

The Bolshevik Legacy in Russia's Contemporary International Relations Theory

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Introduction

The Russian post-Soviet International Relations Theory (IRT) started its existence from the blatant denial of its Marxist-Leninist heritage. With exception of some marginal schools, such as neo-Communists and social democrats, the Russian IR mainstream denounced the Bolshevik and entire Soviet theoretical legacy as wrong, obsolete and inapplicable to the study of the present-day world politics. The Russian post-Soviet IRT of the 1990s drew heavily upon either the Western theoretical arsenal or some Russian non-Marxist conceptions, such as Slavophilism and Eurasianism.

However, already in the early 2000s some Russian IR schools started to gradually reassess the Marxist-Leninist IRT picking up there some ideas, concepts and theoretical principles. It appeared that some Bolshevik IR theories still work in the today's world and can be helpful in explaining some international phenomena and processes as well as at the practical level. Russia's contemporary theorists and diplomats realized that along with the great deal of revolutionary cosmopolitanism and idealism the Marxist-Leninist IRT had a high dose of realism and pragmatism which can be used for the protection and promotion of Russia's present day national interests.

This paper aims to examine how the Bolshevik theoretical legacy affects Russia's contemporary IRT and which particular theories and concepts are most popular among the Russian post-Soviet thinkers. More specifically, I focus on three subfields of the Russian IRT that were most exposed to the Bolshevik influence – International Political Economy (IPE), peace research/conflict resolution studies and peaceful coexistence concept.

International Political Economy

Vladimir I. Lenin's (1870-1924) theory of imperialism still affects Russia's present-day neo-Marxist version of the IPE. Lenin developed the idea of imperialism as a result of capitalist competition for foreign markets and colonies caused by the underconsumption and overproduction. He also took the notion that imperialism reflected the existence of monopoly and finance capital, or the highest stage of capitalism. In his work *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, he underlined: "Imperialism is capitalism in that stage of development in which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital has established itself; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun; in which the division of all territories of the globe among the great capitalist powers has been completed" (Lenin 1969: 387). Lenin argued that imperialism was driven by economic forces and therefore was not a matter of choice but inevitability. The competition between the capitalist states, reflecting the domination of capitalist class interests and uneven development of different countries, unavoidably led to world wars and then to world socialist revolution bringing capitalism to the end. However, already during the Gorbachev's *perestroika* and his New Political Thinking's dominance Lenin's theory of imperialism has been denounced as simplistic and outdated.

After a short break in the 1990s, the popularity of the neo-Marxist IPE in the Russian academic community began to grow again in the 2000s. The proponents of this school typically

assume that to understand the foreign policy behavior of states requires not only internal factors shaping their external policies. One must first find out how the structure of the international relations system conditions certain actors to behave in certain ways. The Russian IPE scholars also believe that it is very important to view international relations from a historical perspective (Fursov 1996 and 2004; Grinin and Korotaev 2015; Korotaev et al. 2007; Semenov 2003). It is only through an examination of history the current international environment can be understood. For them, the rise of capitalism, its development, changes, and expansion is the defining characteristic of the international system. A world capitalist system conditions the behavior and even creation of all states and other international actors. Contrary to other IPE schools, which see states as given and independent variables, neo-Marxists view states as dependent variables. The particular focus of the neo-Marxist analysis is on how some states, classes, or elites create and use mechanisms of domination by which they manage to benefit from this capitalist system at the expense of others. The Russian neo-Marxists are typically concerned with the development and function of dependency relations among industrialized states and the poor, underdeveloped countries. Finally, they emphasize more than other schools the critical importance of economic factors in functioning of the international system (Davydov 1991; Grinin and Korotaev 2009 and 2015; Korotaev et al. 2007; Semenov 2003).

The Russian neo-Marxists share certain commonalities with other IPE schools, such as neo-mercantilists/neo-realists and neo-liberals. Like neo-realists, neo-Marxists consider states to be very important actors in world affairs, but they also emphasize the conflicting interests of social classes. States are not unitary actors. Classes from across national boundaries, as capitalists, for example, may cooperate internationally to maintain a political and economic environment hospitable to investment by multinational corporations. Where neo-realists see anarchy, neo-Marxists see a hierarchy of classes and states in which the weak are subordinated to the strong (Davydov 1991; Semenov 2003). Like neo-realists, they see individuals acting from a kind of rationality, but one that is often distorted by false consciousness regarding their interests and by acceptance by the weak of perspectives and values propagated by the strong. The Russian neo-Marxists and neo-realists both place greater emphasis on the importance of the systems level, or world as a whole, in affecting actors' behavior than do the neo-liberals. But they differ as to how they characterize the systems level component. The neo-Marxists focus on the capitalist mode of production and neo-realists on the distribution of aggregate power. Furthermore, neo-Marxists are more than neo-realists to emphasize the intimate connection between the international system and domestic politics.

The Russian neo-Marxists and neo-liberals have in common at least three features. First, both stress an approach to international relations grounded in political economy. For the neo-Marxist view, various manifestations of political and military power generally reflect the driving force of underlying economic factors. Similar to Vladimir Lenin, the Russian neo-Marxists believe that politics depends on economics; it is not an autonomous realm (Semenov 2003). Second, both approaches pay great attention to events, processes, institutions, and actors operating both within and between states rather than perceive the state as a unitary rational actor (neo-realist view). However, the neo-Marxists place a much greater emphasis on the context (i.e. the capitalist world system) within which these actors operate than do the neo-liberals. Third, both the neo-Marxists and those neo-liberals who are tending to the transnational tradition emphasize socio-economic or welfare issues. A number of neo-liberals have a normative commitment to peaceful change. Although the neo-Marxists are also concerned with the welfare of less developed countries (LDCs), they are not so optimistic about the possibility of peaceful change. The hierarchical nature of world politics with the economic dictate of the world capitalist system make it unlikely that dominant countries will make any considerable concessions to the LDCs. Change, peaceful or revolutionary, is problematic (Davydov 1991; Fursov 1996; Semenov 2003).

There are several currents within the Russian neo-Marxist IPE school. First, there is a *dependency (dependencia)* sub-school originated in Latin American countries and within the UN

bodies. Following the *dependencia* theory, its Russian proponents argue that development is not autonomous and depends on ups and downs of the world's advanced economies (OECD countries). Choices for the non-OECD states - emerging economies, transitional and developing countries (especially for the LDCs) - are restricted as a result of the dictates of capitalism (Davydov 1991). The result is a structure of domination. Opportunities for the non-OECD countries are few and far between because these states are allocated a subordinate role in world capitalism. Economic exploitation of the non-OECD countries by the developed states is not an accident; rather, it is an integral part of the capitalist system and is required to keep it functioning. The principal conclusion of the dependency approach is that the problems of the emerging and developing countries arise from the form of growth pursued by the 'golden billion' (developed/OECD states); underdevelopment is the product of development (Semenov 2003).

The later versions of the dependency theory - centre-periphery analysis and world system analysis are less radical in their critique of capitalism and made more emphasis on the study of implications of globalization for world economy and international relations system.

The world system analysis (WSA) introduced by Immanuel Wallerstein in the mid-1970s is especially popular among the Russian neo-Marxists. This theory differs from dependency in two ways. First, it is concerned not only with the lack of development in the post-colonial and post-socialist countries but also aims at understanding of economic, political, and social development of regions throughout the entire world. In turn, this is targeted at explaining of the global existence of uneven development. Second, this approach wishes to understand the fate of various parts of the world at various times in history within the larger context of a developing world political economy. Study of the global capitalist system from a historical perspective is the first priority for adherents of this theory (Fursov 1996 and 2013; Grinin and Korotaev 2009 and 2015; Korotaev et al. 2007).

The Russian proponents of the WSA believe that under the capitalist system an international division of labor was established with the core, peripheral and semi-peripheral regions (Fursov 2004; Grinin and Korotaev 2015). The core areas historically have engaged in the most advanced economic activities: banking, manufacturing, technologically advanced agriculture, and ship building. The periphery has provided raw materials such as minerals and timber to fuel the core's expansion. The semi-periphery is involved in a mix of production activities, some associated with core areas and others with peripheral areas. The semi-periphery also serves a number of other functions such as being an outlet for investment when wages in core economies become too high. Over time, particular regions of the world may gravitate between core, peripheral, and semi-peripheral status. Contrary to the liberal economic notion of specialization as an advantage, the WSA points out that this division of labor requires as well as increases inequality between regions. There are some currents in the Russian WSA which believe that modern capitalism is uninterested in increasing the developmental gap between the core, semi-periphery and periphery because of the threat of the global confrontation between these countries and even trying to bridge this gap (Grinin and Korotaev 2015).

It is important for the WSA followers to emphasize a systemic nature of capitalism. Capitalism is a system-wide, or global, phenomenon. Not individual states or national economies should be examined. Instead, capitalism as an integrated, historically expanding system that transcends any particular political or geographic boundaries should be studied (Fursov 2004; Grinin and Korotaev 2009 and 2015; Korotaev et al. 2007). The structuring of the world system creates divisions which are reflected in different categories, such as 'international political system' and 'international economic system', 'class', 'nation', 'race', etc. Following the classical Marxism, the WSA considers the capitalist development of the world-economy itself moves toward the socialization of the productive process. In addition, the structure of the world-economy has created the possibility of socialist political movements coming to power in individual states, seeking to construct socialism. These 'socialist experiments', however, failed because the Soviet Union and other socialist countries tried to develop a 'wrong' model of socialism.

There is some discussion among the neo-Marxists as regards the role of political, economic, and social factors in shaping of the international relations system. On the one hand, there is a sub-school that reduces the world system basically to economics and development of innovations and technologies (Grinin and Korotaev 2009 and 2015; Korotaev et al. 2007). On the other hand, some neo-Marxists acknowledge the role of other factors. They, for example, insist that capitalism is based on inter-action of both political-military power and exploitative economic processes (Fursova 1996 and 2013). Some Russian followers of the Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung go even further defining imperialism as a structural relation of dominance with political, economic, military, cultural, and communication dimensions (see the next section). The entire structure of dominance has to be comprehended; one must look inside societies to understand the effects of interactions among them.

Peace research and conflict resolution

The Bolshevik ideas still have some impact on Russia's present-day peace research. Similar to the classical Marxist approach to conflict studies, this school is based on the assumption that conflicts are a natural product of various contradictory processes in the society. The Russian peace researchers do not reduce the causes of conflict to the single one; among the sources of conflict they identify the economic, social, identity, political, military, environmental, cultural, ideological, religious and other factors (Bikbulatova 2009; Dmitriev 2000: 76–93; Orlyanski 2007: 19–22).

The Russian peace researchers note that different causes generate different types of conflicts. Some wars have their origin in domestic political weakness, others in a secure domestic political domination that allows free rein to an adventurous leader. Some are fought to establish domination over a weaker neighboring country, others to establish widespread hegemony, and others to defend oneself or to defend one's existing hegemony over others against a vigorous challenge (Konyshev and Sergunin 2013 and 2014).

It should be noted that Galtung's (1964 and 1969) neo-Marxist theory of structural violence is very popular among the Russian peace researchers (Vorkunova 2009). This school tries to explain why the violence is deeply embedded both in the society and international relations system. This group of peace researchers believes that the structural violence as a socio-political phenomenon is deeply rooted in the capitalist society and economy and constantly reproduced by the capitalist mode of production. They believe that the forms of contemporary exploitation are different from those depicted by Marx, Engels and Lenin but the essence of this phenomenon is still the same and it will continue to generate violence and conflicts both domestically and internationally.

It is interesting to note that along with the structural violence, its cultural variation is increasingly becoming a popular theme within the Russian peace research. The critical peace researchers believe that in the era of global communications the cultural violence can be even more effective than its direct or structural versions. They note that the so-called 'color' revolutions in the post-Soviet space and Arab countries were often generated or at least facilitated by the West with the help of public diplomacy based on the cultivation of liberal/democratic values among the local youth and political opposition. For this sub-school, the cultural violence can be even more dangerous than other forms of violence because it not only reinforces other 'angles' of the 'conflict triangle' (Galtung and Jacobsen 2000) but it can also have long-term negative and unexpected effects (Kubyshev and Tzvetkova 2013; Sergunin and Karabeshkin 2015; Stepanov 2014; Vorkunova 2009).

The Russian peace research school does not limit the conflict management and resolution methods and techniques to the legal instruments and procedures. This school believes that to resolve a conflict and preclude its reemergence, its causes should be eliminated first and foremost. For this reason, this school's conflict resolution arsenal is much richer and more complex. In addition to the instruments that the 'traditional' schools suggest (e.g. negotiations,

cease-fire, truce and peace agreements, peace-keeping and peace-enforcement mechanisms, etc.), the Russian peace researchers offer a broad agenda for post-conflict peace-building and development that envisage a radical transformation of the society and its institutions with the aim to eradicate the causes of the conflict (Stepanov et al. 2007; Stepanova 2003).

To prevent new conflicts peace researchers suggest creating an early warning/monitoring mechanism. The latter should be based on a system of indicators that should monitor dangerous developments and identify conflict-prone areas. Such a system could be helpful in detecting and preventing conflicts at an early phase.

In contrast with other approaches which relate the conflict resolution activities basically to the state and statist instruments, the peace research school believes that conflicts can be resolved and lasting peace is possible if not only governments but also societies talk to each other and develop non-hierarchical, horizontal contacts. That's why peace researchers welcome an active participation of non-state actors in the conflict resolution: people-to-people, NGO-to-NGO, company-to-company contacts, the so-called 'people's' or 'civil diplomacy'.

The Russian peace research school notes that in general usage 'peace' conveys the notion of 'the absence of war' and not any particular ideal condition of society. This broad consensus view of peace is, of course, unsatisfactory from the point of view of this peace research sub-school since we need to know more about the nature of a possible world without armed conflict. According to Galtung (1985 and 2006), peace seen merely as the absence of war is considered to be 'negative peace' and the concept of 'positive peace' has been used to describe a situation in which there is neither physical violence nor legalized repression. Under conditions of positive peace, war is not only absent, it is unanticipated and essentially unthinkable. A state of positive peace involves large elements of reciprocity, equality, and joint problem-solving capabilities.

There have been many different proposals as to the positive definitions: integration, justice, harmony, equity, freedom, etc., all of which call for further conceptualization. Analytically, peace is conceptualized by the Russian scholars in a series of discrete categories ranging from various degrees and states of conflict to various states of co-operation and integration. The dominant trend in the Russian peace research is to interpret peace as synonymous to the category of sustainable development (Samarin 2008; Stepanov 2014). Some scholars believe – in line with the Marxist tradition - that 'positive' peace can be seen as a sort of a social order where not only violence, exploitation and major security threats are absent but also the favorable conditions for human creativity are provided (Sergunin 2012; Vorkunova 2009).

Peaceful coexistence concept

One of the remarkable changes in the Russian foreign policy philosophy, which took place even prior to the Ukrainian crisis, was the return of the famous peaceful coexistence concept. The concept "peaceful coexistence" is deeply rooted in Russian foreign policy thinking. The concept dates back to the post-civil war debates in Bolshevik's Russia. When the civil war has been over and the hopes for the world revolution have gone, the Bolsheviks found themselves isolated in a hostile world, and with an economy which had collapsed. To the strains imposed on the economy by the World War I, were added that of the civil war of 1918–21, also known as the period of 'War Communism', which meant placing economic resources at the disposal of the new state in the fight against the enemies of the revolution.

In 1921 the Communist party leadership had turned to the so-called New Economic Policy (NEP), which legalized a certain revival of capitalism within limits determined by the state, in order to alleviate the desperate economic and political domestic situation. Vladimir Lenin recognized that the fight to secure peaceful coexistence (or "cohabitation", the term which he initially preferred) would also bring much needed relief, not only to the regime but also to the working people. There was also the recognition that Soviet Russia was cut off from much needed capital and technology from the advanced countries, this was a problem, it was hoped, that peaceful coexistence would soon redress. As Lenin noted, "A durable peace would be such a

relief to the working people of Russia that they would undoubtedly agree to certain concessions being granted. The granting of concessions under reasonable terms is desirable also for us, as one of the means of attracting into Russia, during the period of coexistence side by side of socialist and capitalist states, the technical aid of countries which are more advanced in this respect" (Lenin 1970a, 197).

More generally, the development by Lenin of the policy of peaceful coexistence arose logically from his theory of world revolution. According to this theory, a socialist revolution was possible in one country because of the uneven development of the world. Therefore it was necessary to work out the relations of such a country to the others, which still remained capitalist. Leninism recognized that there would be a period of coexistence between capitalist and socialist states, and that it was in the interest of the working class in each country to avoid military confrontation, and that therefore socialism should pursue a policy based on peaceful coexistence (Chubarian 1976; Griffiths 1964; Horak 1964; Jacobson 1994; Kubálková and Cruickshank 1978; Lerner 1964; Light 1988, 27–45; Tsygankov 2012, 97–117, 155–171).

The aim of Lenin's policy of peaceful coexistence was to reduce the possibility of military confrontation between Soviet Russia and the "capitalist camp", to make it harder for "war-mongering capitalist governments" to start wars against the Soviet state. In so far as capitalism exists, such a policy would be imposed on any rational socialist government. Lenin sought to find a way to deal with the contradiction between the two systems, in response not only to the failure of the world revolution to successfully fight for state power in the other countries, but also to the inevitability of a period of coexistence.

According to Lenin, the efforts to ensure military peace, however, did not rule out a different kind of war. As Lenin noted in the debates about trading concessions, "Concessions did not mean peace with capitalism, but war in a new sphere. The war of guns and tanks yields place to economic warfare" (Lenin 1970b, 78).

The first international presentation of Lenin's peaceful coexistence policy took place at the April 1922 International Economic Conference in Genoa. The Soviet delegation led by the Peoples Commissar for Foreign Affairs Georgy Chicherin tried to demonstrate Moscow's non-aggressive intentions and overcome the negative image of the new Soviet state created by the Bolsheviks' "export of revolution" policies. As Chossudovsky (1972) noted, Chicherin presented three key principles of peaceful coexistence:

1. It is the recognition of the difference in property systems in capitalist and socialist countries which lies at the heart of the coexistence question (...)
2. The principal objective of foreign policy and diplomacy in East-West relations is the settlement of all questions at issue without recourse to force, *i.e.* by negotiation.
3. War is *not* inevitable.

In the interwar period (the 1920–30s), Moscow remained loyal to the peaceful coexistence strategy: it managed to attract Western investment and technologies to modernize the Soviet economy, join the League of Nations and even engage in a dialogue with some European countries on creation of a collective security system aimed against Nazi Germany (Chubarian 1976; Tsygankov 2012, 97–117, 155–171). Despite the fact that such a strategy was unable to prevent a new world war, its legacy was quite useful for the postwar peace-building and world-ordering, including the establishment of the UN system and development of international law.

At the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) (1956) the then Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev elevated the peaceful coexistence concept up to the status of the USSR's official doctrine.

In addition to the Leninist concept and UN Charter's principles, the revised version drew heavily on the more recent Indian idea of *Pancha Chila*, or "Five Principles," which included principles such as coexistence, respect for the territorial and integral sovereignty of others, nonaggression, noninterference in the internal affairs of others and the recognition of the equality

of others (De Coning et al. 2014, 100–112; Nezhinsky et al. 1995; Sanakoev and Kapchenko 1977).

Peaceful coexistence was subsequently included to the CPSU's Third Program (CPSU 1961, Chapter VIII), its new version of 1986 (CPSU 1986, Part 3, Chapter III) and written into the 1977 Soviet Constitution (Konstitutsiya 1977, Chapter 4, Art. 28 and 29). The latter two documents included an expanded list of principles such as sovereign equality; mutual renunciation of the use or threat of force; inviolability of frontiers; territorial integrity of states; peaceful settlement of disputes; non-intervention in internal affairs; respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; the equal rights of peoples and their right to decide their own destiny; cooperation among nations; arms control and disarmament; and fulfillment in good faith of obligations arising from the generally recognized principles and rules of international law, and from the international treaties signed by the Soviet Union (CPSU 1986, Part 3, Chapter III; Konstitutsiya 1977, Chapter 4, Art. 29).

The peaceful coexistence concept has not only survived but even been strengthened in the Gorbachev era (Gorbachev 1987; Gromyko and Lomeiko 1984; Nezhinsky et al. 1995). The situation, however, has changed in the post-Soviet period. In contrast with its central position in Soviet foreign policy thinking, peaceful coexistence concept was largely absent from the Russian political lexicon under the Yeltsin and early Putin regimes. Even if the doctrine's principles still existed in Russia's post-Soviet thinking and international strategies, the term itself was viewed mainly as an historical phenomenon. It carried such strong Marxist-Leninist connotations that many Russian audiences almost automatically associated it with the Soviet time.

However, by mid-2000s the concept was in use again. Initially, some Russian analysts, referring to coming of a "cold peace" in the U.S.-Russia relations under the Bush Jr. administration, used the term in ironic sense. For example, already in 2006 the Russian prominent foreign policy expert Sergey Karaganov sarcastically asked whether Moscow and Washington would be "going back to peaceful coexistence?" implying that two countries based their foreign policies on fundamentally different principles (Karaganov 2006).

Moscow's renewed interest in the peaceful coexistence concept can be explained by several reasons. First and foremost, at some point, the Kremlin realized that previous models of Russia's relations with the West, such as comprehensive security (late Gorbachev's era); Russia is the West's 'younger partner' (Kozyrev's era); cooperative security (late Yeltsin's and early Putin's periods); strategic (or just) partnership (second Putin's and Medvedev' administrations), did not work. The return to the old, time-tested and—seemingly—reliable foreign policy concept was seen as a logical step in a search for a proper doctrinal basis for Moscow's international strategy.

Furthermore, since mid-2000s there was Moscow's growing dissatisfaction with the West's reluctance to respect Russia's global and regional interests and treat her as an equal partner. Putin's Munich speech of 2007 marked the moment when the Kremlin started to redesign its foreign policy in a more assertive way (Putin 2007).

Over time, the Russian-Western controversies on international issues were augmented by the fundamental differences on interpretation of core values, such as democracy, rule of law, human and minority rights, freedom of speech, independent mass media, etc. (Makarychev and Sergunin 2013; Sergunin 2014). The West became increasingly critical of the Putin regime accusing it of authoritarianism and human rights violations.

Similar to the Cold war era, both the West and Russia tended to believe that they belonged, if not to antagonistic, but to rather different sociopolitical systems. Under these circumstances, the Kremlin viewed the coexistence principle as a proper approach to dealing with its Western partners.

Interestingly, there was a Western / NATO analogy of the peaceful coexistence concept in the post-Cold war era—a cooperative security doctrine. NATO's 2010 Lisbon Strategic Concept (NATO 2010) even elevated "cooperative security" to one of the alliance's core tasks on a par with "collective security" and "crisis management" and prepared the bloc for the adoption

in April 2011 of a partnership policy document entitled "Active Engagement in Cooperative Security: A More Efficient and Flexible Partnership Policy" (NATO 2011). As Flockhart (2014, 18) notes, NATO's cooperative security strategy sought to use partnerships as a geopolitical tool for sustaining essential features of the liberal order, as well as trying to change that order in a way that will make it more acceptable to emerging powers that did not share the liberal values underpinning it. According to former U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, such a policy "reflects the world as it is—not as it used to be", a world in which America "will lead by inducing greater cooperation among a greater number of actors and reducing competition, tilting the balance away from a multipolar world and toward a multi-partner world" (Clinton 2009).

NATO's cooperative security strategy with regard to Russia was based on the assumption that Brussels and Moscow could have both divergent and convergent views on regional and global security problems but it should not prevent them from a dialogue. Politically, there were a number of areas of friction between NATO and Russia. For example, Moscow remained deeply unhappy about NATO's plans to build BMD in Europe or accept new members, including the post-Soviet states such as Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. NATO and Russia also disagreed on the question of increased transparency on military issues such as military exercises and sub-strategic nuclear weapons.

Those tensions were often exaggerated by mass media. On a practical level, however, the cooperative trend prevailed in the pre-Ukrainian crisis period. Because of the shared interest in stabilizing Afghanistan, Russia has offered reliable and affordable transit routes for supplies in and out of the country for the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission (2001–2014). Through the NATO-Russia Council, the partners have trained thousands of counter-narcotics officials from the Central Asian states, Afghanistan and Pakistan—officials who have been instrumental in making seizures of drugs which would otherwise have ended up in Russia and Europe. Together, NATO and Russia are helping to supply the Afghan army with helicopters, a crucial capability, especially when ISAF ended in December 2014. Beyond that, NATO and Russia have agreed around twenty core areas of cooperation, including the fight against terrorism, counter-piracy and disaster relief (Flockhart 2014, 44). In each area there were concrete projects underway, for example, the development of technology to detect explosives in public areas, or to track together aircraft that might be under the control of terrorists in the airspace bordering NATO and Russia. Although most of these projects were frozen in the aftermath of the Ukrainian crisis, they were instrumental in accumulating cooperative experiences and conducive to embedding the coexistence principle in the NATO-Russian relations.

It should be also noted that, above all, the coexistence concept quite nicely fits a reformist state's political philosophy and can be applicable to the explanation of foreign policy behavior of many reformist powers, including Russia. The peaceful coexistence concept acknowledges the rights of other states to have different socio-economic and political systems as well as diverging views on international problems. This concept calls for non-interference to domestic affairs, solving conflicts peacefully, on the basis of international law, preference of soft rather than hard power foreign policy instruments—exactly what the reformist philosophy stands for.

For these reasons, not only Russia but also other reformist states prefer to use the peaceful coexistence concept. In this sense, they speak the same language and understand each other very well. Some influential international actors like, for instance, China, never stopped to use this term. For example, commenting on the August 1999 Bishkek Declaration of the Shanghai Five then Chinese President Jiang Zemin underlined that protection of fundamental international principles, such as respect to national sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference to domestic affairs, equality, peaceful coexistence, the UN's leading role in world affairs, etc., should be an important priority for those who oppose the "neointerventionism" of the U.S. and NATO (Stroitel'stvo 1999). From the Kremlin's point of view, the peaceful coexistence concept helped to overcome shortcomings of previous policies, reconcile extremes and integrate different approaches to a single and clear strategy on the international arena.

It should be noted, however, that Russia's present-day interpretation of the coexistence concept is different from its Soviet original. The differences between the two versions can be described in the following way.

The Soviet and post-Soviet peaceful coexistence concepts have different ideological underpinnings: the Soviet version was based on the Marxist-Leninist ideology while the current version has no a clear ideological fundament (the so-called national idea has not yet been shaped to date). Moreover, their ideological principles can collide with each other when, for example, the Putin regime suggests conservatism as a basis for Russia's present-day national idea (Sergunin 2014). Conservatism, with its emphasis on traditional values and protection of national interests and national sovereignty, definitely opposes to the revolutionary, progressive and cosmopolitan spirit of Marxism-Leninism.

Furthermore, strategic goals and the roles of the coexistence concept in Soviet and Russian foreign policies are different. In the Soviet era, the coexistence concept was a strategy for the transitional period when two antagonistic social systems had to (reluctantly) cohabit. However, it did not replace fundamental theoretical concepts of Marxism-Leninism, such as the world revolutionary process, class struggle principle, abolition of exploitation of man by man and private property. The peaceful coexistence's strategic aim was still an elimination of the world capitalism and world-wide victory of socialism (Chubarian 1976; Light 1988). The fight against world imperialism should be continued but by other means and in other spheres. Competition in the field of economy and high tech as well as "ideological warfare" should take place instead of an open military confrontation.

Currently, Moscow has no such revolutionary / radical objectives. The present-day coexistence concept is of more defensive rather than offensive character. Moscow has no intention to destroy the dominant capitalist system. Rather, Russia wants to be integrated to this system but on equal terms. The Kremlin does not aim to imposing its values or model on other nations; it wants only to be treated with respect and on the mutually beneficial basis.

There are also completely different geopolitical contexts. In the Cold war era, the USSR was a superpower, a leader of the socialist world. Moscow has conducted its peaceful coexistence policy on the basis of strategic parity with another superpower—the U.S. Post-Soviet Russia has lost its superpower status and now it tries to secure its "normal great power" standing. Moscow does not lead any powerful coalition or alliance comparable to the Warsaw Pact. In the wake of the Ukrainian crisis it found itself in semi-isolation. Geopolitically, Russia is in a situation which is to some extent similar to the position of the post-revolutionary/post-civil war Soviet Russia, the moment when the Lenin-Chicherin peaceful coexistence doctrine was born. Of course, for present-day Russia, the peaceful coexistence policy is not a survival strategy as it was in the case of early Soviet Russia; but still it characterizes the course of an actor whose international standing is rather weak and needed to be improved.

The current interpretation of Russia's peaceful coexistence concept can be summarized in the following way:

- Similar to the old concept's version, the Kremlin believes that countries with different socio-economic and political systems can coexist peacefully. However, in contrast with the Marxist-Leninist interpretation, now the coexisting systems belong to the same type of social formation rather than they are of antagonistic nature.
- At the same time, Moscow does not accept the dominance of one or group of states; instead, it favors a multipolar world model (the concept which now prevails over the Russian foreign policy discourse) where Russia can find its legitimate and rightful place.
- The soft power instruments are preferable while military power is a last resort, an exceptional tool which should be used when other means are exhausted.
- In spite of numerous divergences with the West, Russia has a broad cooperative agenda with the U.S., EU and NATO that includes WMD non-proliferation; arms control and disarmament; conflict prevention and resolution; fighting international terrorism and

transnational crime; environment protection and climate change mitigation; civil protection; outer space and world ocean research; humanitarian and cultural cooperation, etc.

- The coexistence concept is mostly designed for Russia's relations with the West/developed countries. Moscow's relations with the CIS, BRICS and developing countries are based on other theoretical/conceptual principles ranging from the moderate version of Eurasianism to various interpretations of the partnership model.

It should be noted that the coexistence concept is not yet a part of Russia's active political vocabulary; many Russian academics and politicians are quite allergic to the Leninist/Soviet type of the peaceful coexistence doctrine. But implicitly the concept has already returned to the Russian foreign policy discourse.

Conclusions

This paper argued that the Marxist-Leninist political thought still continues to affect Russia's present-day IRT in several ways. First, there is a revival of the IPE strand within the Russian IRT. The Russian researchers have now a renewed interest in themes like economic foundations of world power, neoimperialism, neocolonialism, and relations of exploitation-domination. The neo-Marxist IPE theories, such as dependency theory, center-periphery analysis, world system analysis are popular again in the Russian academia.

Second, following the Marxist-Leninist tradition, the Russian IRT develops sociological approaches to the study of international relations trying to understand which social forces determine world politics dynamics and identity formation. This school focuses on the role of primary actors, such as social classes and groups, nations, races, genders rather than on states or international organizations which are seen as secondary/dependent players (in contrast with the neorealist and neoliberal IRT paradigms).

Third, the Bolshevik legacy still can be traced in Russia's contemporary peace research, especially in identifying the causes of international conflicts and wars as well as conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict peace-building. At the same time, in contrast with the classical Marxist conflict theory, the present-day Russian IRT sees the sources of international conflicts not only in the economic structures of capitalism and relations of exploitation/domination but also in the structural and cultural forms of violence.

Fourth, the Bolsheviks' peaceful coexistence concept is in fashion in the Russian IR community again. Given the current crisis in the Russian-Western relations and the need to develop an adequate and realistic international course, the Russian IR specialists believe that countries with different socio-economic and political systems still can and should coexist peacefully. At the same time, they do not accept that one or more dominant state(s) simply impose(s) rules on the rest of the world; instead they favor a multipolar world model (the concept which is now dominant in Russian foreign policy discourse). Interestingly, the peaceful coexistence concept is of overarching nature and equally popular among different – sometimes opposite – Russian IR schools, such as geopolitics, neorealism, neoliberalism, globalism and post-positivism.

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