2001 - a stark contrast to the mid-to-late 1990s when Uzbekistan was particularly vocal in its dissent (though most recently the country is again becoming a source of dissent). Perhaps the common threat of terrorism provided a way for Moscow to rein in its powerful neighbour with hegemonic ambitions. The cases in the South Caucasus (and the fluctuating relationships between Caucasian regimes and Moscow) all exemplify increasing dissent to any form of sovereignty attenuation. This led to relative sub-regional anarchy until 2008.[39] Moreover, they highlight Putin's relative pragmatism when dealing with other CIS regimes, as political and commercial considerations took precedence over Yeltsin's rhetoric about Russians abroad, integration, and stability.

This chapter also makes chapter-specific conclusions. Russian hegemony as expressed through its military involvement is an attenuation of other CIS state's sovereignty. Russia's military intervention seems to promote the notion that regional stability and the stability of the Russian border overrides the autonomy of neighbouring states. Furthermore, Russia makes its involvement integral to any resolution process, and therefore perpetuates its own position of power in relation to other CIS countries. The other regimes of the CIS studied in this chapter at times show dissent to the attenuation of their sovereignty in action as well as discourse. This chapter also stresses that Russia practices a multivector foreign policy that does not a priori determine friends and foes. Rather, Russia seeks strategic alliances, most apparent in the case of Nagorno-Karabakh after the 2000 foreign policy concept. Lastly, the issue of secession is revealed as a complex one. Moscow acts against the central government in all of the conflicts involving a separatist faction. Though Russia is traditionally against secession, there is no contradiction. Instead, Moscow holds its own sovereignty, security and self-interest over an absolutist view on secession. Comparing Russia's position on the Georgian separatist regions with Chechnya is useful to explain this assertion. In the case of Chechnya, Moscow holds that Chechnya is an internal issue, and thus condemns international interference in its sovereign affairs; in the case of Georgia, Moscow has continually stated that the issue of South Ossetia and Abkhazia is not confined to the sphere of Georgian internal affairs because it potentially places Russians abroad in danger and could spill over to the rest of the region.[40]

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[39] The war with Georgia in 2008 acted as a pull factor back to Moscow for Baku and Yerevan. This shift falls out of the time range studied by this thesis.
[40] Lavrov has also stated that the main difference is that Chechnya conducted terrorist attacks against Moscow, whereas South Ossetia and Abkhazia have done no such thing against Tbilisi (Allison 2008a: 1154-5).

Potential for consent and dissent to Russian-led hierarchy

When other CIS countries consent, they accept some form of regional hierarchy around Russia. In this case, Russia expresses and perpetuates its relative hegemony by getting involved in regional conflicts. Consent in the cases studied here usually occurs when other countries accept Russian intervention, as well as Moscow's objectives, priorities and evaluation of the conflict/threat. This may mean that other CIS countries accept Russia's perception of border stability and Russians abroad. For Moscow, the stability of the Russian external border overrides the sovereignty of neighbouring states, and the 'protection of Russians abroad' overrides their territorial integrity. Thus, to accept Russian intervention and its evaluation of regional conflicts is to accept some sort of regional hegemony around Russia. Moreover, for Russia, stability is often tied to status-quo regimes. Therefore, countries are more likely to consent to Russian-led hierarchy if the established regime is supported in its security measures to uphold the status quo against domestic political threats in the form of revisionist (or separatist) factions.

Other CIS countries show dissent when Russian military intervention prevents the natural evolution of their sovereignty or threatens their territorial integrity. In these cases, Russia sides against the established government[41] and in favour of secessionist movements and ethnic Russians or Russian speakers, thus undermining the territorial integrity and ultimately the sovereignty of other CIS states. Countries can also show dissent when Moscow does not do anything to address conflict resolution or uphold the affected countries' sustainable independence. In these cases, Moscow uses the conflicts to maximise its own political leverage and advance Russian geopolitical strategy in individual countries as well as in the region as a whole. The notion that Russia used the military conflicts of the 1990s as political leverage to justify its troops presence is a widespread view (see Goltz 1993, Allison 1994, Lynch 1998). Baev (1997) on the other hand, argued that Russia's motives are 'post-imperial,' as the country tries to stabilise its surroundings. Later, Baev (1998: 210) argues that Russia was opportunistic. Similarly, in the case of Moldova, Ozhiganov (1997) describes Russian motives as trying to retain some semblance of control of Russian troops. Under Putin (and once the major conflicts had cooled by the mid-1990s), Moscow became relatively more interested in using other types of power to perpetuate its hegemony. In doing so, Moscow also had to consider how to more appropriately legitimise regional hierarchy in a way that did not so openly undermine the physical territorial integrity and sovereignty of other countries. Tsygankov (2005: 133) argues

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[41] Impartiality in the trans-Caucasus has also been argued by Light (1996).

that Putin's approach became more 'accommodationist.' So, existing literature also observes shifts and changes between the periods and phases of policy studied.

Russian military involvements

On the purely military level, Russia's concern with the CIS states in 1991-1992 was relatively less heavy-handed. Moscow focused on mediation over the use of force. There were some exceptions: as analysed below, Russia openly supported the Abkhaz, and Lebed's troops were active in Transdniestria in 1992. However, there was a general laissez-faire mentality during the first part of Yeltsin's term. Moscow focused on developing its relationship with the West; in so doing, Russia believed that the rest of the region would naturally reintegrate, as individual countries would want to cooperate and be open to receiving Russian assistance because of their shared historical experiences. Thus, even when conflict erupted in the spring of 1992 in the Caucasus, Moscow continued to champion mediation and negotiation rather than the use of military force. Foreign Minister Kozyrev was clear about Moscow's commitment to the principle of non-interference and the impermissibility of dispatching troops (for example during his short and fruitless attempt at mediating the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in early 1992). He held that defending Russians' rights in the CIS was 'a priority. We will strongly defend them... but we will not send in groups of armed men. A violation of international law would backfire against the Russians there, and in most cases this would simply imply losing.' (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 1 April 1992: 1, 3) Similarly, CIS Joint Forces Commander in Chief Shaposhnikov and First Deputy Chief of the Russian General Staff Kolesnikov opposed any foreign involvement in the CIS (Allison 1994).

As conflicts began to escalate in early 1993, Moscow became increasingly interested in promoting regional stability. This interest was tied to a sense of responsibility stemming from Russia's relative power position vis a vis other CIS countries. Military involvement became a way by which Russia could perpetuate its regional presence and regional hierarchy. Russia's November 1993 Military Doctrine[42] reflected this shift, and implied that the Russian military would be primarily channelled towards controlling regional conflicts. Considering the conflicts in which Russia intervened in conjunction with the 1993 document, Russia's rationale for intervention can be evaluated as the following:[43]

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[42] Available at http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/doctrine/russia-mil-doc.html.
[43] For a similar interpretation minus the third point and an additional focus on the Russian view that international multilateral bodies were insufficiently available to quell conflicts, see (Allison 1996: 35). For an analysis of Russian military doctrines between 1990 and 2000 see Haas (2001).

1. The immediacy of ethnic conflict and instability in the post-Soviet region necessitates Russian intervention, particularly because these conflicts may spill over and threaten Russia itself;

2. As the historical provider of military security to the region, Russia has a responsibility to protect Russians[44] abroad;

3. Russia employs military policy on a case-by-case basis. No state is inherently an enemy.

We see a shift in Russia's 2000 foreign policy concept[45] to focus on adverse Western influence in the CIS, stressing the importance of bilateral relations and tactical agreements in order to curb Western competition. The emphasis is on 'reciprocal openness.' This chapter uses the cases of Tajikistan, the South Caucasus and Moldova as the prime examples of Russian intervention. The cases are chosen because they are the three instances in which Russia was militarily involved (explicitly like in the case of Abkhazia or implicitly like in the case of Nagorno-Karabakh). They are also the three instances that presented the greatest risk of regional spill over. Instead of providing an historically linear account of the conflicts (literature is suggested for such relatively sweeping chronological accounts), the following section is organised around some key conclusions related to Russian military intervention implied by the above evaluation of the Russian rationale. These themes are the mechanisms by which Russia expressed its hegemony in military intervention, and to which the extent of consent or dissent of other CIS states can be discerned.

The Tajik case of consent: the immediacy of conflict, regional destabilisation and the potential for Central Asian cooperation

This section begins with an account of a country that can broadly be evaluated as a consenter to Russian military intervention and subsequent Russia's projection of relative power: Tajikistan (for accounts of the Tajik conflict and Russian involvement therein, see Djaili et al 1998, Jackson 2003: 140-170, Denber 1993, Nygren 2008: 188-190, Olimov 1999).[46] This study finds that, in the Tajik case, there was a clear joining of

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[44] In 1993 (at least in drafts of the doctrine), this category was made deliberately wide to include as large a number of people now living outside the Russian Federation as possible: Ethnic Russians, ethnically non-Russian Russian speakers (russko-iazychniei) and Russian citizens (having been culturally assimilated) (Adomeit 1995: 48).

[45] Available at http://missions.itu.int/~russia/concept_doc.htm

[46] Civil unrest erupted immediately after independence in 1991 and the election of Rakhmon Nabiev as president, escalating to civil war by May 1992. Tajikistan had a regional clan political structure, a weak intelligentsia supporting democracy as well as the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) emerging in the countryside, all putting immense pressure on the very fibres of the state. In addition to internal instability, pressure to Tajikistan came from overt security threats from the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border that threatened to exacerbate the already tense domestic regional ethnic division.

Tajik and Russian understandings of the conflict at the regime level.[47] Tajikistan also accepted the attenuation of its sovereignty by allowing Russia the opportunity to make itself integral to any conflict resolution process. Dushanbe's consent to Moscow's evaluation of the conflict as one that involved broader regional threats also gave Moscow the chance to promote agreement around threat assessment and even military integration. Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan at times also consented to Russia's evaluation of the Tajik conflict to a certain degree, especially when the Taliban threatened to affect their borders. However, if the threat of Uzbekistan is understood as a more immediate concern to Dushanbe's conception of individual sovereignty, then Moscow did little to address the primary issue. Instead, Russia could instrumentalise the Tajik conflict to keep its hegemonic status against a potential powerful Uzbek competitor by being the only viable guarantor of security for all interested consenting parties.

There are explicit statements as well as actions that suggest that CIS countries agreed on a conceptualisation of the Tajik conflict that involved broader regional stability. As early as October 1992 at the Bishkek CIS summit meeting, CIS member states formally agreed that defending the common external border of Tajikistan was a common CIS concern. Therefore, in compliance with the Agreement on Groups of Military Observers and Collective Peacekeeping Forces, a CIS peacekeeping force would be sent if ever a 'legitimate authority' in Tajikistan requested one (Neumann and Solodovnik 1996: 89-90).[48] After the coup that forced Nabiev out of office, the Russian army (with help from the Uzbeks) pushed the Islamic opposition forces into Afghanistan, where they reorganised under a United Tajik Opposition (UTO).[49] With Russian assistance, the pro-Russian ex-Communist Party leader Emomali Rakhmonov became president. This was an instance where a status quo, largely authoritarian government was supported by Moscow. A Russian-friendly regime would ensure political congruence and a greater chance at securing relative regional hegemony.

Civil war continued. In May 1993 Tajikistan signed a friendship agreement with Russia. In it, Dushanbe consented to Russian military presence and border guards (the Agreement on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance signed on 25 May 1993, see

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[47] Though not necessarily at the mass public level, as many Tajiks were in the opposition forces.
[48] Importantly, the provision of external CIS defence through common borders is a specific exercise of Russian military power that can also be traced in Russian relations with Turkmenistan, Armenia and Georgia.
[49] At this point of the civil war, the opposition was made up of the Muslim Gorno-Badakhshanis and Gharmis. They fought against the communists, or 'People's Front' made up of the Leninabadis, Kulyabis and the Hissaris. These peoples come from different regions in Tajikistan that keep their regional identities (Neumann and Solodovnik 1996: 86-7).

Sevodnya 28 May 1993, Olimov 1999: 110-11).[50] However, the benefits of the Agreement could not be sufficiently guaranteed because it came before any formal peace treaty (that did not materialise until 1997). Therefore, although a formal framework was in place, implementing any advantages and security through Russian-Tajik cooperation was difficult. One year after a 1994 UN-mediated cease-fire agreement was signed[51] in which Russia took an active part, the conflicting parties signed a Russian-supervised agreement (Iran played a role as well). Nevertheless, negotiations came to a deadlock. There were around 25,000 Russian troops in Tajikistan by 1996 when Moscow began to insist on a settlement between the Tajik government and the UTO (Jackson 2003: 147-48, 168).

Russia's framing of the Tajik conflict exemplifies how Moscow could use conflicts to perpetuate regional hierarchy. Specifically, Yeltsin regarded the situation in Tajikistan as a question of stabilising the entire region against the shared threat of fundamentalist Islam and terrorism rather than one of combating internal unrest and restoring stability in Tajikistan without the use of force (Neumann and Solodovnik 1996: 99).[52] In this way, the situation in Tajikistan was used instrumentally by Moscow in an attempt to support its more general efforts at gaining Central Asian consent and in so doing, bolster the chances of potential military integration. Russia was made out to be the only single third party that was essential to any conflict settlement. This study finds that Dushanbe was in agreement with Moscow's broader evaluation of the conflict. At the beginning of 1995 for example, president Rakhmonov stated: 'the Tajik-Afghan border is by no means just the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan; it is a buffer ensuring the security of all of Central Asia.' (Sevodnya 26 January 1995: 3) Much of the CIS also concurred. In February 1995 at a CIS summit, members of the organisation collectively defined the major sources and factors of military danger as (Kasenov 1998: 189): the build-up of forces in neighbouring countries to degrees that unsettled the present balance; training and formations of forces in other countries intended for use against member states; the intensification of border conflicts and any armed provocation from neighbouring countries; and the transfer of foreign troops into neighbouring countries.

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[50] The Agreement also laid out the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; the peaceful resolution of conflicts; equal rights and non-interference in internal affairs; and respect for human rights and liberties (Sevodnya 28 May 1993, Olimov 1999: 110 – 111).
[51] The temporary agreement is found at: http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/services/cds/agreements/pdf/taj12.pdf. The general agreement on the establishment of peace and national accord in Tajikistan only came into effect in 1997, and can be found at: http://www.un.org/Depts/DPKO/Missions/unmot/prst9757.htm.
[52] This distinction was possible because Moscow did not only evoke the principles of peacekeeping for its involvement; instead it also called upon Chapter VII, Article 51 of the UN Charter that provides for more forceful action (Neumann and Solodovnik 1996: 88, Serrrano 2003: 164).

We have seen that there was congruence between Tajikistan and Russia in relation to threat evaluation in public declarations. This is not to say, however, that Russian involvement did not come under criticism, especially because there was little success to show for the involvement of the forces. For example, at a meeting of the Council of CIS defence ministers in April 1995, General Valery Patrikeyev, Commander of the Collective Peacekeeping Force, accused Rakhmonov and the Russian border troops of exacerbating the situation (Sevodnya 20 April 1995). According to Patrikeyev, the Tajik and Russian move to strengthen the troops' military presence in Gorno-Badakhshan was a 'violation of the Tehran cease-fire agreement, which prohibits any troop movements after the start of the negotiating process.' (Sevodnya 20 April 1995) Throughout the first half of the 1990s then, most consent remained at the Russian-Tajik bilateral level. At the same time, strong shows of bilateral consent can, whilst bolstering bilateral integration, exhibit outward legitimacy to other individual CIS countries. Therefore, even at the bilateral level, the effect of consent and ensuing legitimacy should not be understated.

The Taliban came into power in Afghanistan in 1996.[53] The territory under the control of the Northern Alliance in the north of the country, which showed resistance to Taliban rule, was gradually reduced. These developments incited Russian worries. With the Tajik Islamic Opposition in Afghanistan, discourse from Moscow expressed the fear that Tajikistan would feel the spill over effects of rising regional tensions.[54] Exemplifying a public show of converging Russian-Tajik interests in fighting terrorism, Rakhmonov was reported to be 'gesturing threateningly with his finger,' and declaring: 'Show me the Islamic states where these terrorists are being trained. They are being trained in Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan specifically in order to terrorise the Tajik people.' (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 27 January 1996) In reference to the threat felt from Uzbekistan, Rakhmonov issued a harsh statement condemning 'outside political forces' whose interests were to destabilise Tajikistan (Kommersant Daily 2 February 1996: 4). These statements may have been a strategic public declaration at a time when Yeltsin threatened to cut off Tajikistan from Russian support; at a press conference in the beginning of 1996 at the end of a meeting of the CIS heads of state, Yeltsin asserted: 'We cannot carry Tajikistan in our arms forever.' (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 27 January 1996: 3) The pressure was on the Tajik government to outwardly show solidarity with Moscow. Yeltsin reaffirmed his support for Rakhmonov directly after the Tajik president's February statement (Kommersant Daily 2 February 1996: 4). Such public

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[53] In 1996 Dushanbe and the United Tajik opposition signed a framework agreement on national reconciliation, available at: http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/services/cds/agreements/pdf/taj7.pdf.
[54] For a comprehensive discussion on how Islamic fundamentalism poses security threats to Russia and how it affects Russia's foreign policy, see Zviagelskaya 2002.

dialogue between Moscow and Dushanbe confirms a certain degree of agreement with Moscow's overall framing of the situation and Moscow's envisioned central role in the conflict.

The Taliban also worried Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in the late 1990s. At this time, the countries more convincingly joined Russia and Tajikistan in taking security steps to ensure the safety of their borders than they had done in the mid-decade (Kommersant Daily 11 August 1998, Kommersant Daily 13 August 1998). Uzbekistan openly agreed with Russian stated motives. Talking of the possibility of Tajikistan becoming an Islamic state because of the regional situation, Karimov remarked: 'An Islamic state as a neighbour would be dangerous for the people of Uzbekistan.' (Izvestia 6 January 1998) The advance of the Taliban was strategically beneficial to Moscow: Russia was surely the only country that could guarantee the others' security (Izvestia 11 August 1998). High-ranking Uzbek officials denied this claim (Izvestia 12 August 1998). Tashkent did not accept such a black-and-white evaluation of the regional power hierarchy.

So-called Islamic fundamentalists from Uzbekistan located in Afghanistan (of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan who may have been more secular than propaganda made them out to be) crossed into Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in 1999 after a peace accord in Tajikistan had been signed. This gave a further reason for Tashkent and Bishkek to align themselves with Tajikistan and Russia and devise a joint response. Tashkent also finally openly backed Moscow on the Chechen issue in 1999, as did Baku, who also felt pressure from so-called religious extremists from Iran (New Times 1 January 2000). That year, a 20,000 joint peacekeeping force and border troop contingent was planned. However, this show of broader cooperation failed to materialise. Here one notices an explicit disconnect between what was publicised and perpetuated as common interests and what actually came into being. Perhaps real shared interests between Russia and other post-Soviet countries were different from public remarks about commonalities; perhaps Moscow did not have as much regional clout to promote joint ventures as it would have liked. With a weak economy and low funding for the Russian military (about to get worse with the second Chechen war), the domestic situation in Russia meant that Moscow had very little to back up its inflated aspirations of regional command. Tajikistan continued to rely on Russia for basic security throughout Yeltsin's presidencies despite the non-fruition of grandiose Russian plans. At a meeting for Police Day in Tajikistan in February 1999, Rakhmonov called Russia 'the only reliable partner and [guarantor] of stability and security in Tajikistan.' (RFE/RL Newsline 8 February 1999) A joint protocol on military cooperation in April

1999 allowed Russia to establish a permanent military base[55] as well as troop deployment in the country. Dushanbe also confirmed its intention to join the CIS air defence system (Olimov 1999: 114). Russian-Tajik joint exercises were held in September to deter any potential external attack. In May 2001, Karimov and Putin produced a joint statement that signalled a more equal power sharing arrangement, agreeing to engage in 'frank exchanges of views.'[56] Military cooperation was also stressed, providing the basis for what was to come after September 11.

The September 11 attacks constructed Afghanistan as a greater source of terrorist concern for the U.S.. In so doing, they also solidified and provided a pretext for Russia's focus in Tajikistan in the context of 'international terrorism.' Moscow had two Chechen wars as experience. During the second Chechen conflict, instead of officially categorising the conflict as one to disarm illegal formations and restore constitutional order, the Russian effort was labelled as a fight against Chechen 'terrorism.' (Trenin 2005: 102, Ashour 2004)[57] Putin, the first foreign leader to telephone President George W. Bush to offer the country's condolences (BBC News Online 24 October 2001), underlined a connection between the Chechen rebels and Al-Qaeda, which was objectively no different before September 11 than after. Putin was aware of international scrutiny on maintaining a façade of national sovereignty for excusing brutal repression. He therefore began to emphasise the dimension of 'Islamic radicalism' that threatened the country (Baev 2004: 345). In Russia's National Security Concept, there were no provisions included against using military force in other territories with the purpose of pursuing suspected 'international terrorists.' (Wilhelmsen and Flikke 2005: 390) At a 2003 conference of the Russian military leadership that discussed a White Paper on defence policy, which included a new Russian commitment to military pre-emption against terrorism, Putin reassured that:

> 'Russia possesses a significant reserve of land-based heavy strategic missiles… These are missiles of the most formidable kind, and we have dozens of them, with warheads numbering in the hundreds… [The missiles'] ability to defeat any missile defence systems is unrivalled.' (Vremya Novostei 3 October 2003)

This statement implied that Moscow could claim widespread power and was relatively antagonistic to foreign opposing forces. Russia's nuclear might would ensure regional (not individual) sovereignty. A Joint CIS Statement in early October 2001 (just after

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[55] The establishment of a permanent Russian base was agreed upon but not implemented until 2004 under the leadership of Putin.

[56] Joint statement available at (http://www.ln.mid.ru/Bl.nsf/arh/6EF0EDF70ACC63AF43256A46003AFF77?OpenDocument

[57] Ashour (2004) forwards that the renewal of the war as one against Chechen 'terrorism' was the single most important factor that led Putin to power. His ratings were 'raised from nothing to top results' after only enjoying single-digit popularity ratings earlier the same year when Yeltsin fired Sergei Stepashin and appointed him Prime Minister for being more of a 'hard-liner' (Ashour 2004: 138, Williams 2001:134).

Moscow committed itself to support the U.S. in the 'War on Terror') reaffirmed Moscow's focus on international terrorism and was meant to get Western states' support for the Russian cause:

> 'The emergence of the CIS member states is accompanied by the growth of threats coming from terrorist organisations. The representatives of our countries have repeatedly brought it to the attention of the international community. And we pointed out that the policy of double standards pursued by some states inevitably entails negative consequences.'[58]

Dushanbe publicly agreed to the use of the Tajik airfields and Tajik airspace for strikes by American forces against targets in Afghanistan, claiming that Tajikistan was at the forefront of the 'War on Terror' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 8 October 2001). In 2002, Rakhmonov declared that Russia's forces in the southern border would remain for another ten to fifteen years, and the permanent Russian military base agreed to in 1999 by Putin was opened in 2004 (Nygren 2008: 192). Military exercises focused on Islamic terrorism continued to be a main form of cooperation.[59] The developments during the first part of the 2000s suggest that, although the domestic situation in Tajikistan had evolved from what it was under Yeltsin, under Putin Russia continued to be the most obvious provider and principal advocate of common efforts at providing military security to the country. The focus on 'international terrorism' coincided with increasingly firm Russian rhetoric; military cooperation was made out to be essential.

Uzbekistan also faced a heightened threat of terrorist attacks; the IMU operating in the country was reported to receive funding from the Taliban (Moscow Times 25 September 2001). After the truck bombing in Grozny at the end of 2002, Karimov publicly declared his agreement to Moscow's interpretation by condemning the act: 'The people of Uzbekistan condemn the barbarous action, which it sizes up as another reminder about the dangers of terrorism in the contemporary world.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 30 December 2002) Counter-terrorism thus provided a further integration tool in Central Asia.[60] As a bilateral example, Aliyev and Karimov exchanged extensive views in 2004 on how Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan could work together in fighting extremism (Itar-Tass Weekly News 23 March 2004). Tajikistan and Uzbekistan even

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[58] This quote comes from the 2 Oct 2001 Joint Statement of the Participants in the 11th Meeting of the Council of the Heads of Security and Special Services Bodies of the CIS Member States, available at: http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/c5cda5ffab47617943256adb003d396e?OpenDocument

[59] In October 2002, two regiments from Russia's 201st Motorised Division held joint military exercises with around 5,000 Tajik troops aimed at responding to international terrorism; in March 2003, the same Division as well as Russian border guards held joint military exercises aimed at resisting terrorists; in March 2004, the joint military exercises was repeated; in June 2004, joint military exercises were held to repel a chemical attack; in August 2005 and April 2006, more joint military exercises were held as well as border-related exercises (Nygren 2008: 191).

[60] More of this cooperation under the umbrella of counter-terrorism is discussed in the chapter on political power where multilateral efforts under the CSTO are analysed.

signed several agreements of cooperation with Russia in late 2003, stemming as far as the economic sphere (Itar-Tass Weekly News 29 December 2003). In 2004, after Uzbekistan began to de-mine its borders, the two countries' law enforcement bodies also declared their readiness for cooperation in fighting international terrorism (Itar-Tass Weekly News 13 January 2004). Though Russia and Uzbekistan agree in principle on the importance of counter-terrorism and cooperation, they have had different views about the appropriate approach to dealing with the problem (for brief discussions on Uzbek policy for dealing with terrorism, see Bakker 2006 and Peimani 2002). Uzbekistan has in the past explicitly tied the IMU with Al-Qaeda to justify suppression of political dissent, and traditionally sought maximum independence from Moscow (Trenin 2007).

Though this thesis' analysis does not depend on interest but rather on consent and dissent, it is interesting to ask whether there was a genuine meeting of security interests between Moscow and Dushanbe. If interests do not match, Tajik consent to Russian-led hierarchy may not only reflect common interests, but rather a broader public agreement to Russian involvement. Tajikistan was arguably more concerned about its border with Uzbekistan than the relatively elusive threat of Islamic fundamentalism from Afghanistan (particularly around 1998 when Tashkent was accused of staging an anti-government rebellion in Khujand). The animosity between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan was clear in the mid to late 1990s. Indeed, the events in Kurgan-Tyube and Tursunzade (in which the rebel leaders were ethnic Uzbeks and the cities they entered had large Uzbek populations) were indicative of the threat Rakhmonov faced (Kommersant Daily 2 February 1996: 4). For its part, in addition to the claims analysed above, Uzbekistan continuously accused Tajikistan of housing training camps and allowing passage to members of the IMU (Moscow Times 21 September 2001). Uzbekistan also represents an undesirable competitor for influence in Central Asia for Russia and, as stressed at the end of the previous paragraph, has rejected Russian influence since its independence in 1991 (Trenin 2007: 87-88). At the April 1998 CIS Summit, Karimov appealed to Moscow to 'refrain from superpower chauvinism' and to build 'equal and mutually beneficial, not domineering relations.' (Kommersant Daily 6 May 1998). Tashkent was wary of the Tajik-Russian alliance. As a show of stark dissent in 1998, Karimov accused Rakhmonov of working with Russian intelligence services of conspiring to organise attacks in Tajikistan (Sevodnya 2 December 1998). This accusation came even after he had visited Moscow earlier that year – a meeting, which had ended with a troika between Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Russia for combating Islamic fundamentalism in Central Asia (Noviye Izvestia 7 May

1998).[61] Karimov's dissent shows that Russia's offer of military assistance did not address the animosities present between Central Asian states. However, Russia's continued influence in Tajikistan did lie in the expressed desire of Dushanbe for Russian military support as well as hegemony in order to counter the hegemonic aspirations of Uzbekistan. Moscow risked alienating Tashkent by explicitly backing Tajikistan at the expense of Uzbekistan. Continued instability in Tajikistan and the perceived Taliban and extremist 'threat' legitimised the Russian presence and hegemony in Central Asia. This is turn directly challenged Uzbekistan's hegemonic ambition whilst avoiding outright confrontation.

Dissenting regimes: 'protecting Russians abroad' and sovereignty over secession

In Russia's support of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in Georgia, and Transdniestria in Moldova (that is, cases involving a separatist factor), Russian forces backed non-state secessionist actors against their central governments in their struggle for independence and the territorial dissolution of their countries.[62] Moscow's interventions were hence against the consent of the affected central governments.

Aside from the Baltic States, Tbilisi adopted the most extreme stance against Moscow when the Soviet Union fell. Georgia was the first state of the Caucasus to declare independence in April 1991 against Soviet law. The South Ossetian Autonomous Oblast had also declared independence in 1990. When Tbilisi abolished South Ossetia's autonomous status that same year, conflict was quick to break out between the central Georgian government and South Ossetian local authorities (Pravda 13 January 1990, also see Allison 2008a: 1146). The relationship between Tbilisi and Moscow improved once Georgia achieved recognised formal independence. However, Moscow continued to make its own actions towards Tbilisi dependent on Georgia's treatment of the secessionist areas. For example, in December 1991, Moscow refused to sign an economic agreement with Georgia, referring to the instability in South Ossetia as its reason (Izvestia 12 December 1991). Even directly after the Dagomys agreement signed in late June 1992 that allowed Russian

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[61] The seemingly 'new' turn for better relations with Russia suited Uzbekistan, as Russia remained the country's main trade partner (trade between the two countries totaled $1.5 billion in 1997) (Kommersant Daily 6 May 1998).
[62] The Tajik case above is not the best one to study partiality; one cannot expect Moscow to be even-handed between all of the internecine factions within states and their respective central governments, especially when the established regime is being threatened. In fact, siding in favour of and providing military assistance to the existing government is an instance where consent is implied, as laid out in the beginning of the chapter. The status quo was upheld; the internal security objectives and priorities of the regime were supported by Russia.

peacekeeping troops to be deployed in South Ossetia, Chairman of the South Ossetian Supreme Soviet Torez Kulumbegov stated in an interview:

> 'We insist on being a part of Russia, and we will be with Russia... The Georgians have had it impressed on them for too long that they are a special people, that they have a special history and a special land, that even the sun shines in a special way.' (Interview by Moskovskiye Novosti 28 June 1992)

Rumours began to spread about Russian tanks and Russian intervention in general exacerbating the conflict when war broke out and Georgian troops were defeated. In a mid-1992 press conference, the Chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet Khasbulatov left open the possibility of annexing South Ossetia if Tbilisi continued 'expelling' South Ossetians and 'eliminating' their autonomy (Izvestia 15 June 1992). Khasbulatov's statements were met with anger in Tbilisi (Izvestia 16 June 1992), and Shevardnadze charged Moscow of outright aggression against Georgia with an imperial pretext (Izvestia 20 June 1992). South Ossetia's clear consent to Russian hegemony was a direct blow to Tbilisi.

Abkhazia had inherited political ties with Moscow. During Imperial and Soviet times, Moscow had manipulated ethnic cleavages in the area. With ethnic Russians in Abkhazia, the area was a clear favourite for Moscow. Abkhazians felt abandoned by Tbilisi at the fall of the Soviet Union. Abkhazian People's Front leader Sergei Shamba stressed Abkhazia's rejection of Tbilisi by noting that even the most elementary of necessities was scarce: 'There is nothing to eat [in Abkhazia] except green vegetables. We have been cut off from Russia, and Georgia has nothing to offer us.' (Moskovskiye Novosti 5 July 1992) Russia sent its 345th Airborne Regiment (the Gudauta Battalion) to protect ethnic Russians in 1992, which remained until 1996 (Allison 1994: 6).[63] Helped and strengthened by Russian equipment and manpower, the Abkhaz troops were victorious against Tbilisi and were able to establish a separatist administration with Russians as their peace brokers in the North West in 1992. Tensions ran so high that by 1993, like with South Ossetia, Shevardnadze was describing the war in Abkhazia as one fundamentally between Georgia and Russia rather than as an internal conflict to be handled domestically. Shevardnadze suspended talks on signing a state-to-state treaty with Moscow in December 1992, stating: '...given the aggressiveness in Russia's foreign policy is growing and that there is undisguised interference, including military interference, by Russia in the internal affairs of sovereign Georgia, we have no other choice.' (Izvestia 18 December 1992, also see Aves 1998: 180 for discussion on Georgian view of Moscow) Tbilisi served as a dissenting force to Russian hegemony.

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[63] The Gudauta base was later reassigned as a peacekeeping base and remains one of the largest sources of tension between Russia and Georgia, especially in the context of the OSCE and the Istanbul commitments, which Moscow has failed to meet.

Finally, Moscow was able to persuade Tbilisi to support a Russian-led peacekeeping plan in July 1993. In autumn 1993, a hesitant president Shevardnadze led Georgia into CIS membership, agreeing to establish Russian bases in the country. Moscow, seeking to have a continued and sizeable military presence in Georgia, proposed a 3,000-man Russian force to be sent to Abkhazia as a part of a 'joint CIS peacekeeping force.' (Allison 1994: 7)

The Russian-led force in Abkhazia during the early 1990s made explicit its support of 'compatriots abroad.' Moscow's focus suggests that Russia's intervention was meant to impinge on Georgian sovereignty. Firstly, Moscow came to the aid of the Abkhaz during the early stages of the conflict. In so doing, Russian reinforcement reworked the course of the war to give Abkhazia more real and psychological power to secede. Russia helped 100,000 Abkhazians take on and win against four million Georgians (Adomeit 1995: 47). Such numbers suggest that it is only through Russian assistance that the continued presence of separatist factions was guaranteed. This directly impinged on Tbilisi's sovereignty. 200,000 Georgians had been relocated from Abkhazia, fabricating an Abkhazian majority. The fact that those displaced persons were not given return access (even though an April 1994 agreement stipulated their return) suggests that there was an explicit intent to bar the restoration of a majority of Georgians in the republic. If a majority of Georgians were reinstalled, any subsequent election could mean the disintegration of the secessionist movement. Secondly, the peacekeeping force and Russian tanks were deployed facing south, providing a security buffer for Abkhazia from Georgian violence (Mackinlay and Sharov 2003: 104).[64] Although it can be argued that this positioning was a strategic move considering the best possible deployment to provide security, it was also a symbolic move interpreted by Georgia as a choice to fight against Tbilisi. Thirdly, the behaviour of the peacekeeping force may have allowed ethnic Russians in the territory to operate in ways that eluded and were obstructive to Tbilisi's laws. Abkhaz could bribe peacekeepers for leniency and illegal activity thrived that reinforced and advanced separatist interests. Such actions made order and territorial integrity harder for Tbilisi to achieve, and de-legitimised Tbilisi's central authority; they also represented partiality against the established central regime in general. This type of sovereignty attenuation spurred Georgian dissent.

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[64] There were two infantry battalions, one on each side of the Inguri River. However, the ones that were known to be hostile against Georgia were stationed facing the Georgians (Mackinlay and Sharov 2003: 104).

Tbilisi's public dissent to Russian involvement continued in the second half of the decade. In 1998[65] Col. David Tevzadze replaced Vardiko Nadibaidze as Minister of Defence (Sevodnya 29 April 1998). Tevzadze was trained at the NATO college in Rome, as well as in Germany and the U.S.. His appointment marked the entrance of a perceived Western-oriented individual, who took issue with Russian military presence in Georgia. In an interview with Noviye Izvestia, Tevzadze reiterated that Russian bases and troops in Georgia had no legal force, and declared his position as 'neither pro-Western not pro-Russian; it's pro-Georgian.' (Noviye Izvestia 13 May 1998).[66] In this case, Tbilisi's conceptualisation of sovereignty ran against any form of regional hierarchy. Not surprisingly in 1999, Shevardnadze was repeatedly reported by the Russian press of accusing Moscow in statements addressed to the Russian government of 'assisting terrorists,' 'imperialism' and other 'mortal sins.' (Izvestia 14 January 2000) In turn, Moscow accused Tbilisi (and Baku) of supporting Chechen militants (New Times 1 January 2000).

During Putin's two terms, the CIS peacekeepers in Abkhazia that had been on the ground since 1994 (an entirely Russian force over which the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia had virtually no influence) became de facto guardians that remained welcomed by Abkhazia (Sagramoso 2003: 67). Georgia continued to hold that Russian presence violated its territorial integrity (for example, Moscow Times 19 October 2001). However, Russia had ceased being the sole foreign presence in the country by the time that Saakashvili came into power. In 2002, the U.S. also sent military personnel to train Georgian forces in anti-terrorist operations (Baev 2006: 234). In part, the American presence helped to add legitimacy to all operations in the region. Russian-Georgian relations also benefited, and both sides expressed interest in 'normalising' relations (Itar-Tass Weekly News 22 December 2004). In 2004, Saakashvili publicly declared his view that Russia had given up its 'imperial hegemonism' that it had in the 1990s: 'Russia will not create additional problems but it will actually assist Tbilisi in resolving the conflicts on its soil.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 11 February 2004) Even here, Georgia's persistent affirmation of its sovereignty (in this quote, adding 'on its soil') acted as an attenuation of Russian hegemony.

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[65] Fighting broke out again briefly in 1998 in Abkhazia, with several casualties (Kommersant Daily 21 May 1998, Kommersant Daily 23 May 1998, Kommersant Daily 27 May 1998, Sevodnya 28 May 1998). The Abkhaz authorities stated that the Georgian actions were 'prompted by the announcement of [a] decision by the CIS heads of state, which [contained] a recommendation to abolish the administration currently operating in Gali District and to create an interim joint administration.' (Kommersant Daily 21 May 1998)
[66] Tevzadze followed by saying: 'Needless to say, the level of military development in the democratic states...made a big impression on me. It's no accident that military reform is being planned in Russia as well...[In a sense,] Russia's orientation towards world standards could be called pro-Western.' (Noviye Izvestia 13 May 1998)

The view in Tbilisi that Moscow had an overarching plan to encourage tensions remained and resurfaced in the second half of Putin's presidency. This coincided with Georgia becoming increasingly Western-oriented. In February 2006, Georgian permanent UN representative Revaz Adamiya, a close associate of Saakashvili, accused Russia of ethnic cleansing and genocide in Abkhazia (Itar-Tass Weekly News 3 February 2006). Furthermore, Tbilisi's stated goal for all Russian-Georgian relations remained the withdrawal of Russian presence on Georgian territory (Itar-Tass Weekly News 3 February 2006). In mid-2006 Saakashvili called Putin's recommendations to hold a referendum in both secessionist areas 'provocative' and 'immoral.' He stated that Russia was trying to 'annex' Georgian territory (Itar-Tass Weekly News 18 July 2006, Moscow Times 15 June 2006). Through this lens, Moscow retained its military presence with a view to freezing the existing political framework with a strong Abkhaz secessionist movement and maintaining its special and necessary status. If fighting and tensions ceased, then Moscow would lose the leverage it had acquired by claiming its involvement as indispensable to stability and any eventual solution. Alexander Khramchikhin, an analyst with the Institute for Political and Military Analysis, told the Moscow Times: 'Russia is quite content with the status quo because Georgia has nothing meaningful to offer Moscow in exchange for any concession that Russia can make.' (Moscow Times 15 June 2006) By supporting the secessionist regions, Moscow was also ensuring that the central Georgian government would remain illegitimate in parts of its territory. Tbilisi remained legitimised at the international level; however, in Abkhazia and South Ossetia Moscow's involvement obstructed and in a way replaced Georgian authority.

With another armed breakout in South Ossetia in August 2008, we can further contextualise and analyse the Russian-Georgian relationship. Although this most recent display of violence is beyond the main time frame of this study,[67] knowing this outcome of Putin's relationship with Tbilisi helps us discern some important events that led to armed conflict. For example, in 2006, Moscow closed all transport links with Georgia for its arrest of four Russian intelligence personnel for espionage. During the military exercises in July 2008, Moscow also deployed an armoured force that was ready to move into South Ossetia if ever needed (Allison 2008a: 1147). Through such shows of overt hostility and preparation, Moscow and Tbilisi seemed to be getting ready for war; South Ossetia and Abkhazia seemed to be open to supporting an alleged reason for them to do so.

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[67] For an extensive discussion on the 2008 Russian military campaign in Georgia see Allison (2008a).

Moscow de facto recognised the secessionist regions' independence in both conflicts - though before 2008 Moscow was not ready to grant formal, de jure recognition. Because of this, Russia could justify steering away from any mediating role between Georgia and the two republics. Furthermore, similar to the case of Tajikistan, Moscow made itself central in the conflict. This time, Russia's centrality was not only a function of its role in maintaining 'stability'; with Russian presence, any negotiation process between Tbilisi and the two regions could end with the regions becoming a part of Russia. This possible outcome was even implicitly, though perhaps not officially, admitted by Moscow. In 2001 the Russian State Duma passed a law on the procedure for accepting a foreign country or part of a foreign country (sharing or not sharing common borders) into the Russian Federation. During the process, Russian politicians - but no senior officials - were direct about having South Ossetia and Abkhazia (as well as Transdniestria) in mind (Allison 2008a: 1160). In October 2001 amid renewed Abkhazian pleas to become part of Russia, Anatoly Chekhoyev, a State Duma deputy, reminded Tbilisi of the new law, stating that: 'if Abkhazia wanted to become a part of Russia, the law would require Moscow and Tbilisi to resolve the issue.' (Moscow Times 19 October 2001) The law in itself, regardless of Russian motives, acts against Georgian sovereignty. Implicitly it also threatens Georgia's territorial integrity, either through the integration of the secessionist regions into Russia or through the execution or realisation of Russian strategic national interest. It also highlights and begins to explain the gap between stated goals and outcomes. The 'freezing' of conflicts occurred because the real aim was never conflict resolution and restored Georgian stability. The self-interested drivers of Moscow's foreign policy towards Georgia and its support of factions fighting against territorial integrity also underline how Russian hegemony in military intervention can directly diminish the sovereignty of individual CIS states.

Another case of dissent is that of Russian military involvement in Moldova. Moscow's focus on ethnic Russians and Russian speakers as well as its interest in preventing reunification with Romania meant that Russian military involvement in Moldova was decidedly partial towards the Transdniestrian camp. Chisinau demanded the withdrawal of CIS troops even before fighting broke out,[68] fearing that they would fight on the side of Transdniestria (Izvestia 1 April 1992). Russian troops helped to push Moldovan troops out in June 1992 when fighting reached Bendery (Transdniestria's largest industrial centre). This was the first clear case of Russian military intervention, after much debate in Moscow.[69] However, Russian troops in the

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[68] Chisinau demanded the withdrawal of the 14th Army from the left bank.
[69] For a full description of the debate over Russian involvement in the Moldova-Transdniestria conflict, see Jackson (2003: 91 – 108).

region had been unofficially financing, helping to arm and in some cases even fighting alongside Transdniestrian separatists since March (Jackson 2003: 102). In the Russian media, Chisinau was made out to be the aggressor. In 1992, Russia's State Adviser on Political Questions Sergei Stankevich held:

> 'In the newly emerged sovereign states beyond Russia's borders, there are over 25 million people who are historically and spiritually akin to us. Russia is responsible for their fate. And it will not allow anyone to humiliate them, slight them or subject them to discrimination. Let alone kill them. That is why Moldova and the Transdniestria region are our business. A regime that kills people merely for trying to defend their human dignity cannot rely on sovereignty to protect it. Russia will stop the killers, since there is no one else to do it.' (Rossiiskaya Gazeta 23 June 1992: 1)

This statement worked not only to alienate Chisinau, but also to highlight the leadership role that Moscow perceived. Moscow saw military involvement in the conflict as a way of sustaining its special, hegemonic regional status. At the same time, we can question how far Lebed's and the Russian military action represented official Russian political decision-making.

In 1994 without formal Duma approval, Russia promised to withdraw its remaining troops by 1997. The document, signed by Moldovan and Russian presidents, specified the 'synchronisation' of Russian withdrawal with a political resolution (Sevodnya 19 January 2000: 4). Tiraspol began to fear that it would soon be out of Moscow's sphere of interest, and turned its attention toward Kiev. Ukraine concluded several economic agreements with Transdniestria and agreed to sell raw materials at discounted prices (Sevodnya 4 July 1998). So then, Transdniestria's consent to Moscow may have been politically motivated. So too was Russia's involvement on the part of the pro-Russian faction: with experience in Georgia, Moscow could use the conflict as a way of 'blackmailing' Chisinau into more cooperation (Polikanov 2003: 188).

Yeltsin again promised to withdraw Russian troops, ammunition and firearms from Transdniestria in the 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit. Chisinau met the commitment favourably, asserting that Russian troops 'complicated' negotiations and that Tiraspol would be more accommodating should they be removed (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 12 January 2000: 5). At a press conference in Chisinau in January 2000, President Pyotr Luchinsky asserted that Russia should withdraw 'without setting any conditions.' (Sevodnya 19 January 2000) However, when Putin came to power, instead of full withdrawal, Russia only decreased its troops from 10,000 to 5,000 in 2001 and to 1,500 in 2003. Putin's reluctance to withdraw troops fully was publicly linked to Moscow's

interest in protecting the ethnic Russians in the region. Putin assured full withdrawal by the end of 2002 on the condition that Chisinau be committed to 'the respect of the interests of all ethnic groups in Moldova and in particular those [residing] in the Transdniestria region.' (RFE/RL Newsline 19 June 2000) Russia's maintenance of troops beyond the formal resolution of conflicts, which is also mirrored in other parts of the CIS, may explain why other countries are reluctant to welcome Russian military intervention.

The parliamentary election in 2001 that saw victory for the Communist party in Moldova improved the Russian-Moldovan relationship (Itar-Tass Weekly News 19 November 2001a). The Communist Party of Moldova (openly a Marxist-Leninist party) has opposed reunification with Romania as well as advocated the restoration of the Soviet Union. Some Russian parliamentarians even suggested that Russia and Belarus would agree to take in Moldova as the third member of their union state (RFE/RL Newsline 27 February 2001). Noting the 'strategic' nature of the relationship, the new president, Voronin, admitted that the Russian troops in Transdniestria had a task to 'guard the Russian arsenal there.' Therefore, troops could be withdrawn 'only after the arsenal itself has been withdrawn.' (RFE/RL Newsline 5 March 2001) A landmark friendship treaty was signed between Moldova and Russia in November 2001 (Itar-Tass Weekly News 19 November 2001b).[70] The new treaty placed Russia as a mediator in negotiations between Chisinau and Tiraspol. Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov asserted that, after any settlement, Moscow would 'assume commitments as a guarantor of the special status of Transdniestria.' (RFE/RL Newsline 6 November 2001) The treaty saw both Russia and Moldova making concessions. For Moscow, the treaty meant officially condemning 'separatism' and agreeing not to help 'separatists.' For Chisinau, the Treaty meant '[ensuring] the necessary conditions' for Russian-language instruction in schools (RFE/RL Newsline 13 August 2001).[71]

Soon opposition forces in Moldova began to protest against such close ties with Moscow. Relations with Romania, NATO, the EU and the U.S. were strengthened, causing strain on the Russian-Moldova link. Chisinau pushed for the Transdniestria issue to be discussed at the NATO Istanbul summit in 2002; Foreign Minister Andrei Stratan made it clear that the purpose was to pressure Russia to honour its OSCE commitments (Itar-Tass Weekly News 18 June 2004). By 2004, another mechanism by which to resolve the Transdniestria problem was present: the OSCE. During a three-

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[70] A basic treaty had been signed in 1990 but was never ratified by the Duma because it failed to include provisions that defended the interests of Transdniestria.
[71] Furthermore, Voronin went on to assert that he wished for 'all Moldovans to speak Russian.' (RFE/RL Newsline 20 November 2001)

day visit of twenty-three OSCE ambassadors to Moldova, Voronin stressed his wish for Moldova to be increasingly integrated into the EU and more generally, into the West (Trud 18 June 2004: 2). Relations between Moldova and Russia continued to worsen until the end of Putin's term, coinciding with NATO and the U.S. increasing pressure on Moscow to withdraw its troops. Putin's support of a pro-Russian president was thus made less relevant because of his refusal to withdraw troops. Russia's interests again ran contrary to Moldovan sovereignty, creating a greater rift between Moscow and increasingly pro-Western Chisinau.

In the cases studied above, outright fighting occurred mostly in the early 1990s. During this time, one of Russia's stated goals, that of protecting ethnic Russians,[72] was relatively easy to justify, as diaspora communities came under direct attack. Yeltsin was quick to play the Russian card. Though there were, for example, more Ukrainians than Russians in Transdniestria, Moscow could publicly rationalise military involvements in regional conflicts as a tool by which to apply pressure on local governments and to attract international attention. The link to diaspora populations was harder to justify after fighting had stopped and the populations were no longer in direct danger. The issue of Russians abroad was much more rhetorical than substantiated by the mid-1990s. In Transdniestria, the existence of an ethnic Russian diaspora had been a key component of Moscow's interest since Tsarist and Soviet times, when emigration of ethnic Russians into Moldova was encouraged. At the same time, the diaspora was relatively small and not singled out as a threatened portion of the population. Moreover, the existence of Russian speakers in Transdniestria does not fully explain Moscow's partiality for the sub-state region; a greater number of ethnic Russians were present in other parts of Moldova (Jackson 2003: 88).[73] Thus, Russian support of Transdniestria did not mean supporting ethnic Russians in general. The case of Nagorno-Karabakh studied below, Tajikistan studied above and South Ossetia (before Russian passports were handed out in greater numbers after 2004) were similarly not in regions with significant ethnic Russian or Russian citizen populations. This suggests that rhetoric from Russia need not be expressed in rational justifications, so long as it gains agreement. In Moscow, the duty to protect compatriots was considered legitimate as a way by which Russia could continue strengthening its perceived regional responsibilities and overall presence. Outside of Russia, objective rationality in rhetoric is also less relevant; legitimacy is conferred when other CIS

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[72] The goal of protecting ethnic Russians was laid out in the 1993 Military Doctrine. However, this was certainly not the only goal. Moreover, it was used more in statements in elite discussion rather than in official political justifications, despite the clause in the military doctrine.
[73] In 1989, out of the 4.3 million population in Moldova, about 13% (just over 500,000) were ethnic Russians. They constituted the third largest population group after Romanians and Ukrainians. An additional 400,000 people of other nationalities considered Russian their native language. About 27% (or 153,400) of the Russian population lived in Transdniestria (Jackson 2003: 88).

countries feel that their own evaluation of a situation or of their security needs is mirrored by Moscow and when they receive political support (as well as more tangible forms of support, in this case, military) from a perceived important partner. In broader terms, as defined in the introductory chapter, consent is conferred by other CIS states when they express agreement to Russian goals, means, principles, and resulting Russian influence.

This section has shown that, like in the case of Tajikistan, Moscow sees a regional and Russian dimension that justifies intervention. These conflicts highlight Russian's use of rhetoric around 'compatriots' abroad,[74] and point to an increasingly revisionist Moscow policy since the mid-2000s that scorns Western-dominated 'universal' international norms. This section also finds that Russia's support of separatist forces (and later recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in 2008)[75] seemingly contradicts Moscow's insistence on territorial integrity in the face of Chechnya. However, the Georgian case shows that Russia's sovereignty and stability as well as self interest are more important to Moscow than holding on to a coherent black-and-white position on secession. More generally, Russian unilateral actions call into question the overall congruence between Russian hegemony and the expression of sovereignty of local regimes. Acting against the established regime by supporting revisionist factions can be understood as a case where the system is further pushed into an anarchic structure due to consequent dissent from other CIS countries. Tbilisi represents the most vocal dissenter to a regional hierarchy around Russia.

Fluctuating parties in the case of Nagorno-Karabakh

The Georgian and Moldovan cases studied above could rightfully also be included in this section that focuses on Russia's conception of unfixed alliances and multivector foreign policy. As we have seen in both cases (in Moldova in 2001 and in Georgia briefly in the mid-2000s), the central governments' relationship with Moscow fluctuated through time. However, because Russian actions ran fundamentally against Chisinau's and Tbilisi's understanding of sovereignty and their expression of it, the overall trend was one of animosity. Chisinau and Tbilisi could not accept a hierarchical region led by an intrusive hegemon that did not respect individual sovereignty and territorial integrity. The case of Nagorno-Karabakh is less straightforward.

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[74] In 1992, a Federal Migration Service was created by Yeltsin to deal not only with migrants and refugees on Russia, but also with Russian migrants in the former republics (Izvestia 27 June 1992).
[75] See pravda.ru 26 August 2008, available at http://english.pravda.ru/russia/kremlin/26-08-2008/106214-russia_ossetia_abkhazia-0/.

Azerbaijan was the slowest of the Caucasus countries to make a move towards independence. This was partly because the Azerbaijani Popular Front (APF) - having declared its wish to secede from Azerbaijan in February 1988 - had been suppressed by Soviet troops in 1990. New Azerbaijani leader Ayaz Mutalibov[76] declared his support for a restoration of the Soviet Union in an attempt to gain support from Moscow against Armenian separatists in the autonomous region of Nagorno-Karabakh. In response, Soviet forces supported Azerbaijani endeavours to remove Armenians from the Shaumian district in the spring of 1991 (Aves 1998: 177). However, Mutalibov openly backed the August 1991 coup in Moscow; during the coup, he reportedly stated: 'what transpired was the logical result of Gorbachev's poorly thought-out policy. We welcome the development of events in the Soviet Union.' (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 24 August 1991) Azerbaijan consequently lost Moscow's assistance, and Baku failed to initially ratify and join the CIS (Izvestia 7 March 1992).

With common recognition of the benefits of close cooperation, a mutual defence pact was signed between Russia and Armenia in May 1992 along with a 25-year agreement on Russian military bases in the country (Allison 2001: 446). Full-scale fighting erupted in the late winter of 1992; with Russian support (though not direct participation), Armenia gained control of the enclave as well as around 9% of Azerbaijani territory outside Nagorno-Karabakh (Arbatova 2008: 10). Russia tried to broker a settlement in April 1994, which was refused by Armenia, followed by an unofficial cease-fire a month later (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 9 April 1994).

Yerevan did not need Russian troops to secure its military superiority vis a vis Azerbaijan, unlike the clear void of security in the Georgian secessionist areas. However, Armenia, as expressed in the 1997 mutual defence pact with Russia, perceived the Russian presence as a security guarantee against any military pressures that Turkey could exert (Baev 2003b: 49). This was a clear case of consent to Russia as an important regional hegemon. In May 1998, Armenian Foreign Minister Vardan Oskanyan hailed Russia's active and effective role in the settlement process (Itar-Tass Weekly News 5 May 1998). Perceptions in Moscow also changed towards Armenia, at the expense of Turkey. Yeltsin refused to meet Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit in late 1999, and instead received the Armenian president only a few days after the refusal (Moscow News 10 November 1999). As a strategic consideration, if Azerbaijan were to fall into a state of chaos from weak leadership of its own, Russia, Turkey, Iran, as well as the U.S. would find themselves competing for control (Baev 2003b: 49).

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[76] Mutalibov had to flee the country, on charges of neglect in response to an Armenian attack in February 1992 (Moscow Times 6 November 2006).

Thus, the Armenia-Azerbaijani conflict was a strategically important opportunity for Russia to attempt to solidify its regional hegemony. Moscow regarded Armenia as a significant ally and maintained its 102nd military base, a division of S-300 anti-aircraft missiles and a squadron of the Russian air force with MIG-29 fighters, in the country (Cornell 2005: 54). Russia thus held key air combat and air defence forces in Armenia. In return, Yerevan supported further military integration with Moscow. In 1999 discussions were concluded on Armenia's integration into the CIS Unified Defence System's joint alert-duty arrangement - the arrangement under which Russia worked with Belarus and Kazakhstan (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 19 January 1999). In effect this meant that information would be shared between the Armenian military and Russian forces, giving Moscow the ability to monitor air space on its south-west axis. If Turkey ever decided to exert air force pressure on the region, it would first have to penetrate a vast Russian 'umbrella.' (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 19 January 1999)

In response, Azerbaijan welcomed American military presence. An Azerbaijani state counsellor of foreign policy in the presidential inner circle Vafa Gulizade stated: 'Nothing terrible would happen if the American base at Incirlik in Turkey were relocated wholly or in part to the Apsheron Peninsula.' (Vremya MN 20 January 1999) Azerbaijan's rapprochement with the U.S. shows an increasingly multivector foreign policy against Russian hegemony (even though there was no follow-through on Gulizade's nationalist view and he left office in 1999). As Moscow continued to make its presence and support visible in Armenia, Baku turned towards the U.S., NATO and Turkey to balance the playing field.

For the purpose of this study that examines changing forms of hierarchy it is important to highlight other CIS states' fluctuating attitude towards Moscow's involvement in its own right, particularly during Yeltsin's presidencies. Aves (1998) offers a comprehensive summary of three phases of national security policies of the South Caucasian states in relation to Russia under Yeltsin. The South Caucasian states demanded relatively radical independence from Russia before the fall of the Soviet Union when republican armies were being set up as well as directly after it. Because of the reintegration motives it expressed, Moscow was regarded as a major threat against the new states' formal political sovereignty. The South Caucasian states viewed Russian involvement as provoking ethnic tensions while doing little to stop the formation of unofficial armed militias. The exception was Azerbaijan, which started out by backing a renewed Union in its attempt to gain Moscow's support against Armenia. Russia initially responded positively. This phase was followed by a time when Russia's power had already collapsed and Moscow had subsequently identified the South

Caucasus as an area in which its own national interests were at risk. At the same time, the states of the South Caucasus were also concerned with strengthening their own positions; they began to see Russia as another potential strategic neighbour. In this context, Georgia and Azerbaijan continued to resist Moscow's involvement, while Armenia welcomed Russia as a counterweight against Turkish influence. In the third phase, the three countries moved again in different directions. Georgian and Armenian policies towards Russia were based on strategic considerations (with Armenia being much more sincere in its proclamation of common interests with Russia), whilst Azerbaijan resisted being drawn into a close relationship with Moscow.

The Russian presence in the context of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict continued to be quite complex under Putin. In August 2001, a Nezavisimaya Gazeta journalist speculated that 'World War III could break out in the South Caucasus' when an Iranian Air force jet 'invaded' Azerbaijani space (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 18 August 2001: B5). Though nothing came of the incident[77] - and therefore, such a report was outlandish hype - Turkey immediately vowed to come to Azerbaijan's aid; the Turkish Security Council considered it 'necessary to stage a significant demonstration of Turkey's presence in the Caucasus and in the Caspian region.' Turkey also condemned Tehran's actions along with the U.S. (Vremya Novostei 24 August 2001: B6). With such powerful players in the mix, the outcome of any confrontation in the region would only be balanced if Russia maintained its presence. Armenia could have equally fallen into chaos from internal political struggles. Thus, Russia's interest in the countries was solidified.

Russia increasingly became equidistant between Armenia and Azerbaijan after 2002. In the context of Karabakh, Moscow reiterated its more traditional take on secession and territorial integrity. For example, Russian Foreign Ministry official Boris Malakhov announced in August 2002 that Moscow did not 'recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.' He stated that Russia '[supported] the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan' and would 'energetically help' both sides to come to a 'compromise solution.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 7 August 2002) In 2003, Azerbaijan's then Prime Minister Ilkham Aliev stressed the positive developments in Azerbaijani-Russian relations that were important to bringing about a settlement in Karabakh (Itar-Tass Weekly News 4 September 2003). Aliev and Putin came to an agreement a year later to strengthen cooperation in all fields of security (Itar-Tass Weekly News 7 February 2004). First Deputy Foreign Minister Valery Loshchinin held that the

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[77] Official Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Hamid-Reza Asefi almost immediately issued a statement that downplayed the incident, stating that Azerbaijani airspace was never violated, and any claims to the contrary were 'hostile insinuations.' (Khanbabyan 2001)

relationship between the two countries was a lasting 'strategic partnership.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 6 February 2004) As Russian discourse became less hegemonic (i.e. it stopped so obviously challenging Azerbaijani sovereignty), Baku responded more favourably. Still, Azerbaijan rejected Moscow as being integral to solving the Karabakh conflict, and in so doing rejected the notion of an all-powerful regional hegemon. In a radio interview in late 2006, Aliyev stated his view that the 'keys to the Karabakh conflict settlement' did not lie with Russia (Itar-Tass Daily 23 December 2006). He added that Baku regarded the Minsk Group (Russia, France and the U.S.) as 'one organism,' and therefore would not hold separate talks with Moscow (Itar-Tass Daily 23 December 2006).

The fluctuations in how the South Caucasian states regarded Moscow and how Moscow regarded the South Caucasian states exhibit an important dimension of the time-dependent hegemonic fluidity this thesis is beginning to lay out. Hegemony is dependent not only on hegemonic actions on the part of the hegemon; it is just as dependent on the process of legitimacy, the consent-dissent dialectic that determines to what extent hegemony endures and in what light hegemony is seen. The back-and-forth Russian relationship with Azerbaijan and Armenia is a case in point. Systemic developments involving Turkey and the security and strategic implications brought on by other external threats meant that the perception of Russian involvement varied and consent and dissent were dependent on a number of factors.

Chapter conclusions

For the purpose of this study that evaluates change, it is useful to observe that there are continuities related to military intervention from Soviet times that persisted well into the post-Soviet era.[78] Moscow's efforts to cling onto established bases (for example, in Georgia, Tajikistan and Moldova) exhibit how Russia placed importance on infrastructure that could represent a possible renewed core of new forms of integration

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[78]At the time of the Soviet Union, the centrally organised forces had often acted to mediate cultural conflicts in the Caucasus. Russia's interest in the Abkhazian conflict is a good example of the continuities from and conditioning effects of shared historical paths. Georgia had undergone intense Russification during Tsarist and Soviet eras, there was a military presence inherited from the past and there were leftover economic ties. Furthermore, at the fall of the Soviet Union, a relatively small ethnic Russian minority existed in Georgia and there was a strong sense of Georgian national identity. More importantly, there were major Abkhaz grievances against Georgia and Russia concerning the loss of the political status it had enjoyed for over a decade after the 1917 revolution. The status Abkhazia acquired as an autonomous republic within the Georgian Union Republic and the political significance of this allowed and encouraged cultural differences. Abkhazian culture was heavily influenced by and grew to exhibit many similarities with Russian culture, perhaps because of its geographical proximity to Russia's North Caucasian republics. Abkhazia turned to close-kin Moscow for aid, regarding Tbilisi as the larger threat to its survival.

under Russian leadership.[79] At the same time, Russia had to strike a balance between its ambitions and its new political and economic realities, which become clearer in the chapters that follow. In many ways, the conflict in Tajikistan and its international dimension related to the Taliban exemplify Moscow's task in reassessing its strategic objectives.[80] Defeating the Taliban on its own was not an option any longer. At best, the circumstances were used to boost regional integration and promote Russian power; they were not used to advance hard imperial interest or to try to boost Russia's international status.

Now we can begin to discern an overall pattern that runs through this study about the post-Soviet era. Reflecting the fluid notion of anarchy, hierarchy and hegemony forwarded by Watson (1992), post-Soviet Russia was not static in its relationship to the region. To synthesise these observations and with a view to provide preliminary conclusions, the following analysis is divided into two sections: Russian agency and other CIS countries' agency.

Russian agency

Moscow frames its military involvement in terms of interest and realpolitik.[81] For example, Russia's usual insistence on territorial integrity because of Chechnya seemingly contradicts its actions in Georgia. However, this contradiction underlines a broader stance that Russia takes: Russian political interest trumps overarching claims on secession. When conflicts involve a regional or Russian population dimension (and in the case of the South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Moscow evaluated them as doing so), then Russia regards itself as having the right, if not the responsibility to intervene. Similarly, Russia's interest in regional stability and border protection trumps other CIS countries' individual sovereignty. At first glance, this is a neo-realist view. The link to this study's English School framing comes when analysing how Russian interests affected the consent and dissent shown to Russian-centred hierarchy by other CIS countries, analysed in the following section.

Yeltsin showed a strong interest in becoming involved in regional conflicts, as expressed in his heavy-handed rhetoric of the 'near abroad' and the 'compatriots'

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[79]However, Russia may have found itself locked into trying to sustain elements of its out-dated military infrastructure that now lacked sufficient military and defence purpose. Sustaining military bases in countries may have also had a negative influence on other countries' perceptions of Russian intervention. CIS countries may have welcomed Russian military aid only as a last resort because they became aware of the lasting deployment of Russian troops and Moscow's track record of not keeping withdrawal promises.

[80] See Sevodnya(11 August 1998) for discussion on the international considerations Russia had to make in the context of 'shrinking empire' and the Taliban issue.

[81] Makarychev (2008: 13-4) makes a similar claim about Russia's policy towards Ukraine and Georgia.

therein. So under Yeltsin, Russia assumed the main responsibility for regional conflict management. Yeltsin's policy favoured a new integrated structure: conflicts were viewed as embodying regional and common threats and thus necessitating common solutions. In this way, the hegemonic element during this time period was based on the stated ambition that Russia could reintegrate the region, uniting Russians and non-Russians together (for a more extreme argument that the goal was formal unification under a 'single political entity' see Dunlop 1997: 50).[82] As there was little follow-up, it is unlikely that this was Russia's real expectation. Yeltsin was aware of the military as well as economic restraints faced by his country. In objective terms Russia's conventional armed forces experienced massive decline in the 1990s (see Klein 2009: 9, Miller 2004). The forces were weak, spending was low and troops were inefficiently deployed (Miller 2004: 8-11). Moreover, acute economic problems, as is seen in the next chapter, severely dampened any hopes of widespread military reform. Thus is it not surprising that even the most integrationist of goals could not be backed up. Moscow had to be flexible in the way that it developed its relationships with different countries and groups of countries in the CIS region.[83] Under Yeltsin then, high intention mixed with relatively low capabilities to produce a relatively engaged, though rather insufficient effort. Thus, there was a gap between intent and capacity to fulfil objectives. A consenting country like Tajikistan then, consented not only because of military benefits, but also in response to relatively intangible Russian political and symbolic support. Tajikistan did receive security benefits from Russian intervention. However, this alone does not explain its consent. Rather, Tajikistan also consented for broader purposes: for political support from Moscow. This reflects Voeten's (2009) view on justificatory discourse. Tajik consent came from statements that legitimated Russian presence as well as Moscow's evaluation of the conflict, and served to legitimate Russian hegemony. In this way, the political aspect of involvement is just as important as the actual strength of military aid.

Under Putin, military spending was stepped up consistently (partly because of rising economic means).[84] However, as most of the combat in the conflict zones occurred in the 1990s, it is not surprising that explicit military intervention dropped during Putin's presidencies. The main impetus for Russian military involvement in the post-Soviet region changed under Putin's more realist strategy. September 11 provided

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[82] Such a position was advocated by General Alexander Lebed, whose views significantly influenced Russian foreign policy towards the near-abroad (around 1992-5). For a thorough discussion on different ideas and policy orientations in Russia in the 1990s, see Jackson 2003: 27 – 50.
[83] Though it can be argued that the residual influence of common Soviet policies and a common military system and wider security structure meant that Russia at the fall of the Soviet Union was in a relatively easy position to intervene in surrounding countries.
[84] See globalsecurity.org's Russian military budget, available at: http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/russia/mo-budget-2000-06.htm, accessed 7 July 2011.

Moscow with the opportunity to further advance its domestic interests around 'international terrorism.' This interest was reflected in its regional rhetoric. At the same time, CIS states were now drawn towards the U.S. and the American September 11 agenda; Moscow had to find another basis for rallying with CIS states. This was done by post-2003 through bolstering regional structures in Central Asia (discussed in the chapter on multilateral organisations). The aim was no longer reintegration, but a united front to help legitimise Russian actions and to project an image of regional primacy on the global stage. Increasingly, Putin's pragmatism involved normalising Russia's relationship with other countries. In the case of Tajikistan, this worked to a certain extent. Kyrgyzstan and more importantly, Uzbekistan, particularly after 2005, publicly consented to Moscow's new focus. They rallied around Russian-led rhetoric, as Russian interests coincided with the intra-state security concerns of local leaders.

In the early to mid-2000s, Russian military involvement became more explicitly linked to its own national interests.[85] Moscow's reluctance to withdraw its bases from its neighbouring countries in the face of Western protest is a case in point. Russia's involvement in Georgia also shows that Moscow may have continued to be intent on renewing its involvement in foreign territories on the basis of geopolitical interest. In the case of South Ossetia, for example, Moscow in the early 2000s pursued a policy of enforcing the status quo of the separatist region that contrasted with the advances in Russian-Georgian relations made by Yeltsin and Shevardnadze in the mid-1990s that could have encouraged increased rapprochement between the two countries. The conflict with Georgia in the summer of 2008 marks another shift in Russian policy to a higher degree of interest in regional military involvement, though Moscow claimed that its response was sui generis and precipitated by Georgian actions (Allison 2008a: 1145). A renewed insistence on protecting Russians abroad also suggests a more heavy-handed regional approach. However, the aftermath of the 2008 war shows that fears of revived imperial tendencies were for the most part unfounded.

Other CIS countries' agency

The countries studied here show active consent and dissent to Russian-led hierarchy. The consent and dissent shown to regional hierarchy promoted by Russian military power post-1991 thus served to at times promote and at other times restrain Russian hegemony. The countries of Central Asia, with the partial exception of Uzbekistan, seem to be less antagonistic to Moscow-led regional hierarchy. This is

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[85] Around 2003, Moscow also shifted its policy course from a security-centred to an 'economy-first' concept (Baev 2006: 122, Sakwa 2008: 242). This will become increasingly clear in the next chapter.

partly because their authoritarian governance models mean that their political discourse is more likely to reflect Russia-friendly policies. However, governance models alone cannot explain variance in consent and dissent to Russian-led hierarchy. Tbilisi after the rose revolution has been relatively more open to the West, especially in rhetoric. After 2003, the U.S. and EU (though after 2008 the EU has been more equivocal) have almost unconditionally supported Tbilisi, notwithstanding regression from democratic advances and Western governance norms, which the Rose Revolution had promised. Moreover, Georgia's offensive in South Ossetia in 2008 is testament to the uncertainty surrounding the country's evolution. Internal governance models are therefore less important in determining hierarchical relationships; consent and dissent to partial loss of sovereignty is in this case more important. This agreement or disagreement to the attenuation of sovereignty is expressed in discourse that consents or dissents to Russian aims, means, norms, and resulting influence.

This chapter has shown how dissent and consent in response to Russian hegemonic actions served to create different forms of regional power structure. Tbilisi and Chisinau continually challenged Russian hegemony during Yeltsin's presidencies; Armenia and Azerbaijan vacillated between consent and dissent. In the 1990s, the case of Tajikistan remained bilateral as an example of consent by and large (i.e. only Dushanbe showed consent to Russian-centred hierarchy). Other Central Asian states began to show meaningful agreement to the way that Moscow portrayed 'international terrorism' and the Tajik situation in the mid to late 1990s and particularly after 2001. Unrelated to Tajikistan, other Central Asian states also signed some very close security treaties with Russia in the mid-1990s. Though these treaties often failed to be implemented, Central Asian countries, with the exception of Uzbekistan, can in general be seen as consenters to regional hierarchy defined by Russian military power throughout the decade. In the late 1990s, Uzbekistan emerged ever more as a potential challenger to Russian hegemony.

Under Putin, convergence with Russia around threat perception (in particular, terrorism and regional instability) increased in Russia-Central Asia relations and around Nagorno-Karabakh. Perhaps this is partly due to the fact that outright conflict was no longer such a threat and therefore Moscow was perceived to be less directly involved in any violence. Aside from the Georgian case, Russia's focus turned to external threat perceptions involving other countries.

We can now make generalisations about when consent occurs and when dissent occurs. In terms of consent, Tajikistan (perhaps unavoidably) consented to

Russian involvement to the detriment of its own sovereignty (as Russia made itself central to any resolution of the conflict). Having a Russian presence helped broker agreements throughout the 1990s and mitigated all out conflict beyond the mid-decade mark when the Tajik civil war began to subside. Russia's evaluation of the conflict involving external security and border stability was also consented to by countries that allied themselves with Russia (at least in terms of threat assessment) in regional conflicts. For example, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan, particularly after September 2001, all saw eye-to-eye regarding Russian and joint missions in Tajikistan to deter instability in neighbouring Afghanistan from spilling over. Though there may not have been a real risk of such spill over, the military links and cooperation agreements that were established based around the Islamic fundamentalist threat contributed to a sense of common purpose with respect to external security objectives. Armenia also agreed with Russia's evaluation of Turkey as a challenger state, out of its own deep sense of a Turkish threat. By consenting to a Russian presence on its territory, Yerevan directly challenged any outside influence that threatened the regional hegemonic balance, and thus implicitly supported regional hierarchy around Russia. In so doing, relatively secure Russian hegemony was supported. Lastly, the regime security objectives and priorities of Tajikistan and Armenia were met.[86] Russia supported the status quo governments in these two countries.

We see shows of dissent that undermine Russian hegemony where Russian military involvement prevented the evolution of individual countries' sovereignty as they perceived it - namely in the cases of Georgia and Moldova, and during the 1990s Azerbaijan. Moscow's partiality meant that conflict-prone political structures were kept in place. By supporting separatist movements (and in so doing making them stronger and more effective than their numerical strength would suggest), Russia helped the formation of secessionist entities and the prolongation of antagonism between the breakaway regions and the central government to the detriment of internal order.[87] The legitimacy of Tbilisi's and Chisinau's political manifestation of norms (championing individual sovereignty and territorial integrity) was undermined by Moscow's presence. As evident from the examples and discussion above, the South Caucasian states chose rival countries to guarantee their protection. Georgia seeks security from the U.S. and Western organisations, as it perceives a Russian threat; Azerbaijan seeks

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[86]Arguably, the situation in Georgia is mixed. Tbilisi was supported by Moscow against the revolt in Mingrelia; however Russia's support of the separatist entities undermines the regime authorities in Tbilisi.
[87]Clearly, there is no judgement made here about the quality of order present in post-Soviet countries; indeed, order in some cases may imply central government full control – even repressive control – of regions within its internationally recognised borders. Order defined in this way, which was prevented by Russian policies, would be in the interest of centralising regimes.

protection from Western organisations and Turkey, as it perceives threats from Iran, Armenia and Russia (although to a lesser extent).

Russia's insistence on keeping a military presence in CIS countries when lacking sufficient resources suggests that Russian military intervention is also related to the country's overarching rhetorical strategy (for example, related to Russians abroad) and its larger strategic goal of maintaining regional influence. Though Russian troops in so-called peacekeeping formats kept incidents on the ground to a minimum, Russia also used its presence in other CIS countries to promote an extended Russian influence. The nature of Moscow's intervention in Tajikistan and Abkhazia placed Russian presence at the core of any future agreement. This outcome in turn put pressure on government decisions in Tbilisi and Dushanbe. For instance, Shevardnadze agreed that Georgia should join the CIS in 1993. The case of Tajikistan also shows that Moscow may have been 'missing the point' particularly in the 1990s by focusing on the Islamic threat. Uzbekistan was arguably the more pressing challenge to Dushanbe, and Moscow did not provide security to Tajikistan to counteract its powerful neighbour.

On balance: from tight to loose hegemony

We can now begin to sketch conclusions on the types of hegemony Russia has exercised related to its military involvements. The conclusions in the last chapter of this study elaborate what different types/levels of hegemony more precisely entail.

To state that Russia promotes regional hierarchy does not imply that Russia promotes empire or makes imperial claims. The case of Tajikistan and the related Taliban threat show that Russia could not address regional instability on its own; it sought cooperation with others. Russia has used its military power to promote integration in relation to countries or areas that have either chosen to remain effectively Russian protectorates - like Tajikistan, Abkhazia and South Ossetia - or those that have exhibited cooperative tendencies - like Armenia and the Central Asian countries. These countries and areas have agreed to Russian involvement as a security shield in exchange for political friendship. The degree of consent and legitimacy attached to Russian intervention form a hegemonic structure. However, this study does not claim that there has been a tendency towards *increasing* hierarchy. Just as Russia pursues a flexible and multivector foreign policy, so too do other CIS countries feel encouraged to hedge their bets. The fluctuations in Armenian and Azerbaijani policies related to Russia's military involvements are a case in point. Russia's type of hegemony is

flexible enough that it still leaves room for quite an independent system. This same flexibility is conducive to a constellation of power where other countries express dissent to Russian military power and ensuing hierarchy. This dissent provides a counterbalance to the consent of Central Asian countries to involvement which promotes tightness in the system.

Russian military involvement in the CIS region during Yeltsin's presidencies promoted a system of relatively tight hegemony. Under Yeltsin, there was little disagreement with Russian involvement in Tajikistan as well as relatively high Russian interest in military involvement. Even in the case of Georgia, the influence Russia had over South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and the relatively peaceful mediation process meant that the regional constellation of power was not swung into deep anarchy. Instead, a fairly tight system ensued. Georgia before the Rose Revolution dissented to Russian hierarchy. The sovereignty expressed in action by Georgia and Moldova served as a counterbalance to Central Asian consent. The CIS region began to divide between consenters and dissenters to Russian-led hierarchy.

During Putin's presidencies, vacillating political expressions of consent and dissent (as well as the drastic Russian-Georgia conflict in August 2008 that shows active dissent against Russian hegemony) suggests a system of increasingly loose hegemony. Central Asian countries stepped up their cooperation with Russia in the military sphere based on stated threat perceptions. This was done mostly on a multilateral and largely reciprocal basis, and created a relatively tight circle around Russia in the context of a looser broader CIS region. As integrationist hopes were abandoned, Moscow's aim was now mutually beneficial cooperation to legitimise Russian-led hierarchy. Some countries consented. The type of military involvement conducted by Russia left enough system flexibility to support other CIS countries' sovereign development and multivector policies, thus encouraging a looser system.

So far, this investigation has advanced our understanding of the changes and continuities in the post-Soviet region in relation to Russia's military involvements in CIS conflicts. Moreover, it has started to make sense of the changing pattern of Russia's regional relationships, displaying strong signs that Russian influence cannot be analysed as a static condition, but rather is better understood as relational - that is, dependent on other countries' reception of its power and regional hierarchy. Such an understanding presents an alternative to the anarchy-hierarchy dyad. The next three chapters continue this line of investigation, focusing on different power logics.

Together, these four empirical chapters give a solid picture of changing Russian hegemony based on the process of legitimacy.

Chapter 4:
Hegemony in the post-Soviet region as examined through Russian economic power and the consent-dissent dialectic

The previous chapter examined Russian military intervention in conflicts. It outlined how Yeltsin was relatively ambitious compared to Putin in terms of reintegration and Russia's central role in 'protecting Russians abroad' and thus used a firmer hand in intervention. Under Putin, Russia's hegemony through military actions became more piecemeal; Moscow was increasingly pragmatic in its use of military power and was no longer called on to act as the regional provider of military assistance (not least because the most intense period of conflict was over). The discussion also began to highlight the connection between Russian hegemony and the perceived positioning of other CIS countries in terms of consent and dissent to regional hierarchy. The regional division between countries that accept some form of hierarchy and countries that continuously express their sovereignty in ways to shield themselves from Russian hegemony was highlighted.

As a stand-alone chapter, this section makes a number of conclusions based on the analysis of changing hierarchy. One main question that is addressed is: how has the way that Russia employs its economic logic changed through time? This chapter argues that Russia's economic logic towards the CIS has been non-political and uninterested in gaining consent and legitimacy to Russian hegemony; instead it has increasingly been self-interested and put 'business first.' Moscow is not interested in seeking legitimacy in the economic sphere. A main goal in Russian economic policy is balancing Russia's economic interest with its geopolitical ambitions.[88] Under Yeltsin, Russian economic policy seems to be tied to its perception of its regional hegemony. That is, during Yeltsin's presidencies, subsidies were given in expectation of CIS acceptance of Russian hegemony. Geopolitical aspects became decreasingly important under Putin; rather an internal economic logic drove decision-making. In 2006 Russian Economics and Development Minister German Gref stated:

> 'Our position on [raising prices of natural gas to CIS countries] doesn't conceal any political motivation and is clearly based on economic principles... The situation [with Ukraine] is the same with other partners - Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Armenia. All of them are our close partners, and yet we're holding talks with all of them on higher prices.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 28 January 2006)

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[88] Trenin (2004: 77) holds that historical geopolitical ambitions have the potential to 'distort and compromise" Russian policies.

Shadrina (2010: 32) notes that Russia's 2009 National Security Strategy stresses 'security through development' as a 'fundamental principle' of Russian foreign policy, and 'emphasises Russia's intention to pursue a pragmatic foreign policy that excludes costly confrontation.' The slow pragmatic turn under Putin (particularly after the mid-2000s when most of the price hikes occurred) shows that in the face of regional disintegration and costly subsidies, Moscow was unwilling to favour the CIS. This chapter often refers to Putin's 'pragmatic' turn in different ways: sometimes to describe a self-interested strategy, strategy driven by commercial priorities, and one that is driven by structural changes. These positions are not mutually exclusive. Tsygankov (2008) holds that Putin's pragmatism had two 'faces': assertiveness and independence. Although Tsygankov (2008) writes primarily about Russia's relationship to the West, his analysis is also relevant to the CIS region. Moscow, with renewed economic confidence, identified its energy competitiveness and the economic opportunities that it afforded Russia in the region. Russia's decision to raise energy prices even to close allies such as Armenia and Belarus or to lower them in exchange for infrastructure reflected Moscow's determination to secure regional economic gains (Tsygankov 2008). Pragmatism is used in this study to refer to assertive economy-first policies that reflect Russian self-interest. Sometimes these policies come as a response to structural changes such as growing disintegration that highlight the cost of sustained aid or subsidies. Thus, economic and energy policy operate in both the economic and political spheres.

This chapter also focuses on consent and dissent to Russian hegemony and diminishing sovereignty. This consent and dissent can be analysed - at least from an outsider's perspective - to have influenced Moscow's actions. When taken in their political contexts, Moscow's economic policies towards the CIS have wider implications that affect the process of legitimacy and regional hierarchy. However, claiming that Moscow 'punishes' dissenters and 'rewards' consenters is overly simplistic when applied to the post-Soviet case: instead of consistently providing economic incentives for political congruence, Moscow has increasingly used its economic power pragmatically (as defined above) in pursuit of its own realist self-interest. Noting the lack of widespread consent to Russian-led hierarchy and political solidarity as well as the huge expense of continuing to subsidise countries, Moscow pulled away from its donor role as the central regional provider of economic aid. From the perspective of Mann's logic of economic power then (i.e. a logic whereby Moscow would base decisions on affecting the region's basic needs and activities), this study holds that the region has become increasingly anarchic.

Two main observations emerge from this chapter that are related to the broader study-wide theoretical framework. Moscow changed from a military logic to an economic one. The next chapters highlight how multilateral organisations and ideological logics were also more prominently used under Putin. Highlighting the shift in Russia's use of power from hard to other forms of power (and to areas that can be seen as soft power) is not a novel idea. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia's tactics towards the other countries of the CIS have often been analysed in International Relations literature as relying increasingly on economic power (sometimes considered a form of soft power when regarded as power of attraction, other times not, when the focus is on its coercive aspect). Specifically, economic power through Putin's energy diplomacy has become a common focus of academic and policy works (Stulberg 2007, Economides 2008, Goldman 2008, Orban 2008). This chapter joins in this debate. Importantly, an analysis of the economic structure of the region highlights the overwhelming importance of Russian energy - the real source of the country's economic power in the 2000s.[89] The energy relationship between Russia and different CIS countries acts as a case study at the end of this chapter of a highly important functional area of economic interaction. Because this case study is chosen, other areas of economic interaction such as trade and remittances are dealt with relatively briefly.

This chapter also begins to explain Yeltsin's neglect of Russia's economic power because of the ailing condition of the Russian economy in the 1990s - an economy that only began to pick up in the beginning of the new millennium. Such a surge in economic standing meant that Russia gained two aspects related to its economic power. Firstly, its relative economic strength meant that it had the capabilities to be more economically involved in the region, exercising its economic power more explicitly. Furthermore, relative economic wealth meant that Russia's power of attraction grew – in this case Russia's economic power began to hold soft power potential. This persuasive power of attraction could be exploited to encourage integration with other CIS countries, and more importantly hierarchy around Russia. However, based on the failure of integration and the high cost of providing subsidies with little regional political congruence to show for it, Putin used Russia's energy power pragmatically. Instead of continuing to 'repay' political 'friends' with economic incentives, Putin increased energy prices for regional players when their initial contracts expired. Russia's pragmatism served to foment a more anarchic system.

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[89] In the 1990s, with oil prices at $10-12 a barrel, the leverage available was much less and the revenues Russia received also far less.

The above contention relates to the chapter's second conclusion. Related to an English School understanding of a fluid anarchy-hierarchy spectrum, Russian ambitions sometimes faced increasing demands for political and economic sovereignty from other CIS countries. These countries can be analysed as countries that exhibited dissent to Russian hegemony through political expressions of their sovereignty. Other times, countries saw congruence between their own evaluation of the regional system and Russia's evaluation of its regional hegemony. Countries' push for independence meets with countries' perpetuation of Russian hegemony to create a decisive push-pull regional dynamic that serves to consistently either challenge or bolster Russian hegemony. This dynamic continuously swings the regional anarchy-hierarchy pendulum and thus contributes to changing intensities of Russia's relative regional positioning. In the case of economic power, both Yeltsin's inability to step in because of economic weakness and Putin's pragmatism promoted hegemonic independence in the system. In this case, Russia's lack of interest to seek legitimacy though energy policy dictates a more anarchic system. Though Russia remains the most powerful economic contender in the region, the system is relatively very loose: loose enough for an anarchic, self-interested system to flourish without any constraints of empire.

Potential for consent and dissent to Russian-led hierarchy

Here again it is useful to outline situations in which regimes would in general tend to consent or dissent to Russian-led hierarchy in the post-Soviet region. This discussion provides the backbone for the legitimacy dynamic that leads to hegemonic fluctuation.

Regimes are likely to show active consent to Russian-centred regional hierarchy when they benefit from Russia's use of its economic policy: when they continue to receive Russian economic aid, which is congruent with their own economic interests. Economic growth aided by Russia can serve to uphold regimes' status quo power through added legitimacy. A part of Russia's accepted international behaviour has at times included rewarding politically congruent countries with energy subsidies and supply. These regimes continue to benefit from energy subsidies and energy supply, even though such subsidies come with the expectation of consent to Russian-led regional hierarchy. Some regimes remain actively loyal to Moscow, thus bestowing legitimacy.

In terms of dissent, part of Moscow's patterned behaviour includes cutting off energy supply and/or raising energy prices to politically incongruent governments.

Regimes are economically neglected by Moscow for their expressions of sovereignty and tendency towards independence. Russian actions related to energy that economically undermine regimes can infringe on countries' sovereignty by challenging their regime legitimacy in their inability to provide economic growth and stable energy partnerships with their powerful neighbour. Furthermore, as stated, Russia's conception of its own regional economic role has increasingly embraced pragmatism related to economic aid and energy subsidies, basing decisions on commercial and broader self-interest. Whether countries are politically congruent with Moscow or not is therefore increasingly irrelevant; energy supplies have been cut off and prices have been increased for Belarus and Armenia for example. Such decisions make the interest of other regimes secondary and therefore no regime outside of Moscow benefits. The Russian decision to retreat from the role of economic provider for the region encourages a more anarchic system of states, as it encourages multivector foreign policies by incentivising other countries to look for other economic partners.

The tension between the confirmation of and clash against Russian hegemony highlights a distinct dialectic between Russian ambitions and individual countries' expression of sovereignty. It is this push-pull dynamic that ultimately contributes to fluctuating Russian hegemony. In the case of Russian economic power, this thesis finds that the clash related to Russian pragmatism is the most prominent under Putin. Before the new millennium, Russia could not afford to be strongly economically engaged in the region, though trade between Russia and the CIS states as a proportion of total trade was relatively high compared to Putin's time. Energy subsidies continued from old contracts - an economically unsustainable Russian gesture. During Putin's presidencies, economic power could be exercised because of the relative strength of the Russian economy. However, the steps that were taken were increasingly pragmatic and did not exhibit previous favouritism. On balance then, the increased use of economic power in a pragmatic fashion pushed the regional system towards anarchy.

Yeltsin's military conflicts: not an economic imperative

The first part of this chapter's narrative is told mostly from the Russian perspective, as this study finds that Russia's economic power only became of real consequence to other CIS countries after 1999 and really around 2001, when Russia's economy started to stabilise after the 1998 crash.

Before delving into how dissent and consent entered the economic scene, it is telling to highlight the lack of economic imperatives in Yeltsin's decision-making related to the military conflicts analysed in the previous chapters.[90] By doing so, one can begin to see the stark contrast between Yeltsin's hard power logic and Putin's soft power logic and draw continuities between the conflicts studied in the last chapter and the economic concerns studied in this one. An economic logic based on the ability to affect needs and activities was relatively absent from Russian interests under Yeltsin when compared to border stability and the protection of Russians abroad.

Russia had little economic interest in Tajikistan after the breakup of the Soviet Union. By the end of the 1980s, the living standard in Tajikistan had been the lowest of all Soviet republics, perhaps partially explaining why transition was hardest for the country. Thus, military involvement in the country was more of an economic burden than a way by which to advance economic interest (Jackson, 2003: 148-149). The country was in such economic turmoil that by 1997, the UN called for donor countries to raise $65 to $80 million for the restoration of Tajikistan's economy (Itar-Tass Weekly News 4 November 1997). Furthermore, between the time Tajikistan joined the IMF in 1993 and early 1998, the country was granted $40 million in credits and in May 1998, the IMF provided a further $120 million for a three-year programme to reform the economy (Itar-Tass Weekly News 2 April 1998, Itar-Tass Weekly News 29 May 1998). In this case then, it was the border issue that determined Russian involvement throughout Yeltsin's presidencies rather than economic opportunism. The 'economic' came back into the spotlight under Putin. As seen in the previous chapter, after September 11, Tajik involvement was linked in rhetoric to the 'war on terrorism,' in part to legitimise Moscow's own actions in Chechnya. Noting Chechnya's strategic importance for Russia, this form of instrumentalisation can also be understood as having economic implications (see Evangelista 2002: 55). Such economic considerations included the pipeline transit route through Chechnya that already existed as well as the prospects of building pipelines from the fields of Tengiz of Kazakhstan to the Black Sea and from Baku to Tengiz via Dagestan. Russia was also interested (and eventually built) a bypass pipeline for oil from Azerbaijan to Novorosiiysk (Evangelista 2002: 55).

Like Tajikistan, Moldova had been a relatively undeveloped republic under Soviet rule, despite its competitive advantage in high-technology goods during Khrushchev's time in the 1950s and early 1960s (Jackson 2003: 90). After the fall of the Soviet Union, the republic plunged even deeper into economic despair. By 2000,

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[90] Jackson (2003) provides an account of the economic dimension of the conflicts.

4.5 million Moldovans lived on only one third of what they did before 1991: only $20-$30 per month in a country where the government estimated the cost of living to be $100 per month (Moscow Times 5 April 2000). Transdniestria however, had been a valuable contributor to Soviet industry. With all-Union defence factories, it was in Transdniestria where Moldova's industry - and thus Russian economic interest in the country - was concentrated; and vice versa. Transdniestria depended on Russia as a main importer of its industrial (as well as agricultural) goods. Russia was also a main exporter of raw materials that the area needed for manufacturing. In this case then, Yeltsin did tie economic growth to backing Transdniestria (Jackson 2003). However, the logic behind Russian actions there remained concentrated on physical force rather than on trying to affect the economic needs of the area. As is evident below, Russia was in a poor economic condition and could not offer any sustainable long-term economic assistance.

Russian engagement in Abkhazia is a different case altogether. Throughout the communist period, the economy of the union republic of Georgia had experienced such growth that by 1991 it was one of the wealthiest republics. In Abkhazia, Moscow had clear economic interests that persisted from Soviet times: energy, communication and transportation infrastructure including a direct railway link between Russia and Georgia, rich agricultural lands, the Tkvarcheli coal mines and the Black Sea port of Sukhumi that granted access to Russian forces on the coast of the Caucasus (Jackson 2003: 121). Most importantly, Georgia represented a way by which to develop and transport oil and gas from Central Asia and the Caspian Sea (though not via Abkhazia). This economic interest came into play explicitly only after 1996. Between 1991 and 1992, there was very little debate about Abkhazia, as outright conflict had not yet erupted. This was also the pattern in the Moldova-Transdniestria conflict; without immediate threats, Moscow took a fairly laissez-faire approach and thus made room for more Euro-Atlanticist policies. After 1993 up until Primakov's time as Foreign Minister in 1996, Russian policy in Abkhazia reflected Yeltsin's overarching idea that Russia should retain special status and influence in the near-abroad. Though the economic interest in Abkhazia was substantial, the logic used there also remained military-focused throughout Yeltsin's time. The final empirical chapter make clear how instead of an economic logic based on trying to affect the area's basic needs, Putin employed policies with socio-psychological undertones as a means to attract the secessionist regions.

Compared to the drive to secure borders and to protect Russians abroad analysed in the previous chapter, the economic factor in post-Soviet conflicts under

Yeltsin appears to have been a relatively less contentious point. This observation suggests that Russian economic power and the way by which it could be exercised was not the most significant issue that defined Russian policy at the time; it also suggests that economic arguments based on Russian economic power resonated less well with the Russian public and elites and thus were less widely publicised. Under Yeltsin, Russia was economically weak. Lack of resources tied Moscow's hands in its efforts to attract countries through economic incentives. Energy relations with the new CIS states were important considerations - hence the focus on energy later in the chapter. For now, it is telling to examine the stark difference between Russia's economic milieu under Yeltsin and Russia's economic milieu under Putin. It is also interesting to examine how Russia's economic standing related to the other countries of the CIS, which suggests a large material economic disparity. Russia's economic power only became consequential once Russia had come out of economic crisis in the late 1990s.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) trends and current account balances

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, all 15 post-Soviet states continued to share the ruble, comprising the 'ruble zone.' The only way for the republics to develop their new economies was through Moscow's distribution of financial and physical resources (Shishkov 2007: 10). Importantly, this chapter later shows how Yeltsin tied energy subsidies to countries' decisions to remain in the ruble zone. CIS countries that chose to remain linked to Russia and depend on Moscow for administrative control over their national economies were rewarded with continued subsidies; CIS countries that chose an independent path stopped receiving economic subsidies from Russia. For now, it is useful to note that the 1990s began with an attempt by Russia to retain some ties of the former Soviet system, partly out of necessity. At least formally, the economic system of the region remained tied and there was little room for explicit shows of consent and dissent to Russian economic power.

The direct links between Russia's economic performance and economic policy in the post-Soviet region substantially changed during the 1990s. One way to begin to analyse the changes in Russia's regional economic power between Yeltsin and Putin's time is to examine GDP trends in Russia.

Figure 4.1: GDP trends in the Russian federation 1991 – 2008
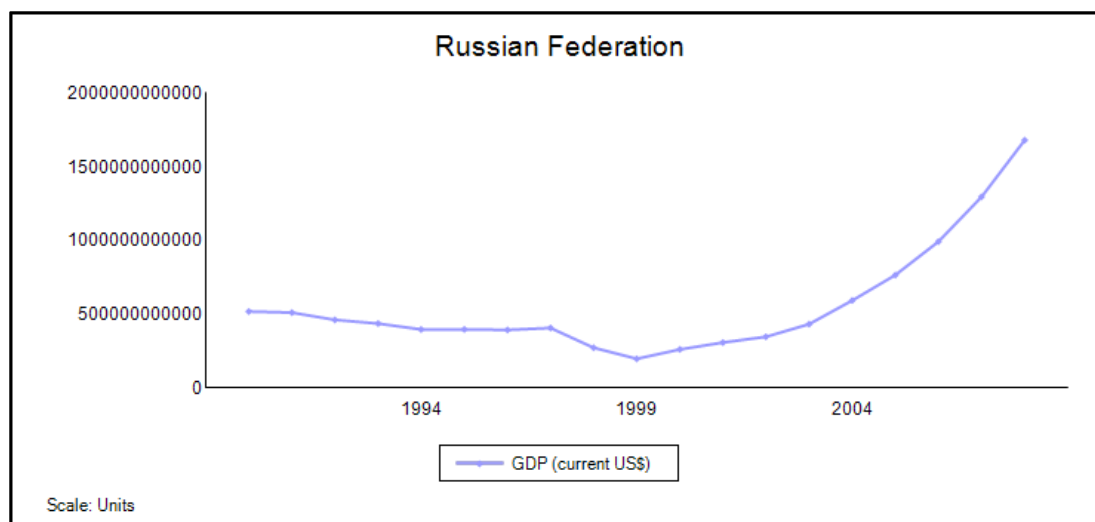
Source: World Development Indicators, accessible through http://ddp-ext.worldbank.org/ext/DDPQQ/member.do?method=getMembers&userid=1&queryId=135

Illustrated in the figure above is a country that began the 1990s in economic turmoil and continued to have a falling economy throughout the decade. Russia inherited a $33 billion debt after the collapse of the Soviet Union and immediately defaulted (Moscow Times 7 October 1997). Therefore, it is no surprise that Yeltsin's presidency used relatively little economic logic, as Russia did not have the economic means to back up any of its intentions. The 1998 economic crisis was a further blow, as investors ran from stock and bond markets fearing a ruble devaluation (for a picture of the crisis and effects see Moscow Times 6 June 1998, New Times 1 October 1998, Kommersant Daily 14 August 1998, Kommersant Daily 2 September 1998). Prime Minister Kiriyenko described the panic that ensued in the Russian economic sector as 'hysteria.' (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 14 August 1998) The economic situation got so dire that George Soros published a letter in the Financial Times suggesting that the Group of Seven countries should provide Russia with $15 billion on top of the IMF's $17 billion loan (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 14 August 1998).

The crisis was enough for some politicians to speculate about a decisive turning point in Russian regional hegemony. If Russian regional power was decreasing, then perhaps so was its influence. Such may have been the thoughts of the IMF, U.S. Vice President Gore, British Prime Minister Blair and German Chancellor Kohl, who all promised Ukraine continued support in exchange for staying the 'course of reform.' (Kommersant Daily 4 September 1998) A new, Western-oriented gravitational centre was being endorsed to fill in where Russia was declining. As a sign of further disintegration, even Lukashenka expressed anger over the Russian crisis, suggesting

that Moscow had deliberately concealed information about the impending crisis from other CIS countries (Kommersant Daily 19 September 1998). The economy was slow to pick up in the first half of 1999, and the ruble only began to stabilise in 2001 (Moscow Times 22 June 1999, Moscow Times 10 August 2001).

Integration into the global economy was a particularly difficult endeavour for the other countries of the CIS, not least because the republics were previously heavily subsidised and tied tightly together through the centrally planned economy. For the Central Asian republics for example, the lost subsidies were claimed to amount to $40 billion (Moscow Times 7 December 2005). In general, the other CIS countries' economic performance starting in 1991 was one of economic contraction at the outset of transition, with negative growth rates extending past the new millennium (Robson 2006). One main source of this contraction was the immediate economic shock of the Soviet Union's collapse that led to the cessation of direct fiscal transfers from Moscow to its former republics. In tracking economic growth levels after the breakup of the Soviet Union, a search using the World Bank's Development Indicators shows the same trend as in Russia in all 12 CIS countries, with varying degrees and with lower absolute values.[91] There was an initial decline in output directly after the fall of the Soviet Union, followed by continuous contraction.[92] The initial decline in the first years of transition between 1991 and 1994 was the steepest.

For example, Georgia experienced a drastic contraction of almost 80% between 1990 and 1994 (Robson 2006). The economic contraction in Georgia was partially due to the ethnic conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The country's weak economic performance was comparable to other CIS countries that also experienced internal conflict: by 1993, Armenia's economy had contracted to 30% of its 1989 levels and Azerbaijan's to 35% by 1995 (Cornell 2003: 26). Ukraine was the country that endured the most drawn out period of contraction between 1990 and 1999, with GDP falling around 60% (Robson 2006: 11). Russia's 1998 economic crisis sparked fear over the ruble in other CIS countries (Kommersant Daily 4 September 1998). Trade with Russia in 1998 decreased for every CIS country except for Belarus (Russky Telegraf 26 August 1998). Moreover, the devaluation of the ruble devalued the Kyrgyz som and the Kazakh tenge, the two most stable CIS currencies (Russky Telegraf 26 August 1998,

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[91] The World Development Indicators are accessible through http://ddp-ext.worldbank.org/ext/DDPQQ/member.do?method=getMembers&userid=1&queryId=135

[92] Robson (2006) also provides a detailed account of GDP trends in five post-Soviet countries to exemplify the region's overall decline in the beginning of the 1990s. GDP movement directly after 1990 in all countries studied (Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Georgia, Tajikistan, and Ukraine) shows a sharp decline in output.

Nezavisimaya Gazeta 27 August 1998).[93] It was only after 2000 that the CIS countries began to break from this pattern.

The external debt[94] of countries in the CIS region ballooned after the fall of the Soviet Union. From a position of almost no debt in 1990, debt burdens (especially on non-concessionary terms) increased rapidly in the CIS region during the 1990s. Short-term flows in the initial phases of transition helped to cushion the severe effects of economic decline, although they built up the countries' debts and delayed external adjustment (Robson 2006). The World Bank posits that this debt accumulation was mostly due to current account deficits.[95] In the first half of the 1990s, exports were only permitted with the new governments' permission (Shishkov 2007: 10). Along with the high levels of economic contraction studied above, this central control spurred isolationism.

At the same time, production across the region declined between 1991 and 1995 (by 8% in agriculture, by 14% in industrial production, and by 25% in freight traffic) (Shishkov 2007: 10). Robson's (2006) analysis also shows that Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Georgia, Tajikistan and Ukraine rendered negative current account balances consistently, with particularly abysmal results around 1997/1998 at the time of the economic crisis. The situation improved during Putin's term, in part due to debt relief and restructuring as well as macro-economic reforms. However, other than Ukraine and Uzbekistan, post-Soviet countries continued to be consistent 'borrowers,' as exposed by their current account deficits (IMF World Economic Outlook Database 2007). Surprisingly, even Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, two energy-exporting countries in the region aside from Russia, exhibited steady negative current account balances. In these two countries, although high oil prices and rising oil output enabled gradual narrowing of the deficit, strong import demand and deficits on both the income and service accounts continued to add pressure in the opposite direction in the 2000s (The Economist 2007).[96]

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[93] Between July 1997 and July 1998, the som dropped from 17.2 to 19.5 soms to the dollar. As Russia was Kazakhstan's main trading partner, the latter took a huge hit, also due to the drop in energy prices Russky Telegraf 26 August 1998). The tenge dropped from 76.8 to 79 tenge to the dollar in a matter of days in August 1998 (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 27 August 1998).

[94] Robson (2006) also uses the proportion of external debt outstanding to Russia as the main measurement for Russia's contribution to domestic investment through external finance.

[95] The current account balance (i.e. the difference between exports of goods and services and imports of goods and services) is particularly important to examine because it measures the size and direction of international borrowing. (Krugman & Obsfeld 2006: 286): 'When a country imports more than it exports, it is buying more from foreigners than it sells to them and must somehow finance this current account deficit...Since the country as a whole can import more than it exports only if it can borrow the difference from foreigners, a country with a current account deficit must be increasing its net foreign debts by the amount of the deficit.'

[96] See The Economist (2007) country briefings for related discussion.

It is apparent from figure 4.1 above that Russia's economy began to grow at the end of the last millennium. Between 1999 and 2005, Russia's GDP had already tripled and continued to grow - and GDP levels continued to soar above those of other CIS countries (see table 4.1 below). Even by the end of 2005 in Central Asia, 44% of the population lived below the poverty line (UNDP report cited in Moscow Times 7 December 2005). Russia's relative strength signalled to other countries in the region that there was potentially a lot to be gained from a close friendship with their powerful neighbour; Russia's economic strength meant additional power of attraction that Putin could potentially utilise to incentivise other CIS countries into closer cooperation. Later, this chapter highlights how Putin took advantage of Russia's rising economic strength.

Table 4.1 GDP and per capita income in CIS countries, beginning of 2006

CIS countries	GDP (billions of dollars, PPP)	Per capita income (thousands of dollars)
Russia	763.7	5.4
Ukraine	81.7	1.8
Uzbekistan	81.7	0.5
Kazakhstan	56.1	3.7
Belarus	29.6	3.0
Azerbaijan	12.6	1.5
Turkmenistan	6.8	1.0
Georgia	6.4	1.4
Armenia	4.9	1.5
Moldova	2.9	0.8
Kyrgyzstan	2.4	0.5
Tajikistan	2.3	0.4

Source: World Development Indicators database, Shishkov 2007: 15.

The economic attraction of Russia became so large that migration from other CIS countries ballooned. People that migrate (legally or illegally) to Russia for work and then send home remittances can have a significant positive impact on economic growth through increased consumption, saving and investment. Russia's official estimate of migration to Russia between 1992 and 2003 was over 6.2 million people, with Azerbaijanis comprising the largest migrant community followed by Armenians and Georgians (Zagorski 2005: 63, Tsygankov 2006: 1092). The World Bank (2007) reports that in 2004, remittances represented over 25% of GDP in Moldova; over 15% in

Tajikistan; and over 5% in Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia. These poorer countries benefited most from remittances.[97] Robson (2006) estimates that remittances from economic migrants in Russia represented between 75% and 98% of total remittances for many CIS countries in 2006.[98] Having migrant workers in Russia, however, was not always a welcome development in other CIS states. As a direct blow to Tbilisi and Baku for example (who as seen in the previous chapter were dissenters to Russian-centred hierarchy in the 1990s), Moscow announced in 1999 its intention to introduce a visa regime with both countries (New Times 1 January 2000). The issue of passportisation and citizenship is dealt with in the chapter on Russian ideological power.

External debt owed to Russia: dependence on Russian lending

This section turns to examine Russia lending to other post-Soviet countries during Yeltsin's and Putin's presidencies. During the Soviet period, the union republics were heavily subsidised by Russia. At the end of the USSR, the share of direct subsidies from Moscow in the budgets of the republics was large. In Central Asia for example, the share varied between 20% in Turkmenistan and 45% in Tajikistan (Syroezhkin 1999: 101). Even in 1992, technical credits continued to be substantially important to the new independent states. For a good example one can again examine the Central Asian states: in Kazakhstan, Russian subsidies amounted to 25.1% of Gross National Product (GNP), in Kyrgyzstan 22.6%, in Tajikistan 42.3%, in Turkmenistan 67.1%, and in Uzbekistan 69.2%. For the first seven months of 1993, they were worth 48.8% of GNP in Kazakhstan, 23.9% in Kyrgyzstan, 40.9% in Tajikistan, 45.7% in Turkmenistan and 52.8% in Uzbekistan (Syroezhkin 1999: 101). These large percentages are telling - there were no sources to counterbalance the loss of Soviet subsidies once the Union broke up.

Post 1991 data on CIS countries' current account position vis a vis Russia (that is, data that shows what percentage of a country's current account deficit is due to Russian lending) is extremely difficult to acquire. However, knowing how much lending Russia provided to CIS countries past the fall of the Soviet Union may assist analysis

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[97] See World Bank (2006) report titled Global Economic Prospectus: Economic Implications of Remittances and Migration for discussion on how the poorest countries benefit most from remittances. The World Bank (2007) report titled Migration and Remittances: Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union provides analysis on the specific case of the former Soviet region.

[98] Remittances from economic migrants in Russia as a percentage of total remittances: in Kyrgyzstan 75%, in Tajikistan 90%, in Armenia 80%, in Georgia 78%, in Ukraine 98% (Robson 2006: 40, 43, 46, 49, 51). The issue of remittances is only one way by which Russia offered incentives for migrant labourers. Russia's provision of incentives to migrants has been an issue in Russian relations with Georgia, Tajikistan and Azerbaijan. Though out of the scope of this study (because most of these examples represent mutual relations where Russia has little leverage), further investigations on Russian economic relations with the CIS could consider this aspect.

of Russia's regional hegemony; Kindleberger (1973) and other proponents of hegemonic stability theory have consistently based their analysis on the role of counter-cyclical lending. Table 4.2 below shows the proportion of debt owed to Russia by five countries in relation to their total debt. These countries are sufficiently varied in economic performance (according to GDP from the World Development Indicators) to make meaningful conclusions. All of the countries (from Ukraine that is relatively wealthy to Tajikistan that is the poorest of the CIS countries) exhibit high levels of external debt to Russia.

Table 4.2 shows data for the beginning of the 2000s. The fourth and fifth columns show the high totals of bilateral debt to Russia in millions of US dollars and the percentage those figures represent in relation to countries' total external debt. In the early 2000s, this percentage was between 8% and 29%. The last column allows one to compare the percentage owed to Russia across time (between 1994 and 2003). All averages between 1994 and 2003 were higher than the percentages for the later years alone. The proportion of outstanding bilateral debt to Russia fell consistently: regionally, it was around 50% of total debt per year in 1990 and had fallen to around 10% by 2006 (Robson 2006: 37). So then, even under considerable economic strain during Yeltsin's presidencies, Russia continued to provide significant subsidies to the other CIS countries. Perhaps because of this continued assistance, Moscow expected political congruence from countries at the receiving end. The lack of political solidarity exhibited by many of the CIS states may have influenced the decline of lending experienced under Putin.[99] However, even during Putin's presidencies, the high proportion of debt owed to Russia cannot be ignored. In Tajikistan, for example, Russia continued to hold the highest proportion of the country's external debt.

Table 4.2: External debt (US millions)

Country (Year)	Total External Debt	% GDP	Total Bilateral Debt to Russia	Bilateral debt to Russia as a % of total external debt	Average Annual External debt to Russia as a % of total external debt (1994-2003)
Kyrgyzstan (2003)	1,518.0	79%	188.4	12.4 %	19 %
Tajikistan (2003)	1,031.0	66%	299.7	29.1 %	29 %
Armenia (2001)	905.0	43%	99.0	11.0 %	14.8 %
Georgia (2002)	1,858.1	55%	156.9	8.4 %	11.4 %
Ukraine (2003)	10,693.0	21%	1,681.0	15.7 %	22.6 %

Source: External debt and Russian proportion acquired from Robson 2006 (GDP acquired from and % GDP calculated from IMF World Economic Outlook Database 2007).

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[99]Though the decline was partly the result of the rising relative importance of concessional flows from multilateral actors in later phases of transition.

The issue of debt for equity (in energy infrastructure or major companies) swaps is of relevance here - what Russia traded or bargained to reduce the debts of CIS states. Under Yeltsin, Russia tried this approach with Ukraine around 1997/8/9 and largely failed. During this time, Ukraine was in significant economic problems, its economy having shrunk by 60% since 1991 (Moscow Times 26 May 1998). Russia provided some economic backing. In 1998, the Ukrainian market was trading at a 70%-80% discount to Russia, and a deal was signed between Yeltsin and Kuchma to lift value-added taxes on goods traded between the two countries (Moscow Times 26 May 1998). Though Yeltsin first proposed debt for equity swaps in 1997, Moscow stepped up its pressure in 1999. This was one sign that in 1999 Moscow was gaining in economic confidence. In October 1999, Ukraine agreed to pay up to 70% of its debt to Russia by the new year, publically agreeing to give 11 strategic bombers, winged missiles and airplane ground equipment in exchange for $275 million worth of debt, and listing about 200 enterprises that could be handed to Russian creditors (Moscow Times 10 November 1999, Moscow Times 11 February 2000). Kiev also agreed to clear its $68 million debt to Gazprom with seven freighters and six trawlers (Moscow Times 10 November 1999). However, noting that debt for equity deals had been largely unsuccessful up until that point, Gazprom officials called the deal 'nothing exceptional.' Russian gas trader Itera filed a lawsuit at the end of the year against Ukrainian Naftogaz for failing to fulfil its promises (Moscow Times 11 February 2000).

The debt for equity initiative was revived under Putin, and succeeded more consistently, though not without its setbacks. At the end of February 2000, First Deputy Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov gave Kiev a list of state assets that could be used to pay Russian enterprises for some of its over $1.5 billion debt. This came alongside Gazprom accusations that Ukraine had illegally siphoned gas to the amount of $1.9 billion (Moscow Times 24 February 2000). With its own economic problems and noting that Russia could not afford to lose the Ukrainian market, Kiev could actively show dissent to Russian hegemony without much consequence. However, aside from Georgia and Ukraine, by the end of 2000 all CIS countries had agreed to restructure their debts to Russia under a 'zero option' agreement, by which CIS countries gave up property of the former Soviet Union to Russia (Itar-Tass Weekly 23 December 2000). Putin was also able to conclude debt for equity deals with Yerevan to settle Armenia's debt with Armenian defence enterprises, power distribution companies, a hydroelectricity plant and other companies (Moscow Times 23 August 2001, Moscow Times 28 November 2001). Noting other countries' dependence, forgiving the high energy debts of CIS countries in return for shares in local businesses was viewed by

Moscow to be a more cost-effective option by which Russia could realise its hegemonic aims (Light 2005: 231).

CIS countries continued to rely on Russian subsidies to fund economic growth. For countries like Tajikistan, Russia continued to play a significant role in determining its economic performance. For Belarus, in 2000 the Moscow Times declared in a headline: 'Kremlin plays the role of IMF for Belarus.' (Moscow Times 15 November 2000) In November 2000, Moscow agreed to loan $100 million to Belarus to support the country's ailing ruble. This announcement came amid expectations that the two countries would unify their national currencies under the Russia-Belarus Union. The connection between politics and economics is one that is important and is analysed below in relation to energy subsidies: although Russian actions were not explicitly political, their timing and contexts imply political consequences tied to legitimacy and the perpetuation of post-Soviet hierarchy around Russia.

Generalisation extended to the entire CIS region is not possible, noting the relatively low proportion of external debt to Russia exhibited by other countries such as Georgia. These difficulties in generalisation begin to problematise the use of external debt data; just examining the proportion of debt owed to Russia does not tell the full story. Indeed, the relatively large percentages owed to Russia in the 2000s were largely due to post-Soviet countries' dependence on Russian energy, and their inability to pay for it regardless of the price. Thus, Russia's real and felt economic power in the region stemmed from its strong position related to its control over energy resources and transit.

Energy subsidies in the post-Soviet region: Yeltsin's energy concerns

Energy is Russia's largest export. During the Soviet period, all of the republics depended greatly on subsidised oil and natural gas from Russia. From the large amounts of oil and natural gas reserves, the Soviet constituent republics were allocated certain amounts at prices far below those of the world market. These implicit energy subsidies were vital for the process of industrialisation across the Soviet Union. The global energy price hike experienced during Putin's presidencies meant that post-Soviet countries without energy resources accumulated more and more energy-related debt to Russia. The overdue payments related to energy imports began to be treated by Russia as loans to post-Soviet countries and thus began to appear on central government balance sheets as outstanding external debt. It is not surprising then, that

most academic literature on Russia's economic power vis a vis the post-Soviet region focuses on energy. This chapter now turns to the energy debate.

Once the Soviet Union fell, many of the newly independent states in the CIS region continued to rely on Russia for energy. For Yeltsin, other CIS coutries' dependence and Russia's power over energy prices may have been viewed as an opportunity to encourage political congruence and to advance Russian political interests as a regional economic power as well as regional hierarchy.

At the fall of the Soviet Union, any price increase on energy would have had a considerable impact on the post-Soviet countries' terms of trade.[100] Table 4.3 shows how the terms of trade of countries dependent on Russian energy (notably, not Turkmenistan nor Kazakhstan that are themselves large energy powers) would have been affected if energy prices had been raised to world levels in 1993.

Table 4.3 Impact of increasing energy prices to world levels on terms of trade (CIS Countries and the Baltic States, 1993)

Country	% change in terms of trade
Russia	+79
Turkmenistan	+50
Kazakhstan	+19
Kyrgyzstan	+1
Uzbekistan	-3
Tajikistan	-7
Azerbaijan	-7
Ukraine	-18
Belarus	-20
Georgia	-21
Armenia	-24
Latvia	-24
Lithuania	-31
Estonia	-32
Moldova	-38

Source: Abdelal (2002: 18) and Tarr (1994)

Eliminating energy subsidies and raising prices to world levels was one card Russia could play when dealing with other post-Soviet countries. Another important tool Moscow had was its control over supply routes, which it could decide to shut off. State-

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[100] The terms of trade of a country is the price of a country's exports divided by the price of its imports (Krugman and Obstfeld 2006: 85). In other words, it is the value of a nation's exported goods relative to the value of the goods that are imported (Balaam and Veseth 2001: 469). A decline in a country's terms of trade is a negative development.

owned energy companies act as additional policy levers for the Russian government (Bugajski 2004: 86). Specifically Gazprom, as the largest gas company in the world in which Moscow retained a 38% stake after the breakup of the Soviet Union, had the potential to act as an arm of Russian foreign policy to force political concessions. The 'success' of hegemonic ambitions from a Russian perspective depended on the individual countries' willingness to accept Russian proposals. We proceed to analyse how Russia utilised its advantageous position in relation to energy to its political and economic advantage, starting with Yeltsin's energy concerns.

Immediately after the fall of the Soviet Union, Yeltsin faced the possibility of losing control over the region's energy economy (i.e. pipelines, production, refining). Turkey, Iran, Israel, India, Pakistan, the U.S. and China were all potential rivals. Added to the importance of energy reserves for industrialisation after the break-up of the Soviet Union, the same commodities and the many kilometres of energy infrastructure continued to link the new states' economies to each other. Thus, Russia could use energy as a means by which to ensure continued regional unity and hierarchy - either through formal integration in the way of agreements or political congruence that ensured 'friendly' actions towards Moscow. Under Yeltsin, military cooperation and formal integration seemed to be the ideal answers. These ambitions did not come to fruition. Nevertheless, like his successor, Yeltsin identified the Russian advantage: having control over pipelines and refineries meant that Russia could control energy flows from Central Asia and use this control as a tool in attempts to pressure countries into an hierarchic relationship with Russia.

At the start of 1992, the newly independent states in the CIS region enjoyed equal prices for oil and gas. Subsidies for energy and related goods continued. Moscow also allowed the central banks in the newly independent states to issue credits in rubles with the aim that they would avoid economic collapse when Russia freed prices in 1992 (Blank 1995). Such subsidies came at a high cost for Russia: an estimated 10% to 15% of the country's GDP (Blank 1995). Directly after the fall of the Soviet Union then, Moscow was willing to incur large costs to continue to subsidise its neighbours if it meant that the region remained cohesive.

When the new governments were confronted with the choice of changing currencies from the ruble to a new national currency, Russia began to use its energy leverage to influence economic decisions: Moscow asserted that it would only continue to subsidise the energy consumption of countries that remained in the ruble zone (Abdelal 2002, Tarr 1994). Countries that did not accept the authority of Russia's

central bank would be forced into a market system in which Russia (a relatively strong regional economic weight) could economically crush the vulnerable new economies. Predictably, when Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia introduced the litas, lats and kroons respectively, energy prices for the Baltic States were raised to world levels (Abdelal 2002: 4). Their terms of trade suffered significantly, exhibiting between 24% and 32% decreases (see table 4.3 above). This was the first of several Russian moves that exemplified the country's use of energy as a political leverage under Yeltsin. Though the move itself may not have been explicitly political, the context and timing in which it occurred gave it political significance. It should be noted, however, that the effect of Russian leverage depended on the world price of oil and gas, which was much cheaper in the late Yeltsin period compared to the mid-Putin period. The Central Asian states (except for Tajikistan) soon followed the Baltic States' example in asserting their independence through economic means. In a 2003 interview, the governor of the Kazakh National Bank Grigory Marchenko reflected on the country's decision to introduce the tenge in 1993:

> 'The Russian economy was going downhill and so was ours...
> We had crisis committees, and their job was not to get the
> economy to grow but to slow the decline.' (Moscow Times 26
> November 2003)

Kazakhstan had never had an independent currency and relied on Russia for 70% of its trade. So when Yeltsin offered to include Kazakhstan in a new ruble zone, many in the Kazakh camp were tempted. Ultimately, Kazakhstan opted for its own currency. Marchenko also reflected on how the decision surprised Moscow:

> 'It was a good decision for Russia. They were subsidising other
> republics, so they decided to cut their losses... From a financial
> point of view they were right, but from a political and long-term
> economic point of view, I think the [Yeltsin group who had
> pushed for a new ruble zone including Kazakhstan] was
> always right.' (Moscow Times 26 November 2003)

This tension between what was economically sound and what was politically advantageous is an important issue to note throughout this chapter. Moscow began to place more weight on economic soundness. With a failing economy, Russia could not sustain such economic outlays. However, it should be noted that Kazakhstan remained one of Russia's most important economic allies, as emphasised in the next chapter. Energy cooperation was at a high point by 1999. In October, then Prime Minister Putin stated: 'Over the recent past Kazakh colleagues and us have doubled the transit of the Kazakh oil via the territory of Russia. Today we say that that transit can be increased by several times more. But that will not be the end of our cooperation.' Russia planned to build a Baltic coast terminal for the shipment of oil and oil products, and Astana was assured that it would play an active role in the project. Putin stated: 'Our cooperation in

[the energy] sphere is long-term and strategic.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 24 September 1999)

At the same time, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan began looking elsewhere for importers of their materials. Specifically, the Central Asian countries preferred to sell cotton to foreign countries for foreign currency (Blank 1995: 11, Kommersant 5 May 1993), since Russia was subsidising their energy regardless of the consequences. This move (read as a show of dissent) solidified Moscow's decision to employ tit-for-tat measures.[101] Moscow would not continue providing expensive economic advantages to countries that were unwilling to return the favour. Gorbachev had used Russia's leverage over energy in the late 1980s against the union republics of Ukraine and the Baltics (Blank 1995). Yeltsin was aware of how Russia had subsidised CIS energy use with little political reward. Instead of continued integration, Russia was faced with a disintegrated region and a failing economy. Continuing economic relationships without seeing payoff for Russia was identified as an imprudent move in the face of unsustainable costs and relative regional disintegration. Moscow's decision to turn away economically from the region also meant that in the economic sphere it stopped pushing for consent, thus facilitating a more anarchic system.

Facing little consent from Ashgabat and shows of dissent from Almaty, in November 1993 Gazprom cut off Turkmenistan's gas exports to Europe (Blank 1995). For four months in the summer of 1994, Russia blocked almost all Kazakh oil. Russia also took advantage of Kazakhstan's and Turkmenistan's large energy debts: Moscow proposed debt for equity swaps, where Russia would gain shares of Kazakh and Turkmen oil and gas firms, effectively meaning Russian takeover of many energy companies. The last empirical chapter shows that the period of the mid-1990s also coincided with Russia pressuring CIS countries (and particularly Central Asian countries) to accept dual citizenship policies. Moscow felt its reins slipping. Disintegration was continuing regardless of economic subsidies. Russia responded not by incentivising consent, but by dis-incentivising dissent, thus contributing to the anarchic pull.

The Ukrainian case is a particularly telling one that begins to outline the changes in energy policy under Yeltsin. As there is plenty of academic literature on this subject, this section relies more on secondary resources than previous ones. So far, it is clear that dissent began to appear around 1993 and that Moscow changed its

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[101]For example, note the 1994 cotton issue between Russia and Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan (see Kommersant 5 May 1993 and Blank 1995 for related commentary).

policies to reflect growing disaggregation. Already in 1992, it was obvious that the government of Leonid Kravchuk would assert a considerably different economic policy from its Russian neighbour. For example, in March, Kravchuk proposed to the parliament to put the goal of being economically independent from Russia in front of exclusively political and social post-Soviet progress; he committed Kiev to the creation of a new Ukrainian currency, reducing Russian imports, and reorienting towards new markets.[102] At the same time, foreign policy actors in Moscow continued to argue that Russia's development hinged on 'unlimited access' to the large Ukrainian market (Kuzio 1998: 229). Whilst Foreign Minister Kozyrev went as far as proclaiming support for Russian-Ukrainian reunification (Karatnychy 1995: 77), Kravchuk insisted on mutual recognition of complete and unequivocal independence.

In part because of such animosities, the dispute over the Black Sea Fleet (BSF),[103] and Ukraine's inability to pay for its energy debt, Russia declared that it would charge Ukraine the average world price for natural gas in February 1993 (Stern 2006, Abdelal 2002).[104] Moscow temporarily discontinued the supply of oil to Ukraine in early June (Karatnychy 1995: 77, Woehrel 2009: 7). In September, a week before the Massandra Summit between Kravchuk and Yeltsin to discuss the BSF, Gazprom reduced gas supplies to Ukraine by 25% (Balmaceda 2008: 26). After the suspension of supply, Prime Minister Kuchma agreed that, from January 1st 1994, Ukraine would pay the world price (or higher) for both oil and natural gas in hard currency. By 1994 Ukraine's energy debt amounted to $2 billion (Balmaceda 2008: 25). That year, Moscow shifted from using the energy card coercively, to outlining more concrete goals related to infrastructure and economic cooperation (Karatnychy 1995: 78, Balmaceda 2008: 27). In context, perhaps Moscow was trying to strengthen the popularity of pro-Russian candidate Kuchma. However, such political motives may be overstated; by 1995, Moscow was again using its power over energy supply to pressure Kiev.[105] The outcomes of the energy conflicts in the first half of the 1990s between Russia and Ukraine were more politically and economically beneficial to Russia than to Ukraine - Ukraine was ultimately allowed to pay for half of Russian supply with transit fees, whilst

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[102] It is important to note, however, that by the end of 1992 Ukraine was in deep economic crisis, partly caused by the severing of economic ties with Russia, and was forced to abandon its policy of economic autonomy and seek reconciliation and cooperation with Moscow.
[103] In January 1993, a main point of disagreement between Russia and Ukraine was the future of the Black Sea Fleet (BSF) and Ukrainian sovereignty in the Crimea with its strategically important homeport of Sevastopol (Felgenhauer 1999:1). The heated negotiations between the two countries that were concluded by an agreement signed by Ukrainian Prime Minister Pavlo Lazarenko and Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin on May 28, 1997 underlined the tensions between the sides that both claimed sovereign control over the Crimean peninsula: The newly independent Ukraine wanted to avoid being patronised by Russia. Russia sought rights to base its ships as a symbolic means to reassert power on its southern flank vis a vis Turkey, the Caucasus, and future Caspian oil flows.
[104] This represented a hike from $39 to $85 per 1,000 cubic metres. Russia settled for $60 after negotiations with Ukrainian officials (Abdelal 2002: 12).
[105] See Balmaceda (2008) for examples.

Russia maintained the BSF as compensation for Ukraine's energy debts (Pirani 2007, Pleines 2004).

Even at this early stage after the breakup of the Soviet Union, Kiev appealed that Moscow was reducing oil supplies to compel Ukrainian leaders to push for further integration. In face of this perceived pressure, more dissent from Ukraine ensued. Kuchma was restricted in the extent to which he could pursue a pro-Russian foreign policy during his first term (Balmaceda 2008: 28). His legitimacy relied on support from nationalists who opposed such rapprochement. Kiev began to seek closer ties with the West. In 1997, along with the other three countries most resistant to closer CIS integration, Ukraine established GUAM.[106] To further underline the complex relationship between Kiev and Moscow, it is interesting to note that in the same year, Ukraine extracted Russian agreement to a bilateral treaty in which Russian recognised the Ukrainian state border legally for the first time. By 1998, the energy struggle between Ukraine and Russia continued, with heated talks over how Kiev would pay off debts, theft of Russian gas from pipelines as well as privatisation (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 7 March 1998).

Though this section on GUAM could rightfully be included in the next chapter on multilateral organisations, it is included here because the organisation largely grew out of distaste for Russian hegemony that coincided with perceived economic pressure. However, it is very important to keep this section in mind when reading the next chapter as a counterbalance to the Russian-led organisations studied there. GUAM was primarily an economic organisation at its inception, and was hailed by Georgian Foreign Minister Menagarishvili as being a determining factor for the foreign policies of the member countries (Itar-Tass Weekly News 7 July 1998). From a Russian perspective, GUAM had the potential to act as a counterweight to Russia's hegemony in the CIS region. However, the balance that member states had to strike is much more nuanced than this potential interpretation suggests; member states (and in particular Georgia and Ukraine) insisted that the organisation was not a political (nor military) alliance (Itar-Tass Weekly News 2 October 1999, Itar-Tass Weekly News 18 August 1999, 23 November 1999). In October 1999 Ukrainian foreign minister Tarasyuk underlined at a press conference that GUUAM was not a closed forum and that if 'Russia [wanted] to join... its participants [would] support it.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 9 October 1999) At the same time, there were shows of sovereignty that went against Russia's vision of regional hierarchy. When Uzbekistan officially joined GUUAM in

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[106] GUAM was established on 10 October 1997 by Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova, and was joined by Uzbekistan in 1999, changing the organisation's name to GUUAM. Uzbekistan later withdrew in 2005, changing the acronym of the organisation back to reflect its original constellation.

1999, a joint statement was released that stressed the members' territorial integrity. Though a representative diplomat said that GUUAM did not seek to supplant the CIS, he also stated that it was the member countries' sovereign right to sign cooperation agreements and enter unions (Itar-Tass Weekly News 25 April 1999). Moldovan president Pyotr Lucinschi stated in a press conference that the establishment of organisations like GUUAM was an expression of individual state interest: 'We should get accustomed that each country has its own interests, and this must not bring about any objections on the part of the [CIS] allies.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 1 September 1999) Other CIS countries were also acting based on their own self-interest. This political expression of sovereignty however, ran against Russian hegemony. In November 1999, Kuchma spoke of the Ukraine's 'European Choice,' referring to its aspirations to join the EU and to forge closer relations with NATO.[107] At the same time, Ukraine continued to owe Russia around $1.6 billion for gas (Itar-Tass Weekly News 12 October 1999).

In terms of dependence, Belarus and Ukraine were in similar positions after the breakup of the Soviet Union. Like Ukraine, Belarus incurred large debts for its energy consumption. However, the energy relationship between Russia and Belarus remained markedly asymmetric, as Belarus lacked Ukraine's leverage of a quasi-monopoly over transit. In comparison to Ukraine, only around 20% of Russian gas exports to Europe passed through Belarus by 2006, whilst most continued to go through Ukraine (BBC News Online, 31 December 2006). Belarus could not afford to anger Moscow. Indeed, even as the ties between post-Soviet states began to loosen in the late 1990s, Belarus became more dependent on Russia. Between 1992 and 1998, Russia's share of Belarusian exports increased to 65% from 48% and its share of imports rose to 55%. Hence, as Russia offered to trade Belarusian energy debts for assets, Belarus (in contrast to Ukraine, who as seen above continuously refused such proposals in the late 1990s) accepted. Examining the overall figures for the last years of the 1990s reveals that Belarus paid over 75% of its gas consumption with bartered goods (Abdelal 2002: 10).

Belarus remained a staunch Russian ally. The next chapter studies the Russia-Belarus Union. For now, this chapter notes that Belarus envisioned a monetary union with Russia since very early on after the collapse of the Soviet Union.[108] In mid-1994

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[107]The West invited this position. NATO made it unambiguously clear that membership was possible depending on Ukraine's willingness to reform. Similarly, Ukraine became an important part of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), creating the EU-Ukraine Action Plan that lays the foundation for further political cooperation and economic interdependence.
[108] In the first half of 1994, Belarusian and Russian prime ministers Viacheslav Kebich and Viktor Chernomyrdin pledged to unify their respective economies and monetary systems (Abdelal 2002: 9).

Lukashenka[109] was elected and continued to advocate the reunification of the two countries. Accordingly, the Community of Russia and Belarus (one year later, changed to the Union of Russia and Belarus) was proclaimed on April 2nd 1996, though it meant little in effect. In 1999, a confederal Russian-Belarusian state was further proclaimed with a sophisticated institutional structure, including a Union budget and a commission to harmonise laws between the two countries (Light 2005: 232). That same month, the price of gas was reduced from an already low $50 per 1,000 cubic metres to $30, with only 10% of payments required in hard currency (Abdelal 2002: 12).[110] Already in 1998, Belarus' energy debt to Russia had ballooned - by 18% between January and March alone - and the only way to repay debts was through private companies that offered liquid Belarusian goods (Itar-Tass Weekly News 6 April 1998). When translated into the impact on the Belarusian GDP, the IMF estimated that the annual energy subsidy provided by Russia at the end of the 1990s was approximately 13.5% ($1.2 billion) (Legvold and Wallander 2004: 117).

The energy subsidies provided through a blanket strategy to all of the republics during Soviet times were unsustainable in the 1990s. By 1998, the Russian economy was sluggish and had lost $6.2 billion that year alone due to the price reduction for oil on world markets (Itar-Tass Weekly News 18 March 1999). Representing a low point in global oil prices, this development meant that Russia lost some of its previous bargaining power. Russia therefore chose a more commercially pragmatic and categorical approach to even its closest allies. Gazprom cut 40% of its gas to Belarus in June 1998 (and 50% of its gas to Moldova);[111] Deputy Fuel and Power Minister Yevgeny Morozov backed Gazprom and insisted that Belarus pay 70% of its debt in cash (Izvestia 17 June 1998). This development put a strain on the close Russian-Belarusian relationship, which as seen in the next chapter was developing into an institutionalised one by the mid-1990s. In July 1998, Lukashenka responded to his expulsion from the Council of Europe on grounds of restricting domestic civil rights with a jab at Yeltsin: '[in order to gain admission to the Council] you simply have to fire on parliament with tanks, as some have done.' (Kommersant Daily 2 July 1998) He also reacted in the nuclear arena by stating that the country's decision to give up its nuclear arms was an 'egregious mistake, if not a crime' and that he conceded only because of pressure from the West and Russia (Kommersant Daily 25 September 1998).

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[109] Lukashenka ran a campaign as a populist junior Communist Party bureaucrat. His platform was strongly at odds with the pro-reform policies backed by the leaders of Belarus' neighbours. He claims to have been the only deputy of the Belarusian parliament who voted against ratification of the December 1991 agreement that dissolved the Soviet Union.
[110] The figures for the year 2000 also provide an effective comparison between the subsidies received by Belarus vis-a-vis other CIS members for gas: Belarus enjoyed prices between $27 and $30 per 1,000 cubic metres, while Ukraine, Moldova and Lithuania paid up to $80 (Abdelal 2002: 12).
[111] Gazprom again cut supplies of gas to Modova by 40% in November 1999 (Moscow Times 10 November 1999).

Russian economic hegemony suffered, as Russia could not continue bearing the previous economic costs of energy subsidies. However, as energy prices began to go up (they almost tripled in 1999[112] and continued to rise dramatically through Putin's presidency),[113] Putin became increasingly pragmatic, as defined at the beginning of the chapter. In early 2000, Putin called for increased investment in oil and gas exports, which continued to account for 47% of all Russian hard currency export revenues (Moscow Times 4 March 2000). Russia used pragmatically its relative regional economic power in the face of little political return. By 2001 it was estimated that Russia lost 3-4% of GDP through direct or indirect subsidies to CIS countries - nearly the amount that the country spent on health and defence (Moscow Times 27 August 2001). Russia's pragmatic use of its energy leverage meant that even Moscow's allies would not continue to receive the type of favouritism they had enjoyed in the past. Russia chose not to act as the provider of subsidies that would integrate the region out of its own economic good will. The next chapters show how political and ideological power were used as sounder ways by which to pull already consenting countries toward a more hierarchic regional constellation.

The use of energy as leverage under Putin towards energy importing countries

CIS countries that had oil, gas and other mineral resources had an advantage over energy importing countries when the Soviet Union fell, since they could now export to other countries beyond Russia. This advantage was particularly noticeable beginning in the last half of the 1990s. For example, the share of energy and mineral products in Azerbaijani exports grew from 56% to 91% between 1995 and 2005 and in Kazakhstan from 22% to 77% (Shishkov 2007: 11). By Putin's time, the CIS could be divided into energy importing countries (Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova) and energy exporting countries (Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and to a lesser extent, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan with respect to hydropower).[114]

The following section analyses how Moscow approached energy importing countries that depend on Russian energy. The two countries most prominently reported in Western media are traditionally Ukraine and Belarus. Also taking into account energy policy towards Moldova and Georgia (like Ukraine, with pro-Western outlooks) and Armenia (like Belarus, a strong ally of Moscow) allows us to make more meaningful generalisations. If one were to only analyse the two quintessential cases, then one

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[112] Moscow Times 4 March 2000.
[113] See BP's Statistical Review of World Energy 2009.
[114] According to the data provided by the Economic Survey of Europe, No.1 (2003: 177), also used in Shishkov (2007: 12).

could conclude that Russia under Putin used its energy leverage coercively with political motivations, rewarding political allies and punishing politically incongruent regimes. However, this simplistic statement is misleading. Indeed, Russia doubled the price of oil for Armenia (its most loyal ally) in January 2006 along with Georgia to $110 per 1,000 cubic metres (BBC News Online 2006). What is revealed then, is a generalised pragmatic approach to Russian economic power. Acting in self-interested ways, other CIS countries continued to assert their sovereignty to the detriment of Russian hegemony.

Ukraine

Ukraine's domestic energy supplies have never been able to meet the country's high demands. By the year 2000, Ukraine's 395 million barrels of oil reserves were only sufficient to meet 25% of its needs (albeit decreasing in volume in comparison to the 1990s). In terms of natural gas, in 2002 the country's 39.6 trillion cubic feet of the resource only met around 20% of its demand (Abdelal 2002: 3).

Between 2000 and 2006, Putin partially abandoned prior coercive means that utilised energy as a threat. Resuming energy deliveries to Ukraine, the Russian president rather confronted Ukrainian nationalists using political means. Here is an instance where a shift is observed towards using politico-ideological power. For example, it is suspected that Russian influence played a significant role in the sacking of Ukrainian Prime Minister Victor Yushchenko and in the judicial proceedings against his Deputy Prime Minister Yulia Timoshenko in 2001. In 2002, Putin's ambassador in Kiev openly backed pro-Kuchma (i.e. at that time pro-Russian) parties. This shift in policy can be understood as Russia's recognition that Ukraine could not be economically coerced into becoming a post-Soviet satellite alone. Indeed, energy pressure only exacerbated tensions between the countries and pushed Ukraine to seek closer ties with the West. In April 2002, Gazprom gave an additional discount to Ukraine for gas, decreasing the price from $30 to less than $20 per 1,000 cubic metres (Abdelal 2002: 12). Perhaps Moscow was employing a similar tactic to that in the winter of 1993-4 when Yeltsin refrained from withholding energy from Ukraine, arguably to strengthen the popularity of pro-Russian candidate Kuchma (Karatnychy 1995: 78). Indeed, in August 2004 when the Odessa-Brody oil pipeline began flowing with Russian oil, the Ukrainian opposition claimed that was the price paid to Moscow for its support for Ukrainian Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich's candidature in the upcoming presidential election (Moscow News 1 August 2004). By 2006, Russia continued to subsidise Ukraine to the extent of $30 billion per year; and senior official in the Russia-

Belarus Union Pavel Borodin remarked: 'we don't get anything [in return] apart from political dirt.' (Argumenty i Fakty 2006)

The January 2006 gas conflict[115] between Russian and Ukraine exemplifies a return to 'business as usual', exemplified by Russia exercising its economic power coercively against an important but reluctant neighbour (Sokov 2006, Stern 2006). In the case of Ukraine, most of the international community condemned Gazprom's move as political 'punishment' for Ukraine's increasingly Western orientation. Some Ukrainian politicians agreed. Levko Lukyanenko, a Supreme Council deputy from the Yulia Timoshenko Bloc told Kommersant:

> 'There can be no doubt that this is connected with the elections... It's intended to force Yushchenko's government to make concessions to Russia by agreeing to the price of $230. That will result in an increase in the unit cost of Ukrainian manufactured goods, a budget deficit and inflation. Then Russia will say: Your government doesn't know how to run things, you need different people. We have a Russian candidate - Yanukovich. Support him, people, and then Russia will lower the price of gas. In this way Russia hopes to bring Ukraine back under its control.' (Current Digest of the Russian Press 11 January 2006)

Increasingly, Gazprom did not deny the political connection. In 2007, deputy chairman of the management committee of Gazprom stated:

> 'If politicians make a decision to establish closer economic ties between our countries, this will guarantee lower gas prices. However, if politicians decide to separate these ties, then the price of gas for Ukraine will be the same as for Germany. Does Ukraine really want this?' (RFL/RL Feature Article 28 June 2007 by Roman Kupchinsky)

Though political interpretations are understandable, the commercial interest for Russian actions cannot be ignored (Balmaceda 2008: 25, Puglisi 2003, Kropatcheva 2010: Chapter 2). For example, there is the issue of the hydrocarbon deposits in the Azov and Black seas with massive amounts of oil and natural gas (Danilchenko 2006).

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[115]Sokov (2006) explains the Ukrainian case: By mid-2005, Gazprom had proposed new prices for gas, justifying the move by the increasing world price. Most of Gazprom's customers were paying over $200 per 1,000 cubic metres, and it was only 'reasonable' that Ukraine would also have to pay more (according to Gazprom calculations, its EU customers were paying around $255 per 1,000 cubic metres). The proposed change was increasing the price from $50 to $160 per 1,000 cubic metres. The company would pay $1.75 instead of the $1.09 per 1,000 cubic metres of gas it was previously paying for 100 kilometres of transit through Ukraine. All payments were to be made in hard currency. Ukraine responded by declaring that Gazprom was in violation of the 2004 Protocol No. 4 that set the price of gas at $50 until 2009. The company counter-offered by quadrupling the price to $220. The conflict resulted in Gazprom turning down the flow of gas to the Ukraine on January 1st, effectively reinstating the use of energy provision as a coercive tactic against Ukraine. Accusations of siphoning quickly emerged as Ukraine once again exemplified its geo-strategic salience. On January 4th, a five-year agreement was reached to the benefit of Ukraine. The Swiss company RosUkrEnergo would act as an intermediary and sell gas to Ukraine at $95. The price for transit was increased to $1.60. Considering this fee hike, Ukraine is only paying a price of gas $20 higher than before.

Economic/commercial interests were primary, not least in order to move towards the WTO. However, when viewed in their political contexts (that is, when the timing of decisions is analysed), they acquire political meaning that affected the process of legitimacy in the post-Soviet region and thus also had consequences related to regional hierarchy.

Georgia

The Rose Revolution in late 2003 spurred Russian rhetoric about the pro-Western political orientation in Georgia. The previous chapter showed how Russia has supported South Ossetia and Abkhazia in their struggle against Tbilisi's central control. In late 2005, Gazprom demanded a rise in the price of gas for Georgia. In light of allegations of pipeline tampering by Georgians in Russia, gas supplies were cut to Georgia that winter. In early 2006, Georgian Prime Minister Nogaideli announced that Georgia would diversify its energy supplies while following market principles in choosing gas sources (Itar-Tass Weekly News 3 March 2006). In late 2006, among increasing tensions, Russia announced that unless Georgia either sold its main pipeline to Gazprom or agreed to pay double its current price for gas, supplies would be cut (CRS Report 2008a: 11, CRS Report 2010, CRS Report 2008b). Georgian Foreign Minister Bezhuashvili commented on the move: 'I do hope there is less politics in these gas prices than commercial logic.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 3 November 2006) Saakashvili in a press conference stated: 'Our neighbours pay $65, $110 and $130 for gas, but Georgia has been offered to pay $230 although it is closer to Russia than they.' (Itar-Tass Daily 14 November 2006) The construction of the Dzaurikau-Tskhinvali natural gas pipeline connecting North and South Ossetia was also interpreted in Tbilisi as an infringement of Georgian sovereignty (Current Digest of the Russian Press 22 November 2006). In comments to Vremya Novostei, an official from the Georgian Foreign Ministry stated: 'Tbilisi regards all such deals that circumvent the Georgian central government as illegal, as an encroachment on the country's territorial integrity and interference in its internal affairs.' (Current Digest of the Russian Press 22 November 2006) Such statements from Tbilisi suggest that perhaps though Moscow's logic behind raising prices was commercial, the pace at which prices were raised to different CIS countries was partly based on political considerations.

In contrast to Ukraine studied above and Moldova studied below, Georgia has the advantage of bordering Azerbaijan, that itself is rich in energy (CRS Report 2008a). Since 2006, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline transports Azerbaijani oil to Georgia and Turkey. Oil is also carried from Baku to Supsa in Georgia through the

Baku–Supsa Pipeline (also known as the Western Route Export Pipeline). Since 2007, the South Caucasus Pipeline (also known as the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipeline) carries gas parallel to the BTC route. So lessening Georgia's energy dependence on Russian gas has meant that Tbilisi has been able to more effectively mitigate Moscow's pressure than other countries have, even though it remained vulnerable to Russian gas cut offs until the feeder pipelines to draw from the South Caucasus Pipeline were in place.

Moldova

The previous chapter delineated Moscow's support of the breakaway regime in Transdniestria, undertaken by deploying a large number of troops in the area. Moldova's rapprochement with the West since 2003 has not gone unnoticed in Moscow. In 2005, Moldova began to rework its customs policies to target the illegal economy operating from Transdniestria as a gesture of good will towards the EU and in response to strong EU encouragement (CRS Report 2008a: 10). As Russia profited from Moldovan activities (such as goods smuggling), cooperation with the EU represented an economic obstacle to Russian interests in addition to political opposition.

Russia's economic and energy policies towards Moldova in general have reflected Moscow's animosity towards Chisinau and support of Transdniestria (though, as noted in the previous chapter, relations improved after the communist party took power back in Moldova). In 2005, Russia restricted Moldovan imports of agricultural products and wine - the country's main exports. Russia represented the largest market for Moldovan goods (and took up 80% of Moldovan wine exports), and such embargoes were significantly damaging to Moldova. The official reason for the wine ban from Moscow was a commercial one: the poor quality of the wine. Chisinau however interpreted the move as pressure related to Transdniestria (Itar-Tass Daily 22 June 2007). 2006 was again an important year for energy policy. On 1 January (the same day that Gazprom turned down the gas flow to Ukraine), Gazprom cut off gas supply to Moldova citing economic motives. Moldova had rejected Russia's demand to double its gas price to $160 per cubic metre (Eurasia Daily Monitor, 11 January 2006). In the end, the gas price was almost doubled (from $60 to $110 per cubic metre) sixteen days later (Eurasia Daily Monitor 18 January 2006, CRS Report 2008a: 11). Furthermore, Gazprom, which already held an over 50% share of MoldovaGaz,[116]

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[116] Gazprom was given 50.4% stake in MoldovaGaz in exchange for settling Moldova's gas debt.

gained another 13% in the company. MoldovaGaz controls the country's important domestic energy infrastructure including natural gas pipelines.

Conversely, Moscow continued to subsidise energy for Transdniestria and provide loans and grants (CRS Report 2008a: 10). The economic relationship between Russia and Transdniestria was further embedded through Transdniestrian firms in which Russian businesses had large stakes. In return, Transdniestria began planning its accession to the ruble zone in 2006 (Itar-Tass Weekly News 23 June 2006, Itar-Tass Weekly News 15 September 2006).

Belarus

In 2000 Belarus continued to import around 80% of its oil from Russia. The country continued to depend on Gazprom for 100% of its gas needs, and Belarus' state-owned gas distributor Beltransgaz acquired massive debts to the Russian company. Other figures for the year 2000 provide an effective comparison between the subsidies received by Belarus vis a vis other CIS states for gas: Belarus enjoyed prices of between $27 and $30 per 1,000 cubic metres, while Ukraine and Moldova (along with Lithuania) paid up to $80.[117] Ever-closer integration kept the prices for oil and gas in Belarus the lowest of all of the CIS countries. In effect, this was a signal from the government that it viewed Belarus as a partner in terms of its political proximity to Moscow - Belarus was now paying the Russian domestic price. In April 2001, after Moscow had already forgiven Belarus' $1.2 billion debt in 1996, Gazprom and Beltransgaz agreed to restructure the debt that had been incurred between 1997 and 1999 to make a third of it ($77 million of the $250 million debt) payable through bartered goods such as tractors instead of hard currency (Abdelal 2002: 10).[118]

Moscow continued to reward Belarus with energy subsidies, promoting its economic growth. Closer integration opened Russia's large market to Belarusian goods that were of little competitive value in other parts of the world. Such support from Russia allowed Belarus' economy to grow – in 2006 per capita income in Belarus was higher than any other energy-importing CIS country (see table 4.1 above). By 2006, Russia was subsidising Belarus by $5 billion per year (Argumenty i Fakty 2006). However, prices for Russian gas had risen in the years under Putin and were expected to continue to rise beyond the prices in Germany - a level unacceptable to Lukashenka.

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[117]Prices for Ukraine varied between $50 and $80 per 1000 cubic metres; Moldova paid $79, and Lithuania paid $80.

[118] $77 million of $250 million was to be paid off through Beltransgaz bills of exchange and Belarusian tractors. Examining the overall figures for the last years of the 1990s reveals that Belarus paid over 75% of its gas consumption with bartered goods (Abdelal 2002: 10).

In a press conference in October 2006, he threatened that if Belarus were made to pay the proposed price of gas (double what it once was), then Minsk would consider charging Russia $2 billion for gas transit to the West (Eurasia Daily Monitor 2 October 2006).

January 2007 also began with an energy dispute between Russia and Belarus. On the last day of 2006, Belarus reluctantly accepted Gazprom's proposal to double its price of gas (From $47 to $105 per 1,000 cubic metres).[119] Using the same leverage as Ukraine, Belarus responded by imposing a transit tax on oil.[120] Moreover, Russian officials accused Belarus of illegally siphoning off nearly 80,000 tons of oil from the Druzhba pipeline that flows to Europe. Subsequently between January 8th and 11th, Transneft, the Russian state pipeline operator cut supplies on the pipeline to prevent Belarus stealing. Belarus justified its move by stating that Russia was not paying the newly imposed tax (BBC News Online, 8 January 2007).[121] Lukashenka demanded that Moscow pay rent for the use of Belarusian land being used for oil and gas pipelines:

> 'Without any haste or ambitions, we will demand to be paid on international legal principles. For instance, Russia will have to pay for land, where gas and oil pipelines were laid. Russia received its raw material resources from God, who did not give similar resources to us. Yet he gave us another strategic resource - the geographic and geopolitical position.' (Itar-Tass Daily 23 January 2007)

After the conflict over gas, Lukashenka (who rarely gave interviews to Western publications) told a German specialist Alexander Rahr: 'The Russian elite has become arrogant, but that will change once energy prices fall.' He even positioned Belarus as a European political and normative ally: 'Belarus is located in the centre of Europe, and we have common values.' (Current Digest of the Russian Press 28 February 2007) The new animosity between Minsk and Moscow represented a shift in Russian and Belarusian policy.[122] Both countries used commercial rhetoric to justify moves, though political implications were not denied. Lukashenka felt a political squeeze from Moscow, and thus responded by in kind by rhetorically distancing Belarus from Russia.

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[119] Gazprom insisted that the increase merely reflected market prices. Belarus finally agreed at a price of $100 per 1,000 cubic metres.
[120] The transit tax was $45 per ton of oil.
[121] The EU condemned Gazprom in the Belarusian case. In criticism, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, as the leader of the country that held the EU presidency, voiced disapproval of the 'unacceptable' price increase (BBC News Online, 10 January 2007).
[122] The 2010 gas crisis between Russia and Belarus overshadows these earlier crises in severity and political bitterness (see Euronews 22 June 2010, SETimes 23 June 2010).

Armenia

Like Belarus, Armenia has been a close Russian political ally. In 1997, energy cooperation between Russia and Armenia was solidified through the formation of the Armrosgaz closed joint stock company (Intar-Tass Weekly News, 19 December 1997). Throughout Putin's time, Armenia continued to seek stability in its political position with Russia because of its struggle over Nagorno-Karabakh against Azerbaijan. The previous chapter highlighted the fluctuating relationship between Armenia and Russia, and Moscow's increasing equidistance between Yerevan and Baku. Pragmatism began to more prominently appear in Russian energy relations with Armenia in 2006 when Moscow announced a sharp hike in gas prices. In a bid to appease Moscow, Yerevan offered to give up many energy assets to Russian businesses as partial payment for the increase (CRS Report 2008a: 14, CRS Report 2010, CRS Report 2008b). In October that year, Gazprom took over management of the Iran-Armenia gas pipeline that generates electricity for Iran, Georgia and Armenia. In effect this gave Russia control of a pipeline route to Iran and Armenia, removing Russian dependence on Georgian-controlled infrastructure. Ownership of other strategic assets was also handed to Russia to settle Armenia's $40 million debt (Tsygankov 2006: 1083).

Whilst Russia continued to be increasingly volatile in its economic aid to Armenia, Yerevan sought energy partnerships with other countries. In July 2006, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad expressed readiness to develop cooperation with Armenia (Itar-Tass Weekly News 5 July 2006). Economic cooperation with Ukraine had already been stepped up in 2002 and with Georgia in 2005 through concrete plans for energy cooperation (Itar-Tass Weekly News 10 October 2002, Itar-Tass Weekly News 12 March 2005). Furthermore, Yerevan sought cooperation with the EU and began to make integration in European structures a foreign policy priority. Between the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991 and 2004, the EU provided 400 million euros in financial aid to each country of the South Caucasus (1.2 billion euros in total). Based on Armenia's action plan within the European Neighbourhood Policy, Armenia was set to receive another 98.4 million euros between 2007-2010 from the EU for its compliance to the agreement (Itar-Tass Daily 5 February 2008).

Putin's energy policy on balance

The difference in Moscow's treatment of the countries studied above delineates a lack of a coherent energy policy for the CIS region, suggesting that Russia's involvement in providing energy security is ruled by pragmatism. The following 2006

quote from vice-premier and Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov at a meeting in Munich is telling:

> 'The West was teaching us to apply market principles in the 1990s, so we are applying them... We have increased gas charges on Armenia, which is our closest ally. Next year we will do the same to Belarus... The difference between Belarus and other CIS countries is that Belarusian pipelines and land lots belong to us. We are still supplying gas at discount prices to certain republics, and we will do that as long as our current contracts are valid.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 5 February 2006)

Similarly, responding to EU and U.S. accusations of political motivations in the energy field, Lavrov commented:

> '... We have no imperial designs, but are building normal relations with our neighbours based on market principles. It was the politicisation of economic mutual relations that could serve as ground for suspicions regarding Russia. Now this is no longer there, but the suspicions linger on, from which one can conclude that geopolitical 'games' are being played in the CIS space with the use of such an instrument as the 'democratising' endeavour.' (Lavrov 2007)[123]

This is not to say that Russian energy policy ceased to be an instrument of pressure on neighbouring countries when taken in their political contexts. However it is telling of a new perceived role of the Russian state. Russia was no longer prepared to incur the costs of subsidising the other countries of the CIS. In other words, Moscow was no longer prepared to incur economic costs with no political reward to show for it. Lavrov's comment further suggests a certain animosity towards Western actors that continued to see Russia as a country forcing a special, central role in the region. So then, though economic logic was increasingly used, Russia abandoned its role as a central economic donor, and in so doing facilitated a relatively anarchic regional constellation of power.

Chapter conclusions

Russian agency

Pragmatism dictates a Russian policy that at least in theory suggests parity-based, anarchic relationships with other CIS countries. Since 2006, Moscow has seemed more accepting of the political implications of its policies - the Western reaction to the Ukrainian and Belarusian incidents alone that suggested that Moscow

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[123] Speech by Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov at the XV Assembly of the Council on Foreign and Defence Policy 17 March 2007, available at
http://www.norway.mid.ru/news_fp/news_fp_06_eng.html

was reacting to political change draws attention to politicisation. So Russia's pragmatism spurred reactive consent and dissent from other CIS countries in a way that affected regional hierarchy. For example: Moscow justified moves against Ukraine with economic logic, claiming it wanted to bring prices in par with world levels. However, because Ukraine was subsidised in the past and any change meant an increase in price and came at a politically sensitive time, Russian moves can be interpreted as hegemonic ones that spurred a reaction from Kiev. Regardless of whether or not Russian actions were intended as political, they affected the relationship between Russia and Ukraine in a way that encouraged further anarchy. Makarychev (2009: 27) also adds that Russia's business-first approach has the consequence of asserting the country as an energy superpower in the long run. Russia's increasing assertion of its energy superpower status suggests that the country may increasingly seek exemption from international energy market norms.

This chapter solidifies the notion that Moscow has consistently seen the economic area as a springboard for the projection of power. Under Yeltsin, Russia's own economic situation did not permit it to act as the regional economic saviour. The stalled Russian economy left Moscow with little choice as to what instruments to use. Military instruments were paramount; and in the cases of military intervention, economic justifications were relatively unimportant or at least secondary as driving factors. The beginning of the post-Soviet period continued many of the economic links previously enjoyed by the republics. The countries continued to be linked in a ruble zone and to receive subsidies in the form of extremely discounted prices for Russian energy. The post-Soviet period thus began as a relatively tightly knit, hierarchic system of states with Russia at the core providing economic benefits. Moscow took on a large economic weight in a region that remained relatively integrated. Moscow perhaps hoped that its economic benevolence would be met by favourable political expressions of sovereignty and consent to a Russian-led region.

However, starting in 1993 and continuing through the mid-1990s, dissent to Russian hegemony became more and more apparent. Though dissent from the republics had been present before the breakup of the Union as well as directly after it, it was not so marked that it directly threatened the last shreds of central control. Now, Moscow was fighting to preserve whatever it could of the power it had once enjoyed. Russia identified energy as a useful tool by which to respond to potential disobeyers. Yeltsin's actions towards Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan show how Russia could capitalise on its control over pipelines in countries where increasing the price of energy to world levels would have no negative effect. Moscow's actions towards Ukraine in the

mid-1990s show how Moscow could both raise prices and cut off energy towards a country relatively dependent on Russian supplies. At the same time, in 1993-1994, Moscow deliberately refrained from withholding any gas or oil supply arguably to bolster support of pro-Russian candidate Kuchma.

These moves highlight that Russia was not necessarily using its energy power purely as a coercive tool to 'get its own way,' but rather, energy relations reflected the growing disaggregation in the region. Energy policy was therefore less about hegemony, and more about the cohesion of a centralised system. The CIS region swung towards anarchy and Moscow responded not by trying to rein in other CIS countries closer; Russia alone could not fight the pendulum's swing towards anarchy. Rather, without political congruence, Russian actions further antagonised already dissenting countries and encouraged disintegration. The Belarusian case exhibits the continuation of similar policies at the end of the 1990s. Belarus was rewarded for its political solidarity, integration ambitions and consent to Russian-led hierarchy through price decreases and allowances for debt to be paid using bartered goods.

Under Putin's presidency, Moscow recognised that economic coercion alone was ineffective at integrating the region. Throughout the first half of the 2000s, Moscow continued to reward its main political ally, granting loans and energy subsidies to Belarus. At the same time, Moscow's treatment of Ukraine before 2006 highlights a more nuanced version of Russian energy policy. Rather than continuing to engage in energy-related disputes, Russia lowered energy prices.

Late 2005 and 2006 represents an important time for Putin's approach towards energy. Moscow applied increasing pressure on Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia. Russia even applied pressure on Armenia by demanding a price hike for natural gas. Energy policy became increasingly disjointed and 'business' oriented. The 2007 Belarus ordeal particularly exemplifies a shift in Russian energy policy towards a staunch supporter. Moscow no longer rewarded Minsk for its political congruence. Lukashenka and Putin were increasingly clashing and Lukashenka himself was losing domestic support. Moscow's move could be read as another instance of Russian economic pragmatism and self-interested politics. Taken in its political context however, one can interpret that Moscow was attempting to weaken Lukashenka by pulling out the economic carpet from under him in fear of the anti-Russian opposition that could arise in any succession struggle after his regime. So Russia hedged its bets - a sign that Putin's pragmatism was also politically realist and based on political self-interest rather than purely economic rationalism.

Thus ensued the abandonment of Russia's donor role that Moscow had in many ways assumed by insisting on a special position within the CIS. Noting the lack of progress in regional integration, the withdrawal from an extremely expensive endeavour could be expected. In 1999, the Mayor of Moscow Yuri Luzhkov addressed the city:

> 'At the early stage of independent development, some CIS leaders believed that... Russia would give them the opportunity to solve their economic and social problems. It is no secret that many of our partners do not regard repayment of their debts to Russia as a priority, in contrast to their debts to Western countries or even other CIS countries... Independence is a costly privilege; it implies more than just a chance to have an embassy in every country of the world. There are also specific political and economic obligations that come with it... Not everyone was prepared for this, it appears. Now they accuse Russia of failing to sort out their problems and are looking for alternative partners...' (Yuri Luzhkov, Moscow News 23 June 1999)

Overly pessimistic evaluations of Russia's change of economic and energy policy are rather judgemental; would any country take on the responsibility of economic donor with little political return? Particularly in relation to CIS countries that favour a relatively anarchic, parity-based constellation of power, Moscow can justifiably expect some benefit in return for economic assistance. The economic realm was not a politically or economically profitable area in which to advance regional hierarchy. With little to show for assumed regional economic responsibility, Moscow cannot be judged to be acting in an imperialist (or even hegemonic) manner by being pragmatic; rather, its pragmatism can be analysed as a sign that Russia would no longer use the economic realm to seek legitimacy for its hegemony. Seeing the system through an economic lens, it moved increasingly towards anarchy. Russia's retreat can also be seen as ceding to growing regional dissent. Tight hegemony was becoming less and less palatable for many CIS countries. This relative anarchy affected the way that Moscow perceived its regional role. Instead of fulfilling a role as the main regional economic provider, Moscow began to use political and ideological logic to try to regain consent and in so doing fashion a more hierarchic system with Russia at its core.

Other CIS countries' agency

CIS countries also act primarily based on their self-interest. Especially since the later part of Putin's presidency, CIS countries have pursued increasingly multivector energy partnerships, and consistently made decisions that express their political sovereignty in a way that runs contrary to Russian-led hierarchy.

During the first years of the 1990s, CIS countries continued to benefit from Russian policies. To Russia's own economic detriment, Moscow continued issuing energy subsidies and allowed the new central banks to issue credits in rubles when prices were freed in Russia. The continued ruble zone as well as the low energy prices enjoyed by other CIS countries effectively sustained Soviet economic links. In terms of the pendulum, though the breakup of the Union had de facto swung the system into relative anarchy, preserved integration acted to form a relatively hierarchic system with Russia at its core. Even after the first years post-breakup, Yeltsin continued to provide energy subsidies, amounting to large costs for the Russian ailing economy. Until 2006, as Moscow continued to favour Belarus, Lukashenka returned the favour with consent. Such economic support against the background of political congruence may suggest the potential for greater regional integration and an hierarchic system.

Dissent that undermined Russian claims to hegemony began to be shown by other CIS countries already in the 1990s. Countries in Central Asia followed the Baltic States' assertion of independence and sovereignty through economic means. The crumbling of the ruble zone and Kazakhstan's and Turkmenistan's preference to sell cotton to foreign currency buyers are two cases in point. This assertion of independence away from Russia was met by Moscow (under both Yeltsin and Putin) by either cutting off energy supplies to countries or by raising price levels of energy. Such moves served to further disintegrate the region, as countries looked elsewhere for economic and political backing. Here, the pendulum swings towards anarchy as Russia stepped away from the role of central regional economic provider.

In analysing energy subsidies, it is too simplistic to make the distinction between Russian supporters and Russian dissenters. Rather than 'rewarding' political friends and 'punishing' the opposition, Moscow increasingly took a piecemeal approach to economic aid and energy subsidies and based decisions on economic self-interest (most obviously after the energy conflict with Belarus). All countries, including Belarus, responded by expressing flexibility in their choices for energy partnerships and economic allies (Armenia being a case in point). This disaggregation and continued disintegration led to an increasingly anarchic system. Whether countries are politically congruent with Moscow or not becomes secondary. This is apparent in Moscow's treatment of Belarus and Armenia, two staunch allies. The decision to not give favourable treatment to political allies can be examined as a decision to retreat from the role of economic provider as well as one that reflects Moscow's unwillingness to push for consent through economic means.

On balance: from tight hegemony to hegemonic independence

Russia was weak after the fall of the Soviet Union, so Yeltsin had little economic clout to exercise. With Putin however, Russia's power of attraction grew as its economy strengthened. This chapter has highlighted the shift from military to economic power logic under Putin. However, noting the high cost of providing subsidies and the lack of political congruence and integration in the region, Putin ceased rewarding allies and took a more self-interested approach. So, the use of economic power under Putin did not serve to strengthen a hegemonic system; rather, Putin's business-first approach in many ways moulded a more anarchic constellation of states. As Moscow used economic power pragmatically, disintegration also continued in spite of it and more clearly because of it. Consent and dissent to Russian use of economic power thus also influenced the hegemonic system of the post-Soviet region. Both Russian as well as other CIS countries' pragmatism related to economic policy and decisions swung the pendulum towards hegemonic independence.

The relatively loose system promoted by Russia's exercise of economic logic suggests that Moscow may have been trying to find other ways by which to attract other CIS countries that were not so economically costly. The next chapter discusses how Russia turned to authoritative political logic in attempts to gain legitimacy (in particular to its norms) through multilateral organisations. Political institutions with other CIS countries both served Russian interests and perpetuated Russian hierarchy.

Chapter 5:
Hegemony in the post-Soviet region as examined through Russian-led multilateral political organisations and the consent-dissent dialectic

The previous two chapters have delineated broad shifts related to two analytical dimensions of interest. Firstly, related to Mann's power networks, there is a shift from hard (in this case, military) to soft (so far, economic) power beginning with Putin's first term. This chapter adds to this analysis, as it outlines Putin's intensification of multilateral attempts as a way to promote regional legitimacy. These organisations have underlying political motives and perpetuate cooperation and integration with Russia, with a distinct normative stance. Because Russia is the dominant player in all of them (aside from the SCO, which it co-leads) and because the organisations are in nature presented as integrative mechanisms, they also serve to advance Russian regional hegemony. In this way, Putin's refusal to continue being the region's economic saviour was compensated for. Secondly, related to hegemonic fluctuations, the study has broadly analysed a loosening of the region (and thus, loosening hegemony) between Yeltsin's and Putin's times in relation to Russian military and economic power. The regional structure has reacted to increased dissent and the continuing regional disaggregation. This chapter underlines a different dynamic that is congruent with the contention of the previous two chapters: a circle around Russia of tight hegemony with suzerain aspects is increasingly forming around Russia. The countries of the CSTO, EurAsEc and the SCO are increasingly solidifying their solidarity with Moscow and consenting to regional hierarchy by supporting symbolic, political organisations. The CIS is becoming more and more asymmetric in its development vis a vis Moscow; groups are emerging that are closely tied with Moscow, leaving other countries to be a part of a different, looser (more anarchic) kind of regional power system.

By the start of Putin's second term, four main integration associations attracting serious Russian interest were active: the Collective Security Treaty (CST, later the Collective Security Treaty Organisation CSTO), the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), the Single Economic Space (SES) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). Additionally, the Russia-Belarus Union provides an ideal case against which to compare relatively weaker political integration attempts. This chapter is dedicated to tracking the developments of these five projects. It addresses the Russia-Belarus Union first - an atypical organisation since it is a bilateral scheme - as a tool for comparison and also to uncover Russian underlying political motives. There is vast literature on regionalism and multilateralism in Eurasia (Allison 2008b, Allison 2001b, Ambrosio 2008, Brzezinski 1997, Collins 2009, Kubicek 2009, Libman 2007). I

draw from ideas proposed by Allison (2008b) and Ambrosio (2008). The first calls attention to the 'virtual' nature of regional organisations whose functional goals have at times gone unimplemented; the second underlines how the SCO sustains authoritarian regimes.[124] Merging these two premises (though careful not to overstate the second one),[125] this chapter also highlights the agency of member states to organisations in as much as they publicly reflect and reproduce organisational political motives and in so doing legitimise regional integration around Russia.

The organisations delineated here spill over other sectors: the CST/CSTO into the military, the monetary unions into the economic. This crossing over between sectors sometimes makes drawing meaningful analysis in this chapter difficult. Public statements of and official positions on many multilateral efforts have traditionally focused on narrower, functional and non-political priorities and goals. In the name of military assistance and economic cooperation, region-wide projects were set up as political expedients. One must therefore read past the official basic goals of the organisations to try to discern members' political (sometimes unofficial) agenda through discourse. Noting the lack of functional integration and discourse surrounding goals and developments, the real function of the organisations studied is political, acting as outward confirmation of Russian legitimacy.

One purpose of the chapter then, is to show how post-Soviet multilateral mechanisms advance Russian legitimacy and Russian-centred hierarchy. This chapter touches much more on the normative side of legitimacy than the first two chapters did. In the organisations studied here, distinctly Eurasian, pro-Russian political orientations are perpetuated. Security in the context of the CSTO and SCO in particular is tied with insulation from outside forces, and stability means upholding status quo regimes. Regional stability is therefore seen as being more important than supporting the individual sovereignty of other CIS countries. The projects outlined in this chapter also act as protective integration mechanisms, insulating member countries from Western orientations. This in turn serves to legitimise Russian regional dominance. The chapter delineates consent to Russian hegemony from other member states by presenting public statements of support for the political motivation of organisations. The crux of the argument proposed by this chapter hinges on the importance of the ideas and interests that are perpetuated by organisations aimed at integrating the region based on political commonalities. Like-minded regimes with similar interests often cooperate to form working institutions (Ambrosio 2008: 1325, Werner and Limke 1997). The act of

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[124] Collins (2009) also combines the two approaches by focusing on authoritarian regimes in Central Asia and the 'virtual' nature of regionalism.
[125] For an example of a critique of Ambrosio's argument, see Duncan (2009).

entering into an agreement with Moscow and public ratification can also include some implicit acceptance of the Russian ethos or 'way.' In so doing, organisations help to promote Russian legitimacy.

This chapter also shows that during Yeltsin's presidencies, when Russia was relatively democratic, Moscow dealt with authoritarian partners. Yeltsin was more concerned with the functional role of institutions rather than focusing on political congruence. In the next chapter it is clear that most of the post-Soviet leaders remained tied to the Soviet *nomenklatura* and thus, Yeltsin focused on maintaining formal regional institutional ties. It is only during Putin's presidencies and in the face of increasing regional disintegration that political power became paramount in multilateral institutions. These institutions increasingly acted to discourage bilateral dissent by forming a tight regional system around Russia.

Potential for consent and dissent to Russian-led hierarchy

As in the preceding chapters, the following section is presented in order to propose scenarios where consent and dissent could play out. In so doing it begins to draw meaningful conclusions about the intensity or type of hegemony perpetuated by Russian-supported organisations and the response of other CIS states to those organisations.

In this chapter, other CIS countries show consent when their own conceptions of sovereignty are met specifically through integration projects. In the context of this chapter this usually pertains to the support of a certain type of political governance or regime-type. Specifically, consent is seen whenever Russia is considered a status quo rather than a revisionist power. Keeping the status quo may be a strong attraction and an incentive for other countries to develop close relations with Moscow and to follow suit in the development and working of regional multilateral bodies. Multilateral institutions may contribute to maintaining existing regimes/political structures (though the effectiveness of this role should not be overstated). These governments are thus also legitimised at the multilateral level, perpetuating their viability. In turn, the international status of the region may also be strengthened against Western-style understandings of governance, namely democracy and civil rights. Most of all, Russia's hegemony is legitimised. Russia is the strongest player (in the case of the SCO, one of two strongest players) in the organisations, and so organisations reflect Russia's power interests. The institutionalisation of cooperation serves as an integrative mechanism.

Other CIS countries are more likely to show dissent where Russia's support of joint ventures through institution building prevents the evolution of individual countries' conception of sovereignty. Here the emphasis is on the push-pull phenomenon that comes from clashing sovereign CIS regimes and Russian attempts at perpetuating pro-Russian regimes. Moreover, the existence of region-wide Russian-backed political governance models that are perpetuated by institutions may come at the expense of other CIS regimes' legitimacy by being seen as alternative types of governance. As promoters of a certain exclusionary type of governance as well as geopolitical category, Russian-led institutions carry a political weight that challenges divergent regimes.

Regional cooperation frameworks

The Russia-Belarus Union

The union between Russia and Belarus is an instance where the active integration of the two countries alone symbolises political congruence and consent to some form of Russian-centred regional hierarchy. Coupled with strong consenting rhetoric from Lukashenka, it is a useful example to show how multilateral organisations, even when there is little 'on the ground' to show for them, can act as political conduits.

Relations between Belarus and Russia, though close due to a mutual distaste for Soviet disintegration, were relatively unstructured in the first half of the 1990s. Confirmed agreements on creating a monetary union and on creating a customs union went unimplemented before 1994 due to Moscow's reluctance (Markus 1996: 46). Moscow feared that Belarus could potentially become a large economic burden if robust integration was achieved. When Lukashenka came to power in 1994, he headed a renewed push from Minsk to strengthen ties with Russia. To exemplify Belarus' intentions, the country's Military Doctrine[126] 'gives priority to formation of the united defence area with the Russian Federation' and holds the 'foundation and development [of] the [Belarusian] state defence system within the framework of the joint defence area with the Russian Federation' as a part of its foreign policy course. Belarus signed 5 military agreements[127] with Russia in 1992 as a sign of common views and interests. These agreements were followed by 20 further documents in 1995, including long-term arrangements on military facilities that projected a close relationship well into the future

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[126] Available at http://www.mod.mil.by/doktrina_eng.html
[127] These were signed as a part of a package of 24 agreements, 19 of which were economic accords (Main 2007: 3).

(Main 2007: 3-4).[128] Also in 1995, a referendum was held regarding economic integration with Russia, for which over 80% voted in support (Markus 1995).[129] Lukashenka, a staunch supporter of Soviet nostalgia, took this ostensible support and ran with it. A working group worked to deepen ties throughout the year (Russia TV Channel 1996a) and a Treaty of Friendship, Good-Neighbourliness and Cooperation was signed. A large number of military agreements were in place by 1996, and the countries started joint combat duty to protect the borders of Belarus and Russia in the western direction.

The mid-1990s, as observed in previous chapters, were a turning point in Yeltsin's presidency. Under Primakov, rhetoric of 'special rights' in the region found an audience in the executive. In relation to Belarus, Moscow stepped up integration attempts in 1996. In February, Belarus' $1.27 billion debt to Gazprom was cancelled (Markus 1996). On April 2, relations were further solidified with the signing of a declaration that expressed both parties' intent to integrate, the Treaty on the Formation of the Community (forming the Community of Sovereign Republics, SSR). The agreement envisioned a common foreign policy, joint border patrols, shared military infrastructure and a common outlook on organised crime. It also included economic integration, agreeing to a common market in order to ensure a free flow of people, money, goods and services. The creation of common institutions, symbols and anthem were also envisioned. The hope - reiterated many times by both Lukashenka and Yeltsin - was that other countries would accede to the agreement in time. Russian State Duma speaker Gennady Seleznyov even called on Ukraine to join the Slavic Union in 1998 (Kommersant Daily 30 September 1998). Just before signing the treaty with Lukashenka, Yeltsin had signed an agreement to strengthen economic and humanitarian integration with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Belarus within the context of the CIS and attempted to resolve tensions with Ukraine (Markus 1996: 47). Also in March, the Russian State Duma adopted a resolution rejecting the USSR's breakup, based on the referendum of 1991, in which the majority of the population voted to keep the Union together. Yeltsin himself admitted to voting in favour of preserving the formal Union (Interfax News Agency 1996). Against this backdrop, Russia's agreement with Belarus is indicative of a broader attempt at forging closer regional ties. The intensification of integration measures in 1996 can also be analysed as an instrument in Russian politics for Yeltsin. Yeltsin used the Union to win the support of conservative (nationalist, communist, etc.) voters in the run-up to the presidential election (for

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[128] For example, a 25-year leasing agreement was signed for the Bananovichi and Vileika military facilities (see Deyermond 2004: 1193 for more details).
[129] In addition to the benign manner of the question that was posed, the referendum has also been argued to have been invalid because of media censorship (see Markus 1995 for discussion).

example see Markus 1996 and Russia TV Channel 1996 where prime minister Chernomyrdin denies that the treaty is an 'election stunt.').

The reactions of other Central Asian countries to the Russia-Belarus Union are telling of how other regimes perceived Russia at the time and how strategic relationships were forming; they also give clues to the overall consent-dissent structure in the CIS region that was forming. Tajikistan - fighting to overcome domestic turmoil with Russian support - was relatively supportive. In response to the new Union, President Rahmonov was reported as stating that 'an active and effective intergovernmental coalition, a community of sovereign states' was needed and that CIS integration 'should take on the highest form and an irreversible character.' (Inside Central Asia 1996: 6) At the same time, he warned against 'full political unification' that could compromise political sovereignty (OMRI Daily Digest 1996). Contrastingly, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan, whose economic necessity for Russian support was in relative decline, were less enthusiastic. Nazarbayev called the pact 'incomprehensible,' and instead promoted a Eurasian Union that would presumably be less intrusive at a functional level (OMRI Daily Digest 1996). Here the dialectic relationship between active sovereignty ambitions and regional integration is apparent. Though not directly in relation to the Russia-Belarus Union, this opposition to integration with Russia was evident since 1994 when Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan formed the Central Asian Union.[130] Political cooperation with Russia was at times evaluated as a force that directly challenged individual and independent development. Such CIS countries gained domestic legitimacy by distancing themselves at least to some extent from Russia. At the same time however, this chapter later shows how Central Asian countries increasingly favoured virtual organisations that legitimised their political preferences. Kiev was distraught by the developments between Belarus and Russia. Kuchma spoke forcefully against joining the Slavic Union in 1998 when State Duma speaker Gennady Selezyov called on Ukraine to join. Kuchma criticised the Union and other CIS bodies for lack of results (Kommersant Daily 30 September 1998). In the Supreme Council in Kiev, Seleznyov was interrupted with shouts of 'shame' and 'provocateur' by the opposition (Kommersant Daily 30 September 1998). Minsk also spoke in favour of a union of the three Slav states (Itar-Tass Weekly News 18 February 1999).

Functional progress during Yeltsin's presidencies towards establishing a working community with Belarus was slow. The majority of the provisions of the Treaty

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[130] This multilateral economic organisation became the Asian Economic Community in 1999 when Tajikistan joined, and later the Central Asian Cooperation Organisation.

were not implemented. Instead, the Union took on an increasingly narrow military character, but only on the surface. The Russian-Belarusian Union Treaty was signed in 1997, which played down earlier talk of a unified currency and focused instead on joint military-security policy (Deyermond 2004: 1193). This treaty was followed by a bilateral military agreement that established a joint board for the two countries' defence ministries. However, the extent of integration under the new treaty suggested a much broader (explicit and implicit) agreement on cooperation that included strategic planning and joint military legislation. Reflecting deeper political integration, another treaty was concluded in 1999 with the view to implement a single currency by 2005 (Deyermond 2004: 1197).

Instead of functional successes, the organisation served a political purpose. The Union Treaty was in large part a Belarusian acknowledgement that Russian support (in the way of military aid, energy subsidies, etc.) now came at a political price. Russian interests would trump other states' sovereign preferences. After signing the treaty, Lukashenka stated in an interview broadcast by Russia TV Channel (1996b):

> 'The times when you could pretend to [say] I just want to mess about on the political scene and pretend to be involved in integration, and at the same time I will milk Russia - I am talking about fuel - the times are past when you could behave like that. And if someone still thinks he could establish such relations with Russia, he is deeply mistaken. The time has come when Russia is going to stand up for its own interests.'

Though the initial treaty did not envision a united state like the Soviet Union, Lukashenka was very forward in keeping this possibility open for the future (see interview with Lukashenka, Russia TV Channel 1996b). Before signing the treaty, Yeltsin also agreed that 'deep integration' and 'supra-state bodies' were needed with budget commitments from all parties involved (Russia TV Channel 1996c). The two leaders reiterated their friendship and commitment In January 1998 at the meeting of the Supreme Council of Belarus and Russia, stating that the Union was 'here to stay.' (Sevodnya 23 January 1998) As a further show of support of Minsk at the meeting, Yeltsin even remarked that he felt the West's treatment of Belarus was 'unfair.' (Sevodnya 23 January 1998) Thus, under Yeltsin, the Russian-Belarusian relationship, though slowly evolving, signalled broader political accord between the two countries (though as analysed in the previous chapter, relations took a brief turn for the worse in mid-1998 because of the energy dispute there). Cooperation was stepped up by late 1998 at the ninth session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Russia and Belarus, and a new single representative and legislative body was created called the Parliament of the Union (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 4 November 1998). All of this was a show of political and symbolic consent. Most of the Union's plans had been postponed

by 2000 (New Times 1 January 2000). Yet the Integration Committee of the CIS Customs Union that was called to inspect the fulfilment of Union resolutions praised Belarus for being a 'state loyal to [Russian-Belarusian] integration in words and deeds thanks to the policy of its president.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 19 March 1999)

The functional goals of the Union were all but scrapped when Putin arrived on the scene. Mounting disagreement between the two countries meant that the only 'real' purpose of the organisation was symbolic. Moscow's relationship with Minsk was relatively tepid during Putin's first term, reflecting Putin's turn toward economic pragmatism analysed in the previous chapter. Putin's popularity meant that he did not have to pursue integration for political purposes; he could levy strict conditions and obligations upon potential treaty partners. This also meant that the focus of the Union once again shifted away from the military component of cooperation towards economic issues. At the 2002 summit between the two countries, Putin - talking of economic integration with Belarus - stated that 'trying to restore the Soviet Union at any cost, including at the expense of Russia's economic interests, would only… weaken Russia.' (Moscow Times 17 June 2002, see Deyermond 2004: 1197 for further discussion) Noting the disparity between the Russian and Belarusian economies, the issue of a single currency quickly became the most contested one. Moscow insisted on Belarusian subordination to Russia, and Minsk insisted on structural economic equality. The economic union thus stalled because of Russian reluctance to engage in equal relations. The political union (of the kind that Russia envisioned) stalled because of Belarusian concerns of Russian domineering. Putin pushed for a single state model (a state with one parliament and one government in Moscow), which in practice amounted to engulfing Belarus into Russia. He continued to push for political integration (amalgamation) throughout 2002, proposing a referendum in 2003 on final unification where both countries would accept the Russian constitution. In 2004, Putin proposed elections in Belarus and Russia for a common parliament and president (Deyermond 2004).

Plans for a single state or 'full' union proved overly optimistic. The budget for the union was 3.3 billion rubbles by 2006, eleven times larger than the CIS budget (Argumenty i Fa'kty 2006). However, there was growing bitterness in Minsk towards Putin's approach, exemplified by the Constitutional Act of October 2005.[131] Lukashenka maintained that Putin's approach was even more heavy-handed than Stalin's had

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[131] The Constitutional Act of 21 October 2005 stipulated that the Union would have a prime minister and two houses: a House of Representatives with 28 members from Belarus and 75 from Russia) and a House of the Union (with 36 senators and 36 deputies with equal members from each country) (Marples 2008: 29).

been, and urged either a European Union-like arrangement or full absorption of the post-Soviet states into Russia (Marples 2006). 'Real' integration halted further as Lukashenka sought to reassert himself as a national leader.

The goals (military and economic) of the Russia-Belarus Union were followed up by only half-hearted policy actions. So what was the real purpose behind expressions of solidarity between the two countries? Though reluctant to give up its formal political sovereignty, Minsk was aware of having made a strong political choice when entering into an agreement with Russia. Belarus had been, along with states from Central Asia, one of the least enthusiastic republics about independence in 1991. Lukashenka was one of the least enthusiastic of all Belarusian politicians, having voted against the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreement that dissolved the Soviet Union. In Lukashenka's speech in Cathedral Square after the treaty was signed, he said: 'We have consciously made our foreign political choice [in favour of Russia] and are firmly intent on keeping it.' (Russian Public TV 1996) Lukashenka rejected Western political models throughout his presidency and neither Yeltsin nor Putin criticised him for doing so. This political support became increasingly obvious under Putin. Putin refused to react to Western appeals to punish the Belarusian regime in the October 2000 and March 2001 parliamentary elections that solidified Lukashenka's power (Ambrosio 2009: 111). Instead, Putin telephoned Lukashenka to congratulate him on his 'convincing victory' after the September 2001 presidential elections in which allegations of fraud were widespread (Interfax News Agency 2001). Similarly, close Putin allies continued to express their support for Belarus after the 2004 elections that allowed Lukashenka to run for president indefinitely. The Russia-Belarus Union State Secretary Pavel Borodin declared the vote legitimate and the secretary of the Russian Security Council and former Foreign Minister under Putin, Igor Ivanov, also defended the Belarusian president's position (Ambrosio 2009: 111). Similar shows of support were expressed in the run-up to the 2006 presidential elections.[132] In return, Lukashenka mirrored Moscow's position on colour revolutions. For example, Lukashenka remarked on April 19th 2005 when delivering his annual message to the public and the National Assembly:

> 'These aren't 'colour' revolutions - they're banditry under the guise of democracy. This banditry is imposed and paid for from outside, is carried out to benefit individuals who don't care about their countries and peoples, and interests only those who have imperialist ambitions and are trying to conquer new markets.' (Aleksandr Lukashenka, Kommersant, 20 April 2005)

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[132] For specific examples, see Ambrosio 2009: 111-112).

The solidarity expressed between Russia and Belarus during much of the post-Soviet experience highlights an underlying animus towards external pressure. The EU and the U.S. continuously sought to delegitimise Lukashenka's regime. Putin and the Russia-Belarus Union provided diplomatic, domestic and some international legitimacy to Lukashenka as well as to the choice of values and norms promulgated by his presidency. The fear was that if Lukashenka were to be deposed, another political upheaval mirroring events in Kiev and Tbilisi would arise that would further undermine Moscow's hold on the CIS region. Any foreign policy realignment Westward would bring into question the conviction-power of Russia's notions of sovereign democracy (that developed in the later part of Putin's presidency around 2006). Thus, the personal disagreements between Putin and Lukashenka that were reflected in the tedious nature of the formal Russia-Belarus Union were secondary to the political purpose of maintaining the status quo. The discussions below on other integration attempts show a similar pattern: the expressed goals of organisations remain unattained; it is their political and symbolic power that is particularly important.

From CST to CSTO

This section proposes that the CSTO is increasingly a politically driven institution. With little practical gains to show, one central purpose and function of the organisation is symbolic. A perceived regional security umbrella does exist, expressed in a reduction in threat perceptions due to an increased sense of collective security as well as a relative increase in coordination on politico-military security issues. However, a main function of the CSTO has become bandwagoning between Central Asian regimes and Russia in a sort of Eurasian political 'club.' This group supports a Eurasian version of sovereignty, as defined through statements about security and the importance of multilateralism.

The debate surrounding the establishment of joint military CIS forces continued during the first months of Yeltsin's presidency. In principle, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan agreed with Russia on the benefits of joint general-purpose CIS-wide forces. However, this commitment quickly decreased even within this core group. By late 1992, Nezavisimaya Gazeta noted that that only Kazakhstan could be considered to be ready for further integration (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 1 October 1992: 1). The other CIS countries, which were persistently less keen to integrate, began to exploit the benefits that came with defying Moscow as the central power. It became increasingly obvious that a consolidated constellation of forces would

serve Russian rather than CIS interests, as the proposals lacked a demarcated division between the CIS command and the Russian government.[133]

Disintegration and relative regional anarchy continued throughout Yeltsin's presidencies. In the context of the failure to preserve the former Soviet armed forces, a collective security framework for the CIS was initiated by the Collective Security Treaty (CST) on 15 May 1992 signed in Tashkent by Russia, the Central Asian states (excluding Turkmenistan) and Armenia.[134] The stated purpose of the Tashkent agreement was to halt the wearing away of the remaining Soviet military structure and to maintain the integrity of the member states' armed forces (Zagorski 1998). However, when the Tashkent agreement entered into force for five years on 20 April 1994, there was little to show for the two years that had passed since its inception.[135] Being the provider of collective security mechanisms increasingly became the *raison d'être* of the CIS, thus rendering a separate Tashkent framework redundant.

Moscow was increasingly sceptical towards the success of reintegration and increasingly doubtful that multilateral defence could serve Russian national interest (though it kept integrationist rhetoric). At the same time, Russia stepped up its bilateral efforts as well as its regional links with Central Asia and the Caucasus. Moscow began to regard the region as a more differentiated area where varying degrees of integration could be followed (Zagorski 1998).[136] Willing members of the Tashkent agreement could pursue full collaboration, and others could pursue cooperation in selected areas by opting out of individual sections. Although such measures to implement the deepening of military cooperation (rather than reintegration) were agreed to, by mid-

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[133] Not surprisingly then, there was an unambiguous partiality within the new Russian administration towards military integration and detailed plans were unashamedly advocated. Already in 1991, Defence Minister Marshal Shaposhnikov proposed a scheme to transform the old Soviet armed forces into a Joint Armed Forces of the CIS. The newly independent states would not (at least during the transition period) establish formal national armies, instead only creating republican guards. A united military budget would be based on joint contribution, and all approaches to military matters (e.g. reform, legislation, hierarchy) would be harmonised. In essence, the region would be under a shared central command with control over communications, and have a common air defence, Antiballistic Missiles (ABM) system, military training and development and production of armaments (Zagorski 1998: 289). Though tension quickly grew between this plan and that for the Russian armed forces, once it was decided to develop the latter (see Allison 1993 for discussion).
[134] The CST was joined by Azerbaijan, Georgia and Belarus in 1993 (Itar-Tass Weekly News 18 January 1999). The Treaty provided for mutual security (joint action in case of an attack on one member). However, it did not provide for the creation of joint forces in the way of common purpose forces as had been envisioned within policy circles in Moscow. Instead, the forces and all of the assets of the former Soviet military remained under the Headquarters of the Joint Armed Forces (GHJAF) under the CIS institutional umbrella.
[135] Instead of developing into a robust and effective structure, the Tashkent framework began to fuse with CIS bodies, facilitated by the joining of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Belarus that made its composition the same as the membership of the CIS.
[136] This trend towards regionalisation and differentiation was reflected in the 1994 'grand design' of the Staff for Coordination of Military Cooperation (SCMC) (Zagorski 1998: 292). The grand design was set out in three stages: A coalition of countries with informal mutual assistance agreements; a military-political alliance with formal political and military entities, common armed forces and coordinated planning and training; and defence integration including common supranational structures and a joint budget.

1997 the CIS continued to be fragmented in its approach, and work was at a standstill. At the CIS Summit in January 2000, the Staff for Coordination of Military Cooperation admitted that Turkmenistan and Moldova did not at all participate in collective works of CIS military organs and Ukraine focused on bilateral military relations (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 26 January 2000: 5). Georgia and Moldova, having experienced Russian intervention and forming GUAM in 1997, were at risk of leaving the CIS.

Russia and some other CIS states continued to support the CST in rhetoric, though little had been implemented under the agreement.[137] Such statements show how integration schemes were not just about military-burden sharing and optimising collective defence efforts, but rather had political purposes. Russia continued to publicly claim grand visions for the organisation. Ahead of a CST Chiefs of Security Councils meeting, Russia's Security Council press service stated: 'life has proved the need to combine efforts in establishing a collective security system within the CIS framework as a component of an all-European security system as well as a possible security system in Asia.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 18 January 1999) Alongside Russian insistence on the military dimension of the CST, Armenian defence minister Vazgen Sarkisyan welcomed any proposals by the Treaty that would make it 'attractive.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 19 May 1999) Yerevan had signed a very symbolic treaty on keeping Russian military bases in the country in 1997 - a treaty that Moscow publicly held as 'adequate reply to NATOs eastward expansion.' (New Times 1 August 1997) Kazakhstan also acknowledged the treaty's mandate. The Kazakh Ministry of Defence made military reform decisions such as halving its armed forces in early 1999 based on the CST. The Ministry stated that the CST could play a 'positive role in strengthening understanding and stability in Eurasia' if it adapted to CIS realities (Itar-Tass Weekly News 1 March 1999).

The symbolic dimension of the CST is also underlined by active shows of dissent to Russian-centred hierarchy. In 1999 when Uzbekistan made clear its intention to withdraw from the Treaty, the issue was more about power control in Central Asia (which had been made apparent by clashing Uzbek-Russian interests in Tajikistan) than any real disagreement with the terms of the CST (Itar-Tass Weekly News 4 February 1999). Uzbekistan had shown its agreement with Russia's and the CST's views on the importance of border stability over individual sovereignty in 1998; Tashkent made a joint statement with Moscow on Afghanistan, which proclaimed:

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[137] Some joint military actions were attributed to the CST, for example Russia's provision of military-technical assistance to Kyrgyzstan in the elimination of a 'large band formation' in 1999 (Itar-Tass Weekly News 27 August 1999a).

'As a result of exchange of opinions on the current developments in Afghanistan, which might directly jeopardise security and national interests of Russia, Uzbekistan and other Central Asian states, the sides reserve the right to take all the necessary measures to strengthen security of external borders in compliance with the [Tashkent treaty].' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 5 August 1998)

Uzbekistan's re-joining the organisation similarly signalled political agreement rather than belief in the functional organisational structure.

In January 2000 before Putin formally became president after winning the presidential elections, political analyst from Moscow State University of International Relations Vladimir Kulagin wrote for the Novaya Gazeta:

'The CIS, in the form Moscow once hoped it would take, is in ruins. Our impoverished relatives are in no hurry to return under the common roof; they prefer to beg a loaf of bread from wealthy neighbours instead. They prefer to live as they see fit, snarling at advice from their former elder brother. Even our last ally in Minsk is losing whatever interest he had in alliances… It is time we asked ourselves exactly what leverage we still have that might be used on the international scale.' (Novaya Gazeta 20-23 January 2000)

Putin's first term understandably began with a call to refocus Russia's political priorities. As analysed in the chapter on military involvements, 2001 marked a drastic change in the way that Islamic terrorism was exploited in Moscow policy circles, revitalising security cooperation around counter-terrorism and border security.[138] The six original Tashkent treaty members, on Putin's initiative, established collective Rapid Reaction Forces with the strength of 3,000 troops in the Central Asian region. This move was spurred by the common concern over political/religious extremism springing from Afghanistan (Light 2005: 231, Nygren 2008: 35), though the force was rather virtual since it comprised earmarked battalions on national territories.[139] The CST continued to be championed by Moscow. At a meeting of the foreign ministers from the participating CST countries in November 2001, Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov stated: 'Owing to what we have achieved within the Collective Security Treaty, the unprecedented challenge by international terrorism did not catch us off-guard.' (Itar-

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[138] The foundations for multilateral cooperation against this 'new' threat had already been laid in 2000, with the establishment of an anti-terrorism centre in Bishkek. Since the September 1999 bombings of Muscovite buildings that instigated regional collaboration, cooperation on extradition and prosecution matters had already been increasing. For example, in 2002, Georgia extradited two terrorists to Russia associated with the 1999 bombings. The two men were convicted and sentenced to life in prison in 2004 (OSCE 2007b).
[139] In 2002, these forces were further strengthened with a limited number of combat aircraft sent to Kant airbase in Kyrgyzstan, signifying a slight qualitative (rather than a significantly quantitative) gain for CST forces. Together with the Rapid Reaction Forces, the Kant airbase became the heart of a new era of CIS collaboration around the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO). The Kant airbase was not inaugurated until September 2003 after many months of negotiation (see Nygren 2008: 35 for discussion).

Tass Weekly News 28 November 2001) Some other CIS countries also supported the organisation. For example, at this stage, Kazakhstan was a firm supporter of the CST. Nazarbayev stated that such an organisation secured the development of the country (Message of the President of the Country to the People of Kazakhstan 24 October 2000).

The most significant cooperation endeavour pursued by Putin was the establishment of the CSTO[140] that grew out of the Tashkent treaty in 2002. It came at the 10th anniversary of the Tashkent agreement, at a time when confidence in Russian regional security provision was at a low. American 'victory' over the Taliban had showed Central Asian states that there was a more powerful player in the region with the means to serve as a regional arbiter (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 21 January 2002). The CSTO was partially a direct response to the failing security framework. Some countries consented to having a regional alternative. For example, in an interview with Itar-Tass during the World Economic Forum in 2003, Nazarbayev stated:

> 'One should not belittle the role played by the CIS even in the so-called 'peaceful divorce.' The states needed that divorce in order to grow aware of their own identity, strengthen their statehood and gain an independent footing, but then to look around and decide where they should make friends and integrate.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 27 January 2003)

Although Putin in a 2003 press conference stressed that the CSTO had a military purpose to 'ensure the security, territorial integrity and sovereignty of member countries,' the extent to which there was an actual (rather than rhetorical or virtual) agreement on joint threat assessment or military doctrine is questionable (quote cited in Nygren 2008: 34). The outward unity of the CSTO was exemplified by the members' joint response to the 2003 Iraq war. They expressed 'profound concern' that the US-led invasion was not UN-sanctioned - a statement that reflected a common view of multilateralism over unilateralism (RFE/RL Newsline 22 March 2003). Public statements made by Russian and CIS officials also exemplified the extent to which the CSTO served as a political integration mechanism. For example, the secretary general of the CSTO Nikolai Bordyuzha (a former senior official of the Russian security

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[140] The Collective Security Treaty Organisation consists of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan (restoring its participation in the Collective Security Treaty and becoming a member of the Organisation in the summer of 2006). The Organisation would comprise 'a joint military command located in Moscow, a rapid reaction force for Central Asia, a common air defence system and 'coordinated action' in foreign, security and defence policy.' (Allison 2004: 286) The CSTO's collective security framework underlines shared values and the willingness to further cooperation. Its preamble holds that the member states are '...determined further to develop and intensify their military and political cooperation in the interests of ensuring and strengthening national, regional and international security...[and set] themselves the objective of maintaining and nurturing a close and comprehensive alliance in the foreign policy, military and military technology fields and in the sphere of countering transnational challenges and threats to the security of States and peoples,' (Charter of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation, available: http://www.dkb.gov.ru/start/index_aengl.htm).

establishment) addressed the participating States (pS) of the OSCE in February 2007; he explained that the underlying goal of the CSTO remained to restore the unified defence space that the Soviet Republics had enjoyed before 1991 through common political understandings (OSCE 2007a). In response, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Belarus openly expressed their confidence in the joint actions of the CSTO in counter-terrorist action. They stated that other CIS countries remained their most important partners in combating extremism (OSCE 2007b).[141]

A unified defence space may not have been what Moscow was expecting of the CSTO, given the reality of the Russian leadership that increasingly emphasised bilateral military relationships with CIS countries. Indeed, not much of the strong rhetoric on joint defence was followed through, and the specific bodies of the CSTO were not particularly active or effective in influencing the positions of member countries. For example, it was not until March 2007 that a draft resolution on enhancing foreign policy cooperation came out of the CSTO Foreign Minister Council (Allison 2008b: 193). On closer inspection, the disjunction between rhetoric and reality may have been partly the result of the CSTO's underlying symbolic function as a political conduit; more specifically, as a way to express Russian-understood regional (as opposed to individual state) sovereignty and hierarchy. Russian national interest turned increasingly to balancing against Western hegemony and universalism. Putin's rhetoric on joint regional defence also served to convey the function of protection against NATO expansion[142] and increasing Western interest and influence in the region (both strategic and normative). Bordyuzha attempted to gain recognition for the CSTO as a regional actor 'co-equal' with NATO in November 2003 by inviting closer ties with its Western counterpart (cited in Allison 2004: 286).[143] The CSTO, in the Russian mind-set, served as an alternative Russian-led forum to which post-Soviet countries could turn. At the same time, the other states of the CSTO did not want to have to make such a choice between NATO and the CSTO. They did not see NATO as a threat, and took part in PfP arrangements.

Bordyuzha, speaking for the Organisation, has been open about the CSTO's non-intervention focus. In an interview with Moscow News in 2008, he stated: 'The CSTO was founded to protect against foreign invasions, to defend the territorial integrity and sovereignty of its member states... If foreign forces interfere in the affairs

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[141] These statements were made as national interventions at the OSCE Workshop on Enhancing Legal Cooperation in Criminal Matters to Counter Terrorism held on 22-23 May 2007 - a workshop I attended while working at the Canadian Delegation to the OSCE in Vienna.
[142] NATO expansion was delineated as a threat to Russia in the new Russian National Security Strategy when Putin came to power (Izvestia 11 January 2000: 2).
[143] The CSTO has continued these efforts.

of a particular member state, the CSTO - in concordance with this country - is able to stop such attempts.' (Moscow News 25 April 2008) He singled out Belarus when asked about the threat of colour revolutions and addressed a previous comment he made about meddling from foreign entities:

> 'There were some attempts at creating disorder in Belarus, and particular foreign groups paid a lot of money to train so-called activists in special camps near the Belarusian borders. But we know the potential of Belarus, and its leadership. The patriotic spirit of the Belarusian people excludes any possibility of a 'coloured revolution' there.... Some states and organisations want to drive a wedge between [Russia and other former Soviet republics]. For example, the European Union organised a summit of the Foreign Ministers of the Central Asian countries in Ashkhabad this year. They invited representatives of NATO and the U.S., but failed to invite representatives from Russia.' (Moscow News 25 April 2008)

Such an anti-intervention focus was also laid out in the new five-year Russian National Security Strategy adopted by Putin directly before he came into power; the document a priori excluded the possibility of a Moscow-Washington partnership[144] and Western policy was described as 'potentially threatening Russian security.' (Izvestia 11 January 2000: 2, Nezavisimaya Gazeta 19 January 2000). Russia's defence White Paper of 2003[145] (more commonly known as the Ivanov Doctrine) maintained that NATO strategy contained 'components of an anti-Russian posture' and that Moscow '[expected] to see these elements completely eliminated.' (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 10 October 2003) The Doctrine sparked so much controversy between Alliance members that the Nezavisimaya Gazeta responded to the state of affairs with the headline 'Russia Declares Cold War on NATO.' (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 10 October 2003)

Forming a Eurasian fellowship through the CSTO had the effect of advancing the region's position and legitimacy at the international level, even though the CSTO remained formally unrecognised by the UN as a regional organisation. At the first joint press conference after the adoption of the decision to form the CSTO, Lukashenka stated that the CSTO would 'create a powerful centre of strength that other international politico-military alliances, first and foremost NATO, [would] be forced to take seriously.' (Kommersant 15 May 2002: 2) The Organisation's members were aware of Russia's more general international goal of using the CSTO as a platform to boost its international position as the main regional security provider in the face of NATO expansion. With member states aware of Moscow's political motivations, one

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[144] The previously used term 'partnership' in relation to relations with the West was replaced by 'cooperation.' (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 19 January 2000)
[145] This followed the military doctrine of 2000. The next formal military doctrine was presented in 2010.

can firstly begin to question the extent to which joint assessment of more traditional threats existed and more importantly, to discern the Organisation's political functions.

The CSTO's political functions were rendered increasingly important for Moscow as well as for regional leaders when the area began to feel the pressure of power struggles with revisionist opposition groups pushing for what came to be known as colour revolutions. The CSTO could serve as a platform for state leaders with which they could procure Moscow's backing and thus gain international legitimacy. Such utility in turn bestowed Russia with additional political leverage. Russia's regional political goals are also supported by the importance that Moscow placed on having a means by which to learn of political developments in other CIS countries. For example, one of the direct tasks of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) is to counter other countries' intelligence activities (Allison 2008b: 194); this task often includes seeking out critical political information. Additionally, Putin sought careful connections with secular political groups in Central Asia. Information acquired through such means could then be used in dealings with the region's governments seeking Russian support for status quo regime security in the face of potential or actual domestic struggles.[146] For example, in April 2005, a set of military exercises was carried out by the CSTO for the purpose of being prepared, reportedly, for 'the possible suppression of a revolution in the CIS.' (Kommersant 4 April 2005)

With this important symbolic and political function (though mixed with an explicit military component and not always expressed so outwardly), it is not surprising that the CSTO has done relatively little in the way of providing many military and security benefits.[147] Russia under Yeltsin was seeking a special role in its immediate sphere of influence through military integration. An attempt at gradual regional reintegration was launched, in which military partnerships played an important role. Russia's political profile in taking the lead in multilateral pursuits increased under Putin, after September 11 in particular, and then again after the colour revolutions. In line with the the shift from

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[146] It is important to note that governments that welcome Russian support may only welcome Russian military aid as a 'last resort' (Allison 2008: 195), as they are aware of the effects that military deployment has had in Georgia, Tajikistan and Moldova. Also noting other examples of Russian military intervention, other governments cannot expect Moscow to side with the established regime. Lastly, governments may be adverse to any sort of Russian political or intelligence support.

[147] Another main hindrance to success of CSTO activity is that Uzbekistan is only a passive member. Furthermore, though CSTO rapid reaction forces are considered by Moscow to be at the centre of any broader regional integration, they are little more than allocated units on paper and Central Asian countries are also oriented to Western military organisations. Importantly, such hindrances and the political goals outlined here do not render the Organisation's military security dimension void. The joint counter-terrorist and extradition activities that began in 2002 continue to be a main way by which the CSTO can act as a security provider and exhibit a common regional threat assessment. The Organisation's role in providing security against external threats has also become increasingly relevant. In the context of the Taliban's comeback in Afghanistan, the CSTO established a Working Group on Afghanistan to provide a range of assistance projects to help counter potential military incursions.

military to political goals, Vladimir Rushailo, Russian Security Council Secretary, appealed to a new focus on integration around 'soft' security issues in 2001 (REF/RL Newsline 15 October 2001). As seen through the Russia-Belarus Union, political solidarity was a more effective tool by which to counteract external influence and secure Russian hegemony.

The post-Soviet space as a possible unified economic area

One of Russia's goals for the post-Soviet region when the Soviet Union disintegrated was to reintegrate the individual national economies in order to maintain a single economic space. Under Putin, economic integration increasingly came to be seen as one way by which Russia could dominate the increasingly economically productive area. For the other CIS countries, a shared economic space gave them access to the large and important Russian market. However, the agreements that Moscow concluded (bilateral and multilateral alike) overlooked many economic factors that are crucial for the success of any free trade endeavour; this calls into question the underlying motives of economic agreements and highlights the political and hegemonic intentions behind them.

Table 5.1 provides an overview of the multilateral integration projects concluded (i.e. formally signed, though not necessarily implemented) during Yeltsin's presidencies. Eleven CIS countries first signed an Agreement on a Free Trade Area in 1994, following an agreement to establish an economic union signed by eight states. The agreement provided for the free exchange of goods, capital and labour, and for the creation of a future customs union (Oka 1998: 151). However, the Union did not take off and the Commonwealth continued to lack a working free trade regime. As many as 400 agreements were adopted between the inception of the CIS and 1994, and none produced results (Kuznetsov and Geason 2000: 33). Other CIS governments continued to reject various provisions of these agreements. Russia insisted on unilaterally excluding certain items such as oil and gas and on introducing quotas on items vital for the other countries' economies such as agricultural products (Sushko 2004: 121). As a result, most of the trade between CIS countries relied on non-transparent barter arrangements between governments stepping in for commercial players,[148] though some trade was conducted on the basis of bilateral free trade agreements.[149]

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[148] See Kuznetsov and Gleason (2000: 32) for elaboration.
[149] The following bilateral agreements, although extremely important in the area (especially the various ones concluded between Russia and Belarus) are beyond the scope of this study: Azerbaijan has signed bilateral free trade agreements with the Russian Federation (1992), Moldova (1995), Ukraine (1995), Turkmenistan (1996), Uzbekistan (1996), Georgia (1996) and Kazakhstan (1997). Similarly, Georgia has agreements with the Russian Federation (1994), Uzbekistan (1995), Ukraine (1996), Armenia (1998),

Table 5.1: Regional economic integration projects before 2000 with Russia as member state

Organisation	Date of establishment or joining	CIS countries involved
Economic Union of CIS	1993 (Agreement on the Formation of an Economic Union signed by 8 states) 1994 (Agreement on Free Trade Area signed by 11 states)	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine (associate member)
CIS Customs Union/Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC)	1995 1996 (Kyrgyzstan) 1999 (Tajikistan) 2000 (renamed Eurasian Economic Community) 2006 (Uzbekistan, withdrawal 2008)	Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan Observers: Ukraine, Moldova
Agreement on common agricultural market	1997	Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

Source: Adapted from Sushko 2004

The Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) is interesting to examine because it is regarded to have the greatest potential for success, having replaced the CIS Customs Union (see Ultanbaev 2006). As one of the founders and the chairman of the Interstate Council of EurAsEC who was instrumental in shaping the structure and motives of the organisation, Kazakh President Nazarbayev touted the organisation as the most progressive integration mechanism in the region (Itar-Tass Weekly News 23 June 2005). Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov assured that the organisation was 'one of the most dynamically developing associations on the entire post-Soviet space.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 21 September 2004) The Community has been often advertised by Russia as having the potential to become a shared currency zone (for example, Moscow Times 6 July 2010). It was even envisaged as *en route* towards a type of Eurasian Union; documents of the EU were used in establishing it (RIA Novosti 2002).

Nazarbayev approached Yeltsin in 1995 and signed seventeen documents on further economic integration between Kazakhstan and Russia, whilst stressing parity

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Kazakhstan (1999), Turkmenistan (2000) and Moldova. But it was only on Feb 11, 2000 that the Georgian Parliament ratified the 1994 agreement with Russia. Kyrgyzstan has also freed its trade with the Russian Federation (1993), Armenia (1995), Kazakhstan (1995), Moldova (1996), Ukraine and Uzbekistan (1998). In addition, both Tajikistan and Turkmenistan concluded free trade agreements with Uzbekistan in 1996; Uzbekistan has also concluded agreements with Belarus, Moldova and Russia. Ukraine has signed free trade agreements with each of the former Soviet republics except Tajikistan (Free Trade Agreements among CIS countries, available at: http://intl.econ.cuhk.edu.hk/rta/index.php?did=25, retrieved 25 January 2009).

and sovereignty. Belarus joined the two countries the following day to sign an agreement on the creation of a CIS Customs Union, where customs duties and quantity restrictions would be abolished, followed by the formation of a single customs territory (Oka 1998: 152). Kyrgyzstan joined the CIS Customs Union in 1996. This addition spurred the deepening of the agreement. The Union took on a structured form on 29 March 1996 with the creation of an Interstate Council, Integration Committee and Interparliamentary Committee. The next day as a sign of overall deepening integration, the countries signed another agreement that included integration in the humanitarian field (Itar-Tass Weekly News 28 April 1998a). The 'Big Five Agreement' was formed in 1998 with the joining of Tajikistan into the group (Itar-Tass Weekly News 28 April 1998b).[150] However, from its inception, because the Customs Union used much of the same language as its CIS predecessor, it did not do away with discrimination problems between the countries that were present in the CIS Customs Union. Real integration never materialised and each country continued to act in its own interests.[151]

Yet other member countries continued to increase economic and political cooperation with Russia. Nazarbayev hailed the Custom Union's path as 'what all integration associations in the world are striving for.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 25 February 1999). He signed a declaration on eternal friendship and unity with Yeltsin in mid-1998 - a declaration which Tair Mansurov, Kazakh ambassador to Russia said was a sign that the two countries had 'consistently, step by step, [been] building up their integration efforts in all spheres.' (Moscow News 16 July 1998) Kyrgyz Prime Minister Muraliyev advocated the Union as a platform from which the 'free trade principles' of member countries could be promoted (Itar-Tass Weekly News 24 October 1999). Moscow also continued to rhetorically praise the integrative function of the Union. At the end of 1999, Yeltsin said that the member countries of the Customs Union '[claimed] the role of an integration nucleus of the CIS.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 26 October 1999) At the same time, the Union seemed to be open for flexible modes of development. For example, Armenia, a Russian ally, chose to stay out of the CIS Customs Union. Armenia adhered to its own liberal trade regime while acknowledging

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[150] With the later addition of Uzbekistan in 2006. However, Uzbekistan announced its withdrawal from EurAsEC after Putin left office, in November 2008 (see Kommersant 12 November 2008).
[151] There are many cases in point under the CIS Customs Union of discriminatory behaviour although it was formally not permitted. These examples include the fact that by the end of 1999 subsidies for agricultural goods still existed (Itar-Tass Weekly News 2 December 1999). Lawson and Erickson (1999: 4-5) also list: Russia's imposition of a 100% tariff on tanks and a 50% tariff on aircraft; the 1998 trade war between Russia and Belarus over the dumping of trucks in the Belarusian market; the restriction on Russian foodstuff in February 1999 from Kazakhstan due to its inability to compete; and Kazakhstan's 200% import duty on goods from Kyrgyzstan in 1999. To add to the ineffectiveness of the agreement before Putin, although in 2000 the volume of exports from Russia to other member countries increased between 20% and 30%, exports to Russia never matched that rise (Sushko 2004: 125). The result was a trade deficit between EurAsEC countries and Russia, the latter enjoying many more benefits.

that its 'traditional ties' to the CIS market would assure continued good relations (Itar-Tass Weekly News 5 June 1998).

Cooperation in the context of the Customs Union also began to take on a more open political character. Three bills were approved at the eighth sitting of the Union's Interparliamentary Committee in the first half of 1999: on 'migration,' on 'state secrets' and on 'fundamentals of foreign economic activity.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 4 April 1999a) Members also supported a statement that had been made by the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly that condemned NATO aggression against Yugoslavia for not being UN sanctioned (Itar-Tass Weekly News 4 April 1999b). It called NATO moves 'a challenge to the modern system of international relations and a real threat to peace and stability in Europe and the whole world' and expressed 'the most serious concern with a possible return to the Cold War.'

EurAsEC was effectively revived under Putin. The turn-around began in 2000 when, again under the leadership of Nazarbayev, a new Eurasian Economic Community was created. This time, weighted voting and financing schemes were introduced that continued to favour Russia - giving it veto power - but no longer made it possible for decisions to be taken unilaterally by Moscow (Kuznetsov and Gleason 2000: 39-40).[152] Members agreed to harmonise national legislations to be able to meet with economic clauses under the Community. Goals were also set to harmonise education, science, humanitarian, culture, health, energy, transportation and welfare policies (Inside Central Asia 2000, Inside Central Asia 2004, see ITAR-TASS News Agency 2000 for exact measures). More importantly, the 'diplomatic subtext' of the agreement signalled a form of recognition of cooperation and acknowledgement that Russia's political will and legal culture could be more or less congruent with that of other Eurasian states (see Moscow News 18-24 October 2000 on Kazakhstan). Integration took on a 'reciprocal and multifaceted' turn, as expressed by the five presidents' statement (ITAR-TASS News Agency 2000).

Kazakhstan was the main promoter of an integrated economic space. In January 2003 during the World Economic Forum, Nazarbayev gave an interview and stated: 'At the end of the day we must understand what we all need and what is rewarding to all - we all stand to gain from integration; especially in the economic field, from opening the borders and allowing people, goods and capital to move freely.' (Itar-

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[152] Though, given its economic size, Russia could have claimed 80% share in decision-making, it only got 40%; Kazakhstan and Belarus got 20% each; Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan 10% each (Interfax-Kazakhstan News Agency 2000).

Tass Weekly News 27 January 2003)[153] In a press conference in June 2004, Putin stated that the progress within the Eurasian Economic Community 'sparked to a considerable extent' the creation of new economic spaces in the region (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation 2004). He was referring to the August 2003 Russian proposal to establish a Single Economic Space with the objective of creating a 'single market' with three other post-Soviet countries: Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine (see Interfax News Agency 2003).[154] The move was an optimistic one: the agreement was to include dissenter Ukraine, 'solve' the economic problems of the 'sagging region,' and push the free trade zone right to the edge of the European Union (Moscow Times 22 September 2003). Indeed, this was a political and hegemonic move meant to counter European markets that were themselves pushing right up to Moscow's doorstep. This underlying goal and sense of competition with the enlarging EU begins to hint at the more 'virtual' motivation of economic organisations in the CIS region supported by Russia (Allison 2008b).

Meaningful economic integration and the ultimate goal of a Customs Union remained an elusive goal throughout Putin's presidency in both EurAsEC and the SES. In addition to the lack of policy coordination and the persistence of national interest over multilateral ones (especially Ukraine's reluctance to move beyond a free trade area within the SES),[155] the massive imbalances between the players meant that the success of EurAsEC and the SES was questionable from the beginning. This imbalance can also begin to explain why members have diverging views of what the agreements should mean. Russia seemed to enter into economic endeavours by appealing that its partner states were also economically strong and that integration would be mutually beneficial. However, Russia remained clearly in a dominant position vis a vis its partners: it is twice as large in terms of population as the others combined and has a much higher GDP.[156] Because Russia is so much larger and economically better off than the other economies (not to mention its hegemonic position relating to energy), it would always effectively choose how the system would run, regardless of

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[153] At the previous CIS summit, Nazarbayev had stated that economic integration 'would enable the CIS countries to work together to solve the problems created by globalization.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 27 January 2003)

[154] The agreement was signed late that year envisioning a single market and a single currency within 5 to 7 years (Chaplygin et al 2006: 48).

[155] One major obstacle in the SES was Ukraine's rejection of a monetary union from the start. For further discussion see Sushko (2003) and Sushko (2004).

[156] In 2006, Russia had 145 million inhabitants compared to a combined 75 Million. Its GDP was five times that of Ukraine, seven times that of Belarus and almost thirteen times that of Kazakhstan (Chaplygin et al 2006). Mayes and Korhonen (2006: 9) explain the consequence of a disparity in sheer territorial and economic size: 'To some extent a larger country gets a lower risk premium simply because it is large enough and diversified enough to absorb many of the shocks that hit economies. This is clearly the case for the Russian Federation with its considerable geographical spread, natural resource base and economic size.'

new weighted voting schemes.[157] Thus, restrictions remained and the volume of interregional trade has been growing much slower than expected (Ultanbaev: 2006: 38). With Russia's preponderance, any currency union would likely be a unilateral union (with one large player) rather than a multilateral one.[158] Hence, the more likely scenario seems to be that a functioning union will not be established region-wide or between EurAsEC and SES partners.

Although little was implemented throughout Yeltsin's and Putin's presidential terms, economic interests spilled into other sectors with political motives. Especially during Putin's presidency, Central Asia became a sphere of interest not only for Russia but also to the other EurAsEC members; thus, stability (political and military) were tightly intertwined with economic integration matters. In an interview in 2002, General Secretary of EurAsEC and former deputy director of the Russian SVR Grigory Rapota stated: 'Although we do not deal with security issues directly, [EurAsEC members] understand very well that in a broader sense [Central Asian] security depends, above all, on good relations with their closest neighbours.' (RIA Novosti 2002). Thus, even though the Eurasian Economic Community did little in the way of 'real' economic cooperation and in facilitating trade, political solidarity was bolstered. Through political concord, regime stability was encouraged. Hence, it is not surprising that in the summer of 2006, military security issues (i.e. international terrorism, trans-border crime, etc.) were on the agenda for the EurAsEC summit, and leaders discussed the merging the EurAsEC with the CSTO (with largely the same membership) (Eurasia Insight 2006, Inside Central Asia 2006). The merger was again discussed in 2008. Uzbek president Karimov, while pledging 'full support to Russia's foreign political course,'[159] stressed the similar agenda of the two organisations and the CSTO's relative strength in executing it (Itar-Tass Daily 6 June 2008). It has been suggested that such a merger may go further in achieving the 'real' goals of both organisations, which are political at the core (see Allison 2008b: 193).

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[157] Moreover, the costs of an economic union envisioned by EurAsEC and SES may in fact be unacceptably high for Russia's partners. Chaplygin et al (2006: 64) explains: 'The costs for each country will be at least one standard deviation larger than the adjustment costs which that country would have faced with floating exchange rates.' Simply put, in its dominant position, Russia may be the source of supply shocks to which the other three countries will have to adjust.

[158] The distinction between unilateralism and multilateralism in the context of monetary unions is a critical one. The consequences of unilateralism were felt by Belarus that began negotiating the creation of an interstate bank to conduct a common monetary policy in 2006. One of the reasons that negotiations stalled was that the relatively weak Belarusian Central Bank could not wield any real influence over the policies of the Russian Central Bank. Russia was also aware of its dominant position and was thus unwilling to either give up any of its policy-making powers or to grant equal status to its potential partner (Chaplygin et al 2006: 50).

[159] Karimov held: 'I am not aware of the issues on which we would have various views, on all key questions we have close positions...there are no undercurrents that could change this state of affairs.' (Itar-tass Daily 6 June 2008)

Moreover, the concept of EurAsEC itself carries a politico-ideological weight. At its semantic core, the organisation denotes a community of Eurasian common interest and political culture centred around Russia (Alimov 2005: 356). Recent discourse underlines this political dimension. Although out of the main time frame of the study, such discourse serves to underline the symbolic function that was arguably present since the mid-2000s. In early 2009, Nazarbayev proposed (and Lavrov supported) a common non-cash virtual monetary unit for all countries of the EurAsEC, to be called the 'yevraz' or yevrazia,' Russian for 'Eurasia.' (Current Digest of the Russian Press 16 March 2009) Noting the lack of economic integration between member countries, this move was seen by analysts as a strategic 'political statement' rather than economic pragmatism (Current Digest of the Russian Press 16 March 2009). In 2009, Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan even discussed withdrawing their individual applications to the WTO and instead joining as a customs union (Current Digest of the Russian Press 15 June 2009). With the fast successes of the Ukrainian and Georgian WTO bids (almost half of the usual requirements were waived), Moscow, Minsk and Astana evaluated the Western organisation as one that rewarded budding democracies and Western-oriented policies. Though the proposal was short-lived (Current Digest of the Russian Press 6 July 2009), it denoted a common frustration with the WTO as well as a statement of political (and economic) commonalities.

Forging closer economic relations with Moscow was a matter of political expediency. Parties to economic agreements recognised that in order to gain economic backing, Moscow asked for political fraternity. Implicitly, EurAsEC and the SES serve to consolidate political solidarity and in so doing, legitimise Russian claims to regional hegemony. Additionally, the SES bolstered economic and cultural links with Belarus and Ukraine, bringing these important Europe-tied states into the Russian sphere of influence. The SES could therefore be an indirect way to insulate member states from European integration. In this way, the political choice made by members in favour of Russia also had the consequence of highlighting and at times fuelling the tension between East and West; Ukraine's domestic political divide between Westernisers and pro-Russian factions was deepened with the decision to join the SES (Kuzio 2003).

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

This chapter has started to delineate how the regional integration attempts advanced by Moscow work beyond their stated goals (i.e. beyond the military and economic dimensions) to perpetuate symbolic and political solidarity. The most obvious organisation to examine in this context is the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation,

whose membership comprises Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. The SCO is a pro-status quo 'club' and serves a protective integration function, where solidarity is expressed in resisting external influence. Ambrosio (2008) convincingly articulates the argument that the SCO promotes a distinct Eurasian 'spirit.'

In the other organisations studied in this chapter, Russia is the obvious dominant player. Moscow has been the leader and instigator of integration within the context of the CSTO; in economic agreements too, Moscow is the dominant player, with the economic weight and subsequent political clout to call the shots. Against this background, the SCO - especially after 1998 and with Beijing to act as a counterweight - in theory provides a more flexible mechanism for multilateralism (Allison 2008b: 195). Such has been the case since the inception of the Shanghai Five in 1996 from which the SCO grew.

During the first years of the Shanghai Five[160] it is difficult to speak of common international behaviour and congruent political views: Russia was relatively democratic and not antagonistic to external influence, whilst China was different. The organisation formed in response to security issues to resolve and confidence building between Beijing and four newly independent states with which China now shared a border. Thus, the initial agenda of the group was explicitly limited to security and confidence building in border areas.[161] Even by mid-1998 before the organisation's third summit, the Kazakh ambassador stressed that the summit 'by no means [signified] any unification into some bloc.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 29 June 1998) Nonetheless, the Shanghai Five began to expand its remit beyond the military sphere to include the political and economic spheres at the Almaty summit,[162] as members agreed to intensify economic relations between them. In the political sphere, they agreed to act in cooperation on the international level to oppose nuclear proliferation in South Asia and expressed their distaste for nationalist separatism and religious extremism (Itar-Tass Weekly News 3 July 1998, see Jia 2001 for discussion). Importantly, this was the first time that the Shanghai Five publicly acknowledged the potential for its members to share common interests and views as well as basic principles for managing

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[160] SCO members minus Uzbekistan, which joined the Organisation in 2001.

[161] In 1996, members agreed to forgo offensive activities in border areas; forgo military exercises against each other; limit military exercises in border areas; exercise transparency with regard to major military activities near borders; and to encourage friendly exchanges between military forces and border patrols (Jia 2001). In 1997, the countries turned to disarmament measures, agreeing to lower the number of military forces in border areas, limiting any deployment to defensive measures. This first stage of the Shanghai accord underlines the members' common security concerns and highlights the commonality of interest that arises from resolving these concerns. In light of the historical animosity between China and the Soviet Union, the potential for hegemonic rivalry between China and Russia as well as the potential for nationalist conflicts arising from the dissolution of the Soviet Union, these countries had an interest in reducing insecurity along border regions by acceding to mutually-binding treaties.

[162] And reaffirmed again at the next summit in 1999

international relations both within and outside the organisation. This move highlighted the members' common interest in their own domestic political stability (Jia 2001). China experienced religious extremism and separatism in Xinjiang and independence movements in Taiwan; Russia was dealing with similar issues in Chechnya; and in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan citizens identified only weakly with the central authority, leading to ethnic tensions that both hampered and curtailed the reach of their sovereign governments. Additionally, China and Russia shared a common antagonism towards American intervention: China in relation to the Taiwan Strait, Russia in relation to NATO expansion, and both towards a missile defence system.[163] In 1999, a Chinese Foreign Minister spokesman Zhu Bangzao stated that 'the Russian Federation is opposed to [the Washington-Tokyo-backed] missile defence system and China is also resolutely objecting to it.' A Russian diplomat agreed: 'The stands of Moscow and Beijing are close on this matter.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 13 March 1999) Yeltsin and Chinese president Jiang also both publicly condemned NATO strikes in Yugoslavia (Moscow Times 24 August 1999a).

In mid-1999 Yeltsin called the leaders of the Shanghai Five countries his 'personal friends.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 24 August 1999) Developing close relations with clear and attainable political goals helped to ward off American pressure. In other words, because of the countries' perceived vulnerability to external intervention, they had an interest in promoting and legitimising their political preferences in the SCO multilateral format. The expression of vulnerability and disdain for unipolarity became a common centrepiece of their international relations. The Bishkek Declaration signed in August 1999 by the five countries held that multipolarity promotes international stability (Itar-Tass Weekly News 25 August 1999a). The declaration reflected Yeltsin's stance on unipolarity: Yeltsin denounced 'attempts by some states to build a world order that is only suitable to themselves. They take no account of the objective gravitation to a multipolar world.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 25 August 1999b) The declaration also promoted a new 'fair and rational' international economic and political order. During the summit, member states also agreed that the organisation helped maintain security and stability in the region (Itar-Tass Weekly News 27 August 1999b). Yeltsin was reported the day before the Bishkek summit to have told a news conference that he was 'in good form for fighting and ready to fight with anybody, and especially with Westernisers.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 24 August 1999b) Such was the discourse advanced by the Shanghai Five.

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[163] Though this did not stretch to the Central Asian states before the colour revolutions, as they welcomed US involvements post-2001 and even before this period had become drawn into NATO Partnership for Peace exercises and Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council activities.

During Putin's presidency, the political dimension of the Shanghai Five expanded. Starting in 2000, the importance of trust, diplomacy, good neighbourship and friendly economic/trade relations were stressed, as expressed in a communique signed by the five countries in Astana in March 2000 (for example, Itar-Tass Weekly News 24 February 2000, Itar-Tass Weekly News 30 March 2000). Members also expressed common views with China's and Russia's position on territorial integrity in the face of extremism (Itar-Tass Weekly News 5 July 2000, Itar-Tass Weekly News 7 July 2000). Furthermore, cooperation was extended to promoting cultural exchange, environmental protection and energy matters. The five members also agreed that their foreign ministers would meet annually to promote political coordination (for full description see Jia 2001). 2001 was an important year for this increasingly robust relationship: the Shanghai Five became the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. Post-September 11 anti-terrorist rhetoric, when added to state narratives of religious extremism, provided yet another channel for mutual interest and coordination to flourish in the group. In 2002, the group adopted the Shanghai Convention for Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism (Trud 8 June 2002).[164] In May 2003, the SCO was further solidified when Zhang Deguang, former Chinese deputy minister of foreign affairs, career diplomat and ambassador to Russia, was made its Secretary General (Itar-Tass Weekly News 29 May 2003a and 2003b, also see Ambrosio 2008: 1327).

Such political cooperation allowed emerging political congruence to become institutionalised. The specific values and norms in question are analysed by Ambrosio (2008) by looking at the SCO's Charter and organisational declarations. The word 'democracy' does not appear in the SCO Charter. The single mention of 'democratic' is in the context of promoting a 'democratic and fair' international order (Charter of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation 2002).[165] This use of 'democratic' implies a focus on sovereignty and non-interference and a preference for multilateralism over unilateral international primacy. The SCO Charter also purports to uphold 'diversity' and 'stability' as organisational goals (the focus of Ambrosio's 2008 article). The SCO's conception of diversity is closely tied to its preoccupation with sovereignty. Diversity is opposed to imperial homogenisation and is crucial so that 'every people [can] be properly guaranteed to have the right to choose its own way of development.' (Declaration of

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[164] In a 2001 statement by Russia's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey A. Ordzhonikidze, he stressed the role of the CIS and the SCO in combatting terrorism: 'In 1999 the Heads of Governments of the CIS countries signed the Treaty on Cooperation Among CIS States in Fighting Terrorism…The Anti-Terrorist Center established last year… is now in operation. The position of the CIS with regard to the September 11 tragedy and the resolute desire of the CIS member countries to rebuff international terrorism are reflected in the joint statement by the heads of member states made on September 28 [which stresses] the need to take concrete steps to ensure the efficiency of antiterrorist measures... We expect a lot from the [SCO] antiterrorist structure.' (Available at: http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/eb4fd6d05ac4eb0143256ad900386861?OpenDocument)
[165] The SCO Charter is available at: http://www.sectsco.org/EN/show.asp?id=69.

Heads of Member States of SCO 2005) In 2008, SCO member states resolved to deepen cultural interaction among them in the face of globalisation. Kyrgyz Prime Minister Chudinov stressed the importance of maintaining 'cultural originality,' alluding to cultural distinctiveness and the importance of a multipolar world (Itar-Tass Daily 25 June 2008). At a SCO meeting in 2009, Putin even proposed a song contest 'Intervision' for singers from SCO members as an alternative to Eurovision in order to 'strengthen cultural ties' between the countries (Moscow Times 15 October 2009). The SCO's discourse on human rights reflects its conception of diversity. The 2005 Declaration states that 'it is necessary to respect strictly and consecutively historical traditions and national features of every people, sovereign equality of all states.' (Declaration of Heads of Member States of SCO 2005) This flexible understanding of human rights is not only a relativisation of what Western states see as universal principles, but it also leaves open the opportunity for the relatively authoritarian governments of the SCO to find legitimation in SCO rhetoric.

'Stability' in SCO terms is a defence of the status quo. Before 2004, 'stability' referred to the struggles against terrorism, religious extremism and transnational crime between the states. After the colour revolutions in Ukraine and Georgia however, 'stability' took on a new meaning (Ambrosio 2008: 1330-1), and for China and the states in Central Asia, the internal focus on order was there from an earlier time. Though primarily a case of regional power holders, the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan that overthrew the authoritarian regime of Askar Akayev where NGOs tried to become involved, also further highlighted to SCO members that another threat to regional stability in Central Asia came from democratising factions. Secretary General Zhang Deguang reacted to the Tulip Revolution on behalf of the SCO by linking the anti-centralist forces with religious extremism (Itar-Tass Weekly News 25 March 2005). Any counter-action by the Kyrgyz regime would be treated as counter-terrorism by the SCO (Ambrosio 2009: 167). So, when President Karimov of Uzbekistan ordered military action against unarmed demonstrators in Andijan supporting alleged extremists of the IMU, the SCO did nothing to intervene and instead highlighted the threat of terrorism (see Ambrosio 2008: 1331-3). Deguang was clear that the events were tied to extremism that threatened to destabilise the entire region (Itar-Tass Weekly News 1 July 2005).[166] At the same time, he also downplayed the events, stating that 'one incident in Andijan and the change of power in Kyrgyzstan must not lead one to a conclusion that the situation in Central Asia is unstable.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 18 June 2005) The SCO commitment to the status quo is strong; the Organization

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[166] Deguang stated that in Andijan 'gunmen planned and staged terrorist attacks in order to overthrow temporal authorities and establish a theocratic regime.' He stressed these actions were also aimed at 'undermining stability in the whole region.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 1 July 2005)

engages in its own election observation to counterbalance the perceived bias of Western observers (for example of work in Kazakh elections, see Itar-Tass Weekly News 12 April 2005). The SCO, as it symbolically legitimises the physical status quo in its member states, also became an active promoter of a distinctively Central Asian or Eurasian discourse.

Mirroring discussions in 2006 about merging EurAsEC with the CSTO, the SCO and the CSTO signed a memorandum on cooperation in October 2007 (RBC Daily 8 October 2007, Asia-Plus news agency 2007). Bordyuzha welcomed joint military exercises between the two organisations (Moscow News 25 April 2008). SCO-CSTO cooperation was met with criticism from the West as forming an anti-NATO military-political bloc, though Western officials were careful not to make this explicit claim.[167] At least, the move was a signal to NATO that the further it expanded eastward, the more alternatives to the ideational foundations of its influence would be promoted.

As status quo regimes are supported by the SCO, relatively autocratic regimes can further solidify their political power. The SCO began under Putin to propagate its position on anti-regime factions. For example, the SCO largely supported a 2006 Russian law that gave the Justice Ministry and the Federal Registration Service control over NGOs (Ambrosio 2008: 1334); just a few months after the law was passed, members of the Organisation issued a statement condemning communication technology that was used to spur domestic instability:

> 'In both civil and military fields, there is the possible danger of using [Information Communication Technology (ICT)] for criminal... and political purposes that run counter to the maintenance of international security, which will cause serious political, social and economic consequences... and trigger social instability in countries… The use of ICT for [criminal and political] purposes may cause a catastrophe… tantamount to that resulted from the use of weapons of mass destruction.' (Statement of the Heads of the SCO Member States on International Information Security 2006)[168]

Beyond the main time frame of this study, the SCO also endorsed Ahmadinejad's re-election in 2009 (in contrast to severely sceptical U.S. and E.U. officials), whilst affirming the importance of a multipolar world and pledging to allow more members into

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[167] CSTO Secretary General Nikolay Bordyuzha denied the claim that the memorandum was anti-NATO (Asia-Plus news agency 2007), stating: 'This document doesn't mean that our organisations are striving to compete with NATO in this region of the world, as some analysts have suggested. We don't regard NATO as a rival or an enemy - on the contrary, we aim to cooperate with it.'
[168] The statements is available at:
http://eurasianhome.org/doc/statement_of_heads_of_sco_member_states_on_international_information_security.doc.

the organisation (Moscow Times 17 June 2009).[169] After Osama Bin Laden was killed and tensions with Washington mounted, Pakistan has sought support from the SCO and seeks membership; in May 2011 Moscow reportedly backed Pakistan's bid to join the organisation (Current Digest of the Russian Press 9 May 2011).

As the SCO delegitimises regime change, it further strengthens, perpetuates and legitimises its member states. At the same time, portraying the SCO (or any multilateral organisation in the CIS region) as an organisation whose only function is to support the status quo (and/or authoritarianism) is overly simplistic. In 2010, for example, Moscow seemed to approve of the overthrow of Bakiyev in Kyrgyzstan (Moscow Times 16 April 2010). The SCO also did not condemn the overthrow. More generally, less powerful members consent to a Russian co-led organisation, and in this way, concede some of their sovereignty to this multilateral body. However, it should be accepted that consent to SCO values conforms with the regime security preferences of Central Asian CIS states and in this respect represents bandwagoning with China – the other leader of the SCO – as well as Russia.

Chapter conclusions

In all of the cases of integration attempts studied in this chapter, there have been underlying symbolic and political consequences that go beyond stated priorities. This is not to say that the stated, functional goals are fully discarded. All of the institutions studied in this chapter represent relatively narrow formations (compared to the CIS) in which countries can interact with Russia in seemingly mutually beneficial functional cooperation. The CSTO and SCO have abated conflicts between member states through the promotion of confidence building measures and regional disarmament. Border problems between China and the other five member countries of the SCO have also been allayed. Joint statements made by the group have promoted and embedded the members' common view on religious extremism and separatism. The colour revolutions in the CIS region underlined that a combination of economic, political, military and ideological factors could raise the relative strength of dissenters and their Western supporters; thus, integrating organisations had to be valid in different sectors in order to wield real influence. Economic and military interests enabled political solidarity and the prospect for further deep integration.

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[169] Though China and Russia later supported UN sanctions on Iran after the country refused negotiations on its suspected nuclear programme, and Russia stepped up its efforts at blocking Iran from becoming a SCO member (Moscow News 11 June 2010).

As Moscow competed with increasing demands from other CIS states for complete independence, it sought a new arrangement in which it could remain the central player. The Tashkent framework, though lacking clear institutional structure, provided such an avenue whereby Moscow could maintain its relative weight and advance overall plans of reintegration through joint forces and command structures. Thus, Tashkent and the CST represent bridges or halfway points between the integrated Soviet system and a disintegrated post-Soviet structure. The treaty with Belarus is perhaps the most obvious institutional expression of Soviet nostalgia in the post-Soviet region. It came after a telling resolution in the Duma that rejected the breakup of the Union and openly supported similar deep integration. Political solidarity acts to legitimise a type of political value system that is antagonistic to external influence. The economic agreements and the SCO are less relics of the past, in that they were not born out of structures already existing in Soviet times (nor was the treaty with Belarus). Instead, they are signs of both the shift that occurred in the mid-1990s and, most importantly under Putin. Noting the span of competing ideological ideas in the new post-Soviet region (most worryingly for Moscow expressed through colour revolutions), less focus was given to functional purposes; these purposes were seen as unfeasible and/or in cases undesirable to implement multilaterally. Instead, the focus was on forming a regional system around Russia that could disseminate Russian-supported (sometimes unstated) regional goals and political ideas.

Russian agency

In the context of building multilateral organisations, Yeltsin's presidencies can be seen as being relatively liberal institutionalist. Yeltsin and Kozyrev supporters in the 1990s were relatively pro-Western, and adopted the idea that institutions would naturally encourage deeper cooperation between CIS states and Russia.[170] These institutions would create order out of the relative regional anarchy that ensued after the breakup of the Soviet Union. Thus, Yeltsin started in the 1990s on a reintegration project that focused on the functional purpose of institutions. Chafetz (1996/7: 675) notes Yeltsin's 'faith' in organisations. The belief was that states of the CIS region were interdependent and shared common norms and rules; this interdependence could and should be institutionalised. Institutions would serve to both coordinate the policies of their members, as well as to restore Russian regional hegemony. Even the Shanghai Five was primarily military-security focused during the time. Perhaps this is what

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[170] This liberal institutionalism was also mirrored at the international level. Kozyrev in particular advocated Russian participation in international institutions that would facilitate rapprochement with the West and free Russia from its imperial past (see Chafetz 1996/7 for discussion about the liberal camp in Russian politics during the 1990s).

explains the discrepancy between the partly democratic Russia in the 1990s and the authoritarian CIS partners it dealt with at the time. Yeltsin was more interested in a blanket regional strategy to regain regional control through functional measures rather than in ensuring political congruence at the bilateral level. The Shanghai Five took an incremental approach to integration from its inception, beginning with limited military issues (confidence building) and increasing to disarmament and later to political and economic issues.

In the context of the 1998 economic crisis discussed in the previous chapter, there is another factor in changes related to the integration process between CIS states - especially in the economic sector. All CIS countries had an incentive to protect their own national products (i.e. areas of relative economic and trade advantage). Thus, the purely economic dimension of EurAsEC stalled. It became increasingly clear that functional integration would be virtually impossible, given different economic interests. Nearing the end of Yeltsin's most intense time at the helm, in December 1997, Nezavisimaya Gazeta published a report from the Institute of CIS Countries titled: 'The CIS: The Beginning or the End of History' that underlined the prevalence of disintegration and geopolitical pluralism in the post-Soviet region (Sodruzhestvo NG 1997).

In relation to a common politico-military framework during Yeltsin's presidencies, we see a heavy-handed rhetoric of reintegration and then differentiation in the military sphere with very little on the ground to show for it. The disjuncture between what was said and what was done is important to note, as it also exemplifies the push-pull tension between Russian integration impulses and the continued attempts by other countries to maintain and enhance their own sovereignty. Perhaps the gap between what was said and what was done can also be partly explained, as Kulagin implies in his statement on the CIS in ruins, by the inflated Russian sense of its own regional and international leverage. In terms of economic capability, as seen in the previous chapter, Russia was in massive economic problems. Politically, Moscow had been unable to stop action in Kosovo. So, though the rhetoric of Russian might and regional reintegration existed, the conditions were insufficient to back up any real advances on either front. In this way, flexibility was moderate in that the aim was no longer to restore the integrity of the former Soviet army, nor was it to achieve a single control over the NIS, nor was it to maintain a single alliance. Instead, the aim was a broader prospect of maintaining some sort of direct control over political and military developments in the region. The functional 'failure' of the agreements focused on in

this chapter underlines why Moscow pursued bilateral relations with other post-Soviet states rather than continued to focus on functionally meaningful multilateral attempts.

This shift to bilateral relations, which occurred in the mid to late 1990s when the Russian-Belarusian Treaty began to take form, is an important one to note. This shift was also noticeable in the context of the CST, where Russia began to favour bilateral military agreements. Deyermond (2009) argues that bilateral hegemonic relations within a region can signify that hegemons are able to act at different levels to respond to or challenge other contenders for power. Bilateral linkages can strengthen multilateral cooperation, and multilateral cooperation can dis-incentivise bilateral dissent. Russian interests lie in having both types of relations in the CIS region. A good example of this was discussed in the first empirical chapter in the case of Tajikistan. What began as a largely bilateral partnership between Moscow and Dushanbe served to strengthen and formalise cooperation between Moscow and other Central Asian states.

Putin's realism came at a time when the prospect of functional integration was bleak. When Putin came to power, the shift to focusing on 'soft' issues in the region (with the exception of the war waged in Chechnya at the beginning of his first term, though not involving other CIS countries) and on Russia's domestic agenda compelled military foreign policy to adapt. At the same time, cooperation was by and large no longer pursued under the auspices of reintegration. Instead, the regional structures were multilateral 'front' ones that reflected political solidarity between regimes - in this way, the real substance of relations remained bilateral and Moscow attempted to gain legitimacy for status quo regimes. Russia's relationship with Belarus is a case in point: instead of focusing on functional military commonalities, the focus shifted to the potential for political integration through economic means. In the area of political-economic agreements, there was a massive shift under Putin; indeed, real economic integration was all but non-existent under Yeltsin, focusing more on declarations of good intent rather than measurable outcomes. Instead, Putin stepped up economic relations at least in institutional terms - a sign that under Putin, Russia saw economic measures as a more effective means by which to gain political solidarity with other regimes and assert political power. One can also begin to see a shift between Mann's four spheres of power towards the political one, as Putin tried to fuse political logic with all different types of power; military and economic integration institutions (and Russian leadership therein) were used as political expedients. The focus on military and symbolic gestures under Yeltsin (with a pronounced patriarchal taste) changed to one where others' interests were also considered in a diplomatic political game. Interest-

based foreign policy became increasingly accepted as a standard of behaviour. With it came flexibility. Putin's presidency also highlighted the potential for political solidarity through multilateral organisations. Russia under Putin began to strengthen its own central authorities to undermine democratic forces. This was mirrored in the regional constellation, and the colour revolutions in Ukraine and Georgia only gave impetus to the process. Multilateral organisations legitimise status-quo governments and thus implicitly acted to subvert and insulate member countries from regime change.

Other CIS countries' agency

Examining the regimes of the other member countries of regional organisations contextualises this chapter's cases and underlines the existence of an implicit as well as explicit political understanding between Russia and these countries. Organisational values as well as statements of consent and joint charters and treaties can be seemingly benign if not taken in the context of the regimes expressing them. Ambrosio (2008) maps out the political systems of SCO member countries using Freedom House (FH)[171] data to justify his sceptical treatment of the SCO's discourse. FH data concludes that none of the member countries of the studied organisations (Belarus, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan) with the exception of Ukraine are considered 'free' countries.[172] By 2010, all of the countries with the exception of Armenia (considered 'partly free') had regressed to being classified as 'not free.' The organisations studied cannot be taken in isolation and are shaped by the political authoritarianism in member countries, as well as the threats to territorial integrity and sovereignty that they identify. Regimes that do not give their citizens basic standards of political rights and civil liberties (the categories FH uses) will accept a type of regional hierarchy that reflects their own status-quo regime behaviour and conceptions of sovereignty. Thus, though concepts like 'sovereignty', 'diversity' and 'stability' could be innocuous even in the way the SCO employs them, the context in which they appear (i.e. in a region with authoritarian tendencies) may confirm their authoritarian meanings. In this light, organisational discourse especially when related to democracy and human rights can allow for a near-endless flexibility of standards in application and can therefore legitimise authoritarianism. In this way, the power interests of the socialising powers support authoritarianism because the status quo is authoritarian and regimes are averse to change.

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[171] Freedom House is an NGO that promotes democracy. Their website and yearly 'Freedom in the World' report containing the cited data can be accessed at www.freedomhouse.org. Individual country reports are also available for more detail. The 2010 data has been used here, as the 2011 report remains incomplete. Some have questioned the full research objectivity of Freedom House categorisations, but the general trends in this data seem sound.
[172] A country is identified as 'free,' 'partly free' or 'not free.'

Now we can analyse where generally consent and dissent have been shown to Russian hegemony, noting the potential for these actions laid out in the beginning of the chapter. This chapter has uncovered a tight core of CIS countries that support Russian-backed organisations - countries of EurAsEC, the SCO and the CSTO (the countries of Central Asia, Belarus and Armenia). From the regime security point of view of these countries, 'sovereignty' is consistent with Russian-backed political bandwagoning. Related to economic agreements, the trade structure in the post-Soviet region is insufficient to raise overall regional efficiency and security. Yet, Kazakhstan has been a major supporter of Russia-focused economic integration. This has been more an expression of political consent towards Russia than a reflection of real conviction that significant economic results will follow. At the same time, for Kazakhstan, EurAsEC makes economic sense; if this serves to boost the bilateral Russian-Kazakh core of the organisation, it could be economically advantageous to Kazakhstan (in this respect, the organisation makes less sense for the other Central Asian members because of geography and the structure of their trade). Kazakhstan also has its own multivector Eurasian policy, supporting many forms of multilateralism. Multilateral organisations may be beneficial to smaller Central Asian states with weak internal military structures of their own, and so they could theoretically consent to functional mechanisms. Again however, consent mainly stems from the political dimensions represented by regional organisations.

The relationship between Minsk and Moscow and organisations such as the SCO helps to solidify status quo political power. Through the legitimacy it holds as an organisation, the SCO can serve to legitimise member countries' forms of governance. Thus, the difference between authoritarianism and democracy is in a way obfuscated by the legitimisation of autocratic rule, making Russian-style 'democracy' and more importantly, Russian-style regional hegemony a viable model for the region. Such region-level validation of the status quo that ensures regime security can also serve to make dissent (both at the domestic level as well as by external critics) less likely. As such, existing regimes can enjoy political power without fear of regional backlash, as legitimising authoritarianism at the multilateral level also means that other countries in the region are legitimised in their measures of resistance to dissent. This is explicit in the SCO's support of Russian action to control NGOs.

Legitimised multilateral institutions that support status quo regimes also threaten the legitimacy of dissenting regimes, and vice versa, by offering alternative governance models. As Russia became increasingly authoritarian and thus commended its form of governance in regional institutions, alternative governance

models (for example, relatively more democratic Ukraine) were a direct threat by example to the Russian political regime. That the SCO, CSTO and EurAsEC promote a value system distinct to that of the West highlights how multilateral organisations work to create abstract spaces that promote differentiation and exceptionalism between states in a wider region and between regional blocs of states. Showing dissent is therefore not just about refusing to be in a solidarity bloc with Russia; it is a direct challenge to the legitimacy of Moscow. Alternative regional structures that exclude Russia such as GUAM, the idea of a Community of Democratic Choice and the EU's Eastern Partnership initiative can thus be analysed as counter structures. However, the case that authoritarian norms are promoted by regional organisations should not be overstated. The variations in the way that Moscow exerts its hegemony, the increase in Western soft power and most importantly, the dynamics of nationalisms in CIS states suggest that the future prospects of authoritarian consolidation are relatively unclear. Furthermore, the flexibility promoted by Russian-led organisations does not exclude other interest-based cooperative mechanisms - indeed, such interest-based behaviour is accepted as a standard of behaviour. As noted previously, President Lucinschi of Moldova in 1999 stressed that politicians should see GUAM and Russian-led organisations as being based on self-interest, and not as running against broader CIS interests (Itar-Tass Weekly News 1 September 1999).

In the case of the Russia-Belarus Union, though there has been little implementation of the explicit military and economic goals of the treaty, Lukashenka's power appears relatively secure and capable of withstanding external and internal opposition. This is not an imperial arrangement; both sides see benefits. Belarus shares interests and values, and is willing to go along with Russian hegemony. In return, Belarus profits from institutional recognition. The reciprocal nature of the organisation makes the Union relatively solid.

Importantly, this chapter does not overlook a post-Soviet structure that is also characterised by dissent and continuing regional disaggregation. The last chapter discussed GUAM as a reaction to Russian hegemonic ambitions. Though efforts to create and sustain regional integration projects were intensified under Putin, their realisation or lack thereof reflected the limited potential of the Russian leadership faced by expressions of sovereignty, and the absence of mutual consent or of real multilateralism. One can also begin to draw broader conclusions related to other chapters. Recalling the military support analysed in the first substantive chapter, one can now add the political dimension. Russia's support of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in the later Putin years, for example, could arguably be analysed as a political tactic

against a government (Georgia) unwilling to confirm the status quo. Russia expressed continuous support for South Ossetia and Abkhazia in opposition to Tbilisi. Ukraine also lost Russian support after the Orange Revolution. At the same time, one cannot overstate this view, and there are grounds for disagreement. The 1990s support of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, for example, was by a much more democratic Russia. It is perhaps interesting to note that neither Ukraine nor Georgia is part of any of the main military multilateral organisations in the region. Georgia withdrew from the CST in 1999 (only five years after joining) and plans are underway to join NATO. Ukrainian dynamics are subtler, and are discussed in the following chapter. Kiev has consistently refused to fully support any CIS structures that have a supranational character and also sought NATO membership until the re-election of Yanukovich in 2010. This political vacillation even after the Orange Revolution reflects the balancing act that Kiev plays between East and West.

The concepts of consent and dissent also affect the notion of fluid hegemonic behaviour. The sort of consent and dissent studied suggests that Russian hegemony has a different quality depending on what country is at stake - patterns and groups are laid out in the conclusions. This observation highlights how political structures and regime types work to influence hegemonic relationships. In the case of the post-Soviet region, Moscow was seemingly aware that the more pro-Russian regimes were present, the more it could legitimise and advance its own political interests as a regional leader. Hence, Moscow worked to strengthen its relationships with individual countries by supporting the creation of multilateral organisations that would sustain bilateral relationships as well as Russia's regional legitimacy and validity as a hegemon.

On balance: a circle of tight hegemony

This chapter shows that consent to Russian-led multilateral organisations and hierarchy is most likely to occur between regimes where political congruence exists. In the context of multilateral organisations, a relatively tight circle around Russia exists that includes the states that consent to politically motivated institutions. Central Asian regimes as well as Belarus and Armenia already have relatively congruent governance models with Russia, and more importantly, conceive their sovereignty to be congruent with some form of regional hierarchy. Regional opposition to other regimes that threaten their interpretation of their sovereignty reinforce the status quo. The Russian 'way' is thus persistent; the more legitimacy organisations like the CSTO, EurAsEC and SCO gain, the more durable and resilient the political models of the member states

become. This circle of tight hegemony is therefore likely to persist. Such legitimate hegemony shows signs of a suzerain system, but not enough for it to depart from the hegemonic realm. In exchange for legitimising relatively autocratic governance models and political support, other countries in multilateral institutions for the most part accede to Russia's regional claim to hegemony.

At the same time, the flexible nature of multilateral institutions and the multivector policies pursued by all CIS countries leaves open the possibility for political change in all member countries, including Russia. For example, hypothetically speaking, if China moves beyond its regional ambitions and seeks global power (providing that economic interdependence and multipolarity do not become entrenched characteristics of the international system), then Moscow too could aim more closely to align with Europe in order to balance against China. Furthermore, though there exists a tight core of countries that are members of the multilateral institutions studied in this chapter, other organisations like GUAM, as well as the existence of regimes like that in Georgia and other countries that seek to reinforce their sovereignty on a case-by-case basis, suggest that the CIS countries not included in the tight core are in a relationship of rather loose hegemony with Russia – or virtually no hegemony in the case of Georgia. The relationships of individual countries as well as groups of countries with Russia are addressed in this study's conclusions. They suggest that the CIS region can partly be characterised by flexible geometry.

Chapter 6:
Hegemony in the post-Soviet region as examined through Russian ideological power and the consent-dissent dialectic

The previous chapter analysed how Russian-backed multilateral organisations play a strong role in promoting a tight group of consenting countries around Russia. For its part, this chapter considers how hegemony relates to Russian-CIS relationships around ideological power. It studies certain cases where Russia has used ideological power to strengthen its regional position and therefore promote hegemony. Though there is increasing work on this type of soft power (Hill 2004, Popescu 2006, Yasmann 2007, Russian Analytical Digest 81/10), ideological power remains a relatively ambiguous area of study. A good starting point is to recall some of the broad related patterns and difficulties faced by Russia after the fall of the Soviet Union. During Soviet times, large sums of money were spent on propaganda campaigns to promote the communist system, and communist leaders in eastern and south-eastern Europe were effectively socialised. Many of the leaders of the successor countries in the mid-1990s were part of the *nomenklatura,* coming from the same political brand, packaged by the same Communist party.

What is clear from the following discussion is that Russia began to compete for the political orientation of post-Soviet countries in the region beginning in the 1990s. Compared to Putin, Yeltsin was relatively half-hearted in his attempts at socialisation. Cultural and political links persisted past the end of the Soviet Union. However, constructed cultural historical links were not enough to spur the kind of relationship that would assure unchanging political loyalty. In this chapter we sometimes find a fundamental clash of actions as well as of understandings of what binds the region together. For example throughout the 1990s other CIS countries continually tried to strengthen the status of their own languages in what was often perceived as a zero-sum competition with the Russian language.

After the colour revolutions, Putin became more aware of the weaknesses in relying on historical ties in spurring cooperation. Hence, ideological power was increasingly employed in attempts to fill the gap between rhetoric and reality. Putin was increasingly concerned with upholding regime security, and perhaps as a consequence became more involved with disseminating Russian political and cultural soft power through policies with socio-psychological undertones. The obstacles that Moscow faced are apparent in Putin's increasing efforts to both preserve leaders (at the state and sub-state levels) with pro-Russian foreign policy outlooks as well as to foster the

Russian culture abroad. At the same time, there was a basic incompatibility between Moscow's efforts to foster pro-Russianess in CIS states and the interest of the leaders in those states to reinforce their own domestic legitimacy by emphasising their sovereign identities and cultures. Even in countries with a large ethnic Russian community like Kazakhstan and Belarus, the push-pull dynamic between Russian ambitions, the need to placate Moscow through foreign policy and national sovereignty was only slightly modified. Having lost the Communist ideology that bound the USSR together, many of the former republics turned to domestic ethno-political identity to bolster their sense of nationhood. The more piecemeal Moscow's strategies became (and the more heavy-handed in nature when they were deployed against central governments), the more dissent Moscow met. Hegemony was undermined through the political expression of sovereignty. On balance then, the regional structure around Russia based on its ideological power slackened from tight to loose hegemony, though elements of a much more hierarchical system are apparent with respect to the sub-state units such as South Ossetia.

In terms of chapter-specific conclusions, as we saw in the first chapter on military involvements, this chapter also concludes that Russian self-interest trumps the principle of non-interference and the prohibition of secession. Russia directly impinges on Georgia's territorial integrity (and Tbilisi's claim to it) by placing Russian officials in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The chapter on military intervention shows how Tbilisi has consistently dissented in its actions to such infringements of its sovereignty. The 2008 clash represents the culmination of years of confrontational behaviour. This chapter underlines that Russia is willing to antagonise Tbilisi in a much more open and direct way than Ukraine - and vice versa. Ukraine is a geopolitical battleground that Moscow does not want to lose, and Kiev is similarly careful about how far away to push its Eastern neighbour.

Hundreds of millions of rubles were allocated to South Ossetia and Abkhazia as economic incentives for the separatist governments to gain political support. Implicit threats to Georgia warned that any attempt to restore the full reach of centralised Georgian authority by use of military force in these regions would be opposed by Moscow. Having citizens abroad with many of the same legal rights as Russians living inside Russia provided a major force of leverage for Moscow against Georgia. So, although Moscow used legalistic language to validate passportisation, the move was opportunistic. Moscow also used diaspora politics to secure leadership roles in the secessionist regions and thus to delegitimise the discourse against Russian hegemony expounded by Tbilisi. The dissent shown by Tbilisi stems from the realist self-interested

understanding of sovereignty held by both parties; Tbilisi is opposed to any form of regional hierarchy centred around Russia.

Potential for consent and dissent to Russian-led hierarchy

In this chapter, other CIS states are likely to actively consent to Russian-centred hierarchy when Russian actions do not explicitly infringe on their sovereign rights. Consent can also ensue when the political agendas of existing regimes are perpetuated, as Moscow's actions and discourse sustains the status quo, reinforcing regimes at either the national or sub-national level. Central governments in states dissent to hierarchy as expressed through Russian ideological power where Russia uses socialisation measures and rhetoric of a shared culture/ethnicity/history as political measures to further segregate portions of the population. More generally, other CIS states show dissent where Russia uses its ideological power to exercise strict control over or influence revisionist central governments. Russia's continued attempt to penetrate the CIS through ideational factors can also have negative implications for the domestic legitimacy of other CIS regimes as leaders of independent nations/states. The question of the loss of credibility of leaders of other CIS countries is tied to the issue of sovereignty that has been presented throughout the chapters. The narrative of separate nationhood and individual cultural/historical identity was important even for the conservative (and reluctantly sovereign) leaders in Central Asia, within a couple of years of the end of the USSR. Such regimes had to consider how their own populations would perceive decisions that obviously reflected consent to Russian-centred hierarchy. This does not mean however, that nations did not recognise their vulnerability as young states and the economic and political danger they faced if they were to reject Moscow.

Appointing status quo, pro-Russian actors

To understand Yeltsin's relative negligence in explicit attempts at socialisation, a brief description of the political milieu in the region in the 1990s is useful (Suny 1999/2000: 152-4). In the early 1990s, the institutional continuity that remained in the post-Soviet region was closely tied to the old Communist system. In part this reflected the successes and effectiveness of the Communist system that prevented elites from other political moulds to emerge to replace players from the old regime. In Eurasia during Yeltsin's presidencies, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and

Uzbekistan all had leaders who were former Soviet first secretaries.[173] Though in the cases of Shevardnadze in Georgia and Nazarbayev in Kazakhstan some elements of quasi-democratic transitions could be identified in the late 1990s, the length of their rule meant that the ways of the old Soviet apparatus remained embedded.[174] In Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan even the facade of democratic change was missing. Though the Tajik communist party faced turmoil in the 1990s, heavy support from Moscow - not least militarily - helped former communist Rakhmonov and his followers maintain power. Though not openly anti-West, there was a clear sense that Western-type democracy was unachievable in the short-term future. The political mood in the early to mid-1990s in Central Asia was reflected in Rakhmonov's statement after the 1995 parliamentary elections:

> 'Tajik democracy, which is only just recovering from civil war, cannot, of course, be compared with the democracy of the United States... Democracy as it is conceived in the West cannot be built in our country in the next one, two, three, ten or even one hundred years.' (Sevodnya 28 February 1995)

This context-specific understanding of democracy is congruent with what came to be the official position in Russia under Putin's leadership. The head of the OSCE's mission in European countries Gancho Ganchev condemned the elections in Tajikistan: 'The republic authorities have failed to create even a semblance of democracy... It's a real farce.' (Sevodnya 28 February 1995) Western critics of the elections held that the real purpose was to get pro-Rakhmonov (and pro-Russian) officials elected at the local level. Moscow could strongly influence this outcome, not least because of military assistance provided by Russia.

Kyrgyzstan and Armenia were the only two Eurasian countries in the 1990s that did not wholly continue with the former leadership culture. Akayev (a former academic) was able to balance Communist and democratic tendencies in Kyrgyzstan, not committing his rule to either. During the 1990s, Armenia vacillated (as observed previously) between pro-Russian and relatively Russophobe alternatives. The nationalist opposition under Levon Ter-Petrosyan (who also had an academic background) gained power in the government. However, reflecting Armenia's wavering

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[173] Heidar Aliev (who returned to power), Eduard Shevardnadze, Nursultan Nazarbayev, Sapurmad Niyazov, Islam Karimov respectively. See Suny (1999/2000: 152 - 154) for discussion on political trends in Eurasia in the late 1990s.
[174] In the case of Georgia, a turning point could perhaps be noted in 1998 with the appointment of a new western-looking Defence Minister Col David Tevzadze, as discussed in the chapter on military power (Sevodnya 29 April 1998, Noviye Izvestia 13 May 1998).

political stance, former Communist party members were close contenders during elections.[175]

The very assertion of sovereignty by nationalist leaders at the fall of the Soviet Union would suggest that Moscow had an interest in developing new ways of ensuring close relationships. During the mid-1990s, this study has shown that Russia used military means in an effort to hold back the disintegration process. The late 1990s saw the rise of more political dissent. GUAM was proclaimed in 1997. As interpreted by Moscow, the organisation officially made Ukraine, Moldova, Azerbaijan and Georgia appear as anti-Russian countries, though Russian officials were not so direct about this (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 1 December 1997). Though this is a crude interpretation from the Russian perspective and it was not so polarised a choice as that (especially for Ukraine as discussed below), GUAM was a symbolic loss of Russian influence. As countries began to have increasingly multivector policies and look elsewhere for economic and political support, they strengthened their actorness without Russia. Ukraine continued to disregard participation in the CIS and began talks with Poland and the Baltic States whose aim was the creation of a Black Sea-Baltic union - interpreted by Moscow as creating an anti-Russian cordon (Nezavisimaya Gazeta 1 December 1997). Again, though this early idea dating back to the early 1990s never developed, such actions and talks suggest rising dissent to a Russian-dominated arena. As analysed below, the Russian language, media presence and culture more generally began to be rejected at the policy level more frequently in the late 1990s. Rather, Western influence in Georgia and Ukraine and Turkish influence in the Trans-Caucasus emerged. As an example of early discourse coming from the Ukraine-NATO relationship, the 1997 Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and Ukraine proclaims the 'highest level' of political commitment and boasts mutual 'respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all other states, for the inviolability of frontiers.'[176] Such discourse suggests that Ukraine was at least open to having another hegemonic influence (NATO) regionally involved.

The Central Asian countries also started to show increasing signs of sovereignty at the expense of Russia. As outlined in the military chapter, Uzbekistan began to express its relative power in the region as well, particularly trying to gain influence in Tajikistan at Russia's expense (Izvestia 6 January 1998). At a meeting in

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[175] For example, Karen Demirchian, former Communist party chief came very close to nationalist opposition leader Robert Kocharian in the May 1998 elections. In the 1999 parliamentary elections, Demirchian became the speaker of the parliament (Suny 1999/2000: 153).
[176] Charter available at:
http://www.mfa.gov.ua/mfa/en/publication/content/1705.htm?lightWords=nuclear%20weapons

early 1998 in Ashgabat between the Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Turkmen and Tajik leaders, a plan was set for a Trans-Caspian pipeline that would by-pass Russia. In this context these leaders declared their 'resolve to continue policy of strengthening [their] political and economic independence.' Even Nazarbayev called the route a 'priority.' (Izvestia 9 January 1998)

The disaggregation that continued during Putin's time signalled to Moscow that more could be attempted to reverse this trend. Political revolutions, supported by a strong civil society and with the backing of the West, became a very real threat to Moscow's regional ambitions that were previously facilitated by responsive governments. The colour revolutions of the 2000s brought to power two Western-oriented administrations with progressive and ambitious foreign policy outlooks (in Ukraine and in Georgia only, as Bakiyev's regime soon reverted back to quite a pro-Russia orientation in Kyrgyzstan). In 2005, the Borjomi Declaration by Presidents Yushchenko and Saakashvili made clear their affinity towards Europe:

> 'We pledge to conduct policies in our respective countries, Ukraine and Georgia, based on those principles, as members of the European family, sharing European values and history.... We invite those devoted to ideas of democracy to our [Autumn 2005] Summit in Ukraine and to unite our efforts to turn the Baltic-Black-Caspian Sea region into a sea of democracy, stability and security, to make it a fully integrated region of Europe and of the Democratic and Atlantic community.'[177]

On paper then, both Ukraine and Georgia sought to distance themselves from Russian-backed representations of democracy.

Numerous books have been written on democratisation trends through the colour revolutions.[178] As such, this section does not seek to provide an historical review of events and how Russia reacted. Moscow chose a relatively moderate path in dealing with the colour revolutions. To show its distaste for developments in 2006, Moscow boycotted Georgian goods such as wine and mineral water, and followed this with the imposition of an economic embargo (Ambrosio 2009: 137). However, with the major exception of the August 2008 march towards Tbilisi that occurred under Medvedev, there were no coercive and overtly intrusive policies that directly challenged the new regimes by attempting to replace them with pro-Moscow ones. At the same time, Moscow supported pro-Russian candidate Yanukovych in Ukraine. Political and judicial support was also given to the Uzbek government in 2005 during the regime's

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[177] Borjomi Declaration by President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko and President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili in 2005, available
http://www.president.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=226&info_id=4084
[178] On the Orange Revolution see Aslund and McFaul (2006), and Wilson (2005), on the Rose Revolution see Karumidze 2005 and on the Georgian nation see Suny 1994.

suppression of protesters in Andijan, who it initially claimed were part of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (Littlefield 2009: 1476). In 2008 former defence minister Ivanov also threatened that all defence industry links with Ukraine would be cut if the country were to join NATO (Moscow Times 16 June 2008); Moscow also threatened to introduce visa regulations. Yushchenko had made it clear that Ukraine's 'political sovereignty' and 'territorial integrity' would be strengthened by NATO membership, which would in turn 'guarantee stability.' (Itar-Tass Daily 5 April 2008, Itar-Tass Daily 21 March 2008) Ukrainian expression of sovereignty could therefore only go so far - any further step of integration with the West could result in more adverse responses from Moscow.

At the same time, Yanukovych's election in 2010 and his decision to halt Ukraine's full NATO membership bid in order to 'overcome unnecessary tensions with Russia' (20 June 2011 Itar-Tass News Agency) both show the extent to which Ukraine retained some political congruence with Moscow. In August 2009 Medvedev had accused Yushchenko in a harsh address for his 'stubborn determination to join NATO.' He included this grievance side-by-side with others such as 'glorifying Nazi collaborators' and 'imposing on the international community a nationalistic interpretation of the 1932-1933 mass famine in the USSR that presents it as a genocide against the Ukrainian people.' (Current Digest of the Russian Press 17 May 2010) The vacillation between Ukrainian leaders that reflects the stark political divide in the country[179] and the preservation of quasi-authoritarian rule even after the Orange Revolution is also testament to the subtlety, flexibility and ultimate limits of any foreign policy decision made in Kiev that too closely aligns Ukraine with either Russia or the West.

Putin focused on Georgia: a country with organised internal dissent but with a very cohesive animus against Russia (outside of the separatist regions). This section tackles a type of socialisation that has until this point not been studied in this work: internal reconstruction. Internal reconstruction is a type of political socialisation that imposes substantive belief formation and hegemony rather than cultivating shared norms through social interaction (Ikenberry and Kupchan 1990); it is a relatively more

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[179] The eastern and southern parts of the country have been associated closely with Russia, while the western parts of the country look more towards the West. Western Ukraine has an ethnic Ukrainian concentration and were never part of the Russian Empire, only becoming part of the Soviet Union after World War II. This divide is reflected in politics; in 2004, Yushchenko gained most of his support from the north-west (for 2004 election results, visit Central Electoral Commission of Ukraine, available at: http://www.cvk.gov.ua/pls/vp2004/wp0011e). Because of the geographical split, election results have been similarly heterogeneous. For example in the 2006 Supreme Council elections, the pro-Russian Party of the Regions received 32.14% of the vote, whilst the two Western-oriented parties (the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc and the Bloc Our Ukraine) received 36.24% combined (Central Electoral Commission of Ukraine, available at: http://www.cvk.gov.ua/pls/vnd2006/w6p001e).

intrusive way to promote and solidify hegemony. As secessionist groups in Georgia gained strength, Moscow ensured that the sub-national political elite was politically and ideologically well equipped to counter Tbilisi's attempts to reassert territorial integrity. Russian journalist Yulia Latynina called South Ossetia a 'joint venture between KGB generals and a South Ossetian gangster who work with money transferred by Moscow for the fight against Georgia.' (Die Zeit 2008) This may not be a measured description of the leadership in South Ossetia, but it hints at a very important, closely intertwined political partnership between Moscow and the security apparatus and political leadership in secessionist entities on the legal territory of another state. Gradually, especially after 2004, Moscow strengthened its regional presence through the political elite of secessionist areas. Former Russian civilian and military leaders were appointed in key posts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In Abkhazia, this included Sultan Sosnaliev (the de facto Defence Minister of Abkhazia) and Lieutenant General Gennadi Zaytsev (the de facto Chief of the Abkhaz General Staff) (IFFMCG Volume 2: 19, 132-33). However, the sense of political independence from Moscow remained stronger in Abkhazia than in South Ossetia.[180]

We now turn to the case of South Ossetia. Even though South Ossetia is a small area and therefore one cannot generalise much further, it represents a case worth studying. This is because it exemplifies a case where Moscow deviates substantially from the middle of Watson's spectrum. This study does not solely seek to show representations of relatively moderate hegemony; analysing a case that falls on the outer fringes of the spectrum adds to our understanding of Russian regional power.

In South Ossetia, Moscow's presence was stronger than in Abkhazia. It included Anatoly Barankevich, the de facto Defence Minister of South Ossetia between 2004 and 2008 and the Secretary of South Ossetia's Security Council between 2006 and 2008. Barankevich had served in the Soviet Forces, participated in the first and second Chechen wars and was deputy commissar in Chechnya (Illarionov 2009: 81). Russian representatives that previously worked in Russia also staffed the State Security Committee, the State Border Guard and the Presidential Administration. Yuri Ionovich Morozov, the Prime Minister of South Ossetia between 2005 and 2008 was previously the commercial director of the Kursk fuel company in Russia. In January 2005, Russia appointed Anatoly Yarovoy, a Russian citizen who was formerly a Head of the FSB in the Republic of Mordovia, the Chairman of the KGB of South Ossetia. Oleg Chebodarev, appointed Chief of the State Border Guard in South Ossetia since 2005, was also a Russian FSB colonel. Mikhail Mindzaev, appointed Minister of the

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[180] For example, in the 2004/05 'presidential' elections, Russian-backed Raul Khadjimba lost.

Interior in 2005, was a former deputy chief of staff in the Ministry of Interior in North Ossetia and a commander of the Alpha Group's special forces of the Russian FSB.[181]

Many of these individuals went to military academies in Russia that reinforced their pro-Russian outlook. For example, Barankevich graduated from Ussuriysk Suvorov Military College, the Far East Military Command College and the Frunze Military Academy. The most recent South Ossetian Minister of Defence, Yuri Anvarovich (who, before his appointment was a chief of the intelligence department of the staff in the Urals Military District in Russia), graduated from the Minsk Suvorov Military College (Illarionov 2009: 81-2). The Suvorov military boarding schools, many still active in Russia and in other parts of the CIS, begin pro-Russian socialisation for students as young as 14 years-old.[182] They are a remnant of the Soviet Union's obsession during the Great Patriotic War for educating boys in military subjects. Similarly, Vasily Lunev, South Ossetia's Minister of Defence between March and August 2008 graduated from the Frunze Military Academy, the Moscow High Military College and the Military Academy of the General Staff. The Chief of the South Ossetia Presidential Administration since October 2008, Alexander Bolshakov graduated from the Vladimir State Pedagogical Institute (Illarionov 2009: 81-2).

Under the South Ossetian Constitution (Art. 47, Par. 1),[183] appointed officials are accountable to the de facto president of the state. However, with Russian officials (either direct representatives, individuals with Russian citizenship, or South Ossetians that had been socialised in Russian academies and worked in equivalent positions in Russia) in key decision-making positions that essentially give them control over South Ossetia's institutions, Moscow ensured that a pro-Russian 'foreign policy' would prevail. Thus, people in influential positions directly sanctioned and socialised by Moscow acted as instruments of Russian policy working from the inside. In 2005, Dmitry Medoyev, the South Ossetian president's authorised representative in Moscow, stated in response to allegations that president Kokoity (also a Russian citizen) continued to employ Anatoly Sysoyev (a colonel in the Russian Defence Ministry's Chief Intelligence Administration whom Tbilisi thought had masterminded acts of terrorism): '...why would we need military advisers from Russia when our Minister of Defence, Anatoly Barankevich, is Russian and the head of the State Security Committee is from Russia?' (Kommersant 25 July 2005)

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[181] See Illarionov 2009: 81-82 for extensive list.
[182] The Suvorov military schools are particularly interesting places. Named after Alexander Suvorov, an 18th century general, they act as a feeder into the broader military academies for grown men. To learn more, see http://www.svu.ru/ (accessed 1 March 2010).
[183] The text to the South Ossetian Constitution can be found at http://cominf.org/node/1127818105, accessed 15 March 2010.

Russian influence from within the separatist regions has meant that Tbilisi's attempts to impose full central authority over these regions will remain disputed. Russian influence also means that South Ossetia's own struggle for independence (or outright statehood) will remain contested – a gradual process at best – that perpetuates Russian involvement. If we recall the aforementioned 2001 law passed in Russia on accepting parts of other countries into the Russian Federation (and that politicians were clear about having Georgia's secessionist regions in mind), appointing status quo pro-Russian actors shows signs of relatively hierarchic tendencies. In relations to Watson's spectrum, we see aspects of suzerainty and dominion. Russia intervenes directly into the affairs of the two separatist regions, and the separatist regions consent to the arrangement. Georgian acts of dissent represented a clear rejection of Russian-centred hierarchy.

Moscow's strategic use of dual citizenship and 'passportisation'

In Moscow after the fall of the Soviet Union, there was an acute awareness of the incongruity between Russia's territorial borders and the domain of Russian culture. Early on, this discrepancy was met by Moscow with a policy of dual citizenship.[184] The rationale was a political one: that granting dual citizenship would serve as the backbone to other policies aimed at 'protecting Russians abroad.' (Zevelev 2001: 133 - 134) Granting Russian citizenship - in the form of mass-conferral of Russian nationality (i.e. large-scale collective naturalisation) to people with historic ties with Russia - would therefore be a way by which Moscow could extend its hegemony and control over populations. Importantly, it would also enable Moscow to protect the rights of Russians abroad. Russia's passportisation policy represents a policy with socio-psychological undertones.

The bold 'solution' to the perceived regional diaspora problem was first proposed in 1993 (Zevelev 2001: 134). Moscow made the assertive policy choice to issue Russian passports to all 'ethnic Russians' now living outside of Russian borders - though the category is by no means easy to determine - as well as to non-ethnic Russians who had historical connections (family or individual) to Russia - again, a very fungible category. The issue of dual citizenship during Yeltsin's time was relatively uncontentious from the viewpoint of international law (Ginsburgs 1998: 147-250), as many other countries engaged in similar practices. Although pushed by Yeltsin,

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[184] For a discussion of the basic legal basis of granting nationality, see IFFMCG (2009: 149-150). Continue to p.183 for a comprehensive analysis of related legal issues.

Kozyrev and Mikitaev,[185] plans for dual citizenship hardly transpired. Only agreements with Turkmenistan in December 1993 (when Yeltsin was famously given a Turkmen passport) and with Tajikistan in September 1995 were concluded; and these can be considered the product of relatively small states buying favours from their powerful neighbour through political acts expressing consent. However, Russian consulates in the newly independent states began to illegally grant automatic Russian citizenship to 'stateless' persons who were unready to take up the passport of their host state even if they had been granted the citizenship of the host state. Russian consulates issued passports to people in the Crimea, the only autonomous republic of Ukraine, in 1994-1995 (Zevelev 2001: 139).[186]

1995 was a decisive year for the issue of dual citizenship and coincided with a shift in Yeltsin's policy. As Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan continued to stand firmly against dual citizenship,[187] Moscow began to favour bilateralism as a policy instrument. The status of Russian citizens in other countries became a higher priority than pushing for dual citizenship. Treaties on the legal status of Russians abroad were signed with Georgia, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan and included provisions for the legal status of other citizens living in Russia. Even these agreements were shaky at best (Zevelev 2008: 49-50). For example, Ashgabat was consistently reluctant to confer Russian nationality on its citizens and unilaterally withdrew from the agreement in 2003 (Itar-Tass Weekly News 25 April 2003).

Recognising the failures of pushing for de jure citizenship, Moscow began to encourage de facto dual citizenship, starting in 1997,[188] that did not require relinquishing the citizenship of the country of residence.[189] Such de facto citizenship gave the new Russian citizens who chose to live outside Russia many of the same fundamental rights as Russians living in Russia (though many people who acquired Russian citizenship in Central Asia and the South Caucasus moved to Russia). This again marked a shift in Russian policy towards acting unilaterally. All of the above claims on people's rights arguably infringed on the sovereignty of other countries with de facto dual citizens living within their territories. Citizenship in the mid-1990s played an important role in the region in solidifying new national identities. New leaders were

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[185] Andrei Kozyrev was foreign minister under Yeltsin. Abdulakh Mikitaev was Chairman of the Presidential Commission on Citizenship.
[186] This was not the case of statelessness in any form. At the same time passports were issued in north-eastern Estonia.
[187] Kuchma in Ukraine refused to enter into talks with Moscow over dual citizenship and dual citizenship was omitted from a comprehensive treaty Russia signed with Belarus and from two signed with Kazakhstan (Zevelev 2001: 137).
[188] Based on legislation from 1993-1995.
[189] This is a key provision that allows for de facto dual citizenship without the consent of the host state (Zevelev 2001: 138).

therefore sceptical of the Russian policy, fearing that it was a further instrument aimed at Russian domination, a sign that Moscow was trying to split loyalties within countries to gain support from their populations regardless of ethnicity or language.

The Yeltsin administration was however unable to conclude agreements with the CIS countries with the most significant ethnic Russian populations: Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan;[190] indeed, the Russian diaspora in Turkmenistan and Tajikistan were among the smallest in the CIS region (Zevelev 2001). Firm political opposition barred agreements with Ukraine and Kazakhstan from being signed in the 1990s. In the case of Belarus, Moscow remained optimistic about deeper reintegration with the country and therefore showed extreme flexibility when dealing with Minsk. Moscow's inability (and reluctance) to get key governments to the table calls into question the rhetoric used surrounding the protection of ethnic Russians abroad; indeed, if it was non-ethnic Russians who were given citizenship and who enjoyed Russian rights, then Moscow could now claim responsibility for non-ethnic populations as well.

Aside from the furore about Turkmenistan's withdrawal from the dual citizenship regime when it was reported that Moscow would declare 'cold war' on Turkmenistan (Itar-Tass Weekly News 25 April 2003, Itar-Tass Weekly News 9 June 2003, Nezavisimaya Gazeta 21 June 2003), the issue of dual citizenship was all but forgotten until 2004. Before the Orange Revolution, the relatively pro-Russian Kuchma and Yanukovich agreed to draft a citizenship agreement with Moscow. Reflecting the delicate balancing act Kiev tried to play even after the revolution, Yushchenko declared he would continue to discuss dual citizenship and was prepared to change his mind if benefits were shown to derive from this (Itar-Tass Weekly News 22 December 2004b, Itar-Tass Weekly News 12 November 2004). Other CIS countries continued to prohibit dual citizenship. In 2006, the Kyrgyz parliament's new constitution lifted the prohibition on dual citizenship and Moldova and Armenia took similar steps (in 2002 and 2007 respectively), though not without opposition and later backtracking (Itar-Tass Weekly 11 December 2002, Itar-Tass Daily 13 December 2007). Moldova officially banned holders of dual citizenship access to government positions (Itar-Tass Daily 4 May 2007). Such moves exemplify how, during Putin's presidencies, advances continued to be made mainly in countries with relatively insignificant numbers of ethnic Russians[191] rather than in those with large diaspora communities. At the same time, the Russian government refused to envisage dual citizenship for its own population; in 2006 Putin

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[190] The difficulties with the three key countries persisted throughout Putin's presidency.
[191] Ethnic Russians do make up quite a large proportion of the population in Kyrgyzstan.

stated at a news conference: 'Citizens of other countries who want to link their fate with Russia must ditch the citizenship they have.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 31 January 2006)

We now turn again to the cases of the secessionist regions in Georgia. Again, these areas are studied because they represent another dimension of Russian regional power in terms of the Watson spectrum. Abkhazia and South Ossetia - like Crimea where Russian passports were distributed under Yeltsin - were areas of acute Russian interest. They demonstrate how Russia used an assertive policy 'passportisation' to naturalise non-ethnic Russian communities no longer within the Russian Federation. The Independent Fact Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia (IFFMCG 2009) explains that Moscow capitalised on the anti-Georgian sentiments of non-Georgian populations in order to justify any future Russian action against Georgian aggression (or what Moscow could seek to present as aggression). Mass conferral of Russian citizenship began in 2002 when a new Law on Citizenship was passed that made it easier to obtain Russian citizenship by broadening the categories of acceptable individuals and that explicitly prohibited dual citizenship.[192] By September 2002, President Kokoity of South Ossetia welcomed Russian troops, stating that 'out of 70,000 [people in South Ossetia], over 60% have Russian citizenship, and the rest are trying to obtain it.' (Vremya Novostei 16 September 2002) As a Russian citizen himself, he vowed to improve South Ossetia's relationship with Moscow, advocating an 'associate membership with Russia and equal, treaty-based relations with Georgia.' (Kommersant 8 December 2001) According to the official answers given to the Fact Finding Mission by Abkhaz authorities, virtually all the inhabitants of Abkhazia were Russian citizens by 2009 (IFFMCG 2009: 133).

South Ossetians and Abkhaz had the same claims on health insurance and pensions as Russians living inside Russia once having acquired Russian citizenship. They could also benefit from the EU Visa facilitation programme with Russia, potentially making it easier for them to travel abroad. Additionally, once they became Russian citizens, South Ossetians and Abkhaz also had the right to actively participate in the management of the state and also received the right to vote in Russian elections. The choice of leadership in Moscow directly affected policy towards Tbilisi. The right to vote was, for example, particularly symbolically important for South Ossetians in the

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[192] All amendments to Russia's citizenship law after 1991 progressively made it easier for individuals to get Russian citizenship. Clause 4 in Article 14 of the new 2002 Russian Law on Citizenship (and its amendments a year later) states that foreigners and stateless persons who were former citizens of the USSR receive nationality under a 'simplified procedure' (i.e. they do not have to have lived in Russia for five years, they do not have to have 'sufficient' means for living and they do not have to take a Russian language test to prove they are proficient in Russian). (IFFMCG 2009: 165) It also stipulates in Article 13 Clause 1 that a person with a Russian passport should renounce citizenship of another country unless they already have dual citizenship (i.e. it is not retroactive) (Zevelev 2008: 51).

March 2008 presidential elections that were rather salient for the development of Russian-Georgian relations (although there was no effect on the elections as such because of the small number of South Ossetians). The Abkhaz have also participated widely in Russian presidential as well as parliamentary elections. In this way, acquiring Russian citizenship served to distance the secessionist territories from Tbilisi and to legitimise Russian actions in the name of citizen interests abroad. It is telling that President Medvedev invoked such sentiments in his response to Georgian bombardment of Tskhinvali:

> '... It is my duty to protect the lives and dignity of Russian citizens wherever they may be. It is these circumstances that dictate the steps that we will take now. We will not allow the deaths of our fellow citizens to go unpunished...' (Medvedev 2008)

The Putin administration's passport policy was condemned as illegal on multiple fronts,[193] and Tbilisi denounced the project as a violation to Georgian territorial integrity in 2003. The IFFMCG concludes that conferral of nationality on such a scale was 'apt to deprive Georgia of its jurisdiction over persons' and infringed on Georgian territorial sovereignty (2009: 172-3).[194] The policy directly interfered in Georgia's internal affairs. Moscow, as expressed by an official's comments to Itar-Tass, reacted by holding that 'all citizens of the former USSR have the right to receive Russian citizenship.' (Itar-Tass Weekly 27 January 2005) Here, hegemonic ambitions start to become imperial ones. However, the difference between Moscow's action and an imperial power constellation is worth noting: in the post-Soviet region, Moscow's policies were so heavily contested by Tbilisi that Russia was forced into a struggle with Georgia backed by much of the West (at the very least rhetorically). Thus, Tbilisi swung the pendulum back towards anarchy by acting as an active dissident to Russian hegemony. This push-pull dynamic was most prevalent in hard power actions; in this case, Tbilisi's 2008 military measures in South Ossetia.

The existence of a country with certain regions that border Russia that are full of Russian citizens could be used as a basis (rather than a mere pretext or excuse) for military intervention (Littlefield 2009). According to Russia, the official main precondition to any normalisation of the relationship between Moscow and Tbilisi was based on the recognition that Moscow had a favoured status in the country; this favoured status stemmed from the large number of Russian citizens living in the

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[193] See IFFMCG chapter (p.147 - 183) for full legal analysis.
[194] Another legal issue: the principle of 'good neighbourliness' found in the UN Charter that requires states to refrain from causing harm to other states was also violated.

region.[195] In 2007 Moscow allocated 100 million rubles to South Ossetia and paid out 590 million rubles in pensions in Abkhazia, justifying its actions by reference to the overwhelming number of Russian citizens (IFFMCG 2009: 19). Moscow City, through the action of its major Yuri Luzhkov, also directed funds to South Ossetia as well as Sevastopol. According to the official Georgian answers provided to the IFFMCG, the 2008 Georgia-Russia conflict provoked passportisation on an even more massive scale. Again, perceived antagonism from Tbilisi and the protection of Russians abroad was used as the pretext for the Russian response. There was sufficient demand for anti-Tbilisi actions in South Ossetia to allow for Russian passportisation to continue.

The promotion of the Russian culture and language

> 'Nationality does not fly away with the first fire in the new home. So long as I can ensure that [my daughter] does not lose her Russian language, she will always be able to discover in it the essence of her Russianness.' (Miranda Ingram, Russian émigré writing for the Moscow Times, 14 November 1997)

Promoting the Russian language is another way by which Moscow can affect the context in which political elites operate and their decisions are made. Examining Moscow's attempts in this field reveals the strategic importance Moscow places on keeping close cultural ties with countries that have ethnic Russian communities or historical ties to Russia. The actions that post-Soviet Moscow took in promoting the Russian culture were relatively soft tools compared to the policies of citizenship/passportisation and direct political intervention discussed above. Nonetheless, the attempts related to the promulgation of culture and the Russian language were also aimed at promoting Russian leadership over Russians abroad, and ultimately, Russian leadership in the CIS region.[196]

In his opening address to the Russian Academy of Science (RAS) in 2007, Yuri S. Osipov, president of the Academy, stated: 'The Russian language is our key cultural asset, which embodies the nation's view of the world. Its history reflects the whole history of national culture.' (Osipov 2008) Based on Osipov's premise, Moscow saw Russian speakers as a continuation of cultural ties that existed during the Soviet era - as bridges between Russia and the newly independent states. Yeltsin's softer tactics did little to attract the CIS region to Russia and disaggregation continued throughout the CIS in the 1990s. Perhaps this is one starting point for thinking about why Putin

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[195] The other preconditions for normalisation were based on Georgia's renunciation of its partiality towards the US and NATO as well as Georgia's support of Russian military efforts against Chechnya in Georgian territory (Independent Fact Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia 2009 Volume 2: 8).
[196] See Rose (2005) for a discussion on the use of language as soft power.

intensified efforts in the socialisation sphere: Moscow's perception of itself went from regional cultural goliath to regional cultural weakling.

In the 1990s, Russia's perception of itself was still as the regional core. In a speech to the Sixth Congress of People's Deputies only four months after the Belavezha Accords,[197] Yeltsin declared: 'Twenty-five million of our compatriots in these countries must not and will not be forgotten by Russia.' (Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 1 January 1994) Under Yeltsin, *Basic Directions of the Russian Federation's State Policy Toward Compatriots[198] Living Abroad* was adopted, further asserting the case for the protection of Russians now outside direct Russian jurisdiction. By framing the Russian diaspora in the language of fraternity, Moscow could foster a sympathetic view towards Russia through the power of attraction. From the perspective of the Yeltsin administration, the time was ideal for the use of such rhetoric, as Yeltsin had overcome the standoff with the Duma and was therefore less preoccupied with internal Moscow politics; discourses concerning protecting compatriots could help to psychologically ease the transition from a centralised Soviet system. More radical visions of unity were also a characteristic of the political scene in Moscow during Yeltsin's time. Starting in 1993/1994, the Duma discussed several bills with undertones of reunification. These included *On the Ethnic and Cultural Development of the Russian People*; *On the Right of the Russian People to Self-Determination and Sovereignty in the Entire Territory of Russia and to Reunification in a Single State*; and *On the Russian People*; however, none of these bills were passed (Zevelev 2008: 54).

In relation to language, there was no concession from Moscow to teaching in other languages in Russian schools; for example, there remain no Ukrainian language schools in Russia. Other CIS countries began to express their sovereignty at the expense of the Russian language. Fierman (2009) provides a comprehensive discussion of the developments that occurred in the 1990s in Central Asia related to language. 13,000 Russian schools were closed in the post-Soviet region due to affirmative action-type policies in favour of languages that were subject to discrimination in the Soviet Union. Central Asian countries with large Turkic communities also began to stray away from Russian in the early 1990s. Turkmenistan under Niyazov was among the harshest opponents of the Russian language: Russian ceased being obligatory at school, almost all non-Turkmen schools were closed or

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[197] The Belavezha Accords ended the Soviet Union on 8 December 1991.
[198] 'Compatriots' are defined by Article 1 of the Law on Compatriots Abroad adopted in 1999 as 'citizens of the Russian Federation living abroad; individuals that used to have Soviet citizenship; individuals who emigrated from the Soviet Union or the Russian Federation; and descendants of compatriots 'with the exception of descendants of individuals representing titular nations of foreign countries.'' (Zevelev 2008: 52)

made mixed, Russian print media and television broadcasts were severely limited and all non-Turkmen speaking communities were marginalised. In 1992, the capital city went from being spelled and pronounced 'Ashkhabad' to 'Ashgabat' in order to '[preserve] their Turkmenian transcription.' (Izvestia 5 May 1992) The president announced that the Latin alphabet would replace Cyrillic in 1993.[199]

Ukraine showed similar dissent. In 1995, Kiev decided to cut back access to the transmission of Russia's Channel 1 from 92% to 70%, totalling to a loss of around 25 million audience members (Moskovskiye Novosti 6-13 August 1995). Officially, the argument was an economic one: state-run firm Ostankino owed Ukraine 14.9 billion rubles. However, noting that Ukraine owned Russia 6 trillion rubles and that both Belarus and Kazakhstan were faced with similar problems but did not cut transmission (Moskovskiye Novosti 6-13 August 1995), other motives can be explored. This may have been a case where commercial motives and political motives converged. As Russian shows were popular amongst television viewers, accusations were made that the cuts were government 'attacks' on Russian-speaking Ukrainians and mass protests in Crimea, the Donets Basin and Kiev ensued (Kommersant Daily 12 August 1995). In 1998, even the Crimean Constitution gave in to Kiev and established Ukrainian as the autonomous entity's state language, demoting Russian to a less-important 'language of everyday communication.' (Kommersant 23 October 1998)

Uzbekistan also cut Russian Public Television's broadcasting in Tashkent from 6 to 3 hours, and Channel 1's broadcasting range was cut in Azerbaijan from covering 98% to 70% of the country (Moskovskiye Novosti 6-13 August 1995). Again, Russian shows from all of these channels were proven to be highly popular in other CIS states; the decision to cut their air time was made at the regime level, without considering viewer tastes. Contrastingly, in the 1997 conference in Astana (then Akmola) of Lad Slav,[200] the 14 representatives of Kazakh cities agreed unanimously that their 'historic motherland - Russia - must not forget the need to preserve the Russian language and culture in the CIS countries, and protect rights and freedoms of compatriots.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 1997) Thus, Uzbekistan balanced linguistic sovereignty with pro-Russian tendencies and felt arguably more threatened by the Tajik language, particularly in the strategically important areas of Bukhara and Samarkand. In 1993, Uzbekistan announced that Latin script would replace Cyrillic (although this never materialised). Before the shift to Latin, switching to the Arabic alphabet was also debated. This

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[199] Progress in transitioning to the Latin alphabet was relatively slow until 1999 when a resolution was adopted stating that Turkmen would be written in Latin letters.
[200] Lad Slav was a public organisation on political and cultural issues that represented the interests of the almost six million strong Slav diaspora in Kazakhstan.

change would have represented stronger ties to Islam and to Uzbekistan's southern neighbours (Fierman 2009: 1219).

Even Kazakhstan began to emphasise the titular language over Russian (though not nearly as severely as Turkmenistan). The political leadership in Astana was decisively pro-Russian and only about a third of the population was literate in Kazakh compared to 90% that was literate in Russian after the fall of the Soviet Union (Fierman 2009: 1218). However, Kazakhstan began to experience an emigration problem in the 1990s: between 1992 and 1998 alone, over 1.3 million ethnic Russians[201] emigrated from Kazakhstan, citing language as the main push factor (Kommersant Daily 7 July 1998). Kazakhs filled 83% of leadership positions by 1998 (though they only made up 44.5% of the population), the number of Russian publications continued to diminish, and only 10% of radio airtime was reserved for Russian language broadcasters (Kommersant Daily 7 July 1998). Noting these issues, Kazakhstan was the first country in the region to grant the Russian language state status at the constitutional level. In mid-1998, Nazarbayev expressed his commitment to the Russian language:

> 'Instruction in Russian is provided at 70% of universities and colleges and at 60% of secondary schools. More than half the newspapers and magazines and electronic media programs are in Russian. 30% of our government members are Russian. Suffice to mention that the vice premier in charge of economic matters is Alexander Pavlov; the general prosecutor is Yuri Khitrin; the science minister is Vladimir Shkolnik, who is also president of the Academy of Sciences; and the minister of labour and social security is Natalya Korzhova [all Russian names]. I think that no comment is needed here.' (Moscow News 16 July 1998)

Aside from a few exceptions, Yeltsin's cultural efforts described above were not efficient in their promulgation of the Russian culture and language across the region. Coupled with the aggressive methods by which culture was promulgated during the Soviet period, dissent by non-Russian CIS states can be seen as efforts to reverse the aftertaste of Russification. The Russian language was a powerful symbol of 'Soviet internationalism'[202] that stood firmly against nationalisms and sovereignty. Yeltsin's policies were insufficient to counteract embedded historical grievances. At the same time, Russian ideological power during the 1990s was not a priority compared to military means. Russia continued to view itself as a cultural, political and military heavyweight. Perhaps Moscow was overly optimistic about its cultural relevance in the

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[201] More precisely 1,340,000, though by 1998 34.8% of the population remained Russian (Kommersant Daily 7 July 1998).
[202] See Fierman (2009: 1217) for related discussion.

post-Soviet region in the 1990s, so it invested relatively little in socialisation. This changed under Putin.

As Yeltsin's ambitious projects did not materialise, Putin took on a more pragmatic but energetic attitude. Moscow, especially after 2001, recognised culture as a main way to gain influence in the region. Russia sees the region as being one of fraternity, filled with Russians and tied together by a common ancestry all tied to Russia - an historical and ethnic/national commonality that can be used as justification for action. Actively promoting dual citizenship/passportisation as well as the Russian language and Russian culture is accepted as behaviour that fits with the region's 'unique' history. Rhetoric that called on shared cultural history often evoked a nostalgic remembrance of Russia as a civilisational core, one that was at the centre of stability and security. In reviewing the programmes adopted by the Putin administration in 2006, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs asserted:

> 'A special role in Russia's foreign policy strategy belongs to our cultural/civilisational resource. Historically the role and prestige of the Russian state in the world were determined not only by its political weight and economic strength, but also by the cultural heritage of the peoples of the Russian Federation and their spiritual and intellectual potential.' (A Survey of the Russian Federation's Foreign Policy 2007)

Putin made his wife the head of the Russian Centre of the Development of the Russian Language in 2001. One million books, computer software and other learning materials were provided to Russian schools in the CIS a year later. 925 scholarships were also reserved for students in the CIS to take up higher education study in Russia (Kuzio 2004). Slavic universities were opened in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (Tsygankov 2006: 1083). Providing students with such opportunities was a way by which Moscow could use its power of attraction to paint a positive picture of Russia as a regional leader.[203] Georgia's Rose Revolution severely damaged Russia's image in the CIS and shifted Moscow's perception of itself in relation to the West and its apparently effective soft power. This lead to heightened Russian awareness of the importance of cultural power. However, primary dissenter states continued to push the region towards diversification. Already in 2000 before the Rose and Orange Revolutions, Ivan Drach, the main ideologist of Ukraine's language policy and the chairman of the Ukrainian State Committee for Information, Television and Radio stated: 'Language is a [way] to consolidate our grip on our history. The war for the language is a war for our right to strengthen our base.' (Moscow Times 26 August

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[203] There was also an emerging state project of presenting a skewed version of Russian history that left out past abuses. The Ukrainian reaction to this project is another area that could be examined to show Kiev's dissent.

2000) In July 2000, a quota was introduced to restrict the number of foreign language schools in Ukraine, as it was noted that only 40% of Ukrainians used their titular language on a daily basis (Moscow Times 26 August 2000).

Underlying the actions taken under Putin was the following rationale, an implicit link between foreign policy and the use of culture as a force of attraction that was reiterated repeatedly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

> 'Culture must be an efficient tool for ensuring the foreign policy and economic interests of our country and shaping its positive image in the world... Considering the increasing role of the cultural, scientific, educational and sporting aspects of international cooperation, it is necessary to more vigorously assimilate the world space in this field... [Therefore] a top priority is to restore and develop our informational and cultural presence abroad. It is about accelerating the opening of new cultural centres, primarily in CIS countries; and based on existing representations of *Roszarubezhtsentr* (an organisation involved with the promotion of the Russian language and culture abroad), organising regional Russian centres for science and culture (RCSCs) ensuring work in adjacent countries.'
> (Survey of the Russian Federation's Foreign Policy 2007)

In late 2003, Russian Foreign Ministry's Eleonora Mitrofanova declared that Moscow aimed to obtain official status for the Russian language throughout the CIS (Kuzio 2004). However serious this goal was, it backfired. Cultural revolutions spread and Russian remained an official language in only three countries: Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan; and in Moldova, Ukraine and Tajikistan Russian has the special status of 'language of inter-ethnic communication.'[204] In 2004, Moscow spent 210 million rubles assisting Russian speakers in the CIS (mainly in Ukraine and Kazakhstan), and increased the spending by over 40 million the next year (Kuzio 2004). These monetary incentives were backed by the felt economic advantage, in terms of increased employment opportunities, that speaking Russian bestowed. This alone was a strong lever for Moscow in influencing language behaviour, and in turn policy. Yet Yushchenko held that the only way to make Russian an official second language would be by changing the constitution, making it 'unrealistic.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 22 March 2006) 'The Ukrainian language is an attribute of the Ukrainian nation. Its loss will mean the loss of the nation,' Yushchenko said as he declared that Ukrainian would remain the sole state language (Itar-Tass Weekly News 27 August 2006). After the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, Putin reiterated his view on what bound together the CIS: 'Russia, traditionally linked with the former Soviet Republics, and now newly independent states, by history, the Russian language and great culture, cannot stay away from the common striving of freedom.' (Putin 2005)

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[204] Tajikistan renounced this in 2009.

Putin's heightened attempts (that were of course combined with economic and political means discussed in previous chapters) were met favourably in some countries. In Uzbekistan, for example, the formal shift from Cyrillic to Latin letters was pushed back in 2002 to 2010 (and still has not occurred). Most newspapers as well as books continued to be published in Cyrillic (Fierman 2009: 1219). Reflecting the rapprochement between Moscow and Tashkent that began when Putin took office, the countries made a joint statement that affirmed 'the importance of creating the conditions for the study of the Russian language in the Republic of Uzbekistan and of the Uzbek language in the Russian Federation.' (Joint statement by the president of the Russian Federation and the president of the Republic of Uzbekistan 3-5 May 2001)[205]

In 2006, the *Programme of Work with Compatriots Abroad for 2006-2008*, the *Russian Language Federal Target Programme (2006-2010)*, and the *State Programme for Assistance to the Voluntary Resettlement of Compatriots Living Abroad to the Russian Federation* were all adopted. The *World Congress of Compatriots*, in late 2006 in St. Petersburg, sought to further cooperation with compatriots by encouraging the consolidation of organisations representing them and strengthening the positions of the Russian diaspora abroad (Survey of the Russian Federation's Foreign Policy 2007). In 2006, Nazarbayev emphasised that 26% of the Kazakh population were ethnic Russians and noted that Russian is taught in all schools and most electronic and print media are in Russian. To this, he added: 'we do it not for the sake of politics, not to say nice words to you, but it is a vital necessity for our people and great wealth for our country.' (Itar-Tass Weekly News 5 April 2006). At the same time, the Kazakh political elite progressively eased ethnic Russians out of high positions in politics, administration and business and in late 2006 it was announced that there would be a 'gradual shift' from Cyrillic to Latin letters (Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press 29 November 2006). Yet by 2007, Nazarbayev announced that Russian would be used equally with Kazakh in all state bodies and bodies of self-government (ITAR-TASS Daily, 20 August 2007). Kazakhstan's mixed reactions underline the task for CIS states of balancing nationalism, the search for national identity and sovereignty with their interest to remain Russian partners. The case of Kazakhstan also raises questions about how effective ultimately Russian language promotion policies were and what real influence they had in the CIS. Indeed, Nazarbayev has always been good at saying different things to different audiences; the active diminishing influence of the Russian language in Kazakhstan may therefore be more decisive in this case.

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[205] Joint statement available at:
http://www.ln.mid.ru/Bl.nsf/arh/6EF0EDF70ACC63AF43256A46003AFF77?OpenDocument.

2007 was an important year for the promotion of Russianness. In June, Putin founded the Russkiy Mir foundation[206] (literally meaning 'Russian world') with the purpose to 'support the Russian language, Russian culture, and organisations that represent the Russian world.' (Russkiy Mir website) The foundation quickly became a main conduit of Russian culture and a clear symbol of Moscow abroad, with several Russian centres across the post-Soviet region and abroad. These centres act as cultural projects to popularise Russian culture and manage funding (grants and financial as well as technical support) for programmes abroad that advance Russian history, language and culture. At the end of 2007, an Internet portal for compatriots[207] was created. Russian theatres, centres for culture and science, universities - including quotas and scholarships therein - continued to be a significant addition to Russia's regional foreign policy. Putin encouraged such cultural exchanges well into the last months of his presidency. In 2007, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reiterated that the preservation of the Russian language was a major source for protecting the interests of compatriots abroad (Survey of the Russian Federation's Foreign Policy 2007). Nothing spelled this view out more clearly than making 2007 the 'Year of the Russian Language.' According to a Gallup poll measuring the effects of this move on attitudes towards the Russian language, there was a marked positive influence on attitudes in Georgia, Moldova and Armenia (Gallup 2008).[208] In early 2008, Russian Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov signed a decree on the opening of Russian centres of science and culture in Armenia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Uzbekistan and Ukraine, as well as a Russian information and cultural centre in Azerbaijan (Turkish Weekly 2008).[209] Such efforts and rhetoric of compatriots abroad played a large role in the Russia-Georgia conflict. During the conflict, Die Zeit speculated that the Brezhnev Doctrine 'once socialist, always socialist' that justified Soviet entry into Prague forty years ago had been brought back to life by the Putin Doctrine 'once Russian, always Russian' to

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[206] The organization can be compared to the French Alliance Française and the Spanish Instituto Cervantes. Russkiy Mir (in Cyrillic Русский Мир, previously spelled Русскый Мip). Ivan Ognev, director of the Department for Regional Cooperation at the Centre for Strategic research in Moscow, explains that the old spelling under the old religious script was particularly denoting of a mental unity rather than a purely geographical or territorial one (Ognev 2009). The importance of diaspora pockets and the passportisation of non-ethnic Russians suggests that a useful way with which to view the area may be through a cultural/social lens rather than a territorial one. The fluid and malleable (preferably, in the eyes of Moscow, ever-growing) Russian mental space that exists because of shared historical and cultural ties is reflected in the use of the term as well as the cultural institution. The Russkiy Mir foundation's definition of Mir (world) reflects the broader concept: 'The Russian world is much larger than the territorial boundaries of Russia. It encompasses people who love Russia, Russian culture and Russian history.' (Russkiy Mir website)
[207] Said portal can be accessed at www.ruvek.ru
[208] In Georgia in 2007, 64% of respondents said it is 'very important' for Georgian children to learn Russian, compared with 43% in 2006. In Moldova, the percentage of respondents saying it is very important rose from 27% to 39%. The percentage in Armenia saying it is very important rose from 73% to 75% (Gallup 2008).
[209] Tsygankov (2006) also speaks of the changing nature of the Russian language from one that represented imperial domination to a lingua franca in reference to a presentation given at the Kennan Institute on 27 September 2004 by F. Hill entitled 'Eurasia on the move.' The Foreign Policy and Diplomatic Activities of the Russian Federation in 2008 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides a more recent view on how Russia reinforced its efforts at socialisation (113 - 121).

justify intervention (Die Zeit 2008). Moscow's intensification of cultural efforts after the colour revolutions reflects the view that decisive changes had occurred in the political landscape of the region that in many ways pushed to the side feelings of Russian fraternity. Russia's regional position shifted abruptly as some CIS countries' actions drifted increasingly further away from Russian preferences.

Chapter conclusions

The attractiveness of Russian citizenship, the Russian language and political culture may suggest that Russians as well as many non-ethnic Russians in the post-Soviet region continued to find value in the past and were able to reflect on their shared histories with nostalgic recollection. Looking backwards at historical occurrences, post-Soviet leaders constructed their own links and path dependencies, justifying actions that upheld status quo practices.

At the same time, it is perhaps partly because of the tendency to call on the past that Russian attempts to perpetuate hegemony failed in most cases during both Yeltsin's and Putin's times; the similarities in post-Soviet rhetoric coming out of Moscow and the symbolic links that continued to exist to the hard centralising tone that was previously used may have deterred the new independent regimes from accepting Russian-led hierarchy. For example, in Central Asia especially during Yeltsin's time for example, the Russian language remained of acute historical symbolic significance. Post-Soviet CIS leaders made decisions about language and script knowing that keeping the Russian language could encourage Russian leaders to aspire to a sort of continuation or new form of regional (re)unification with Russia at the core of any power and cultural constellation. Domestic, internal considerations, given the multi-ethnic character of their states, took precedence and the Russian language was increasingly rejected. Adopting new cultures and languages represented a challenge to continued power from the Russian core; such demonstration of dissent resonated well with many CIS elites and populations that were trying to distance themselves from Moscow. It is this dissent that increasingly pushed the region towards anarchy.

Russian agency

Yeltsin was at first relatively less concerned with socialising the post-Soviet region than his successor. Perhaps this is a function of the *laissez-faire* mentality or benign neglect[210]in the Kremlin caused by domestic preoccupations and optimism

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[210] See Hunter 2004: 328.

about reintegration. Moscow was optimistic in thinking that the CIS would automatically gravitate towards Russia - the core of the Soviet empire and the heart of the Slavic culture - as a natural cultural leader. Russia's new dynamism and openness would attract the newly independent states into a form of (re)grouping. Though nationalism spread widely even before the breakup of the Soviet Union, leaders remained that were favourable to Moscow. In general the Yeltsin administration started out with the perception that Russia enjoyed tight relationships and an elevated regional status and therefore there existed a favourable regional context for which it was not essential to promote in socialisation measures.

During Yeltsin's presidencies there was a shift to bilateralism in the mid-1990s. 1995 marked an important year for the issue of dual citizenship and saw a shift towards the promulgation of milder cultural programmes rather than bold legal efforts. Russia's move towards more reciprocal and less assertive policies signified a step towards conforming to international norms. Moscow acknowledged that any policy would be better received in the context of a mutual, consensual and particular relationship with individual countries rather than trying to apply a general framework to the region. Both the multilateral and bilateral efforts at dual citizenship stemming from strong dissent can be analysed as socialisation and integration attempts within the boundaries of internationally accepted standards of behaviour, pointing to a relatively hegemonic-anarchic regional constellation. The shift that occurred in early 1997 towards unilateralism and continued into Putin's time reflects a new Russian evaluation of the regional arena and its relationships therein. Ideological power had been unsuccessful and Moscow was losing its grip to increasingly dissenting regimes. Here, Russia focused on a target dissenter, Tbilisi, and began to implement policies without the consent of the weaker state in order to tighten control over the dual citizens living within Georgian territory, albeit outside de facto Georgian control. Though Moscow used increasingly imperial means, growing dissent from Tbilisi signalled a relative loss of legitimacy. At the same time it is difficult to argue that Moscow was increasingly imperial with respect to all CIS states. With Georgia and Ukraine the dynamics were affected by the colour revolutions and remained sporadic. As we saw in previous chapters, Putin took a softer line towards Azerbaijan, and the Russian administration adopted a more even-handed policy over Karabakh. Therefore, Moscow's efforts analysed above were sporadic and uneven, and it is misleading to imply that they were consistent and strategic in their implementation.

The types of programmes and initiatives that were feasible in the region were relatively established by the year 2000. After the regional shakeup of the colour

revolutions, Moscow realised that unilateralism and bold measures were unsustainable. The way that other CIS countries perceived Moscow was almost exclusively based on Russia's effectiveness rather than a nostalgic remembrance of the past; the lack of advantages that were seen to derive from Moscow's actions meant the loss of legitimacy and ideological authority. Though tradition still played a role, relationships were based heavily on reciprocity. Moscow became a piecemeal ideological leader, depending on the context and acting on a case-by-case basis - perhaps reflecting the sporadic, inconsistent implementation of policy. For Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the Putin administration's instruments provided the 'boons of salvation' (Weber 1978: 446-47) by antagonising Tbilisi. In relation to the rest of the CIS region, a struggle for ideational recognition and leadership continued.

After 2002 and especially after 2004-5, Moscow's perception of its regional role in relation to other countries changed. None of its efforts had deterred colour revolutions from occurring. Thus, the Putin administration attempted to gain increasing political leverage in its relations with other states through socialisation-based policies. In March 2005, Putin created a special department in his administration to promote Russia's influence abroad with Modest Kolerov, a well-known political technologist,[211] as its head (Krastev 2005: 1). Paralleling Moscow's decision to stop favouring Minsk so conspicuously out of fear of the succession struggle that could arise,[212] the goal of Moscow's soft power was to ensure that any subsequent uprising (in its hopes, against Viktor Yushchenko in Kiev or against Mikheil Saakashvili in Tbilisi) would be Moscow-coloured. Putin had concluded that the region was not an easy case for geopolitical reintegration through hard power. Instead, as with other types of Russian power, the administration adopted a pragmatic attitude combined with a renewed focus on soft power. In Tsygankov's (2006) description of Putin as a 'stabiliser,' he elaborates the importance that the administration attached to using soft power tools and its reluctance to make strict imperial and overbearing decisions.[213] For example, during and after the key elections in Ukraine, Moscow did not follow an overtly imperialist path and directly threaten sanctions should Kiev choose to be disloyal. At the same time, the threats that were made in the later 2000s against Ukraine's NATO membership show how Moscow would not stand for formal integration with the West.

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[211]A powerful circle of political technologists who sought to engineer political and electoral outcomes, sought to cultivate an infrastructure and intellectual milieu of pro-Russian ideas and institutions that would help Moscow regain influence in its periphery at the political and societal levels (Krastev 2005: 2).
[212] This is also discussed in the context of energy subsidies in the chapter on economics.
[213] Of course, Tsygankov's rather uncritical and even approving description of Putin's interest in soft power was written before Russia's invasion of Georgia in August 2008. This development occurred during Medvedev's presidency and therefore is beyond the time frame of this study. Any further analysis of Russian hegemony past the Putin period would surely see a development towards more intrusive forms of power.

The case of dual citizenship also highlights the importance of soft power. Though some of the CIS states have not acknowledged dual citizenship, there is no denying the power of attraction that disempowered national groups in South Ossetia and Abkhazia felt when presented with Russian incentives. Lavrov reflects on this swing away from invasive regional integration:

> 'In the CIS space in bilateral and diverse multilateral formats we cultivate elements of objective commonality and interdependence – economic, cultural-civilisational and other – between our countries. No more than this, but also no less. Among other things, this must be conveyed to the consciousness of our Western partners that it is futile to try and keep Russia in a regional 'shell.'' (Lavrov 2007)[214]

As disintegration and dissent continued, Moscow was more accepting of its position and relative regional anarchy. One could even claim that Moscow was an adaptive power; it adapted to the changing circumstances in the CIS region. The major exception is Moscow's march towards Tbilisi in August 2008 that could be taken to imply more reliance on hard power.

Other CIS countries' agency

In the case of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, a process of competitive advantage and positive feedback[215] (or consent) is at work that creates and perpetuates a demand for Russian-supported meaning as opposed to Georgian-supported meaning. Tbilisi is Moscow's direct competitor.[216] By supporting the South Ossetian cause, Moscow has created ideological lock-in by further provoking the actions of its direct competitor Tbilisi. Tbilisi, by actively showing dissent towards Russian hegemony, also shows antagonism towards the separatist cause more generally and towards South Ossetia specifically. In doing so, the predictions of the anti-Saakashvili position that Moscow is trying to disseminate are fulfilled: Russian-supported meaning is perceived by South Ossetia as being necessary for solving the struggle against Tbilisi. This *fait accompli* means that the demand for anti-Tbilisi (and thus pro-status quo) discourse and action remains strong, thus encouraging Russian intervention in Georgia. A similar phenomenon was observed in the military chapter: Moscow intervened so heavily in conflicts in Georgia and Tajikistan that any solution would necessitate Russian involvement. Such a push-pull dynamic suggests that Russia's hegemonic power is constantly reinforced through consent and contested through dissent and therefore

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[214] Speech by Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov at the XV Assembly of the Council on Foreign and Defence Policy 17 March 2007, available at http://www.norway.mid.ru/news_fp/news_fp_06_eng.html

[215] The process of competitive advantage and feedback is discussed in Snyder (2006: 321) in the context of Michael Mann's conception of ideological power (see Volume 1 1986).

[216] Though in the context of the entire CIS, Ukraine under Yushchenko was Russia's main competitor.

fluctuates in its intensity. At the same time, though Saakashvili rhetorically associated himself with the West, the continued nationalist and autocratic tendencies in the country and its political arrangements suggest that Saakashvili's political pronouncements against Moscow and in favour of the Euro-Atlantic community can partly be regarded as lip service.[217] Tbilisi's version of democracy has not rid itself of statist influences. Georgian state control over the media and judiciary as well as intolerance of political opposition and suspicious election behaviour have been well documented by NGOs.

At the same time, the porous nature of the new borders of the post-Soviet region, as well as the effects of global information technology, underline the potential for competing socialisation influences. The opening of the CIS region, at the doorstep of Europe, signalled to Western powers that they too had the opportunity to project soft power in a new area - a 'shared neighbourhood'[218] between the EU (representing Western power) and Russia. As regards to political culture, the colour revolutions and the emergence of GUAM signal Western soft power most clearly. During Ukraine's colour revolution, the West was vocal about its support for Yushchenko. The EU's and NATO's offer of various forms of association to attract CIS states during Putin's time further underlines the obstacle that Moscow faces. Once seen as by Russia an 'objective process in the development of post-bipolar Europe,' EU-enlargement is now considered a 'source of new challenges [linked with] rivalry in the post-Soviet space' to which Russia must respond (Arbatova 2006). This is not least because during the 2000s the EU was increasingly concerned with the promotion of good governance and democracy. In this context, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the Strategy for a Partnership with Central Asia, Black Sea Synergy and the more recent Eastern Partnership aimed at establishing a zone of stability also have served to set out a Western normative agenda that signals to other countries: 'be more like us.' (Averre 2009: 1694) The competition between East and West and resulting effects on CIS countries also influence Russia's perception of itself at the systemic level. Mounting Western power has thus also affected the push-pull dynamic that determines different intensities of hegemony.

In terms of active consent, this chapter reminds that during the 1990s, some of the elites in other CIS countries remained loyal to Russia. At the ideological level there was relatively less dissent to some form of regional hierarchy. During Putin's time, the

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[217] Alexander Cooley (2009) also holds that 'Tbilisi proved highly skilled in crafting an image of Georgia as an embattled democracy and in using it for maximum political advantage.'
[218] This is a term of EU bureaucratic discourse that describes the European Neighbourhood Policy. It is used in the context of Russia and the EU by Averre (2009).

sub-national elites of Abkhazia and South Ossetia felt the benefits of Russian ideological power and implicitly consented to the hierarchy perpetuated by Russian policies. Passportisation policies enticed populations and elites alike in these regions, securing Russian support at the expense of Georgian territorial integrity and thus advancing the separatist cause. Russian hegemony also continued to find a favourable reception during Putin's time in Belarus, as seen in the previous chapter, and in parts of Central Asia. During Putin's term, Kazakhstan was particularly keen to balance nationalism with its Russian heritage. Cultural programmes and language policies reflected Nazarbayev's aim to appease ethnic Russians in the country as well as Moscow. By accepting the Russian language as a state language, regimes make a political statement. Policies like passportisation and directly placing personnel in positions of authority in these regions are a very direct way by which to influence elite level legitimacy.

Dissent from Tbilisi in this chapter is in response to Russia's actions regarding the separatist areas. In Georgia, Russia has used socialisation measures and the rhetoric of a shared culture/ethnicity/history as a political measure to further segregate South Ossetia and Abkhazia from Tbilisi. From the point of view of Tbilisi (and for most Western international lawyers), such exercise of control over portions of Georgian territory is a direct violation of Georgian sovereignty. Yet, the principal 'triumph' for Moscow in respect to Georgia would be in successfully advancing an anti-Western campaign. Russia's continued attempt to penetrate the CIS through ideational means therefore had negative implications for the legitimacy of CIS leaders as leaders of independent nations/states. Even conservative Central Asian countries such as Kazakhstan sometimes used a narrative of separate nationhood and distinct cultural identity, as shown with the case of the Russian language.

CIS leaders continued to recognise their vulnerability as representing young states. This meant that they faced potential economic and political consequences if they were to reorient either too closely towards Moscow or too far away from Moscow. Such states had to balance sovereignty with voicing at least partial consent to Russian hegemony. Georgia and Ukraine are both good examples of this observation: until around 2006, Tbilisi did not risk alienating even more the secessionist areas, though compared to before they were more alienated once Saakashvili came into power (and post-2006, Saakashvili's policies were increasingly uncompromising). As seen in the chapter on military power, Tbilisi in the early 2000s also vacillated between diplomatic consent and dissent in order to at least offer the semblance of good will towards Moscow. Ukraine has been more equidistant between the West and Russia,

particularly with the return to power of Yanukovich. However, this balancing act also means that Moscow cannot count on sustainable support in all cases. The constant negotiation of sovereignty and consent works consistently to challenge and bolster Russian hegemony.

On balance: from tight to loose hegemony, with aspects of dominion in South Ossetia

Yeltsin's hard stance on dual citizenship, as well as the sustained pro-Russian governments in many other CIS countries after 1991, ensured a relatively tight hegemonic structure in the region for the first few years of his presidency. Soon however, the other CIS countries began to show reluctance and dissent to dual citizenship regimes, and links to Russia were diminished. Putin's realisation that regional disaggregation was occurring led him to enhance soft power tactics. Emphasis was placed on disseminating Russian culture and language, and more effort was placed on making Russia attractive to citizens abroad, for example by giving them many of the rights enjoyed by Russians living in Russia. However, aside from the usual consenters, there was little success. Countries continued to vacillate, many showing no strong commitment to Russian actions that perpetuated Russia's regional hold. At the same time, particularly important in the case of Ukraine, there was no unequivocal commitment to challenge Russia. This flexibility is consistent with a structure of loose hegemony around Russia, where countries exercise their sovereignty on a pragmatic basis.

The case of South Ossetia is altogether different. It is the one case in this study that shows signs of dominion. In conjunction with the 2001 law on the procedure for accepting foreign areas into the Russian Federation and the 2008 conflict, passportisation policies and the support of pro-Russian actors in leadership positions can all be interpreted as active attempts to formalise a hierarchical relationship with the secessionist area. Here, Russia intervenes directly in the internal decision-making process of another entity, whilst that entity remains separate from Russia and in this case a part of a foreign country. The consent shown to Russian hegemonic actions by the South Ossetian authorities (not surprisingly since they are fully dependent on Russia) means that such an hierarchical relationship is likely to persist.

The study has now evaluated all four dimensions of Russian power. At points, it has been more or less critical about Russian actions, not on the basis of normative claims, but on issues of dissent and infringements of sovereignty. It has also started to delineate certain patterns related to types of power and what types of power were

favoured during Yeltsin's and Putin's times. The regional system around Yeltsin was characterised more by relationships in military networks and Putin increasingly adopted measures of soft power whilst laying the groundwork for a return to military power post-2008. In so doing, the study has also re-addressed the balance in much of the literature about Russia's involvement in the post-Soviet region that mainly concentrates on the military dimension during Yeltsin's time and the economic dimension during Putin's time. This study has addressed two additional areas: the multilateral projects Russia led and the ideational dimensions of different policies, which proved to be significant in Russian efforts to regain control after the 'wake-up call' of the colour revolutions. Putin realised that intrusive military and piecemeal pragmatic economic measures were insufficient to reaffirm Russian influence in the CIS region. In the Russian evaluation, efforts to influence substantive belief formation, instrumentalising multilateral institutions and various means of socialisation were important ways to re-engage with the region.

Several issues remain to be elaborated: how Russia's regional relationships have changed over time, what overall trends can be discerned, and what analytical advances can be offered on the basis of this study's initial theoretical propositions. The concluding chapter turns to the discussion of these issues.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

In the study's chapters on forms of social power this thesis argues that hegemony is best seen as a fluid concept. Based on English School assumptions, hegemony navigates through time and fluctuates with the consent and dissent shown to hierarchy - the process of legitimacy. The empirical evidence thus far also suggests that, like Michael Mann's argument, different moments in history are more acutely focused on different forms of social power. This study has been critical of deterministic as well as overly pessimistic accounts of Russia's past and future, positing that a deeper understanding of the dialectics between hegemonic power and the consent and dissent to that hegemonic power is necessary to understand variation over time. As reflected in the model proposed, dissent and consent to regional hierarchy creates a dialectical opposition between periphery and hegemon. This push-pull relationship between Moscow and CIS sovereignty feeds into a fluctuating system of hegemonies. These proposed changes have thus far provided an entry point for studying the way that Russia's relationships with other countries in the CIS have changed since the end of the Cold War.
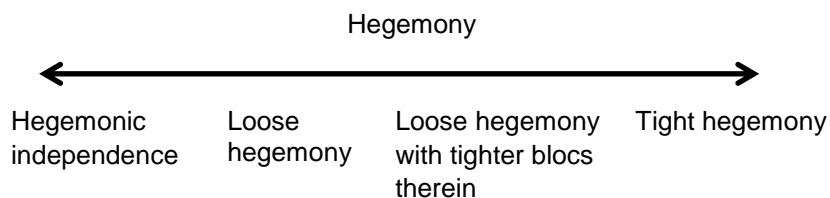
This final stage of the study is meant to complement the chapter conclusions offered at the end of each of the previous sections; it is not meant as a reiteration of what has been stated before. I first present more detailed definitions of the different types of hegemony that have been used to categorise the different forms of relationships studied in the empirical case studies chapters. Examining Russian hegemony from different levels of analysis, these conclusions then provide additional specific empirical conclusions and importantly, advance the theory on which the empirical case studies are based. Admittedly, some of the empirical conclusions are not novel; however, it is their analytical packaging and theoretical implications that make them interesting and relevant.

Types of hegemony and Russian behaviour at different points on the spectrum

Watson's pendulum has been useful in expressing a swing between anarchy and hierarchy. However, this thesis has shown how Watson's types are not nuanced enough to account for the different types of hegemony that can exist. If Watson hones in on hegemony, and all systems fluctuate, then surely there is a case for developing the nuances within the most important category of his spectrum, at least on a case-by-case basis. In the case of the post-Soviet region, this study finds that there are four

basic types of hegemony exhibited at different points in time. They can be plotted on a Watson-like continuum as follows:

Figure 7.1: A spectrum of hegemony

Hegemony

Hegemonic independence | Loose hegemony | Loose hegemony with tighter blocs therein | Tight hegemony

In this figurative spectrum of hegemony there are four basic forms, ordered from most independent to least independent (or least hierarchic to most hierarchic): hegemonic independence, loose hegemony, loose hegemony with a tighter core (which may exhibit suzerain or dominion characteristics), and tight hegemony. For now this section presents a general and brief account of each type of hegemony; the conclusions that follow give specific examples that serve to elaborate. Each type of hegemony can be used to describe multilateral relations, bilateral relations, as well as relations based on power logic.

In a system characterised by hegemonic independence, Russia is not the dominant active regional leader. Though Russian agency as well as capability and intent do play a role as seen throughout the chapters, the active dissent of other CIS countries to Russian hegemony creates a distinct counter dynamic to Russian-led hierarchy. Other CIS countries are able to and do exercise their sovereignty in ways that serve to further circumvent Russia's claim to regional hegemony. Dialogue on what type of system is legitimate is widespread; the negotiation of sovereignty is a defining attribute of hegemonic independent systems. Russian agency can also play a role: in the economic/energy realm, Russia's pragmatic turn signals to other countries the end of a Russian-led economic donor mechanism. In turn, other CIS countries turn to competing actors.

Moving further down the spectrum there is loose hegemony. In a loose hegemony, other CIS countries actively dissent to Russian hegemony. Loose hegemony is usually characterised by political assertions and pronouncements of sovereignty that are incompatible with an hierarchic system with Russia on top. Within post-Soviet loose hegemony, there are some indications that a relatively tight hierarchic core is developing. Under this model, some CIS countries remain outside of a close-knit group around Russia. This tight core is willing to accede to Russian-led

hierarchy and in some instances to align themselves with distinctive Russian interests. In some cases, Russian intervention is so intense and coercive that the relationship with select actors is one approaching dominion. Here – in the cases of the two secessionist regions in the territory of Georgia – little dialogue is left regarding hierarchy.

In a tight hegemony scheme, Russia is clearly the dominant player that affects relationships between countries, and in some cases internal decisions as well. Other CIS countries consent to Russian hierarchy on a more sustainable basis. Dialogue regarding hierarchy continues to exist however. Even countries that are part of a tight hegemonic system with Russia show active dissent to Russian hegemony in some respects. Because of this, tight hegemonies tend to occur in particular functional areas and/or with particular countries, rather than on a more general level.

Based on these hegemonic types, we now turn to conclusions about Russian regional hegemony using different tools for classification.

Overall country trends

This study has started to outline regional as well as intra-regional trends. Analysing bilateral trends in the empirical case studies chapters allows for conclusions about the intensity of Russia's relationships with specific countries. The major movements are highlighted below.

Table 7.1: Russia's relations with other CIS countries during Yeltsin's term and during Putin's term, analysed by consent and dissent

	Mostly consenting, translated into very close relations	Sometimes consenting, translated into fairly close relations	Mostly dissenting, translated into relatively distant relations
Russia under Yeltsin and:	Belarus Armenia Kyrgyzstan Kazakhstan Tajikistan	Ukraine Turkmenistan Azerbaijan	Georgia Uzbekistan Moldova
Russia under Putin and:	Belarus Armenia Kyrgyzstan Kazakhstan Tajikistan	Azerbaijan Uzbekistan Moldova Turkmenistan	Georgia Ukraine

The following section analyses country trends rather than groups of countries from most to least consenting (otherwise, for example, Belarus and Armenia would be with

the other Central Asian states). These conclusions are based solely on the functional areas and specific cases studied in this thesis.

Belarus

Belarus has been the greatest consenter to Russian-centred hierarchy since the fall of the Soviet Union. The Russia-Belarus Union is testament to just how far Minsk and Moscow are normative, political and symbolic kin. Minsk is equally as (and at times more so) antagonistic towards the West as well as any external interference in its affairs. Political friendship between the two countries resumed even after Gazprom's energy cut in 1998 when Belarus publicly and forcefully dissented to Russia. Moscow's treatment of Belarus in the 2007 gas conflict and again in 2010 show how Russia is increasingly pragmatic in its use of economic power. Russia realises that its relative high economic and energy power is an important leverage it can use for compliance. Lukashenka's dissenting voice after 2007 exemplifies how Minsk can also play the pragmatic, multivector card. So, more recently, even Belarus has dissented in various respects. Overall, consent usually trumps dissent in this case, and Moscow enjoys very close relations with Minsk despite occasional, more recent public spats. Because the Russian conception of regional hierarchy remains fairly flexible, the relationship remains in the realm of tight hegemony. The Russia-Belarus Union and the potential for Russia to be the clearly dominant power therein, as well as the other regional multilateral organisations of which Belarus is a part, bring in elements of loose suzerainty. This close relationship between Belarus and Russia occurs in the context of a looser regional structure.

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan

The next band of consenters is made up of the Central Asian countries, with which Russia has an increasingly hierarchic hegemonic relationship. These are countries with which Russia has friendly relationships, most notably through the regional organisations in which they are members, with some political differences over time. Kazakhstan leads this group (though not in the recent period), showing consent in the military, politico-economic as well as ideological spheres. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have relatively difficult internal situations and have been at times on the fence, trying to balance potentially deviating expressions of sovereignty with their reliance on Russia. Tajikistan continued to rely on Russian subsidies for economic growth as well as Russian military assistance in the decade after the end of the Tajik war. All three of these countries were drawn into closer cooperation after Taliban developments in 1996

(that coincided with Primakov's more pragmatic strategy) and also after 2001's regional focus on Islamic extremism. As a part of Russian-backed multilateral organisations with political functions, they consent to Russian hegemony at least to some extent. Their relationship with Russia in this context is also tightly hegemonic. When seen from a systemic institutional lens, this aspect of relations has elements of tight hegemony because of the level of symbolic integration and the political function of such organisations. At the same time, it is important not to overstate Russian control over the three Central Asian countries in regional organisations. Kazakhstan, for example, has used its own regional initiatives and multivector policy to create its own space in foreign policy and in some way to balance Russia. This came partially because of increased Kazakh capabilities; Kazakhstan's oil wealth has increased and pipelines have been built to China that bypass Russia. Such increased autonomy suggests that regional hierarchy does not go beyond the hegemonic point.

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan was very close to Russia in the first half of the 1990s, not least because of the political congruence that endured at the regime level. In the second half of the 1990s it shifted to being more Western leaning, and developed its own regional hegemonic ambitions (remember the huge signs of dissent in 1998). In 1996, even though Uzbekistan agreed with the Taliban threat, Tashkent openly denied that Russia was the only country able to provide regional security. After 2004/5, Uzbekistan reoriented back towards Russia and became a more moderate strategic partner. The country's interest in bringing attention to extremism and terrorism has meant increasing cooperation with Russia, and an expressed rhetoric of consent to Russia. Tashkent's leadership in the SCO's counter-terrorism efforts has solidified its place in Central Asia as a status quo power (though it has kept out of Russia-led rapid deployment force arrangements to the present day). Policies began to reflect a slight shift in favour of Russia: in 2002, the move away from Cyrillic letters was postponed. Yet Uzbek-American relations also improved at around the same time, and Uzbekistan agreed to U.S. military access. Thus, the relationship between Russia and Uzbekistan remains complex and relatively anarchic. As a potential sub-regional competitor, Tashkent has enough clout of its own to seek parity-based relations with Moscow.

Armenia and Azerbaijan

Armenia became an increasingly important partner for Russia to maintain influence in the South Caucasus after Moscow lost Georgia as a potential future ally

soon after the fall of the Soviet Union. Yerevan consents to Russian involvement partly because the two states share threat perceptions regarding Turkey, although Russian-Turkish relations greatly improved in the 2000s. The vacillation between friend and foe in the Yeltsin period was quickly transformed into one of relatively consistent cooperation. However, Yerevan does not openly share all interests (normative and material) advanced by Moscow, as shown by its increasing cooperation with Ukraine and the EU after Putin ceased being the main regional economic provider. Moscow has also become more balanced towards the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, becoming more even-handed with Azerbaijan (seeking a close energy relationship with Baku). Azerbaijan's move towards authoritarianism, which inclines it towards a similar political orientation to Russia, aids this process. Russia and these two countries conduct relatively flexible relations. The extent of flexibility and the experienced potential for dissent dictates a fairly loose hegemony.

Moldova and Turkmenistan

In Moldova, Russian strategy was one of managing instability rather than seeking any real political convergence, perhaps because of the country's lack of economic significance for Russia (and Transdniestria's relative economic importance). With a relatively hierarchical mentality in its support of Transdniestria at the expense of Chisinau, it is no wonder that Moldova has been an active dissenter to Russian hegemony. The Communist party's victory in the 2001 parliamentary elections in Moldova improved relations between Chisinau and Moscow, and a treaty was signed in which both sides had to make concessions and Moscow had to publicly agree not to help 'separatists.' However, opposition forces soon balanced any new shows of consent and Moldova increasingly sought a closer relationship with Western actors (hence the slight movement in the above table). Moldova and Russia remain in a relatively loose hegemonic constellation.

Turkmenistan is a comparatively large energy power and, as a consequence, has had a relatively less hierarchic relationship with Russia (as union republics they had an equal trading partnership in the late 1980s – The Turkmen republic was the only one in this position, Syroezhkin 1999: 101). Ashgabat has therefore been relatively 'free' to voice continuous dissent to Russian dominance (even though it can be argued that in varying degrees the two countries have shared an authoritarian outlook). Turkmenistan refused to join the CST in 1992, looked for new importers of commodities in the early 1990s provoking Gazprom's gas shutoff, and controversially withdrew its dual citizenship regime in 2003. At the same time, Ashgabat agreed to help supply and

expand the Gazprom-controlled Pricaspiysky gas pipeline, and in 2008 agreed to expand trade and economic ties with Russia. Turkmenistan is in an independent hegemonic system with Russia. Ashgabat's political congruence or incongruence with Russia in terms of its governance model is a relatively moot point, as Ashgabat can exercise its own sovereign interests to undermine Russian goals.

Ukraine

Ukraine remains Russia's most significant potential ally, as the relationship is central for stability and security in Europe. For example, if another crisis over Crimea broke out or if Ukraine joined NATO without support from Moscow, a new line dividing East and West could emerge. Russia continues to employ tactics towards Ukraine (and Georgia studied below) that do not mirror its behaviour in other areas. For example, rhetoric about Russians abroad as well as other politically-charged claims are used in conjunction with the two dissenters more often than with other CIS countries.[219] However, this study has shown that Moscow's relationship with Kiev is markedly different to its relationship with Tbilisi. Kiev has consistently been careful not to antagonise Moscow too much and developed close relations in Kuchma's second presidential term. Moscow has been similarly cautious in its behaviour towards its western neighbour. The relationship, though precarious, certainly remains in the span of hegemony; this study finds the relationship is located at independent hegemony.

Georgia

Tbilisi has always been the greatest dissenter to Russian hegemony, although as seen in the chapter on military power, there have been some fluctuations. Under Shevardnadze relations were closer to Moscow than under Saakashvili.[220] With relatively low external debt to Russia, Georgia has also felt less economic pressure from Moscow. More recently, the fact it borders energy-rich Azerbaijan has also helped Georgia to escape some of its reliance on Russian gas. Instead, Russia focused on an intense military logic in the 1990s. Russia's military logic was coupled with ideological pressure, including in the 2000s through 'passportisation' policies and by placing Russian-backed officials in high positions in the secessionist areas. The deep rift between Tbilisi and Moscow continues to widen. Georgia is the only country in the CIS that is difficult to firmly place within the scope of Russian hegemony in the terms we

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[219] In the broader post-Soviet region there is the exception of the Baltic States - also countries that showed widespread dissent to Russian-centred hierarchy
[220] In fact, under Saakashvili, one could argue for the addition of a further category in Table 7.1 in which Georgia would fit. This category would label Georgia as the greatest dissenter to Russian-centred hierarchy, often translating into distant and at times hostile relations.

have defined. One could argue that elements of quasi-authoritarianism have remained in Tbilisi and that therefore some form of kinship remains with Russia in terms of governance. However, this is a quasi-authoritarianism that relies on anti-Russian, anti-hegemonic and nationalistic rhetoric to justify its actions and policy positions. This study argues that the only way that Georgia can be seen to remain within the hegemonic reach of Russia is if the two secessionist regions are considered to be part of the state for our analytical purposes. Russia's approach to South Ossetia and Abkhazia in fact exhibit qualities of a dominion; within the Georgia-Russia relationship then, there is also a more imperial aspect. Moscow's relationship with the two secessionist areas (especially with South Ossetia) is so hierarchic that it is located towards the imperial side of the spectrum. The tactics that Moscow employs in Abkhazia and South Ossetia as well as the consent that the two areas show to Russian active involvement shapes a relatively hierarchic structure. This tight relationship between Moscow and the two regions is surrounded by the relatively anarchic relationship between Moscow and Tbilisi. If one considers that Tbilisi has not been in control of the two secessionist regions since 1990, then the relationship between Georgia and Russia can only be classified as being one of independent states whose sovereignty constantly clashes.

Broader reflections based on country analysis

These conclusions on individual countries as well as sub-regional clusters help to highlight more general observations about hegemony. Three underlying theoretically relevant conclusions can thus far be drawn:

1. Having a congruent governance model with Russia does not necessarily imply consent to Russian-led hierarchy.
2. Rather than congruence in governance model, it is the political expression of sovereignty in a way that consents to regional hierarchy that bolsters Russian hegemony. In these cases, relations begin to exhibit more hierarchic characteristics. Countries that are typically politically incongruent with Russia in terms of governance model can also consent to Russian-centred hierarchy.
3. Different types of hegemony can exist within a region (bilateral and/or with a group of countries).

Let us unpack these conclusions briefly. The case of Uzbekistan exemplifies the first contention best. Though Tashkent is congruent in terms of governance model, it has often acted in ways that circumvent Russian hegemony and therefore enjoys a

relatively anarchic relationship with Moscow. The partial exception is Uzbekistan's membership in regional multilateral organisations – although even in those organisations the country is not as vocal a consenter as other members in some cases. Even Kiev and Tbilisi can be used as examples here: the colour revolutions did not completely transform their regime types. So then, congruence in regime models does not determine hierarchy. This is also the case with countries like Kazakhstan, which embraces realist calculations and multivector policies. In the entire energy sphere, congruence in governance model and broader political congruence is secondary. As Moscow uses a commercial, 'business-first' logic towards other CIS countries regardless of their political positioning, other CIS countries also respond pragmatically.

The second contention is related to the first: it is only when countries express consent in ways that enhance Russian hegemony that a more hierarchical relationship can develop. The best examples to back this claim are the countries that are members of regional institutions. Russian-supported organisations are based on agreed political norms, and represent institutional confirmation of Russian hegemony. The CSTO, Russia-Belarus Union and economic organisations of other CIS states with Russia remain Russian-led and perpetuate relative Russian power. Because the SCO is so explicit about the types of principles it espouses, it too serves to legitimise Russian power. Countries that are less politically congruent with Russia such as Ukraine can also show consent on a case-by-case basis when Russian power and regional hierarchy does not infringe on their sovereignty. During the 1990s when Russia was relatively democratic, relatively autocratic Central Asian countries continued to consent to some form of Russian-led hierarchy in some instances.

Lastly, a more general contention: the CIS region varies in its hegemonic relationship to Russia. Through the lens of multilateral organisations, there is a tighter core of Russian partners that consent to Russian-centred hierarchy. If we look at individual countries and sub-state entities, again we see variation. The post-Soviet region is a patchwork of states and groups of states with varying relationships with Russia in terms of hegemony. The unifying elements are: the constant process of legitimacy that revolves around Russia, and the ultimate hegemonic system that emerges (though as we have seen, the type of hegemonic system varies). More broadly then, hegemony can vary within regions in terms of clusters of countries as well as individual countries or sub-state entities.

Fluctuating power logics in the CIS region

The empirical case studies chapters already made conclusions on the types of hegemony exercised. This section turns to Mann's contention that depending on the time period, countries employ different power logics, and these power logics also change in terms of their embeddedness and connections to other power logics.

We know that the Soviet period was dominated and driven by the ideological and military power sectors that were deeply fused. This study shows that during Yeltsin's presidencies (particularly after 1993) Russia employed heavily its military logic, leaving Tajikistan dependent on Russian security policy. In the case of the South Caucasus, regime dissent meant further antagonism and the loss of 'natural' allies in the CIS region. Yeltsin's rather unsuccessful attempts at employing ideological power underline his erratic approach to the CIS. He played the 'Russians abroad' card as a lever in conflicts to pressure regimes into political congruence, but did not follow it up with any ideological power to sustain relationships. Putin realised that not all CIS countries could be counted on as natural consenters. Instead, Moscow began to focus on pragmatic economic, political and ideological power, attempting to merge political logic with all other spheres; this is reflected in the multilateral organisations whose functional goals formally are economic and/or military in nature. Putin's focus on ideological power reflected a realisation that legitimacy and influence were directly tied to consent and legitimacy. The Russia-Georgia conflict in 2008 signals a return to hard military power filled with political rhetoric in the South Caucasus, and possibly indicates that Moscow is more willing to militarily engage in other parts of the CIS region as well.

Noting how the importance of individual power logics has fluctuated for Russia, we can draw more independent conclusions about individual power logics as well as how they have overlapped at different moments in time. The military security sphere was relatively autonomous from the economic sphere under both Yeltsin and Putin. That is, Russia's military involvements had little to do with economic imperatives. Rather, they had broader stated justifications (such as the protection of Russians abroad) and strategic significance (such as maintaining influence in strategically important areas). During Yeltsin's presidencies military logic was the most prominent and significant logic. In all of the other spheres, relatively little was effectively developed. In this sense, Moscow's military logic during Yeltsin's time was also the most influential in the sense that it spurred reaction (consent and dissent) from other CIS countries. The case of Uzbekistan is a good example of this. This study has shown that where common threats and/or threat perceptions exist, then countries are more or

less willing to intensify their relationship with Russia, bringing them politically closer. However, Russia as the main regional military actor (unilaterally or through the CSTO) has proven to be largely unsuccessful, both as a sustainable guarantor of peace (except in freezing conflict formations) and more importantly in fostering an hierarchical system, even under Yeltsin when intentions were high. Therefore, the prominence and significance of military logic has not always translated into effectiveness. Military intervention however, remains a tool with which Russia builds up its regional image and tries to gain relational power. The 2008 conflict with Georgia is a case in point. However, Russian military intervention is so obviously at the expense of CIS state sovereignty and territorial integrity that it encourages CIS state dissent to Russian-led hierarchy.

After recovering from the economic downturn of the late 1990s, economic power was Russia's best bet, its main leverage point, with relatively high capabilities. Yeltsin had relatively high intentions, but his hands were tied by a failing economy. Under Yeltsin, the economic sphere was tied largely to the political one: Moscow's behaviour depended on the political congruence it perceived from its partners. Though Russia's capabilities were high under Putin, Moscow stopped trying to advance political convergence and consent to hierarchy through economic means (this study sees economic multilateral organisations as political rather than economic). Russia's pragmatic use of economic power encouraged further dissent. Russia raised energy prices even for its staunchest political allies, who in turn also expressed dissent. By choosing to step out of its role as sole economic provider for other countries of the CIS, Moscow did not use its relative economic power to incentivise consent to hegemony. In other words, Russia's power of attraction had grown, but Putin did not utilise it in a way that encouraged tighter hegemony. Parity-based relations and self-interested, business-first policies leave room for independent CIS states to express dissent to Russian-centred hierarchy. At the same time, though a commercial dimension exists, supply interruptions of energy rather can act as coercive levers against states that obstruct Russian policy. Russia's pragmatism and *realpolitik* focus, that intensified under Putin, thus does not necessarily exclude a political dimension. In their political contexts, commercially aimed decisions acquire political meaning. Therefore, there is an overlap between the political and ideological spheres.

Russian-led multilateral organisations under Yeltsin and in the initial years under Putin were largely ineffective, in that they had no real outcomes to show for their functional intentions. Yeltsin's attempt to reintegrate the region under the CIS was unsuccessful. Regional institutions covered both military and economic goals, and

under Putin, increasingly these goals were tied to political motivations. During his second term, Putin revived many multilateral political projects that promoted Russian hegemony. In Belarus, Central Asia as well as Armenia, these organisations were accepted at least to some extent. As stated, a tighter core of relatively hierarchic hegemony emerged with these countries. Now we can add that in regard to these countries, Moscow tried to merge its economic and military imperatives with political and normative ambitions.

The basis for a regional ideological space remains the Russian language and, at the elite level, the Russian political culture. However, both economic and political interests often supersede explicitly ideological ones, and thus attempts in this area have been largely unsuccessful. Putin took a much harder, though selective stance than Yeltsin did, focusing on Russia's most vocal dissenter, Georgia. In this case, Russia has been at least partly successful in gaining the consent of the secessionist areas, diametrically opposing Georgian sovereignty and territorial integrity. Similar to the power dynamic in regional institutions, Belarus and some countries in Central Asia continue to consent to Russia's explicit ideational projects on a case-by-case basis.

Variation in types of hegemony across time

There are also fluctuations between Yeltsin's and Putin's presidencies (and periods therein) based on agency. This section begins with a narrative for context, and then adds analysis to draw more precise conclusions.

Yeltsin's initial period of trying to join the West was couched in idealism with little strategy or goals for the CIS. The CIS region started out as one of relatively tight hegemony. At the same time, the 1991-3 period under foreign minister Kozyrev, a staunch Western supporter, was not imperial. There was a push and pull between Kozyrev's foreign policy and the Russian military's needs and actions in the CIS. Russia perceived itself as the natural leader or regional core - almost like a genetic memory based on the past. Moscow thought it could show other CIS countries the way out of Communism in conjunction with a renewed integrated structure. However, Yeltsin's declarations of integration were made of straw. Russia possessed neither the economic weight nor the sustained legitimacy to rally the support it aspired for. Yeltsin's naive hope that the breakup of the Soviet Union was, to use Kravchuk's term, a 'civilised divorce' after which other CIS countries would naturally float back to Russia inhibited him from seizing the opportunity to create a viable working structure with consent at its core. Hegemony began to loosen. Disintegration and juridical

independence was immediate in 1991. The pace was so quick that Moscow had trouble accepting its losses. The economic chapter shows how Yeltsin used favouritism (rewarding friends and exerting pressure on dissenters, for example in relation to the ruble zone) in an effort to force consent. At the same time, countries like Belarus and Kazakhstan showed signs of consent even early on. Agreement to some form of Russian hierarchy meant that deepened cooperation could be sought. As such, legitimacy has the potential to create ties that are thereafter difficult to break. Yeltsin failed to create an attractive CIS region with a Russian centre of gravitation. This study has revealed a shift in the mid-1990s. Under Yeltsin after 1993 (notably in his speech in the UN) and under Primakov, special rights were declared in the near abroad and more aggressive strategies were employed. This heavier hand coincided with increased consent from Tajikistan and Belarus, and renewed Russian determination in regional involvement.

Under Putin, Russian capabilities were augmented and Russia's power of attraction grew along with oil prices and the country's economic weight. Political projects could be brought to life with more enthusiasm, and emotional idealism turned into pragmatic, interest-based decisions. In the context of threat perceptions as well as multilateral projects, the area around Central Asia became more hierarchic, with growing consent from countries there. However, the many shows of dissent meant that any widespread legitimacy was virtually impossible. Important players like Ukraine and Georgia rejected any constellation that gave Moscow too much regional power. With the advent of colour revolutions in the mid-2000s (the main turning point during Putin's administration), Russia realised that its leadership did not come 'naturally.' Moreover, the revolutions were a stark show of dissent that highlighted how Russian-led hierarchy went against the sovereign ambitions of two fellow CIS countries; Ukraine and Georgia's political transformations (as we have noted, they were never real revolutions) and expressions of wanting closer ties with NATO and the EU confirmed that they were equal sovereign states whose foreign policy decisions could be directly in opposition to Russian regional ambitions. Such dissenting countries understand Russian-centred hierarchy as a direct infringement on their sovereignty.

From Moscow's perspective, blanket regional integration dreams had to be abandoned. In the energy field in particular, Putin adopted a more pragmatic approach. Increasingly conservative and pragmatic politics meant that the real framework for cooperation between Russia and other CIS states remained bilateral. The problem with any bilateral relationship with Russia is that it is unbalanced and explicitly hierarchic. Other CIS countries seek multilateral relationships with the EU, NATO and OSCE,

adopting multivector and flexible foreign policies. At the same time, the chapter on multilateral organisations has shown that multilateral projects like the CSTO, EurAsEC and SCO exhibit the potential to form platforms to espouse common political norms (both internal governance standards of behaviour as well as international standards of behaviour). Though they lack real outcomes and remain useful for cooperation only on a case-by-case basis, they have been successful in solidifying a relatively tighter core of hegemony around Russia involving countries in Central Asia, Belarus and Armenia. The virtual impression of Russia in the region is therefore just as important in sustaining Russian hegemony, as are the successes of any projects it promotes. The region can now be categorised as being relatively anarchic, whilst further consolidation is possible around a select group of countries that remain consenters to a relatively hierarchic system.

Specifics can now be added to this narrative, and analytical conclusions can be drawn. The findings that the two tables below present are relative; that is, for example, the ultimate outcome in the Putin era in the military intervention category (loose hegemony) is relative to the outcome in the Yeltsin era (tight hegemony). Judging Russia's involvement and other CIS countries' responses in the region as a whole and applying it to the matrix, the following conclusions can be identified:

Table 7.2: Hegemony during Yeltsin's presidencies

Type of power	Legitimacy lies at
Military intervention	Tight-to-loose hegemony
Economic power (energy in particular)	Tight-to-loose hegemony
Multilateral organisations	Loose hegemony
Ideological power	Tight-to-loose hegemony

Table 7.3: Hegemony during Putin's presidencies

Type of power	Legitimacy lies at
Military intervention	Loose hegemony
Economic power (energy in particular)	Hegemonic independence
Multilateral organisations	Tight core, loose periphery
Ideological power	Loose hegemony, tight isolated patches

More concise conclusions can now be drawn. Yeltsin's time was characterised by a mixture of tight and loose hegemony. In all of the areas except for multilateral organisations, Russia started the 1990s at the core of a relatively tight hegemony. In

the military sphere, the beginning of the 1990s was dominated by an idealistic laissez-faire mentality, though some hegemonic effort was present in Abkhazia, Transdniestria and Tajikistan. After 1993, Yeltsin engaged in re-assertive regional conflict management, with high intentions for acting as a security provider for the CIS region. Tajikistan became dependent on Russian involvement. Russia also actively engaged in military intervention in the Caucasus and Moldova. As a perceived stronger 'third party' with a 'unique' interest and role, Russian involvement served to highlight enduring hegemony. However, low capabilities and dissent from countries in the Caucasus meant that hegemony was not tightly consolidated around Russia, and legitimacy was often missing. In the economic sphere, Russia under Yeltsin distributed economic subsidies that served to strengthen Moscow's perception as a regional hegemon. However, the high cost of these subsidies far outweighed the political benefits. During the 1990s, we sometimes see how Russia used energy policy as a coercive lever against dissenters. In the multilateral arena, Russia under Yeltsin was focused on the functional role of institutions in the hope that they would spur deeper cooperation. This allowed relatively democratic Russia to engage with comparatively authoritarian partners. However, these "partnerships" were strategic in nature and not necessarily based on shared visions of the extent of regional hegemony. Overall, hegemony loosened quite steadily throughout the 1990s, and it was a particularly quick process in the economic sphere.

Putin's time was characterised by loose hegemony in the CIS region, with pockets of relatively tight power dynamics. In the military sphere, aside from the 2008 Georgia conflict, Russian military units were relatively inactive under Putin. The CSTO acts as a politico-military structure that serves to advance Russian hegemony. However, the Organisation's political importance outweighs its military one, and remains relatively limited in geographic reach. In the economic sphere, Putin's use of self-interested energy policy, which is more sophisticated than a 'friend' v. 'foe' analysis suggests, served to foment anarchy. Energy cuts are perceived by other CIS countries as Russian political coercion, and incentivise other CIS countries to further reduce their dependence on Russia.[221] In the multilateral organisation arena, some countries have been more open to cooperation with Russia. Belarus and Kazakhstan are the two most consenting countries, followed by the other Central Asian states and Armenia. The other states of the CIS remain relative 'outsiders' and active dissenters to Russian-led institutions. An effective CIS-wide organisation is yet to emerge. In the ideological sphere, Russia has not recreated a unified cultural and/or ideological space. Language and dual citizenship policies have been largely unsuccessful. South Ossetia and

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[221] See Larsson and Hedenskog (2007) for analysis of different 'levers' Russia uses vis a vis the CIS.

Abkhazia represent the only places where Russian actions involving an ideological logic serve to heighten Russian dominance. At the same time, Moscow's assertive partiality in the secessionist areas constitutes a barrier in the development of Moscow-Tbilisi relations. Despite Russia's relative economic strength, from the perspective of the rest of the CIS, it seems that Russia lacks positive forces of attraction.

Though in general disintegration has continued and there are more active political expressions of sovereignty that undermine Russian hegemony, there is increasing consolidation in certain projects and with certain countries and sub-state entities. This type of regional constellation may be a sign of a flexible geometry and asymmetrical development. Russia has abandoned integrationist dreams and focuses on already-congruent parties to advance its hegemony. Though it now exists in a very different form than it did at the breakup of the Soviet Union, in general terms the system around Russia continues to be best described as a hegemonic one. Thus, this thesis validates Watson's pendulum where hegemony is the gravitational centre. This claim is explored in more detail below.

The pendulum in the CIS region

Firstly, it is important to think back to the introduction and reiterate one of the main hypotheses in this work: the states of the CIS represent a system. All of the relationships and countries studied here are sufficiently involved with one another and react to each other in terms of consent and dissent to form a system. This system is held together by an hierarchical structure that varies throughout time. The post-Soviet region is based on a distinct pattern of hierarchy around Russia. In this way, this thesis suggests that systems of hierarchy tend to cluster in regions. Furthermore, all of the system types that are expressed by the particular relationships examined in this study are hegemonic. Hegemony is a relatively sustainable characteristic of the post-Soviet region. Lastly, this study shows that hegemonies are political processes. They are also social institutions that depend on both the hegemon and subordinate states.

To explain these contentions, we can return to some of the analytical concepts proposed by English School authors and offered in the theoretical chapter. Starting from a formally independent system of states, this study underlines the propensity to hegemony in relatively anarchic systems. This propensity is characterised by a constant dialogue on the legitimacy of different system types (or in other words, the negotiation of sovereignty and hierarchy). Like Watson proposes, the system of states around Russia is lubricated towards hegemony partially because of its shared history

and culture. As a dialogue on hierarchy and sovereignty commences, there is a realisation that to some extent, there is an historical and relatively capable 'natural' regional leader in Russia. This study has also shown the potential for a propensity to autonomy in the imperial side of the spectrum. At instances where countries have perceived a coercive hand from Moscow they have reacted by expressing their dissent. All countries, including Belarus, are drawn towards expressions of autonomy when Russia blatantly infringes their sovereign claims.

This is Watson's pendulum at work. For Watson (1992: 131), the gravitational centre of the pendulum is at hegemony, because it is where the 'optimum mix of legitimacy and advantage' lie. This study gives substance to this claim. In the case of the post-Soviet region, a fairly sustainable hegemony exists (though it tightens and loosens). In envisioning what a sustainable hegemony means, it is useful to return to the English School framework. For Bull (1971), stable international society can produce a set of shared habits and practices associated with hegemony. The concern for hegemons is to 'ensure that enough other states have enough of a stake' in the system to produce consent, making a system more sustainable (Clark 2009: 214). Hegemons must '[secure] and [preserve] the consent of other states to the special role they play in the system.' (Bull 2002: 221) One cannot assume that all actors in the system will accept the 'special role' of a dominant power, so the hegemon must work hard to react and adapt to other states' reception of hierarchy.

Noting some of the conclusions forwarded by the empirical chapters, we can also add that hegemons must work hard to promote norms that will be accepted by the other actors in the system. The chapter on multilateral organisations exemplifies this best. When regime norms of other states are mirrored and reinforced by the hegemon, they are more likely to consent to an hierarchic relationship. Certain norms adhered to by the regimes of member states are persistent; the more legitimacy status quo regimes and organisations like the CSTO, EurAsEC and SCO gain, the more durable the norms of the member states become and the harder it is for the region to escape them. Internalising norms at the elite level transforms the preferences of secondary states in terms of how they evaluate their short-term interests and thus they make decisions congruent with Russia (Ikenberry and Kupchan 1990). Legitimate hegemony then maintains existing power patterns (and perpetuates hegemon-backed regional norms for status quo governments as well as for status quo hegemons) by embedding an acceptable set of norms into both state behaviour as well as institutions. Legitimacy then, is based on finding the accepted type of power structure and the common norms that can be sustained in a system of states. Stability in norms articulates the

appropriate principles of sustainable hegemony (Clark 2003: 92). Although the focus of this study has not been on the specific norms advanced by Russia and by Russian hegemony, the cases studied suggest that there is a need for more research to be conducted on the relationship between hegemony and norms on the one hand, and legitimacy and norms on the other.

There is another important aspect in Bull's and Clark's contentions that can be applied to the post-Soviet experience. In all cases of consent, we see that the consenting countries have 'enough of a stake' in the system. Consent is most likely to occur between regimes whose norms, sovereign interests and conception of their own sovereignty are reflected by the hierarchical structure. In particular, authoritarian systems are hard sovereignty focused and therefore gain in having a status quo Russian-centred regional hierarchy. Consent is also more likely to occur between regimes that are resilient to outside influence and are proven to be historically durable - status quo regimes that benefit from the type of hegemony expounded by Russia. Central Asian regimes as well as Belarus and to a lesser extent Armenia already have relatively resilient governance models with historical legitimacy. Status quo regimes are reinforced by regional historical legacies as well as by institutions. There is of course the other side. Authoritarian regimes (and in fact, all CIS regimes to varying extents) also gained domestic legitimacy – in the 1990s especially – by defining their sovereignty at the expense of Russia. In these cases, accepting Russian-led hierarchy would have meant a loss of domestic legitimacy.

The research agenda

This thesis has evaluated the basic institutions and practices promoted by Russia in the CIS region and analysed the process of legitimacy that contributes to fluctuating hegemonies. Returning to English School arguments, the study has shown how only focusing on the hegemon and/or hegemonic system is insufficient in evaluating changing systemic structures. Attention also needs to be paid to the process of legitimacy to discern how systems rise and fall. Hierarchy in general and hegemony in particular are not merely imposed from above. They depend on the active acceptance or conferral of legitimacy by other countries in order to be sustainable. If this dynamic is not present, the relationships fall on the imperialist side of Watson's spectrum.[222]

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[222] Clearly pure coercion works for quite long periods in historical cases.

The scope and theoretical framing of this thesis have necessarily limited the empirical depth of research. The schematic design has smoothed out particularities that an Area Studies work would bring forth. Further research with an Area Studies focus would be needed to offer more detailed examples and cases of Russian hegemony and evidence of the intentions of state leaders. The merit in this IR research stems from its analytical framework, the evidence base used, as well as the theoretical conclusions offered.

Firstly, the empirical application of Watson's spectrum and English School work on hegemony and legitimacy is quite pioneering - ES work on the subject is notoriously theoretical in nature, and Watson's theory sometimes lacks rigour when empirical cases are examined. Secondly, many of the primary sources used in this study provide declarations that collectively outline relationships. Lastly, in addition to the case-specific conclusions drawn, the thesis offers broader theoretical contentions that advance IR's understanding on:

1. how the conceptual anarchy-hierarchy dyad can be dismantled and why it should be;
2. the process by which regional hegemony is (re)formed and sustained;
3. and how and why legitimacy (and the consistent negotiation of anarchy and hierarchy) matters.

Noting the strengths of such an analysis, this research opens the way for future applications and further research. A direct extension to this research could be an analysis of different post-Soviet functional areas that this study has omitted. Some examples include: Russia's regional role related to its nuclear capabilities (and its potential to be a regional nuclear umbrella); regional cooperation in fighting non-military security threats such as drug trafficking; media links between Russia and CIS countries; other areas that express Russian political power such as Moscow's role in CIS elections; arms delivery flows to other CIS states; investment guarantees and taxation agreements between Russia and CIS countries; etc. Relatively broader empirical applications of this research could include looking at other regions through similar analytical lenses. Europe, Latin America, North America, East Asia - all of these regions could be examined through a consent and dissent-based framework that explores fluidity between anarchy and hierarchy. At the abstract level of theoretical advancement, Watson's spectrum could also be further developed in a way that makes it more readily applicable to empirical cases. Ian Clark is already doing a lot for ES advancement on a coherent theory of hegemony - the same could be done for the

wider spectrum. The wider issue of how hierarchy, hegemony and norms relate to each other also remains to be explored.

By showing how the post-Soviet region has changed, this study highlights that the process of disintegration and dissociation from the Soviet model is not yet finished. To continue to talk of a post-Soviet 'space,' connoting at least the potential for integration, gives little additional meaning and adds little value to thinking about the region. Other cases of imperial disintegration and ethnic disaggregation like the British empire suggest that the future remains risky as well as challenging for Moscow. This study has highlighted that different areas within the region exist, where Russia holds different degrees of legitimacy (for example, the difference between Central Asia and the South Caucasus, Belarus and Ukraine). The choice to focus on the CIS and individual relationships rather than the region as a unit also highlights that relations with individual countries (and in some cases sub-state entities within them) and ad hoc policies are the main drivers of Russian regional power. Some countries continue seeking integration with the West, others are oriented more to the East, and yet others try to balance between the two.

It is reasonable to claim, however, that the foreign policy choice for CIS countries should not be regarded as exclusively between East and West. Neither can dominate the region completely on its own (and beyond the scope of our analysis, we should also note the growing influence of the further eastern power, China). CIS countries want to take advantage of both relationships. Russia could be a leader in the CIS, for example in the fields of energy and of security (for much of the region) through the CSTO. For this to occur, Moscow must concede that interdependence is reciprocal. A flexible geometry with different projects and the choice to participate (much like in the EU) could be one way to achieve such a constellation defined by Russian leadership. There are already elements of this appearing. Like in the EU, CIS countries want to feel like equal members where their understanding of sovereignty is validated.

Russia will always be at the core of the CIS region at some level. However, in order for Russia to be successful in gaining consent for its hegemony and become a magnet and leader in the CIS region, more resources will have to be invested into large-scale projects that are beneficial to other CIS countries. Economic power is one potentially highly effective way by which Moscow can raise its power of attraction and generate consent to Russian hegemony in the CIS region. For this to occur, however, Moscow needs to encourage other countries to cooperate through economic incentives. At the same time, other CIS countries will have to accept (like Ukraine

learned after the Orange Revolution) that assistance comes with an expectation of political ties, and at least some level of consent to a Russia-led region. If Russia provides economic incentives such as low energy prices, each side needs to agree to make concessions with the other. Where commonalities and consent to Russian preferences already exist, like in the case of Armenia, Kazakhstan and Belarus, Moscow should be ready to contribute to common projects that institutionalise cooperation. The cases of most Central Asian countries, Belarus and Armenia have shown how multilateral organisations as well as ideological power in particular are effective ways by which Russia can consolidate its hegemony. Institutionalising cooperation can also serve to institutionalise Russian hegemony. The issue here is that political and ideological projects are sometimes very explicitly tied to Russian hegemony and not sufficiently accompanied by incentives. In these cases, CIS states with different regime-types to Russia in particular would be reluctant to consent to Russian hegemony without any accompanying sort of encouragement. Security, political and cultural ties are difficult to maintain and justify without any economic incentives.

Academic discussion on hegemony can be ridden with preconceptions about what being a hegemon entails. Whether one ties the concept with empire or with the benevolent provision of international public goods, judgements are made. This study has tried to approach hegemony with open-ended questions. Russia has abandoned hard hierarchic ambitions. Such has been the retreat of Moscow that other CIS countries have gained in actorness and consistently voice their consent and dissent to regional hierarchy; in so doing, they determine the ultimate regional constellation of power. CIS countries voice consent and dissent to regional hierarchy around Russia and are free to change their minds, contributing to a system of ever-fluctuating hegemony. Their expression of sovereignty is just as integral to determining the type of regional system that forms as are Russian actions. As an integral part of the regional disintegration process, Russia is, like all other CIS states, still finding its role. However, if it remains exclusively a status quo power, change is likely to continue in spite of and at the expense of Moscow. This thesis has tried to reject a deterministic approach and adopt a relatively neutral stance towards the notion of hegemony. To this end, it concludes that the outcome of Russia's hegemonic ambitions depends on its present and future behaviour towards the CIS region, and on being able to adapt to the responses of other CIS countries.

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