
PhD THESIS

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ABSTRACT.

Taking as its starting point the changes effected under Gorbachev and the impact on Soviet foreign policy of the ‘New Thinking’, this thesis goes on to examine the debates surrounding the direction of Russian foreign policy both within the political elite and in Russian society from 1991 to 1997. Within the context of these debates, the implications are drawn out for Russian relations with China and Japan. The thesis argues that institution-building has had a major impact on Russian policy towards China and Japan, as elites have jostled for influence.

Regarding China, it is argued that Beijing was an object of Moscow’s attention much earlier than many analysts have claimed. The orientation towards China was the culmination of a process begun under Gorbachev, but the radical pro-Western orientation of the Russian Foreign Ministry tended to mask this trend. Arms sales have been an important instrument for Russia to maintain its profile in the Asia-Pacific, albeit not helpful to economic integration here. Border demarcation has been a difficult area of relations, but the determination of the two sides not to let it harm wider areas of cooperation has paid off. Areas of tension remain however, and Russia’s future role in the Asia-Pacific could suffer if these are not resolved.

Regarding Japan, it is argued that here the initial high expectations of relations were largely due to the influence of a handful of academics and diplomats who favoured the pro-Western geo-economic line. Finally, Russo-Japanese interaction at the global level has been severely handicapped by the territorial dispute. Russia is economically weak but with a politically high profile, while Japan is economically strong, but politically impotent. Both have been trying to gain advantages to make up their deficits in different spheres, but until the global system changes, this situation will persist.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>APEC</td>
<td>Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation.</td>
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<td>APR</td>
<td>Asia-Pacific Region</td>
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<td>ARF</td>
<td>ASEAN Regional Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOst</td>
<td>Bundesinstitut fuer ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBM</td>
<td>Confidence-Building Measure</td>
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<td>CDPSP</td>
<td>Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press</td>
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<td>CIS</td>
<td>Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
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<td>DPR</td>
<td>Democratic Party of Russia</td>
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<td>DPRK</td>
<td>Democratic People’s Republic of Korea</td>
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<td>FBIS</td>
<td>Foreign Broadcast Information Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaimusho</td>
<td>Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>G-7/G-8</td>
<td>Group of Seven/Eight</td>
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<tr>
<td>IAEA</td>
<td>International Atomic Energy Agency</td>
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<td>IEWS</td>
<td>Institute of East-West Studies</td>
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<td>IISS</td>
<td>International Institute for Strategic Studies (London)</td>
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<td>IMEMO</td>
<td>Institute of World Economy and International Relations</td>
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<td>JV</td>
<td>Joint Venture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEDO</td>
<td>Korean Energy Development Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>KGB</td>
<td>Committee for State Security</td>
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<td>KPRF</td>
<td>Communist Party of the Russian Federation</td>
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<td>LDPR</td>
<td>Liberal Democratic Party (Russia)</td>
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<td>MEiMO</td>
<td>Journal of World Economy and International Relations</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MFEA</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Economic Affairs (Russia)</td>
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<td>MITI</td>
<td>Ministry for International Trade and Industry (Japan)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MGIMO</td>
<td>Moscow State Institute of International Relations</td>
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<tr>
<td>MID</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDR</td>
<td>Our Home is Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODA</td>
<td>Official Development Assistance (Japan)</td>
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<td>OMRI</td>
<td>Open Media Research Institute</td>
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<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>PFP</td>
<td>Partnership for Peace</td>
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<td>PLA</td>
<td>People’s Liberation Army</td>
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<td>RFE</td>
<td>Russian Far East</td>
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<td>RFE/RL</td>
<td>Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty</td>
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<td>RIIA</td>
<td>Royal Institute of International Affairs</td>
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<td>SVR</td>
<td>Foreign Intelligence Service</td>
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*Note on Transliteration from Russian: I have used the Library of Congress Transliteration System throughout. Thus, El’tsin rather than Yeltsin, Zhirinovskii rather than Zhirinovsky, Ziuganov rather than Zyuganov.*
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Introduction.

Identity crisis.

Russia’s relations with China and Japan are important for a range of reasons. Firstly, in geographical terms, these two countries abut Russia’s Far East, which has increased in significance in the 1990s. Secondly, since Gorbachev’s famous speech at Vladivostok in 1986, the Asia-Pacific was widely expected to become a new opportunity for the Soviet Union in both economic and political terms. Thirdly, these relations can tell us much about the new Russia’s foreign policy as a whole, as the debates over Russian national identity have tended to crystallise around relations with on the one hand, ‘the East’, and on the other, ‘the West’. What is particularly interesting about relations with China and Japan in terms of the East/West debate is that there are in effect two different ‘Easts’ in operation in the minds of the Russian elite, or at least they have been used to mean different things in different contexts. For some in Russia the East implies the economic dynamism of the Asia-Pacific - with Japan as the main player. For others it means a chance to reassert Russia’s claim to be a great power, based mainly on its geopolitical position as an Eurasian power: for these China is the power to engage with. Looking at the two powers from the traditional geopolitical perspective, China and Russia together can control both ‘Heartland’ and ‘Rim’ - both Eurasia and Asia-Pacific, while Japan and the Russian Far East sit on the periphery. When Russian foreign policy players spoke of turning to the East, what was really meant was turning to China and away from Japan. The fact that the intensification of relations with China came when Russia was attempting to define its relationship with the new independent states on its borders provided a unique opportunity to present this as a coherent strategy borne of discontent with Western policies and with Japan in particular, as the
Introduction.

West’s ‘representative’ in the East. The rimland idea (open regionalism) implies acceptance of shared sovereignty and possibly of Russia as a raw materials supplier, which is not a palatable scenario for most Russians to accept. Chinese notions of a ‘Northeast Asian coprosperity sphere’ or the Japanese idea of a ‘Sea of Japan economic zone’ have not come to fruition, in part because of latent suspicion among the powers here, but also because of Russian fears of losing control of key resource areas. (This is reflected in the approach to security in the region, which has often continued to rely on bilateral dialogues rather than multilateral security mechanisms. As William F. Tow has pointed out this tends to encourage American unilateralism, which is resented by Russia and China. Russian proposals for multilateral security mechanisms are not welcomed by any party in the region.) Thus engagement with the Asia-Pacific and therefore with China and Japan has been constrained by internal disputes regarding Russian national identity. As one Russian political scientist has put it:

> We understand that we are no longer the Soviet Union. We understand that we are not the Russian empire. We understand that we are not western Europe. But who then are we? Until we have developed a new identity we cannot conduct serious, reasonable, logical, consistent policies.

This thesis is not a history of Russian relations with China and Japan, but an examination of changing Russian perceptions of Northeast Asia in the context of Russia’s changing political landscape. The focus is therefore on political and security issues, rather than economics, although economic aspects are touched upon where relevant. The Russian rapprochement with China has evoked memories of the alliance of the 1950s, which was in large part motivated by the threat from Japan and dictated much of Russian policy in the Far East from then on. The alliance was initialled in the wake of the Soviet relinquishment of Manchuria and Port Arthur to China, in Deutscher’s words a ‘calculated strategic risk in the hope that the risk will be greatly outweighed by the moral advantages to be gained...’ Deutscher even surmises that the evacuation of Port Arthur was a sign to Japan that Russia ‘had buried the hatchet’. It might not be entirely wrong to see Gorbachev’s concessions to
China regarding the ‘three obstacles’ (the military buildup on the border and in Mongolia, Kampuchea, Afghanistan) in the same light, and possibly the later border agreement also.

It is ironic that the end of ideology in the Soviet Union made it easier for Gorbachev to make headway in rapprochment with China, but did not, at first, help to improve relations with Japan. If anything, the collapse of the Soviet Union made dialogue with Japan more difficult, partly because of Japanese domestic politics which still viewed the Soviet Union, and later Russia, as a military threat. Of course Japan’s close ties to the United States also made dialogue more problematic. Despite the avowal by the new thinkers (found primarily in the Russian foreign ministry) that Russia now viewed the US-Japan alliance as a factor of stability, this notion took time to filter down through the armed forces. In any case the collapse of the Soviet Union increased sharply the salience of geopolitical factors in foreign policy and increased the sense of territorial vulnerability. The agreement on the of the Sino-Soviet border had been initialled prior to the fall of the Soviet Union, and was therefore an existing obligation. In addition the military buildup here had led to serious confrontation in the past, and now hindered cross-border trade. As it was not at all certain that concessions to Japan would inevitably bring with them economic investments there was clearly less at stake. Thus, the foreign policy concept of 1993 noted the special status of the countries of the Asia-Pacific, West and South Asia in terms of establishing Russia’s ‘Eurasian status’ and exerting a direct influence on the situation in the CIS by virtue of their geopolitical position.

Of course the dilemma for Russia in making a direct link between policy in Northeast Asia and Russian policy in the CIS is that while this goes some way to addressing the Sino-Russian relationship, it leaves largely unanswered the relationship with Japan. In the past relations with Japan had been defined by their importance for the future of the Russian Far East, but the argument that geographical contiguity and economic complementarity would automatically signal investment by Japanese business proved illusory.
Introduction.

Domestic factors.

This thesis sets out to chart the progress of relations between Russia and China on the one hand, and Russia and Japan on the other. The analysis is conducted in the context of Russian domestic debates on internal and external policies, which have been closely intertwined. While acknowledging the importance of external factors, for example, Western financial aid (or lack of) and global financial markets, for example, on Russian foreign policy, many of the problems of Russian foreign policy have come from within and are closely related to the problems outlined above: that is, the future of the Russian state as territorial entity, and in particular the ‘fallout’ from the collapse of the Soviet Union in the shape of its relations with the ‘near abroad’. The shape of Russia today has no precedent in Russian history, so that when ‘some parts of the state start to drift away, borders are declared sacred and inviolable, but when there is a chance to add a piece to the state – then borders are taken as conveniently expandable.’

This then, is not an International Relations thesis, but rather is rooted firmly in foreign policy analysis. In the words of Margot Light, ‘the official relations that take place between the units of the international system constitute foreign policy. FPA is the study of those transactions, the domestic circumstances that produced them, and the effect on them of the system and its structures and their influence on the system.’ Further, FPA seeks to translate ‘abstract theory into concrete problems’. Thus, the thesis seeks to concentrate on Russian domestic political developments as a key to understanding Russia’s approach to the Asia-Pacific, rather than the view from Washington, this is the view from Moscow.

Scope of the present thesis.

I have chosen 1997 as my ‘cut-off point’ because this was a watershed year in Russian foreign policy for a number of reasons. Firstly, because the expansion of NATO was now irreversible and Russia had to come to terms with this; secondly because that year saw the first summit for four years
between Russia and Japan, following the declaration of Hashimoto's 'Eurasia doctrine' earlier in the year; thirdly, because there were now signs that the 'honeymoon' in Sino-Russian relations was coming to an end, and the limits of bilateral relations were tested; fourthly, because Hashimoto and Jiang Zemin met to discuss vital regional security issues (just prior to the El'tsin-Hashimoto meeting); lastly, because October 1997 saw the 'first substantive summit meeting' between the United States and China, ending a twelve year break in Sino-American summits. Six years of El'tsin's incumbency as president, and two years with a new foreign minister at the helm also seemed a substantial timespan in which to make some assessment of Russian policy towards China and Japan, which in too many analyses has taken second place after Russian policy towards Europe and the United States. Studies in the West of Russian policy in Northeast Asia or the Asia-Pacific tend to be by American academics who often view Russian interests here as peripheral. These analyses do not often make room for Russian internal politics, or if they do, such background is dealt with in a sketchy fashion, tending to look at Russian policy here principally from a security viewpoint. While this is a valid angle, too often this can become mired in defence-related concerns, which tell us little about the overall thrust of Russian foreign policy. There have been no extensive monographs on Russian relations with China or Russian relations with Japan since the fall of the Soviet Union, which have given a comprehensive picture of developments, and covering all aspects of relations. There have been some chapters in edited volumes, such as that edited by Stephen Blank and Alvin Rubinstein. However, the chapter on Japan is fairly brief and is not based on a thorough analysis of Russian domestic changes. Meanwhile the chapters dealing with Russia and China by Blank shows some insight and acknowledges American marginalisation of Russia in the region, but criticises Moscow for believing that 'it must frown on Tokyo in order to smile at Beijing.' A belief that will lock Russia 'into a self-perpetuating cycle of enmity with Japan'. In fact it appears that Russia's policy of courting China and refusing to let the territorial issue dominate the Russo-Japanese agenda has been to a certain extent beneficial. In the words of the director of the Nomura Institute, 'China was a "catalyst" in changing the relationship between Japan and Russia to one that seeks active
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To be fair, the changes wrought by Primakov in Russian foreign policy were not yet visible at the time of the publication of Blank and Rubinstein's edited volume, so this thesis aims to bring developments up to date.

Other work on the Asia-Pacific, such as the volume edited by Mandelbaum (published in 1995, but analysis ends 1994) focuses on relations within the 'Strategic Quadrangle', an approach which yields interesting insights but, constrained by space, is not able to give a detailed background to Russian policy in the region. In addition, the latter concludes that Russia will only be a significant player in the APR 'in the context of a resurgent ultra-nationalist shift in its domestic politics...'. A valuable work, albeit superseded by events, was the collection of chapters edited by Ramesh Thakur and Carlyle Thayer, which took a comprehensive look at Russia in the Asia-Pacific. However, this was published in 1993, and therefore necessarily has to rely on predictions of future Russian policy in the region. Regarding Japan and the territorial dispute, there have been three volumes published in the West which have shed light on the issue: Joachim Glaubitz's overview of Soviet/Russo-Japanese relations is an invaluable resource in terms of untangling the history of the dispute, but also the problems of economic cooperation in the Far East. Unfortunately the analysis stops in 1991, with just a brief epilogue. Jonathan Haslam and Andrew Kuchins published a collection of articles on the Russo-Japanese relationship, which tried to get away from the territorial issue, but again this account stops in 1993. Here at least there is comprehensive background to Russian domestic influences, albeit mainly on the Gorbachev period. Similarly the recently published volume by Kimie Hara, while published in 1998, has little of substance to say on developments under El'tsin, as its main focus is the Soviet period. In 1996 a U.S.-Japanese-Russian edited volume appeared, with articles covering diverse aspects of the Soviet/Russo-Japanese relationship, including issues of economic cooperation, and the wider regional security context. This volume is more even-handed, containing contributions from several Russian politicians and academics. However again the analysis stops at the end of 1993/beginning of 1994. In addition there is no overall context of Russian
Introduction.

foreign policy into which these separate analyses can be fitted. Regarding China, I am not aware of any comprehensive and full-scale work devoted exclusively to Russian relations with China since the breakup of the USSR. 20

On the Russian side, Mikhail Titarenko’s volume gave a throughgoing account of Russian policy in Northeast Asia, dealing with China, Japan and Korea, and including discussion of Russian concerns in Central Asia.21 Unfortunately, little substantial work has been completed on Russo-Japanese relations by Russian academics, barring the occasional article, while the account by Igor’ Latyshev (he was Pravda’s Tokyo correspondent for fifteen years and a member of the ‘Committee for the Defence of the Kurils’) of the Russo-Japanese dispute is highly subjective and frankly hysterical and extreme in tone. The title alone, ‘Who is selling Russia and How. A Chronicle of Russo-Japanese territorial deals (1991-1994)’, says it all.22 A more recent publication on the Kurils and Russo-Japanese relations is an edited collection of documents and articles relating to the dispute, which proved useful in drawing together a range of sources on the issue.23 However in Russia, analysis and discussion of Russo-Japanese relations in both the media and academic press tapered off after the 1993 summit, having become almost a taboo subject. Russian academics wishing to write extensively on this theme were obliged to seek funding in the United States or Japan, for example, Vladimir Ivanov (now at Niigata) and Konstantin Sarkisov (at Harvard). The financial costs of publication in Russia are prohibitively high, which, in addition to the dire financial straits experience by many Russian academic institutes, severely constrains research in Russia. (There is often resentment of those who are able to obtain lucrative posts in the West) Thus Vladimir Miasnikov’s account of the Russo-Chinese border, ‘Confirmed by articles of agreement. A Diplomatic History of the Russo-Chinese Border, from the XVII-XX century’, was self-financed, resulting in very small print run and making it almost impossible to find in Moscow.24
Sources.

For this reason, I have to a great extent had to rely on articles in journals, in particular Russian periodicals such as *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn’* (International Affairs), published by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MID), *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnaia zhizn’* (MEiMO), the journal of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations, which has housed a considerable number of Japanologists over the years such as Ivanov, Sarkisov, Georgii Kunadze, (deputy foreign minister responsible for Japan, 1991-1993) and Sergei Chugrov. *Problemy dal’nego vostoka* (available in English as ‘Far Eastern Affairs’), the journal of the Institute of the Far East, where many Sinologists are based such as Miasnikov and Aleksei Voskresenskii, regularly publishes articles on China and Japan, albeit with articles on China tending to outweigh those on Japan. I found the journal *Voennaia mys’* (Military Thought) to be of great help in assessing views of Russian military analysts. On the factual side, the monthly publication of the Russian ministry of foreign affairs, *Diplomaticheskii vestnik* has been invaluable for its regular publication of official documents relating to foreign policy and accounts of diplomatic meetings. Russian newspapers were, as always a valuable resource: in particular, *Izvestiia*, *Nezavisimaia gazeta* (and its military supplement, *Voennoe obozrenie*), *Segodnia*, but also the newspaper of the Russian government, *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, and the official paper of the parliament, *Rossiiskie vesti*. *Krasnaia zvezda*, the official newspaper of the Russian armed forces shed light on the viewpoint of the Ministry of Defence. *Moskovskie novosti* provided more lively analyses of Russian politics and its deputy editor Aleksei Pushkov’s musings on Russian foreign policy both here, and at times in *Nezavisimaia gazeta* have been especially valuable. Naturally the *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* has many times proved its usefulness in lieu of those Russian newspapers not stocked by the university library, such as *Komsomol’skaia pravda*.

The *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* and American *Foreign Broadcast Information Service* were useful for factual information not only on Russian,
Introduction.

but also on Chinese and Japanese developments. Western journals consulted are too numerous to mention here, but I would draw attention to Asian Survey and the Seoul-based Journal of East Asian Affairs for their regular articles on Russian relations with the Asia-Pacific, as well as the Japan Review of International Affairs for the view from Tokyo. Pacific Affairs, Pacific Review and Asian Affairs were similarly helpful, as was Issues and Studies for Chinese foreign policy.

Finally, in autumn 1997 I spent six weeks in Moscow talking to Russian academics and government officials, which was a unique opportunity to discuss questions that had arisen in researching this thesis. It was interesting to compare the views of academics at the different institutions, so that those at IMEMO appeared to hold rather different views on Russian foreign policy to those at the Institute of the Far East, for example. They were all, almost without exception, both surprised and pleased that someone from the West should be so interested in Russian policy towards China and Japan, in particular as both academics and diplomats felt strongly that Russia’s profile was still too low in this important region. As my trip coincided with a veritable flurry of diplomatic activity in relations with China and Japan, it was a particularly fruitful time to be in Moscow, and the newspapers and television were full of relevant reports.

Structure of the present thesis.

In the first chapter I examine Gorbachev’s ‘New Thinking’ and its effect on the foreign policy institutions as well as the implications for policy in the Asia-Pacific. It is argued that Gorbachev’s rapprochement with China was one of his biggest achievements in foreign policy, but also that the military content of the rapprochement was carried over into the El’tsin period. El’tsin’s promotion of a Japanologist to a senior rank in the RSFSR (later Russian) Foreign Ministry and the need for economic assistance from the West temporarily obscured the benefits of good relations with China. While
Introduction.

Russian national interests had not been defined, Russian foreign policy remained in a state of flux and institutions competed with each other for influence. The excessive influence of the Foreign Ministry was soon checked by the appointment of a Minister for Defence and a presidential Security Council whose membership reflected a more centrist, pragmatic tendency. The mooted expansion of NATO eastwards served to crystallise this tendency into consensus on the direction of foreign policy. As the elite were in agreement on the need for a more active policy towards the near abroad, so too were relations with China emphasised as a priority for the new foreign policy, as a means of balancing relations with the West. In this context relations with Japan were viewed as a sign of subservience to Western economic institutions (Chapter two).

The core of the thesis, the course of Russian policy towards China and Japan, is examined in chapters three and four respectively. Chapter three is divided into three sections: 3.1 looks at the broad development of bilateral political, economic and military relations in chronological fashion. The political relationship has been the driving force in relations, as economic developments have not lived up to expectations, while the military relationship is an important source of legitimacy for the Russian armed forces and the military-industrial complex. Arms sales began to be touted as a means of competing with the West, so much so that Russia even lowered its prices in order to secure its position in lucrative arms markets. Section 3.2 examines a new factor in relations: the Russian Far East in the context of the demarcation of the joint border. To a large extent this demarcation has been successful, but it is a case study in problems of centre-periphery relations. Various institutions, in particular the newly created Border Guards Service have profited from the problems surrounding the border, such as the influx of Chinese migrant workers. Secessionist governors in the Russian Far East have played on Moscow’s fears of separatism in order to extract financial concessions from the centre. The greater emphasis on territorial integrity may hamper economic integration in the longer term, but it has been vital in order to secure Russia’s borders. Finally, section 3.3 examines the interaction of Russia and China in the wider context, a crucial element of the vision of a multipolar world, which
the two countries have so fervently embraced. While there are shared concerns regarding regional security, in particular in Central Asia, and a sense of resentment vis-à-vis the West, there is also residual suspicion regarding alliances within Asia as a whole, for example, the question of India and Pakistan. Ultimately Russia has tended to focus too much on China’s role as a counterweight to the West.

Chapter four addresses Russian policy towards Japan since the collapse of the Soviet Union. This chapter is divided into two sections: 4.1 looks at the whole panoply of relations within the context of the territorial dispute, which has constrained relations for so long. The section seeks to measure how successful Russia has been in steering Japan away from its insistent focus on the territorial issue and towards a broader canvas of cooperation. It examines also the competing influences of the different institutions for control of Russia’s Japan policy. Section 4.2 takes a look at bilateral relations in the global context. Previously Russia and Japan’s relations have been subordinated to their relations with the United States, but the emergence of China has changed this constellation. In this second section, I suggest that the convergence of Russia and China may have a beneficial effect on the Russia-Japan relationship in the long term. However the disequilibrium between the two states’ political and economic profiles may continue to hamper relations.

In conclusion, I argue that the core of the problem in Russia’s relations with China and Japan is still predicated on Russian domestic politics. Russian resentment regarding Western economic preeminence and the perceived attempts to marginalise Russia as a great power continue to lie beneath the surface of Russian foreign policy. At the same time Russia has made some progress towards forging a new national identity and its own national interests, interests which do not always coincide with the West. The expansion of NATO has exacerbated the sense of marginalisation, making cooperation with China a tempting prospect. Still, as I will suggest, developments in Russo-Japanese relations have now been accorded a higher priority on the Russian foreign policy agenda, reflecting the declared aim of pursuing a balanced policy in the East.
Introduction.

8 Margot Light, ‘Foreign Policy Analysis’, in Groom and Light, (eds.) Contemporary International Relations, pp. 93-109, p. 94.
9 I would add that at times events after 1997 might of course be mentioned, but only as epilogue.
16 Thakur and Thayer, (eds.), Reshaping Regional Relations.
19 Jennifer Anderson has produced an Adelphi paper on Sino-Russian relations which is a welcome addition to the somewhat empty pool of knowledge here. However, the account is limited in its treatment of Russian foreign policy. See Jennifer Anderson, The Limits of Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership, Oxford University Press for the International Institute of Strategic Studies, Adelphi Paper no. 315, 1997.
23 V.S. Miasnikoy, Dogovornymi stat’'amj utverdili, Diplomaticheskaia istoriia russko-kiitaiskogo granitsy, XVII-XX vv, Institut Dal’nego Vostoka RAN, Moscow, 1996.
The Gorbachev Legacy.

CHAPTER ONE.


"The situation in the Far East as a whole, in Asia and in the expanses of ocean that belong to it, where we are permanent, longstanding inhabitants and seafarers, represents for us a national and state interest."

Mikhail Gorbachev.

There are many who have pointed out that the ‘New Thinking’ in foreign policy initiated by Gorbachev was not entirely ‘new’, i.e. that it had roots in debates begun in the Brezhnev era. Andrei Kozyrev (Russian foreign minister, 1991-1995) indeed has commented that the ‘New Thinking’ was no more than a ‘substantially liberalized modification of the earlier Soviet foreign policy course.’ However, it was only Gorbachev who realized the urgency of the tasks facing the Soviet Union in 1985, and saw the importance of the link between domestic policy and Soviet foreign policy: primarily, the urgency of restructuring the economy which implied diverting resources away from the military and channelling them into the civilian economy. He was also the first leader to acknowledge that national security without mutual security was useless, and that the best way of ensuring this was by discarding military instruments and relying primarily on political methods to achieve his goals. It is the aim of this chapter to examine briefly Gorbachev’s efforts to implement this programme in the Asia-Pacific, which will necessitate a brief look at the ‘New Thinking’ and Gorbachev’s overhaul of the institutions which influenced foreign policy making.
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The New Thinking in International Relations: General Concepts

The gap between the ideological premises of Soviet foreign policy and the reality of relations with the outside world had, by the end of the Brezhnev era, become increasingly apparent. Soviet positions in the Third World in particular had not brought any benefits, but had become an economic burden with no guarantee of loyalty from the client states, as the Soviet model of economic development offered no solutions to their plight. It was becoming apparent that the ‘correlation of forces’ was not in fact changing in favour of socialism, but that capitalism was gaining in strength in global terms. Strategic parity with the United States had been achieved, but at a heavy cost. In addition, as Allen Lynch has pointed out, the ‘scientific-technical revolution’ in both the military and economic spheres led many Soviet specialists and policy-makers, even before 1985, to appreciate the growing importance of ‘economic interpenetration among states’ which naturally exerted a concomitantly greater influence on interstate political relations. As a result, it became increasingly difficult to maintain the autarchic nature of the Soviet economic and political system, leading to the conclusion that ‘the foreign policy of socialism is a function of the entire interstate system.’ Thus by the Twenty-seventh Congress of 1986, Gorbachev was asserting that the ‘scientific-technical revolution’ in the West had actually allowed it “to sustain concrete economic, military, political and other positions and in some cases...the regaining of what had been lost before.” The fact that China, a socialist country, had aligned itself with the West against the Soviet Union also threw into stark relief the idea that conflict is only inevitable between socialist and capitalist states. Concomitantly a distinction now had to be made between the internal and international politics of states, rather than seeing an “inevitable link between domestic socio-economic order and foreign policy orientation.”

More broadly still, at the Twenty-seventh Congress Gorbachev
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called for adopting the concept of ‘a contradictory, but interconnected, interdependent and essentially integral world.’ This concept went hand in hand with the recognition that there could be no victor in a nuclear war and, that security could no longer be assured in military terms. In short, therefore, ‘security is indivisible. It is either equal security for all or none at all.’ For this reason the interests of all states necessarily converge and problems take on universal significance.

So much for the rhetoric, but how did Gorbachev intend to realise his aims? One of the key legitimising factors in his vision was the demilitarisation of the Soviet economy in order to divert resources to civilian production. However, this undertaking, as Gerald Segal has pointed out meant, in effect, accepting reduced status as a great power. Further, as in the era of détente, there was ‘no necessary link between arms control and a general strategy of demilitarisation.’ One way of achieving such demilitarisation would be to cut back the military budget, partly by reducing Soviet military positions and entanglements in global conflicts – the legacies of Soviet adventurism under Brezhnev. Therefore, a complete overhaul of Soviet military doctrine, which was ‘an extension of the policy of the CPSU and the Soviet government in the military arena’, would be required. If Gorbachev’s policy in terms of domestic reform were to revitalise the economy, then military budgets would have to be slashed. Thus the new guiding principle was to be ‘reasonable sufficiency’ in defence rather than the maintenance of strategic parity. In order to promote the new principle effectively, Gorbachev was mindful of the fact that he would need to have people supportive of the aims of perestroika within the decision-making and policy-making apparatus.

**Gorbachev tackles the institutions.**

In order to achieve this, Gorbachev went some way to transforming the centralised decision-making process he had inherited from Brezhnev. In his book ‘Perestroika’, he had emphasised the difficulty he would have in
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ensuring that the ‘new thinking’ was ‘reflected in the actions of the policymakers, in their minds.’ Under Brezhnev, the Politburo met at least once a week and generally had the last word on foreign policy matters, although due to the number of issues in its brief there were always ‘subgroups’ which specialized in specific areas of foreign and security policy. The primacy of the Politburo in foreign policy decisionmaking under Brezhnev was confirmed by Valentin Falin, first deputy chief of the International Department of the CPSU, who said: “all our foreign policy and national security questions must be discussed and decided in the Politburo.” One of the most important bodies in this respect was the Defence Council, established in the 1960s to allow the Party leadership to control Soviet military policy. This body included the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, the Minister of Defence, the Chairman of the KGB, the Central Committee Secretary in charge of Defence Affairs and various members of the military-industrial complex. The Chief of the General Staff functioned as the Secretary of the Council. It was in effect a sub-committee of the Politburo until Gorbachev’s creation of the executive presidency in 1990. This body had always played a leading role in arms control negotiations and the formulation of military policy in general, including questions of budgetary priorities and staffing levels. In addition it regularly dealt with economics, ideology and diplomacy in external policy. During the first SALT negotiations it played an integral role in the negotiations and, according to Christoph Bluth made the final policy decision in these discussions on behalf of the Politburo.

Until the Fourth Congress of People’s Deputies in December 1990, the Defence Council was still an extremely influential body in security matters; but the creation of the Presidential Security Council seemed to eclipse its influence. One of the tasks of the new body was to supervise the work of the Defence Council. In addition, by early 1991 its membership had been reduced to the Defence Minister, his three first deputies and some members of the military industrial complex. There was speculation that the Defence Council might now confine itself to the formulation of specific technical decisions
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relating to defence matters. Conversely, the Security Council’s brief appeared to expand quickly: as Alexander Rahr noted it had ‘swallowed the functions’ of the defunct Presidential Council, which had been set up in March 1990 to work out the guidelines of domestic and foreign policy. 14 The Security Council included the Foreign Minister, the Chairman of the KGB, the Prime Minister, the Defence Minister, the Vice President, the Interior Minister, the former Interior Minister Vadim Bakatin and Evgenii Primakov, foreign policy adviser to Gorbachev. 15 By creating this body, Gorbachev was clearly seeking to strengthen the presidency further, but at this time he was facing challenges to his power from the regions, and in particular from Boris El’tsin as RSFSR president. Gorbachev’s apparent rapprochement with those elements he had previously sought to marginalise, i.e. the KGB and the military ultimately backfired when the KGB chairman, the Minister of Defence, the vice-president, the Minister of the Interior and the Prime Minister all joined in the coup in August 1991. The coup failed because most real influence had already flowed away from the centre to the republics: the coup’s aim – to prevent the breakup of the Soviet Union – could not be realised, because it was already too late.

One of the successes of Gorbachev’s bid to ‘deideologise’ foreign policy was his encouragement of debate on foreign policy issues among specialists in the research institutes. As he built his authority he was able to bring new personnel into the decisionmaking process, so that many senior specialists from the foreign affairs institutes of the Academy of Sciences were now appointed to key posts in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MID). In 1987 the role of academics was further enhanced when the MID established a small unit called the Scientific Centre which played a co-ordinating role between the ministry and the research institutes of the Academy of Sciences. The Centre commissioned research, evaluated research proposals, and passed on research reports to the appropriate directorates of the Ministry. There was also a constant flow of articles in academic journals that often expressed views at variance with official ones. 16
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Under Gorbachev, the MID and the ID were encouraged to work together more closely. Anatolii Dobrynin, a career diplomat, who headed the ID until 1988, was well placed to assist the relatively inexperienced Shevardnadze in his bid to re-energise the MID by initiating huge changes in personnel.\textsuperscript{17} Prior to 1985, as Shenfield has pointed out, both the MID and the ID (as well as the Ministry of Defence) had become 'a series of semi-autonomous empires'. Now under Gorbachev these were broken up by circulating personnel between them.\textsuperscript{18} Thus there was a certain amount of 'cross-fertilization': for example, Shevardnadze, a party official became foreign minister, while Foreign Ministry officials, such as Dobrynin and Georgii Kornienko (first deputy foreign minister), moved to the ID, to be joined by Lt. General Starodubov from the Ministry of Defence in the new arms control department of the ID. In 1988 three new deputy foreign ministers were appointed who had close ties to Dobrynin.\textsuperscript{19}

Such changes were part of Gorbachev’s drive to break down what Pravda refers to as the ‘departmentalisation’ and ‘compartmentalisation’ of information in security policy, and in foreign policy as a whole.\textsuperscript{20} The increased role of civilian experts was an integral part of this process. However, Soviet officials were still dependent on the General Staff and other sections of the Defence Ministry for military and technical advice. This was witnessed by the fact that the former Chief of the General Staff, Sergei Akhromeev, was retained by Gorbachev as his personal adviser on arms control and military affairs, and the fact that the new civilian agencies themselves partly had to rely on senior military officers such as Starodubov. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Co-ordinating Council also included a former high-ranking General Staff officer, Admiral Nikolai Amel’ko, who generally expressed hard-line views on arms control. Still, there was change: as one Foreign Ministry official put it, "The mentality [in the past] was that national security matters were so classified and so sensitive that the fewer
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people who dealt with them the better...Now the role of expert analysis in the Ministry has increased considerably."

As regards the armed forces, the Main Political Administration had been a vital tool used by Gorbachev to shake up the military, and, as Bluth has pointed out, there was an attempt to strengthen party control over the army in order to carry through reform. The new Party Programme adopted at the 27th Congress in February 1986 emphasised this point: "the CPSU considers it necessary in the future to strengthen its organizing and directing influence on the life and activities of the Armed Forces." The establishment of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies in 1989 meant that military officers, selected by the High Command, were finally able to make their voices heard in a political forum. The result was that Gorbachev now faced overt criticism of his policies from sections of the armed forces that had previously been outside the political sphere. By the end of his tenure of office it seemed that Gorbachev was increasingly addressing the concerns of the military, in particular as the armed forces began to be used as instruments of internal control and repression in the secessionist republics.

The Committee for State Security (KGB) was just as difficult a candidate for reform as the armed forces, perhaps more so. Vladimir Kriuchkov, the chairman of the KGB, was made a full voting member of the Politburo in 1989, while Dmitrii Iazov, the defence minister, remained only a candidate member. Attempts under Gorbachev to curb the KGB's influence included the setting up of the Supreme Soviet Committee for Defence and State Security, created in summer 1989, whose brief was to monitor matters of defence, defence conversion and state security. This body was charged with creating new laws to regulate the KGB and the military, but as the committee was made up almost entirely of members of the military-industrial complex there was little ground for optimism that it might be successful. The final version of the new law in fact seemed to widen the functions of the KGB, as Viktor Yasmann noted at the time; instead of a comprehensive law
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reformulating the concept of state security the committee had drawn up the legal basis for the KGB's current status. At this time also, many deputies in the Supreme Soviet voiced concern that the new law would give the KGB a monopoly on foreign and domestic security and called for a division between departments of the KGB with external functions and those with internal functions. The KGB attempted to undermine the Soviet Union's relations with the West by publishing articles that spoke of 'imperialistic states' that sought to undermine the Soviet economy by, for example, flooding the economy with roubles. A month before the coup, Kriuchkov joined Iazov and Boriss Pugo in denouncing perestroika, and charging that the doctrine of 'reasonable sufficiency' was an attempt to hide the Soviet Union's loss of superpower status. Kriuchkov also asserted that the CIA planned to place its agents in key posts within the Soviet government in order to sabotage the economy. Those whose influence depended on the survival of the Soviet Union were not going to agree to write themselves out of existence.

New Thinking in the Asia-Pacific.
Soon after coming to power, Gorbachev emphasised that Soviet foreign policy should no longer be viewed solely through the prism of relations with the United States. Alexander Rahr has also pointed out that a key tenet of the new political thinking was that Soviet diplomacy should no longer approach world politics exclusively on the basis of superpower competition. In a closed conference of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Anatolii Kovalev, first deputy minister under Shevardnadze said that the Soviet Union’s “geostrategic positions” meant it could act as a “bridge” between Europe and Asia. Here then were the first signs of the geopolitical approaches that would be so characteristic of El'tsin’s foreign policy. There was a perception that the United States faced a new challenge in economic and technological terms from Japan and the EC. It is ironic, therefore, that to a large extent it was the drastic improvement in the superpower relationship that was the crowning achievement of the ‘New Thinking’ in Soviet foreign policy under
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Gorbachev. Nevertheless, Gorbachev did go some way towards breaking out of the straitjacket of bipolarity, and his speech at Vladivostok in 1986 signalled at least some positive moves towards a new Soviet strategy in the Asia-Pacific region. Until this point, in Robert Legvold’s words, the USSR ‘had only a security, not a foreign policy in East Asia.’ 32 However, those for whom the speech was intended were cautious in their responses. It was still too early to assess whether Gorbachev’s thinking was really ‘new’.

At Vladivostok, Gorbachev spoke of creating a conference on economic cooperation in the Pacific and the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the region. However, this evoked memories of Brezhnev’s call for the creation of a collective system in 1969, one which would include China and Taiwan. Given the tensions at that time in the Sino-Soviet relationship, it is hardly surprising therefore, that Beijing rejected this proposal as “an attempt to form a new anti-Chinese bloc by coercion and cajolery” 33 In addition, Japan viewed the speech as another Soviet attempt to undermine the US-Japanese security alliance, while seeking to maintain Soviet conventional forces. As one Soviet scholar has remarked, ‘the spirit of Vladivostok was positive, but its word was dead.’ 34 Writing in 1987, R.Litwak and S.N. MacFarlane surmised that Gorbachev’s resurrection of the idea of collective security in the APR was clearly designed ‘to exclude the United States from Asian affairs.’ 35 Michael McGwire has also argued that the speech at Vladivostok was ‘a prime example of the strong anti-Americanism that colored Gorbachev’s thinking throughout this period...’ Thus until 1986 policy was perceived by the Soviets’ neighbours in the Pacific as only different in terms of style. 36 Still, Stephen Shenfield pointed out that Aleksandr Iakovlev, a chief proponent of the ‘new thinking’, ‘combined an optimistic outlook on relations with some parts of the capitalist world (Western Europe, Japan) with a deeply pessimistic outlook on relations with another part (the USA).’ 37 Thus there was some evidence that the Soviet Union might be moving towards an assessment of Japan which saw Japan as an independent player rather than an appendage of the United States.
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According to Hung Nguyen, the ‘anti-U.S., anti-Japan direction in Soviet military policy in East Asia was solidified in 1987 with the appointment of General Dmitrii Iazov, a former commander-in-chief of the Far Eastern Military District, as defence minister.\textsuperscript{38} It is true that in 1987 his views were still that the United States was escalating its military activities in the Pacific, but such views were not confined to the military. A year after Vladivostok, many Soviet scholars, for example, Mikhail Kapitsa, still referred to the American ‘strategy of imperialism’ as having brought the region to crisis on many occasions. \textsuperscript{39} Others directly accused the United States of trying to turn the Asia-Pacific into a new ‘Eastern front’ of confrontation. The fact, then, that the United States was a major player in both Europe and Asia was a problem for the Soviet Union. In Allen Lynch’s phrase,

[in] an international system with Europe as the chief ‘arena’, China as the chief threat, and the United States -occupying a favourable position in relation to both, and thus also in relation to the Soviet Union – as the chief adversary, it is apparent that the Soviet Union is faced, and perceives itself as being faced with, an international system which both defies simple class analysis and is resistant to the easy extension of Soviet influence. \textsuperscript{40}

Having realised this, Gorbachev moved to rid himself of the ‘old thinkers’ in the foreign policy establishment who had been reared in the Brezhnev spirit of military confrontation. Thus Kapitsa, Brezhnev’s chief Asia adviser, was transferred in January 1987 from his post as deputy foreign minister to head the Institute of Oriental Studies, replacing Evgenii Primakov, who was in turn appointed director of the Institute of International Relations and World Economy (IMEMO). Kapitsa could now sound off about American hegemony without impeding the policy-making process. In November 1988, after the speech at Krasnoiarsk, which built on the Vladivostok speech, Gorbachev also removed Igor’ Kovalenko, deputy head of the International Department and Kapitsa’s close ally. Kapitsa was replaced by Igor’ Rogachev, who had been
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made head of the new Asian division of the Socialist Countries Department in June 1986, and who later became Russian ambassador to China under El’tsin. Thus, by the end of 1988, Gorbachev had replaced eight of the nine deputy ministers in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including Kapitsa. It was clear that the scope for foreign policy initiatives would now be considerably wider. The priority Gorbachev now accorded the Asia-Pacific region was demonstrated further by the creation of new departments in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs focusing on South Asian, Pacific Ocean and International Economic Affairs, and the appointment of new ambassadors to both China and Japan.

Two years after Vladivostok, in September 1988, Gorbachev spoke at Krasnoiarsk where he drew attention to the economic aspects of Soviet policy in the Asia-Pacific. By now Gorbachev had already offered to withdraw from Afghanistan and negotiations had begun on reducing tensions along the Sino-Soviet border, so that there were signs of progress in relations with China. Prior to Krasnoiarsk, the atmosphere in Soviet-Japanese relations had also shown signs of improvement, since the USSR had acknowledged the existence of the territorial dispute, and in December 1988 Shevardnadze travelled to Tokyo for talks, although these were mainly on the territorial issue. However, while the Soviets were making concessions to the Chinese in the military sphere, by withdrawing conventional forces from the Russian Far East and also from Mongolia, there were to be no withdrawals from the Far Eastern Pacific districts, i.e. on the Kurils and Sakhalin, the areas close to Japan, due to the continuation of the US-Japanese alliance. There was thus a contrast between advances made in the Sino-Soviet relationship and the slow pace of Soviet-Japanese relations. Concessions to China in terms of troop reductions could be made in the knowledge that China could reciprocate, while concessions to Japan involved a third party, the United States.

Soviet attempts to link improved relations with Japan to the economic rejuvenation of the Russian Far East also failed, partly because there was no
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overall strategy for tackling the issue. In 1987 Gorbachev had announced a plan for the long term development of the Soviet Far East to the year 2000, but it never came to fruition, as the central government could not provide the necessary investment. In addition, the failure of military conversion programmes meant that the Russian Far East remained heavily militarised, so that 'much of the production activity and social infrastructure [was] dependent on military orders.' As we shall see, these problems have carried over into the El’tsin period and remain largely unsolved.

Still there were now some Soviet academics who were revising the traditional view of the US-Japanese alliance: Georgii Kunadze, later to become deputy foreign minister under El’tsin, but at the time a senior researcher at IMEMO, was one of these. In an article on 'reasonable sufficiency' published in 1989, Kunadze criticised the Soviet aim of eliminating the United States in the Northeast Asian region, because it did not take into consideration the fact that the US military presence was a stabilising factor: it forestalled Japanese rearmament and war in Korea. In objective terms, he argued, Soviet military elite should therefore realise that the US military presence in reality served Soviet security aims. Further, Kunadze noted that the Chinese threat to the Russian Far East was 'largely an illusion, based on a “vulnerability complex” in the minds of the Soviet leaders and the public.'

By 1990 strains were beginning to show and there were increasingly disagreements between the reformist Foreign Ministry officials and the more conservative elements in the armed forces and at the Defence Ministry. The Gulf War highlighted the differences between the military high command and civilian policymakers - as one military deputy in the Supreme Soviet pointed out: "Army political workers cannot keep up with the changes in our foreign ministry’s political views". Since Tiananmen in 1989, military exchanges had begun between the Soviet and Chinese military establishment, and the cessation of American arms transfers to China, had opened up a new market for Soviet defence plants. There was great disquiet in many sections of the
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military regarding Gorbachev’s support for the West’s actions in the Gulf, a feeling shared by China’s leadership, although ironically the Gulf War had spurred on the modernisation of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). Military cooperation with China then, may have seemed preferable to supporting Western military positions. In the context of major concessions to Germany on unification and the secession of the Baltic republics, Japan’s demands for the return of the ‘Northern Territories’ were unlikely to be met. Moreover, Japan was now obliged to deal with both Soviet and RSFSR officials under El’tsin’s leadership.

**Conclusion.**
Can we agree with Andrew Kuchins’ judgement that without ‘the benefits of economic reform, the new political thinking amounted to a strategic give-away with no quid pro quo besides an improved image in the West’? It is true that economic co-operation in the Asia-Pacific did not live up to Gorbachev’s expectations, which were probably too high, but real economic integration in that region will depend very much on the future course of reform in Russia. Gorbachev’s time was limited, but he did release the potential for further progress by de-ideologizing Soviet foreign policy and above all by creating an atmosphere of trust, one in which the Soviet Union was no longer a military threat. As Hans Heymann Jr. points out the ‘new thinking’ required a longer time scale, so that ‘early measures should have been seen as ‘pragmatic incrementalism ...a process, rather than a fully formed strategy...’

One measure of the success of the ‘new thinking’ in practice must surely be the end of ideological conflict with China, and the abandonment of competition in the Third World. In 1985, Gerald Segal believed that the Afghan and Kampuchean conflicts would not be resolved ‘by great-power decision and fiat, and that unless China dropped these objections, the ‘three obstacles’ to Sino-Soviet normalisation would remain: it is testimony to Gorbachev’s determination to improve relations that he removed all three. Yes, the Soviet Union made far more concessions to China than vice-versa,
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but this was needed so that the Chinese could see that Gorbachev was a man of action not just of words.

Of course the very diversity of the Asia-Pacific was a constant problem for the Soviet Union and remains so still for Russia. The fact that Japan is still bound to the United States continues to pose problems when foreign policy actors attempt, as Gorbachev advocated, not to view the world through the prism of superpower relations. Like Russia today, the Soviet Union faced an imbalance in its Asian policy; it has relied too heavily on China as the central plank of that policy, perhaps because the relationship with China was perceived to be more equal, while approaching Japan implied accepting her economic superiority. Nevertheless, Gorbachev also left his imprint on Soviet-Japanese relations, opening up diplomatic channels and the possibility for future negotiation.

In the next chapter we shall see how El’tsin has coped with the legacy he inherited from Gorbachev; how this has affected the elaboration and implementation of foreign policy, and the implications for the new Russia’s policy towards China and Japan.

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* Gorbachev speaking at Vladivostok cited in M.S. Gorbachev, Perestroika i novoie myshlenie dlia nasheoi strany i dlia vsego mira, Izdatel’stvo politicheskoi literaturey, Moscow, 1988, p.189.
5 Ibid., p. 146
6 Mikhail Gorbachev, Perestroika, p. 141.
7 Ibid, p. 142.
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9 Gorbachev, Perestroika, p. 155.


13 Ibid., p. 26


15 Rahr, ‘Further Restructuring’, p. 3.


18 Shenfield, The Nuclear Predicament, 1987, p. 82.


25 Sakwa, Gorbachev and His Reforms, p. 333.


29 Sakwa, Gorbachev and His Reforms, p. 326.


40 Lynch, The Soviet Study of International Relations, pp. 64-5.

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43 See Ziegler, Foreign Policy and East Asia, pp.97-99.
CHAPTER TWO.


"Among the tasks facing Russian foreign policy is the need to work on all fronts. I would particularly like to single out China... For us relations with India, the countries of Latin America, of the Middle East, the APR and Europe are very important. We cannot concentrate on just one aspect, however important it may be. For example the American aspect. We naturally have understanding for the capabilities of the USA, and evaluate realistically the role played by the USA, but we cannot concentrate only on the American aspect, because then we will lose manoeuvrability in our foreign policy, and this could lead to the notion of an equal partnership not being taken seriously."

Evgenii Primakov

Conceptualising Russian Foreign Policy under El'tsin: Implications for Relations with China and Japan.

The debate surrounding the direction which foreign policy should take in the former Soviet Union has yet to be fully resolved. As long as the problem of Russian national identity remains lodged in the Soviet past, the debate will continue. In this chapter I shall examine the course this debate has taken since the formation of the Russian Federation in order to give some picture of the backdrop against which relations with China and Japan have been played out. Separate chapters (three and four) will deal with the actual course of relations with these two important Asian states,

I shall examine the main issues concerning Russia's relations with the outside world, including the relationship of the 'near abroad' to Russian foreign policy. This discussion will take us to the end of 1997, two years into Evgenii Primakov's stewardship of Russian foreign policy, and a year after El'tsin's re-election as President.
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Russian National Identity and Foreign Policy: Europe, Eurasia or Asia?

The definition of Russian national identity has been perhaps the thorniest problem in attempting to arrive at a set of national interests, which would serve as guidelines for a new Russian foreign policy. Debating whether Russia’s interests lay in integration with the West or in a more qualified, individual path which would take into account Russia’s ‘unique’ geographical position as a ‘Eurasian’ power began to take on its own momentum, obscuring the real tasks that policymakers faced. A new nation-state has a particularly complex task ahead of it: as Anthony Smith has written, ‘On the one hand, the community seeks to compete with its neighbours by borrowing techniques and ideas; on the other hand, it clings to its received traditions and lifestyles and seeks to purify its culture of alien elements.’¹ In the new Russia the debate became increasingly polarised as the idea of the ‘West’ became identified as an absolute, thus splitting policymakers into two distinct groups which in a very broad sense could be defined as: ‘Atlanticists’ and ‘Eurasianists’. As Russian foreign policy has evolved, it has become clear that this initial labelling of the groups was both an oversimplification and a snap judgement that did not do justice to the real lines of the debate. Today there are few who could be termed unreservedly Atlanticist or indeed Eurasianist. Thus these two groupings do not reflect the real divisions; Andrew Bouchkin has emphasised - ‘there is no such polarization, nor has there ever been any; nor is there any clear boundary between the supporters of these different views on foreign policy...’² With hindsight this assertion may seem a valid one, as a broad consensus had begun to emerge already by early 1993 on the main priorities of Russian foreign policy, and was certainly in place by 1994. Nevertheless the manner in which the debate was formulated by the players themselves was to a great extent expressed precisely in terms of the two poles. Sergei Stankevich (a presidential advisor) was one of the first in the Russian foreign policy elite to outline the two orientations in Russian foreign policy: he criticised Atlanticism as being incompatible with Russia’s position as a country ‘that takes in West and East, North and South, and that is uniquely capable...of harmoniously unifying many different elements.’³ While
disavowing the notion that Russia should turn its back on the West and head for the East, Stankevich advocated ‘redistribution of our resources, our possibilities and ties and our interests in favour of Asia, in an eastward direction.’ [my italics] The answer, according to Stankevich, lay in balancing both Russia’s ‘Western and Eastern orientations’ and at the same time correcting the ‘obvious distortion caused by the creators of the conception of the “common European home”’ (i.e. the ‘new thinkers’).  

Such views were echoed by figures like Evgenii Ambartsumov, (chairman of the Supreme Soviet Joint Committee on International Affairs from April 1992 until Autumn 1993) and Andranik Migranian, who later became a member of the Presidential Council. This group tended towards a realist view of foreign policy, although Stankevich professed to be ready to join a ‘school of foreign policy...that combined rationalism, the pragmatic principle and our natural idealism, linked to Russia's mission.’ In general these figures believed in a modification of the pro-Western policies then being advocated by the Foreign Ministry (MID). They have been variously labelled Statist Nationalists, Centrists, or Moderate Conservatives or Pragmatic Nationalists. As well as their shared belief in the necessity for Russia of declaring the former Soviet space to be a zone of Russia's vital interests, Migranian also pointed to China as an example to Russia of a state which, while maintaining good relations with the United States and the Group of Seven, was 'conducting a perfectly independent foreign policy, not fearing to appear "uncivilised" in upholding its national interests...’ Vladimir Lukin (then still head of the Committee on International Affairs) also called for greater attention to be paid to China, not so much as a model for Russia to emulate, but because of China's growing economic and military might, which would be a cause for concern, in particular if Russia's Far Eastern policy were merely a ‘residual policy’. Importantly, Lukin advocated the improvement of relations with Japan, as problematic relations with both China and Japan simultaneously would make life very difficult.
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At this time, the group around the Russian foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev (variously called Westernisers or Atlanticists) was relatively unconcerned about developments in the former Soviet Union. It is true that Kozyrev had early in his tenure spoken of defending the rights of ethnic Russians in the CIS, and where necessary with ‘severe’ methods, but at this time he was proposing such actions as part of a wider operation under the aegis of the United Nations, rather than as a task for Russia alone. His critics saw the lack of attention to the former Soviet states as creating a vacuum that the West would be only to eager to fill. Kozyrev’s first visits as foreign minister were to the West not to the CIS countries, while the United States, it was alleged, was hurriedly touring the CIS and marking out zones of influence. Thus while Russia was neglecting her closest neighbours, the West clearly was not. One Fundamentalist-Nationalist scholar, El’giz Pozdniakov, charged that the main geopolitical task of the United States was ‘to destroy once and forever the Eurasian Geostrategic monolith’ and to prevent any other power, first and foremost Russia from dominating Eurasia. In this context, Pozdniakov writes, it is Russia’s mission to fulfil the role of guarantor of stability in Eurasia, which will also help to prevent disintegrative tendencies within Russia itself. The Eurasian Heartland would also serve to maintain the balance of power on a global scale, i.e. by preventing the emergence of one hegemon.

In many ways, Kozyrev himself helped to fuel the image of Russian foreign policy as starkly polarised, seeing the Westernisers as besieged by ‘brownish pseudo-national patriotism’. The Foreign Minister laid himself open to attack by those who saw Russian diplomacy as ‘exchanging one ideological measurement of foreign policy for another. While it used to be asserted that our interests clashed with the interests of the West everywhere, now, on the contrary, it is asserted that they coincide everywhere.’ In effect, the ‘evil empire’ was no longer the United States, but the USSR, and the ‘good empire’ was now the United States rather than the USSR. Such relatively moderate views were sometimes echoed by so-called Fundamentalist-Nationalists, albeit in a cruder version: ‘Today people are trying to foist on us the Western form of economic development in order to harness us to a structure of economic
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relations in which we would play the part of a raw materials appendage and a source of cheap labour.12 Another view was that Russia had no need whatsoever of external markets, for, unlike the rest of the world, Russia, due to its great territory and abundant natural resources was able to survive as an independent economy, and ‘was not frightened by the word “autarky”’. ‘The idea of Russia trying to become part of Europe was just as ridiculous as if it were to become part of China, India or Japan.’ The scholar cites the example of Peter the Great who said “We need Europe for a few more years and then we can turn our back on it.”13 Peter used Europe, but used it to strengthen Russian national interests and the state.

Konstantin Pleshakov, a holder of ‘pragmatic nationalist’ views, believed Russia should not take up a policy of isolationism vis-à-vis the CIS as the conflicts occurring in the post-Soviet space were linked to Russia’s vital interests. The pivot of Russia’s ‘mission’ was to be the basis for Eurasian continental stability. Russia might not be able to have any influence in the Persian Gulf, for example, but in continental Eurasia Russia’s role is exclusive. The West had not been able to take action in the post-Soviet space, and so far its economic penetration of these states had been negligible (although he was writing in 1993). In addition if chaos broke out in Central Asia or China the main responsibility would fall to Russia.14 An interesting variation on this theme was the view espoused by V.Fadeev who, while believing it was essential to link up with the West, with which Russia shared the same values, it would be more advantageous for Russia to play the role of a buffer between West and East, defending the West from ‘the less cultural forms of life’, for example, Muslim fundamentalism. In exchange for fulfilling this role, Russia would receive technical and financial help from the West.15

The ‘romantic democrats’ on the other hand believed that becoming part of the ‘civilised’ West, they should also take the West’s lead in terms of foreign policy. For this reason those advocates of ‘Westernism’ in the MID who were prepared to give back the Kurils to Japan, believed such an act would be
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viewed by Japan as a sign that democracy was irreversible in Russia, and would promptly dispense economic assistance.

Thus for the liberals foreign policy was a continuation of domestic policy - the adoption of shock therapy for the economy necessitated the subordination of Russia's interests to Western institutions and a concomitant harmonising of Russian and Western foreign policy positions – 'the principle of unity of internal and external policy.' Of course if, as Kozyrev stated, the Western countries were Russia's 'natural allies', this begged the question as to the nature of Russia's relations with countries like China or Iraq and Iran, whom others saw as equally 'natural' allies. Espousing a doctrine of the primacy of human rights could jeopardise relations with these areas, and undermine Russia's security interests. The final abandonment of shock therapy by the beginning of 1993 thus seemed to send a message to the West that Russia was unique and would not be dictated to by the West. In addition, critics of Gaidar's economic reform such as the vice-president Aleksandr Rutskoi viewed the focus on markets of the industrialised Western European states as having led to an increase in the export of energy and strategic raw materials, which, in his view were 'the signs of, if not a colonial, then a developing country.'

The political grouping which had possibly the greatest effect on the direction of Russian economic policy was the Civic Union: this was a wide-ranging and broad forum which brought together representatives of business and industry and was opposed to Gaidar’s ‘shock therapy’ programme. This grouping was ‘centred around three separate parties: ‘Renewal’ created by Arkadii Vol’skii in May 1992 to work on the political front, and later joined by Rutskoi’s party ‘The People’s Party of Free Russia’ and Nikolai Travkin’s Democratic Party of Russia. At the sixth Congress of People's Deputies in April 1992 the speaker, Ruslan Khasbulatov, together with the parliamentary faction ‘Industrial Union’, put pressure on the government to continue subsidies for the military industrial complex and large state firms believing Russia was not ready for large-scale privatisation, as advocated by Egor Gaidar. While the
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privatisation programme was adopted, it was passed with great difficulty, and at a cost: El’tsin now felt obliged to appoint to his cabinet representatives of the industrialist lobby, including Viktor Chernomyrdin and Vladimir Shumeiko as deputy Prime Ministers, and also appointing Iurii Skokov (closely associated with the Industrial Union and the military industrial complex as a whole) to head the new presidential Security Council, set up in May.\(^{20}\) At one time it seemed as though El’tsin himself might join this grouping, and he was certainly very close to it, appearing at many of their conferences and seeming to agree on many points of policy. For example, attending the Fourth Congress of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, in April 1993, El’tsin noted: ‘We are working in close contact now...I think there is more agreement now than ever’.\(^{21}\) However, El’tsin did not ally himself with this faction and broke with them completely after his victory in the referendum of April 1993. Still, he had absorbed some of their policies, and Viktor Chernomyrdin held views very close to those of Vol'skii, in particular.

By the summer of 1992, the Foreign Ministry was being attacked both inside and outside the legislature for its support of Western sanctions against the Serbs, but also for its proposals regarding the transfer of the Kuril Islands to Japan. In closed hearings of the Committee on International Affairs, it was made clear that to make any territorial concessions would be very dangerous and also that ‘’others who lay claim to Russian land, of whom there are quite a few, will immediately pounce on us.’’\(^{22}\) Oleg Rumiantsev's report (he was chairman of the Committee on Constitutional Questions) rejected as ‘propaganda’ the idea that giving in to Japan's territorial demands would ‘open a path for Russia to purge itself of the legacy of the old totalitarian era and would facilitate the beginning of concord between civilised states is propaganda.'\(^{23}\)

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At the MID conference in February 1992, Kozyrev indicated work would begin on a concept of foreign policy which would be a 'process of evaluating and correcting the realisation of national interests'. Yet only a couple of months later he was stating that there could not be 'schematic outlines' in the conception of foreign policy but only 'reactions to a concrete situation'.

However, by the time a third draft was submitted in November 1992 it was clear that Kozyrev had had to change his stance. Drafts submitted in February and April had both been rejected by the Supreme Soviet. In the meantime too, the presidential Security Council had been established under the chairmanship of Skokov, and Pavel Grachev had been appointed as Defence Minister. Kozyrev was now obliged to take heed of the opinions of a diverse body of official and non-official views, and also of events that had been taking place in and around the former Soviet Union: the furore over the Kurils and Serbia, the events in Transdniester, the Crimean question, secession in South Ossetia, all seemed to underline the inability of Russian foreign policy to deal with the new geopolitical and geostrategic realities. The Foreign Ministry was under pressure not only from its 'enemies', but also from the President: El'tsin made it clear that the slow progress on formulation of a foreign policy concept was unacceptable. El'tsin criticised Russian diplomacy for failing to pay enough attention to relations with the Asia-Pacific but also for having entirely neglected Eastern Europe and even the third world. Finally he charged that Russia was now viewed as a state which always said 'yes' and allowed itself to be treated 'in ways in which no other great power could possibly be treated', and he singled out the US as a prime culprit.

Consequently, by November that year, Kozyrev, in the draft which was later modified and published in January 1993, declared Russia's intention to protect the rights of Russians in the former Soviet states 'above all by political and diplomatic methods...But if these means fail to put an end to encroachments on the lives and safety of our fellow citizens, the conception calls for the carefully considered application of economic and military force... By the time of El'tsin's approval of the final draft, in April 1993 (which was not published in full), the concept spoke of actions in the political sphere aimed at
undermining the integrity of the Russian Federation and integrative processes in the CIS and steps intended to weaken and undermine Russia's international prestige as threats to the security of the country and the vital interests of its citizens. In this way a clear link was established between the security of the Russian state and the CIS states, as disintegrative trends in the CIS seemed likely to reverberate within the Russian Federation itself. More attention was devoted also to the Asia-Pacific, but in particular, China. The earlier document had already singled out China as a 'great Asian country', while no specific mention was made of Japan, apart from the general context of the Asia-Pacific. This final document again underscored China's importance, while Japan came a firm second in the hierarchy: special attention was now devoted to China as 'the region's most important state in geopolitical and economic terms.' The question of finding ways to resolve the territorial dispute with Japan was mentioned, but it was stressed that this should not be to the detriment of Russia's national interests.

The final draft was drawn up as a result of cooperation between several different agencies and ministries, including the Ministry of Defence and the Foreign Intelligence Service, and two Committees of the Supreme Soviet, the Joint Committee on Defence and Security Questions, and the Joint Committee on International Affairs, as well as the presidential Security Council, whose head directly supervised the work. In addition, the report of the Council on Foreign and Defence Policy, 'Strategy for Russia', published in August 1992, was cited as a major influence on the final concept. In the economic area, the concept seemed to echo the views put forward by Civic Union members, including Rutskoi. Concern was expressed that the process of opening up the Russian economy would lead to a weakening of Russia's economic independence, the degradation of her technological and industrial potential, and an increase of specialisation as a supplier of raw materials. This was seen to be a result not only of internal, but also external factors, in particular attempts to oust Russia from a range of foreign markets, continued lack of access to advanced technology, and also the unregulated nature of economic relations with the former republics. In the section on military and economic
security emphasis is placed also on any actions that would undermine Russia's defence potential and its position in the world arms markets.\textsuperscript{31} The influence of the ‘Strategy for Russia’ as well as of consultations with representatives of the legislature and executive mentioned above, is evident: the 'Strategy' stated that Russia should have “a strategy of aggressively asserting Russian economic and business interests abroad” which included arms sales.\textsuperscript{32} Just a month before the 'Strategy for Russia' was published, the head of 'Oboroneksport', Sergei Karaoglanov, said in an interview that Moscow's readiness to support sanctions against Iraq, Yugoslavia and Libya had cost Russia in terms of hard currency earnings from arms sales, and that aid won from the West in the last two years had amounted to less than what could have been earned through such sales. Similar criticisms were made by Aleksandr Rutskoi, who concluded that when certain deputies and government officials called for reducing arms exports, one could almost believe that they were 'lobbying in the interests of US arms dealers.'\textsuperscript{33}

\textit{Conflicts of Interest with the West.}

It was now made clear that Russia's interests would not always coincide with the West, and indeed could even conflict. Evgenii Primakov, head of the SVR, had already emphasised this point at the MID conference in February 1992. He said that as it was essential for Russia to pursue her own policies vis-à-vis China, India, Japan, Europe and the Near East, it was very likely that in pursuing such policies Russia would come into conflict with other states. Primakov also deplored the recent slowing of integrative processes within the CIS and described this as the ‘infantile illness of sovereignty’. Nuclear weapons were deemed to be essential while other states still possess them, and in addition the idea of parity should not be abandoned entirely. 'Russia is Europe and Asia, and geopolitical factors continue to play an enormous role in the elaboration of her foreign policy. Without such a geopolitical scope Russia cannot be great...History does not eradicate geopolitical values.'\textsuperscript{34} In December 1992 Kozyrev stunned the world community by making a speech which was widely interpreted as a return to Cold War rhetoric - in fact, it was
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a spoof, designed to alert the world to the kind of foreign policy they could expect from Russia if the 'red-brown coalition' came to power. He explained afterwards that the speech was a compilation of 'the demands that are being made by what is by no means the most extreme opposition in Russia'. The speech noted that the Russian tradition was

in large part, if not primarily, in Asia, and this puts limits on our convergence with Western Europe. We see as essentially unaltered...the objectives of NATO and the Western European Union, which are working out plans to strengthen their military presence in the Baltics and other regions on the territory of the former Soviet Union and to interfere in Bosnia and the internal affairs of Yugoslavia. The sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were evidently dictated by this course. We demand that they be rescinded.

He also stated that the former Soviet space was a 'post-imperial space, on which Russia will have to defend its interests using all available means, including military and economic'. Kozyrev later said that another goal of his 'shock therapy' was to see what world reaction would be to a change in Russian foreign policy. One conjecture was that: 'most of the theses that the Minister used were taken from an article by a well-known figure in the Civic Union who at one time was instructed to prepare a version of a foreign-policy platform for the bloc.' 35 That same month, Egor Gaidar was dismissed and replaced as prime minister by Chernomyrdin, a close ally of the Civic Union.


There are striking similarities between the evolution of the foreign policy concept and the military doctrine, which was finally adopted in November 1993, after the dissolution of the Supreme Soviet. Discussions on a military doctrine began in May 1992 at the time of the creation of the Russian Federation armed forces and the appointment of Pavel Grachev as Minister of Defence. Initially, it had been thought that a joint CIS military doctrine could be adopted, but as conflicts erupted around the edge, and even within, the
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Russian Federation, it became clear that a CIS-wide doctrine was inconceivable. Debates within the military on the doctrine revealed differing views on threat perception and military reform in general. Grachev presented himself as a reformer strongly in favour of downsizing and the defensive nature of the proposed doctrine. Conservative analysts, in particular, General Igor' Rodionov (at the time, chief of the military academy), supported the no-first-use pledge, but believed that Russia should ensure the protection of certain vital interests. Among these he listed continuing access for Russia to the Baltic and Black Seas, and the undesirability of forces of a third country being stationed in the Baltic States. Rodionov specifically noted moreover, that NATO continued to pose a threat to Russia, as it might take advantage of ethnic conflicts within Russia to bring about the disintegration of the Federation itself. Like the final version of the Foreign Policy Concept, the draft doctrine of May 1992 stated that Russia might have to use military force to protect the rights of Russians in the former republics. There seemed then to be a harmonisation of policy between the Foreign and Defence Ministries, and the dissolution of the legislature in autumn 1993 appeared to set the seal on this state of affairs. By the end of that year, both institutions were having to come to terms with a new development: the mooted expansion of NATO eastwards. The military doctrine defined as an immediate threat to Russian security an introduction of foreign troops into neighbouring states by a regional organisation without Russian agreement, but also the maintenance of stability in regions adjoining Russia, including Eastern European states - a sign that NATO's expansion would not be taken lightly.

The final version of the Military Doctrine differed little from earlier drafts, and was adopted hurriedly, and without the approval of the legislature. The use of the military for internal policing had been legitimised by its involvement in the storming of parliament, so that El'tsin now owed a heavy debt to the armed forces who had gained 'enhanced political status as rescuers of the fatherland.' This new status put a serious brake on military reform, as El'tsin promised not to make further cuts in defence spending. The proposed expansion of NATO only added fuel to arguments from the military and other
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circles against military downsizing: "'We may not cut the army to the scope of armed forces of a minor nation without thorough thinking'" commented the chairman of the Duma Defence Committee, Sergei Iushenkov, in February 1994.\(^{39}\) Military interests were now more than ever intertwined with national interests, as the military had become not only an instrument for use in conflicts within the CIS, but also the guarantor of stability and statehood of Russia itself. Khasbulatov had emphasised this point at the MID conference in 1992 – ‘the armed forces, whether we want them or not, are not just an abstract factor of policy, but also an instrument of policy.'\(^{40}\)

1993 - Disillusionment with the West sets in.

At first, the Westernist group, including Kozyrev, believed that the disappearance of the Cold War would render NATO essentially redundant, and that Russia’s new military leaders ‘simply cannot think ...of NATO as Russia’s adversary.'\(^{41}\) The issue of NATO’s expansion served, however to unite official and unofficial policymakers and commentators. On a trip to Poland in August 1993, El’tsin seemed to give approval to Poland's intention to join NATO, declaring that such a move would not run counter to Russia's interests. There was an immediate outcry in the executive and legislature, but there was also condemnation from such liberals as Aleksei Arbatov, who now declared that it was ‘Russia's duty to push its defensive line as far westward as possible. This would have an impact on Moscow's policies with respect to Kaliningrad province, the Baltics, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova and the East European countries.' Arbatov concluded that this was what ‘the "new political thinking" has led to - NATO vanguards on Russia's doorstep.'\(^{42}\) Primakov (then still head of the Foreign Intelligence Service) outlined the security implications in a report entitled ‘Prospects for the Expansion of NATO and Russia’s Interests’, charging that NATO's expansion would violate the ‘principle of the balance of power... Thus, the conventional arms quotas not only for the potential new members of NATO but also for the CIS countries, Russia above all, would be called into question.'\(^{43}\)
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The West had supported the violent storming of the Parliament building, but ironically the results of the parliamentary elections in 1993 showed the public’s rejection of El’tsin. Many concluded that the West's support for El’tsin's actions made a mockery of so-called Western democracy and respect for human rights: 'Every shell fired at the White House was a shot fired straight at the foundations of Western democracy, completely debunking the legends that had been created around it...'

The Russian public clearly had no confidence in Western-style democracy or economic reform, as it was plain to them from their falling standards of living that the West's offers of aid were empty promises, while at the same time the West was happy to support armed assault on Russia's legislature. The strong showing for Vladimir Zhirinovskii’s party the KPRF, was not so much a vote for his policies, as a vote against the El’tsin administration: ‘If the question of foreign aid figured at all in the preelection campaign, it was not in the arguments of the democrats in power (they had nothing to offer) but in those of Zhirinovskii and other radical critics of the regime (who emphasised that there was nothing to offer)'

Zhirinovskii's wild statements on the need for Russia's 'push to the South' and his dream that Russian soldiers would one day 'wash their boots in the warm waters of the Indian Ocean', are unlikely to have been taken very seriously by the voters. Nevertheless, his was the only campaign which really addressed the issue of Russia's place in the world and appealed to the sense of wounded pride that loss of empire had brought with it: 'Zhirinovsky's remarks frequently echoed popular sentiments, particularly on the need for Russia to act as a great power in the international arena.' This, compounded with the seeming lack of a concrete definition of Russia's national interests by the other main contenders, and in particular their inattention to the problem of the rights of ethnic Russians in the former republics, goes some way to explaining Zhirinovskii's success. Aleksei Bogaturov, noting that a new nation-state requires a 'national idea' which should play 'an integrative role', suggested that ‘...the threat comes not from the upsurge of nationalism in Russia, but from the fact that it is not present in the form of a national-democratic
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However, one should not overestimate Zhirinovskii’s success, as the combined seats of the Communist and the pro-Communist Agrarian parties outnumbered those gained by Zhirinovskii’s party. In addition, Gaidar’s party ‘Russia’s Choice’ did fairly well, but was essentially on its own, while the Fundamentalist-Nationalists and the Communists in the majority. The centrist Civic Union gained no seats in the new Duma at all, having failed to convince the voters that they had any clear political platform to offer (Travkin’s DPR successfully standing separately): Aleksandr Rutskoi was, of course, no longer in the grouping and the remaining leaders had little charisma or authority.

The West’s offer to Russia and the former Soviet states of the Partnership for Peace programme at the end of 1993 appeared at first to be an ideal way of quieting the general anti-Western feeling in the new Duma. However, the debate soon became a hostage to more great-power assertiveness, in particular as NATO was seen to be taking advantage of the Yugoslav crisis to extend its influence in Eastern Europe in general, without Russia’s participation. The Yugoslav crisis served to highlight the more assertive policy vis-à-vis the West, which declared that Russia’s interests did not always coincide with the West’s. Russia, indeed, saw itself as having special interests in Eastern Europe, commensurate with its own status as a Eurasian power. So, by March 1994, Kozyrev, the erstwhile Westerniser, was declaring that ‘certain illusions must be rejected. Some people in the West have actually succumbed to the fantasy that a partnership can be built with Russia on the principle of “if the Russians are good guys now, they should follow us in every way”.’ Back-pedalling furiously, he went on to identify himself as one of a group of ‘pragmatic politicians’ who had realised from the start that Russia was ‘doomed to being a great power’, which means ‘it can only be an equal partner, not a junior one.’ Secondly, he noted, partnership did not mean ‘renouncing a firm - aggressive, if you will - policy of defending one's own national interests...’ Another illusion, which he described as standing in the way of partnership with the US, was ‘the almost maniacal desire to see only one leading power in today's world -the United States.’ Kozyrev concluded by
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saying that if Russia's democrats agreed to a subordinate role in international decision-making, then this would only be playing into the hands of 'nationalistic and reactionary forces' in the domestic arena.49

Elt'sin made the link between Western actions in Yugoslavia, NATO's eastward expansion, America's desire for world hegemony, and CIS integration:

We have here the first indication of what might happen...when NATO comes right up to the Russian border...' If NATO expanded to the Russian border, he declared, 'you can already assume there are two military blocs...But we will quickly establish constructive links with all the former Soviet republics, which constitute a bloc, anyway.50

Of course this type of rhetoric has often been used to jolt the West into making concessions in Russia's favour, rather than representing actual policy. Nevertheless it is true that the priority accorded by Russia to CIS integration accelerated, in particular after the bombing of Bosnian Serb positions in autumn 1995.

The Partnership for Peace agreement was at first perceived by the Russian leadership as a possibility that NATO might be transformed into a purely political organisation, rather than as a military bloc aimed primarily at containing Russia. Russia agreed in June 1994 to adhere to the Partnership, but by the end of that year, as it became clear that the Eastern European states would become full members of NATO, the Russian leadership refused to sign the documents. In May 1995, Russia finally signed up to the PFP, but the 'partnership' never really got off the ground, the programme being viewed by Russia in any case as a sop designed to keep them quiet while NATO completed enlargement: 'the real intent [behind the Partnership programme] is to deal with some important strategic tasks behind a peacekeeping screen.'51

The Partnership for Peace programme was seen not as addressing the need for a pan-European security structure, but as a response to the anti-Russian feelings of those East European states aspiring to membership of NATO. The accession of former Soviet republics to the Programme appeared to
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demonstrate NATO's aim of breaking up the post-Soviet space in order to weaken Russia's strategic and political positions. One analyst, who opposed Russia joining the Programme, argued that Russia should create joint armed forces of 'a confederation of Eurasian states' which would replace the Warsaw Pact and serve 'as a second (the first being NATO) anchor of security in Europe, and as a buffer between NATO and Asia, especially China.'


By contrast, during 1994 Russian diplomacy with China was stepped up, in particular in the spheres of military cooperation. Setbacks for diplomacy were evident however, in the scant attention paid to Russian opinion by the United States and Japan during the nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula. Russia, together with China, refused at first to support UN sanctions against North Korea, because Washington had failed to consult Russia prior to submitting the proposal, despite the fact that Russia had hitherto generally followed the line taken by the United States and Japan. Given the presence in the Duma of a 'pro-North Korea lobby', it seemed as though Kozyrev and El’tsin were simply back-pedalling in order to avoid further attack from these critics. A similar lack of consultation on Bosnia seemed to highlight Russia's lack of influence in world politics. The fact that in March 1995 North Korea, Russia's erstwhile ally eventually accepted nuclear reactors from South Korea, under pressure from the United States and Japan (the humiliation was compounded when North Korea insisted on negotiating solely with the United States) was a further source of frustration. Kozyrev's critics saw this lack of influence as a logical outcome of his pro-Western policy, which had led to increased contacts with South Korea at the expense of Russia's traditional ally. The developing relationship with China was a useful tool for the foreign policymakers to draw attention to the 'great power status' of both China and Russia, and served simultaneously to highlight dissatisfaction with Western policies. Thus, Chernomyrdin, on a visit to China in May 1994, noted that relations between China and Russia influenced the entire Asia-Pacific region, and that no issue there could be discussed without the participation of these
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two states. The final communiqué stressed the coincidence of the two countries’ views on fundamental international problems, and declared the aim of strengthening cooperation in regional and world affairs. Analyses in the press focused on the contrast between the active China policy and the lack of interest in improving relations with Japan, stating that in 'El’tsin's entourage, beginning with Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, there are no politicians prepared to fulfill the provisions of the 1956 Soviet-Japanese declaration…’ and concluding that the level of diplomacy had ‘fallen to that of Poland’. It is no coincidence that at this time, Japan was objecting to Russia’s fully-fledged participation in the G-7 talks, held in May 1994. Japan's insistence on linking Russian territorial concessions to large scale economic aid was problematic, but Russia could not rely on the United States and Japan, the leading military and economic powers in the Asia-Pacific respectively, to increase her profile, 'as this would mean a concomitant weakening of American and Japanese influence. China was therefore increasingly being viewed as the only partner in the region that, together with Russia, could act as a counterweight to the US-Japan alliance and Japanese economic power.

A measure of the changed views on Russian foreign policy by 1994 can be found in a survey conducted of students of the MGIMO and various faculties of MGU, a spectrum of views of the future foreign policy and political elite. The survey compared responses to those of a survey of politicians and experts in the foreign policy elite, conducted in 1993, (the majority of whom were graduates of the MGIMO and MGU) There were four main areas of questioning; 1. How the respondents assessed the specifics of the present international system and Russia's role in this system; 2. Which countries did they see as potential allies or opponents of Russia; 3. How did they think Russia should conduct itself in relation to its partners; 4. How did they view Russia's internal problems. The survey aimed to establish the extent of differentiation in the students' views and whether this correlated to a similar level among Russia's politicians.
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Thirty-one per cent believed Russia should attain the status of one of the world's great powers. A further twenty-four per cent believed Russia should aim to restore its status as the second superpower along with the US, although only 10 per cent believed Russia should be the leading regional power on the territory of the former USSR. The survey concluded that, by comparison with the 1993 survey, despite the end of the Cold War, the number of respondents who saw the world in bipolar terms had increased sixfold.

Regarding cooperation with the West, thirty per cent thought that the West was interested in helping Russia to solve its economic problems. However, thirty-eight per cent believed the West was helping Russia for its own advantage. Finally, twenty-five per cent believed the West was not interested in helping Russia, as Russia was a potential competitor.

Despite these qualifications, forty-two per cent believed Russian interests were best served by cooperating with Western Europe, only thirteen per cent believed ties should be restored with Eastern Europe, and a further thirteen per cent saw the US as a promising partner. Fifty-two per cent believed substantial aid from the West was important, while forty-two per cent saw such aid as of little importance.

When asked which country they considered to be Russia’s ‘enemy number one’, fifteen per cent said there were no such countries, by comparison to 1993 when 30 per cent gave the same answer. In the present survey, among concrete enemies, the US was named by eleven per cent, Japan and the Baltic states by seven per cent, and China by one per cent. It should be noted that in 1993 only one respondent considered the US to be Russia's enemy.

Finally, the majority of respondents believed Russia held a special place in the international system because it was a Eurasian country with a unique history and culture - seventy per cent believed the attainment of such a status to be important, or very important. With regard to Russia's military and strategic priorities, it is clear that compared to 1993 a greater number of respondents
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believe Russia's military potential needed to be strengthened. Sixty-one per cent believed Russia should maintain strategic parity with the West, compared with forty-seven per cent in 1993. At the same time, forty-two per cent believed that active competition with other developed countries for global influence by non-military means was the best way for Russia to assure her status in the world, while only twenty-four per cent saw the way to achieve this as being via attempts to gain influence in international structures like the EC, NATO or GATT. The lack of confidence in international organisations is striking and mirrors the frustration of Russia's policymakers in making their voices heard in these fora.

The view that Russia should compete for influence with the countries of the developed world has been a major theme in the arguments of more pragmatic policymakers and commentators. In addition a sizeable proportion of the Pragmatic Nationalists view strategic parity as increasingly important, particularly in view of the expansion of NATO. Karaganov, for one, advocated continuing reliance on nuclear weapons due to various geopolitical factors: he singled out the potential threat from China in particular as a reason for 'greater political reliance on nuclear weapon.' This view is a common one, across the political spectrum, and has been echoed by Aleksei Arbatov in 1995, who, while admitting that Russia would not face any direct threats against its territory in the foreseeable future, stressed that strategic nuclear forces should be retained, as this guaranteed great power status as well as functioning as a deterrent. He noted, moreover, the possibility that in ten to fifteen years time, a country like Kazakhstan might need Russia's nuclear guarantee to deter, for example, China. It is interesting to note Arbatov's changed stance on nuclear weapons since 1993, when he did not include himself in the same category as Karaganov, Stankevich et al, (the category of 'Centrist and Moderate Conservatives') who advocated 'preservation of substantial military power, emphasising nuclear weapons... Karaganov also emphasised the utility of preserving a certain quantity of weapons 'as a treatment for the growing Russian psychological complex of weakness, vulnerability and humiliation... Since the announcement by the United
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States and Western Europe of NATO's enlargement by the year 1999, Russian political commentators have noted the increased salience of the nuclear factor. Lukin for example emphasised that if NATO came right up to Russia's borders, it would be essential for Russia to have nuclear guarantees - her own nuclear guarantees, which would of course call into question the START-II treaty.\(^{61}\)

1995 - Continuing Conflict with the West.

Despite certain setbacks for Russian foreign policy, such as the EU's refusal to extend a partnership agreement to Russia while military intervention in Chechnia continued, a consensus was emerging on Russian foreign policy: there were few who would now challenge the priority of the 'near abroad' or who would welcome the expansion of NATO. A new framework was being shaped for Russian foreign policy which gave more prominence to geopolitical considerations, thus strengthening the Asian orientation of Russian foreign policy, in particular with regard to China, but also South Korea, India and the ASEAN countries. The increased importance of China was more and more linked by Russian policymakers to the priorities for both countries of internal stability, and their mutual interest in combating Muslim fundamentalism, as well as an increasing mutual agreement on the desirability of preventing the emergence of a unipolar world. Russia was able to take comfort in the fact that its relations with China were going from strength to strength, and voted against the adoption of an anti-China resolution in the United Nations, described by China's representative as "the result of a political confrontation with China that the West is carrying out with ulterior motives".\(^{62}\) The fact that, unlike the Western countries who adopted the resolution, China had not protested at Russian actions in Chechnia, clearly contributed to the Russian support. So, while Russia was facing difficulties in its relations with the West, 1995 was, by contrast, a year of acceleration on the Asian front, Russia submitting an application to join APEC, whose members were also, like China (bar the United States) uninterested in condemning
Russia’s human rights record. At the same time there was a general sense of pessimism in the commentaries that appeared in the newspapers and periodicals. Russia's attempts to lay claim to great-power status were not being heeded, and seemed at times to be mere rhetoric. 'Kozyrev's entire policy in 1994 was aimed at putting proof of Russia's greatness on El'tsin's desk, in some cases by pointedly challenging the Americans', wrote Aleksei Pushkov, concluding that tough talk was having no effect on the West's policies, simply bolstering arguments in favour of enlarging NATO to contain Russia. Kozyrev and El'tsin had clearly not heeded the warnings of the authors of the second 'Strategy for Russia' (published in May 1994) which criticised the tendency of 'high-ranking officials' to indulge in 'great-power rhetoric which would not bring results in foreign policy'.

Many were coming to the conclusion that international organisations dominated by the West were not ready to accept Russia on an equal basis: yes, Russia could participate in the G-7 talks, but only on the political level; yes, the West believed in the resolution of conflicts in the post-Soviet space, but no, the OSCE would not help to resolve those conflicts; yes, the rights of Russians were being violated in Estonia, but Estonia will still be accepted before Russia into the Council of Europe; no, Russia is no longer the West's enemy, but NATO will expand in any case. Russia's range of foreign policy options seemed to be narrowing, and there was still no real framework in place that would expand the room for manoeuvre. Sergei Rogov argued that in the three years since the formation of the Russian Federation, Russia had failed to gain a place in 'the key economic, political and military bodies created by the West…' He concluded that Russia was essentially on its own 'having lost all levers of political influence in Eastern Europe and having abandoned integration of the former Soviet republics…'

The problem was that Moscow still tended to view the world through the prism of US-Russian relations and in terms of balance of power considerations. Thus even a liberal commentator such as Pushkov now spoke of the behaviour of states in the international system as being 'dictated not so
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much by the predisposition and sympathies of their leaders as by an objective correlation of forces and the ability to exploit the weaknesses of other states for their own interests. Pavel Fel'gengauer even suggested that as a response to NATO, Russia ‘could conclude military alliances with...anti-Western fundamentalist regimes’, including Iran, which ‘could become a strategic ally in the future’. He predicted that such alliances meant that the NATO countries would have to 'divert enormous amounts of manpower and resources to contain this new "southern" threat, while Moscow would probably receive additional income if the threat to the stability of oil deliveries from the Middle East significantly raised world energy prices. Thus, even a weak Russia could, in principle, resist the last superpower. This line was echoed by Karaganov, in an article entitled 'Let us Recall “Neo-Gaullism”'; he argued that, even in its weakened position, Russia could force the West to ‘make concessions incommensurate with Russia's real strength’, so that deepening relations with the West could be combined with a policy of independence and a gathering of economic and political strength 'to prevent situations that could perpetuate our weakness'. A speech by Primakov (then still head of the SVR), in December 1995, designated the expansion of NATO a security threat and stressed that Russian foreign policy should seek to prevent the emergence of a global hegemon. El’tsin too, in his annual address to the Federal Assembly in February 1995, had underlined attempts to take advantage of Russia's weakened position, ‘by forces abroad that fear the restoration of Russia's might on the basis of democratic market reforms’, forces which were ‘trying to push our country back from its historical boundaries and minimise its international role.’ He went on’ the potential for relations with the East is immeasurably greater. It is important to step up our policy and diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region...’ One article on the Russia-China relationship denied a Japanese charge that Moscow was trying to speed rapprochement with Beijing as a restraining influence on the US, but that ‘processes occurring in international relations are objectively nudging Russia and China toward closer cooperation with each other'.
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In the parliamentary elections of December 1995, it was once more clear that the parties of reform and the pro-government parties, such as the centrist ‘Nash Dom Rossiia’, (set up by Chernomyrdin) were unable to present a united front against nationalist and pro-Communist parties. ‘Iabloko’, for example the party headed by Grigoriy Iavlinskyi, Vladimir Lukin, and Boldyrev, refused to ally with Gaidar's 'Russia's Choice', which was very low in the popularity stakes in any case. The Nationalists were, however, also divided, and ultimately Ziuganov's party won the most seats, mainly on a platform of great power ideology and the 'reunification' of the Russian people by reuniting Russia with Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus. The causes of Russia's present predicament were identified as lying above all in 'the subjugation of Russian interests to the West and in the unlawful dismemberment of the USSR.' In fact most of the parties had little of substance to say on the subject of Russian foreign policy, with the notable exception of 'Iabloko' (where one detected the hand of Vladimir Lukin). It is clear then that foreign policy issues were not uppermost in the Russian voters' minds when they cast their votes. However, the issue of Russian minorities in the CIS, and also in the Baltic states, probably was significant (not least given the spectacle of ethnic Russians falling victim to the Russian military intervention in Chechnia), which may help to explain the Communists' success. The pro-government 'Nash Dom Rossiia' emphasised the importance of stepping up integration within the CIS, in particular noting the importance of Russia as the 'economic locomotive' for closer ties. Zhirinovskii's party predictably attacked the West as intent on destroying Russia and dividing it into a multiplicity of states dependent on the West, and advocated restoring ties with Iraq, Libya, Cuba and North Korea. The Iabloko programme was strongly pragmatic and advocated Russia first regaining its strength and 'rebuilding our civilised space'. It also noted that relations with the near abroad should be the first priority of Russian foreign policy, but integration should only take place on a voluntary basis. Ultimately the Communists may also have garnered support by their anti-Chechen stance - the fact that 'Nash Dom Rossiia' was closely identified with the government would have counted against them in this case. The further fact that, embarrassingly, Zhirinovskii
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supported the Russian government's intervention in Chechnia may have contributed to his reduced share of the vote compared to 1993, although the vote for the LDPR in 1993 was more of a protest vote than anything else.

One thing that was clear by the end of 1995 was that Kozyrev would have to go: he had lost all credibility as a guardian of Russian interests abroad, and was liable to have come under renewed attack in the new Duma. By appointing a new foreign minister, one who had no associations with subjugation to the West, El’tsin might at last be able to muffle the opposition and give a fresh start to Russian foreign policy.


It was immediately evident when Primakov was appointed Foreign Minister that he would face fewer problems than his predecessor in carrying out his duties: both Zhirinovskii and Ziuganov welcomed his appointment; Ziuganov declared it “implies open efforts to protect Russia's national interests which were sacrificed to the enemies of our state”, while Zhirinovskii noted Primakov's expertise as an Orientalist - he will “turn Russia’s foreign policy toward the Arab world, India and China.” Praise came too from the centre, as Lukin emphasised that Primakov did not hold 'extreme super-ideological views', he was neither a 'Mr Niet' (like Gromyko) nor a 'Mr Yes' (like Kozyrev) but rather 'Mr Commonsense'. It was also a fact that despite his former links to Mikhail Gorbachev, Primakov was well known in the West for his attempts to negotiate with Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War of 1991 - he was well used then, unlike Kozyrev, to making the United States and the West aware of the fact that Russian interests could often be rather different.

Primakov made it abundantly clear, at his first press conference, that Russia’s foreign policy as a whole should reflect her status as a 'great power', a status only attainable if Russia concentrated on priorities both at home and in the
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'near abroad'. He particularly noted the need to create external conditions to strengthen Russia's territorial integrity, to foster integrative tendencies within the CIS, and to stabilise regional conflicts in the post-Soviet space and the former Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, he also emphasised the need to continue building relations with the West, specifically an 'equal, mutually beneficial partnership.' He made a point of touring the CIS countries shortly after his appointment in a clear bid to 'demonstrate' the priority of the CIS for Russian foreign policy, unlike Kozyrev who made his first trips as minister to the West.

1996 was thus a year of all-out action on the 'near abroad' front and relations with the West remained locked into the debate over NATO enlargement. Although a temporary halt seemed to have been called at the end of 1995, Russia's hopes that the reelection of El'tsin as President in 1996 would make the West reconsider its plans did not materialise. Arguments, that NATO expansion would only strengthen anti-democratic forces within Russia, went unheeded. 1996 saw continued emphasis on the need for the West to treat Russia as an equal partner in world affairs and an active policy of defending Russian interests, in particular Russian interests in the CIS. El'tsin had drawn attention in his annual address to the tendency of 'certain countries' to work against Russian interests in the CIS. Primakov noted, however, that Russian moves to accelerate CIS integration, which he described as an 'objective' process could clash with those of the West, notably the US. He cited the USSR's own negative stance on European integration in the 1960s and 70s, which he said, was a mirror image of the West's present stance on CIS integration. The counterplan to combat the United States' attempts to create a unipolar world was to be a diversification of foreign relations with more room for manoeuvre - Primakov singled out China as the best example of such diversification, as this relationship was 'an equal partnership' based on common interests.

One of the highlights of 1996 was the signing in March of a quadripartite agreement between Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and a
bilateral agreement between Russia and Belarus, which were seen as the first steps in a programme of 'variable speed' integration. This came in the wake of the denunciation in the Duma of the Belovezhsk Accords, which had set the seal on the break-up of the Soviet Union. Although there were initially fears that the resolution could damage moves towards CIS integration and even strengthen the case for NATO's expansion, there was condemnation from the CIS states, and integration seemed in fact to gather pace. El'tsin and Primakov, by contrasting their own gradualist, and voluntary plans for reintegration with those of Ziuganov and Zhirinovskii, were able to present their own vision as relatively moderate. Further proof of the CIS' viability came when, on El'tsin's visit to China in April, an agreement was signed between Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and China on confidence-building in the border area. More significantly, El'tsin received support from China on the issue of NATO expansion and the final declaration from the summit made clear the two countries' objections to "hegemonism in international politics". While such rhetoric did not lessen the West's intention to accept new members into NATO, Russia's unwavering position on the expansion plans throughout 1996 did show that Russia's interests would have to be reckoned with to some degree at least. Russia was also able to garner support for its anti-NATO stance by getting CIS states to agree to oppose NATO expansion jointly, as the CIS states had a 'common interest' in the expansion of NATO's military structures. At the same time, Primakov denounced forces in the West for their negative attitude towards CIS integration and 'those who would like to see a unipolar world'. Subsequently, on 14 August, the CIS Council of Defence Ministers issued a declaration condemning the eastward expansion of NATO, although Ukraine declined to sign the statement.

The issue of NATO dominated Russian foreign policy in the second half of 1996, as the West's plans for eastward enlargement gained momentum. Accordingly, statements by leading government officials reflected this preoccupation. Thus, Rodionov in a controversial speech criticised American attempts to ensure world hegemony by 'relying on the NATO bloc'. He
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elaborated further, that the expansion of NATO eastward was a direct military threat to Russia. Regarding the CIS he accused the West of aiming to violate its integrity and seeking to intensify conflicts in the region. The West’s underlying aim, Rodionov charged, was to prevent Russia from regaining political influence, as well as military and economic power. The MID was quick to point out that the speech contained only Rodionov’s personal views and did not constitute an inherent part of Russian military doctrine. However, he was voicing the fears of many parts of the military, concerned by reduced military budgets. Pointing to new military threats would be one way to ensure increased budgetary allocations. Some speculated that Russia would seek to create a military bloc to counteract NATO expansion, but even Rodionov denied this, while reiterating his opposition to NATO’s plans.

1997 - Russia Carries Out A Damage Limitation Exercise.

Popular opposition to the enlargement of NATO found expression in the establishment of an ‘anti-NATO’ grouping in the Duma in January 1997. Predictably, both Zhirinovskii, leader of the LDPR, and Ziuganov, leader of the KPRF, spoke strongly against NATO enlargement. Zhirinovskii suggested creating an “eastern military bloc” to include Russia, Belarus, Serbia, Cyprus, Iraq, China, and so on—effectively Russia and Belarus plus the leading buyers of Russian weapons. Ziuganov’s statements were less extreme, but he noted that the expansion of NATO could destroy all existing arms reduction agreements. More moderate voices, such as Vladimir Lukin, said that Russia could do little to halt the enlargement plans, as its poor economic position was not conducive to the exertion of influence in world affairs. However, he was clear that if NATO military bases appeared close to Russia’s borders, then a response would be vital. Lukin concluded that formation of a strategic alliance between Russia and China would largely depend on how the problem of NATO enlargement will be resolved. In his annual address to the parliament, in February, El’tsin described NATO expansion as opposed to Russian security interests as it would once again divide Europe: at the same time stressing that Russia did not wish to adopt an isolationist policy.
For the moment disagreements with the West, in particular the United States continued to highlight the strains in Russia’s relationship with the Western world. The exchange of barbs over Russian sales of light water reactors to India, and S-300 surface-to-air system to Cyprus, was a good opportunity for Russian officials to lash out at the United States and accuse them of double standards.90

Despite these differences between Russia and the West, and Russian threats to form alliances to counteract NATO expansion, Russia continued to seek cooperation with the West. Thus, talks began on signing an agreement between NATO and Russia that would take into account Russian interests. Primakov noted that while Russia would never cease to oppose NATO expansion, in particular, the inclusion of the Baltic states, its policy now was to “‘minimise the damages [NATO expansion] will cause to our national interests, and the deep divisions that could appear in Europe after the bloc accepts new members’”.91 Russia was able to find some comfort from the fanfare of the third Russo-Chinese summit, held in April, when the Chinese expressed understanding for Russia’s opposition to NATO enlargement, and the two sides declared their joint opposition to the attempts of one state to dominate world affairs.92 Finally, in May, the ‘Founding Act on Relations between Russia and NATO’ was signed which encoded cooperation between Russia and the West, albeit not granting Russia the veto it had requested over NATO actions. Still, the agreement was hailed by El’tsin as a sign that the West could not ignore Russian interests and that Russia would now be able to discuss security issues with the West on an equal basis.

The issue of NATO expansion had also thrown into relief Russia’s own attempts at military reform, which were seriously overdue: START II remained unratified for example. In February, the secretary of Presidential Security Council Council suggested that Russia launch a nuclear first-strike if attacked with conventional weapons.93 Although the MID denied at the time that this represented official policy, Primakov later confirmed that Russia
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reserved the right to retain its first-strike policy, as Russia was reducing its conventional forces and therefore might not be able to deter aggression. Meanwhile, Rodionov had been dismissed in May, apparently due to disagreements over military reform with the secretary of the (now defunct) Defence Council, Iurii Baturin. The new concept for military reform, advocated by Rodionov’s replacement General Igor’ Sergeev (previously head of the Strategic Rocket Forces), was described as “reform under an umbrella of nuclear missiles” – a view which found agreement in civilian circles also. Thus, Arbatov and Lukin both drew attention to the continued need to emphasise strategic nuclear forces - as Lukin said, “[L]oss of parity would take us out of the group of great powers”. 

In 1997 too, great strides were made in improving relations with Japan, while relations with China continued to be hailed as the crowning achievement of Russian foreign policy. The November Russo-Chinese summit reiterated the existence of a strategic partnership geared towards alliance in the twenty-first century, but there were cracks in the edifice. Disagreements regarding economic cooperation and low trade turnover were beginning to show, and the content of the relationship appeared to be increasingly of a declarative nature. However, its symbolic importance amid fears of NATO expansion to Russian borders was clear, and it was hailed as evidence of moves towards a multipolar world.

The year ended with the signing of the ‘Concept of National Security’, a comprehensive document which outlined Russia’s views on state strategy and the defence of both internal and external threats. The Concept drew attention to the fact that Russia’s capacity to influence ‘cardinal issues of global affairs’ had significantly reduced and deplored the lack of effectiveness of organisations such as the UN, OSCE and CIS. In a further display of frankness, the Concept admitted that Russia remained isolated from the integrative processes taking place in the Asia-Pacific (although Russia was admitted to APEC in December 1997), which was ‘unacceptable for Russia as an influential European-Asian power with traditional interests in Europe, the
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Middle East, Central and South Asia, and in the Asia-Pacific region. Threats posed to Russia in the global arena included attempts by other states to counteract Russia’s strengthening as one of the centres of influence in the multipolar world.96

Conclusion.

Thus, the optimism with which the Russian Federation began, was tempered by a sense of betrayal by the West. Contradictions within the elite and Russian society as a whole, which had already begun to emerge under Gorbachev, were only temporarily subsumed. The expansion of NATO therefore acted as a catalyst, producing a new consensus on Russian foreign policy. In fact the foreign policy apparatus had ‘forgotten about geopolitics’, as Aleksei Pushkov argued, from 1988 to 1992 ‘Moscow rejected the logic of geopolitics while the West showed that it was alive and well. This alone destroyed the Kozyrev concept of conscious subjugation to American leadership.’97 It took Evgenii Primakov to remind Russia of the importance of geopolitics – he had early on made clear his stance on ‘geopolitical realities’. Pushkov was specifically referring to Zbigniew Brzezinski’s advocacy of a Western policy of 'geopolitical pluralism' vis-à-vis the former Soviet republics, in effect encouraging centrifugal tendencies within the CIS to counter Russian domination.98 In effect, the West’s determination to expand the alliance has provided Russian policy-makers with even stronger evidence that the West seeks to undermine Russian influence in the CIS, and has helped to justify the acceleration of CIS integration.

In conclusion Russia seems finally to have decided on its main priorities in both the near and the far abroad. Significant steps have been taken to assert these priorities in the post-Soviet space, steps which may better assure Russia’s security. Simultaneously, Russia has moved towards a more sober and realistic assessment of the possibilities and limitations in this sphere - for example, it has acknowledged the improbability of the Baltic states ever joining the CIS. But the danger remained that Russian foreign policy might
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overstretch itself by attempting to ‘engage on all fronts’, while in Northeast Asia, relying on China and ignoring Japan, could turn out to be a short-sighted policy, tactical rather than strategic, in view of the fact that China would be an extremely powerful country by the next century. Excessive reliance on military instruments in the CIS may prove hard to sustain given budgetary constraints, and may endanger the course of long-overdue military reform.

Russia will continue to cooperate with the West, and, to his credit, Primakov’s ‘multivectored foreign policy’ has opened up the channels of communication with Japan. However, the West must ensure that Russia is not to be locked out of key security and economic institutions, otherwise the CIS may well become a new imperialist space, and China will continue to exploit Russia's conflicts with the West. As Nicolai Petro and Alvin Rubinstein have perceptively pointed out, the new realism in Russian foreign policy, while coming ‘at the expense of downgrading relations with the West and especially the United States is less a reflection of the rise of anti-Western sentiment... than of the new geopolitical realities that Russia now faces.’

What is clear however, is that there can be no return to the framework of the ‘New Thinking’. For, as Primakov has made clear, there is a middle way, which can serve an independent Russia's interests.

The subsequent chapters of this thesis (three and four) will examine how the evolution of a concept regarding Russia’s role in the world has been played out in Russian policy towards China and Japan respectively.

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4 Ibid.
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5 Astrid Tuminez has used the term 'Statist Nationalism' to describe the views not only of Stankevich, Rutskoi and Ambartsumov, but also Vladimir Lukin. She asserts that this group wishes to restore the borders of the Soviet Union. However, I do not believe that Lukin has ever held this opinion. See Astrid S. Tuminez, 'Russian Nationalism and the National Interest in Russian Foreign Policy', in Celeste A. Wallander, (ed.), The Sources of Russian Foreign Policy After the Cold War. Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1996, pp.41-69, p.48-51.; Aleksei Arbatov allows more scope for shades of opinion by dividing this group into 'Moderate Liberals', to include Lukin and himself, while including Rutskoi, Ambartsumov, Stankevich, and Migranian in the 'Centrist and Moderate Conservatives' group. See Aleksei Arbatov, 'Russia's Foreign Policy Alternatives', International Security, vol.18, no.2, 1993, pp.6-43, p.9-14; Margot Light has less differentiation and is closer to Tuminez's categorisation: see Margot Light, 'Foreign Policy Thinking', in Neil Malcolm et al, Internal Factors in Russian Foreign Policy, Oxford University Press for RIIA, Oxford, 1996, pp.33-101, p.34.


8 See Maksim Iusin, 'Moskva predlagaet zashchishchat' demokratiiu s pomoshch'iu politiceskikh sil OON', Izvestiia, 14 February 1992.


10 Andrei Kozyrev, 'Soiuz ostavil Rossiiu plokhoe vneshnepoliticheskoe nasledstvo', Nezavisimaia gazeta, 1 April 1992.

11 Migranian, 'Podlinnye i mnimye orientiry...'

12 From an article in Den', an extreme nationalist paper. Cited in Sergei Chugrov, 'Rossiia mezhdu vostokom i zapaden?', MEIMO, no.7, 1992, pp.76-85, p.82.

13 El'giz Pozdniakov, 'Rossiia- velikaia derzhava', Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn', no.1, 1993, pp.7-17, p.15.


16 Andrei Kozyrev, speaking at the MID conference, 'Preobrazhennaia Rossiia...', p.93.


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Kozyrev, ‘MID predlagaet i ostaiavaet...’

Chernov, ‘Natsional’nye interesy Rossii,...’

Ibid.

Cited in Light, in Malcolm et al, p.65.


See Staar, The New Military, p.32.


See his address to the MID conference, 1992, p.90.


Vladimir Zhirinovskii, Poslednyi brosok na iug, LDP, Moscow, 1993.


Interview with Arbatov, ‘U Rossiskoi armii est’ veroiatnyi protivnik’, Nezavisimoe voennoe obozrenie, no. 4, December 1995.


Karaganov, ‘Where is Russia going?’, p.30.

Interview with Lukin, ‘My okazalis’ v ochen plokhoi geopoliticheskoi situatsii’”, Nezavisimia gazeta, 17 March 1995.
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64 ‘Strategia dla Rossi (II)’, Nezavisimaia gazeta, 27 May 1994.


69 Speech at a meeting of the SVR on the seventy-fifty anniversary of the organisation’, cited in OMRJ Daily Digest (electronic mail), Part I, no.248, 22 December 1995.


77 Interview with Primakov, ‘Rossiia iischet novoe mesto v mire’, Izvestiia, 6 March 1996.

78 Report on Primakov’s speech at MGIMO (Moscow State Institute of International Relations), Moskovskie novosti, no.25, 25-30 June 1996.


80 Citied in OMRI Daily Digest, Part I, no.146, 30 July 1996.

81 See Ibid., no.158, 15 August 1996.

82 ‘Igor’ Rodionov vystupil za sozdanie oboronnogo soiuza stran SNG. Bezuuslovno, takaia pozitsiiu vyvzhit sozhdanie v NATO’, Nezavisimaia gazeta, 26 December 1996.

83 Deputy foreign minister, Grigorii Karas in, Interfax news agency, Moscow, in English, 0816 gmt, 5 January 1997, SWB, SU/2809 B/9, 6 January 1997.


86 Interfax news agency, Moscow, in English 0833 gmt, 14 January 1997, SWB, SU/2817 B/7, 15 January 1997.


88 Interfax news agency, Moscow, in English, 1113 gmt 7 January 1997, SWB, SU/2811 B/6, 8 January 1997.


90 See PTI News Agency, New Delhi, in English, 1729 gmt, 7 February 1997 SWB, SU/2839 B/13, 10 February 1997.

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97 Pushkov, ‘Vneshniaia politika Rossi...’
CHAPTER THREE.


"When we have no ideological barriers,... when we pursue reforms, including market relations, there can be hardly found two other countries which have such mutual interest, such possibilities for cooperation in the economic, social, intellectual and, naturally political spheres..."

Boris El’tsin.*

3.1 Bilateral Political, Military and Economic Relations.

The aim of this chapter is to give the broad outlines of the course of political and economic relations, mutual interests, and potential areas of conflict in bilateral Russo-Chinese relations. This first section is divided into two main parts: 3.1a) is an account of the chronological development of relations focusing on political and economic issues. Subsequently, the military aspects of the Russo-Chinese relationship are discussed in 3.1b). This first section is essential background in order to place in context the later, more analytical parts of this chapter, on the joint border (3.2), and, finally, on the broader context of relations (3.3).

3.1b) Political and Economic Relations.

The new Russia’s relations with China did not at first look promising. Diplomatic activity under Kozyrev’s stewardship was, as shown in chapter two, initially focused on the main economic powers of the West, which meant that Japan appeared to be the priority in Asia. An early remark by Kozyrev betrayed this stance: "Whether we have a stabilization fund, and whether we enter the world economy depends on the G-7 ... With all due respect, China is not a world economic leader for the time being."

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* El’tsin speaking just prior to his departure for Beijing to attend the first Russo-Chinese summit. Summary of World Broadcasts, Xinhua News Agency in English, 2103 gmt, 16 December 1992.
Nevertheless, one year into El’tsin’s incumbency as President of the Russian Federation, despite all expectations, the new state’s first summit was held in Beijing, rather than in Tokyo. Due to the ‘high drama’ engendered by the preparations for El’tsin’s stymied visit to Tokyo in September 1992, it seemed as if his trip to Beijing in December 1992 was the less important of the two, diplomatically speaking, or was simply intended to send a signal to Japan that Russia was perfectly capable of finding alternative allies in the Asia-Pacific. In fact, the Beijing summit laid the foundations for a qualitatively new relationship devoid of ideological considerations and continued Gorbachev’s policy of engagement with China. The assertion that it was ‘largely by default that China became the chief object of Russian diplomacy in Northeast Asia’\(^2\) is not borne out by the evidence. While courting the West and Japan for economic reasons, the diplomatic ball had already started rolling in China’s direction as early as December 1991, when Russia was still the RSFSR and Vladimir Lukin as Chair of the RSFSR parliamentary committee on International Affairs visited Beijing and ‘expressed understanding for China’s concern that the exit of the USSR would leave the United States as the lone hegemon.’\(^3\)

*Views of the Russian elite on China.*

While many drew attention to the dangers of neglecting China, the reasons cited were often very different. Sergei Stankevich and Sergei Goncharov both spoke of improving relations with China as a counterweight to the West, while more moderate, centrist voices such as Lukin emphasised the need for greater realism as Russia could ‘no longer rely on being stronger than China in economic terms which implied a difference in potential policies in the near future’.\(^4\)

Early articles by academics pointed to the need to accelerate the pace of relations with China, in particular as Russia was concerned that close cooperation with the United States could elicit negative reactions from China. One such academic, a noted Sinologist, warned that Russia’s reaction to developments in China and the Islamic world [presumably Iran and Iraq]
should be measured ‘in accordance with our own interests and not with the US reaction.’\(^5\) Of course being an employee of the Institute of the Far East in Moscow, a bastion of China specialists, Goncharov may have been thinking of his own career prospects,\(^6\) but there were numerous others whose voices were added to this warning. Lukin, at the time Russia’s ambassador to the United States, and a politician of centrist, pragmatic views stressed at a conference on Russian foreign policy: ‘It would be bad if our Far Eastern policy were a kind of “residual” policy. It should be one of the most intensive, consistent policies and aimed at creating the kind of level of interdependence, above all with China, which would rule out in our complicated times any kind of chance circumstances [...]’.\(^7\)

At the same time, the Foreign Ministry (MID), notably Georgii Kunadze, a Japanologist, and his superior, Kozyrev, with his background in Western European affairs, were accused of continuing and even exaggerating its Soviet predecessor’s “Euro-Americocentrism” (in the words of Goncharov) and moreover ‘displaying a tendency to relegate the South and East to a minor position’.\(^8\) Others pointed to the fact that states such as China, Turkey and India were attempting to integrate into the world economy but “without losing face and while protecting their own interests”, while partnership with the West and in particular Japan entailed substantial strategic concessions and playing the role of junior partner.\(^9\) The reasons for the MID’s shunning of China are best described as a combination of lack of expertise (i.e. Kunadze and Kozyrev’s backgrounds) and the fact that in these early months El’tsin appeared to have placed too much of the burden of foreign policy making on the shoulders of the MID. It was not until the appointment of Pavel Grachev as Defence Minister in May 1992 and, in the same month, the establishment of a presidential Security Council, that the Foreign Ministry’s pre-eminent role in Russian foreign policy began to come under scrutiny. Igor’ Rogachev, an old China hand, was made ambassador to Beijing, but in the Kremlin there were few high level champions of rapprochement with China. (with the notable exception of Evgenii Primakov, head of the SVR, who early on drew attention to the need for a balanced policy in the East. See chapter two of the present
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thesis) Instead, in the first half of 1992 official policy towards China displayed a breathtaking degree of naivety and clumsiness. Thus in March 1992 Kozyrev concluded that relations should be based on ‘pragmatism’, a pragmatism that in his view included developing ‘nongovernmental ties with Taiwan at the same level as most other countries without damage to political relations with China.’ The Foreign Ministry’s failure to take China seriously, and the lack of a Defence Minister allowed other agencies such as the champions of the beleaguered defence industry to exert pressure on the government to allow arms deals with Taiwan.

However, in economic as well as political terms, there were many who favoured closer relations with Beijing. The Chinese model of reform, in particular the free economic zones, such as the successful example of Shanghai, was championed by some as a model to emulate, in particular in order to revive Russia’s ailing Far East. The Russian ambassador to China, Rogachev, stressed in an early interview: ‘I wish to remind you that Russia and China are two mutually complementary economic complexes, that share a common border.’ Just as Gorbachev had been seeking a ‘way to bind the Soviet Union and China on the basis of common developments in domestic politics’, so too did E’ltsin come to realise that this was the surest way to convince both the Chinese leadership and his domestic critics, that the pro-Western policy had been but a lull in the traditional, centuries-old friendship of two neighbours. Thus the head of the First Asia Department, Evgenii Afanas’ev, and his colleague, Grigorii Logvinov, chief of the department for bilateral relations with the PRC, pointed to the fact that almost ‘four decades of historical experience and cooperation show that our national and state interests have never been in irreconcilable opposition. They simply needed to be cleansed of alien elements.’ In the same way, the director of the Institute of the Far East, Mikhail Titarenko was able to write: ‘in Russia as in China the close connection between the internal economic reforms and open foreign policy defines the possibilities for their joint cooperation.’ The industrial lobbyist and centrist politician Arkadii Vol’skii espoused reform ‘a la chinoise’: ‘Our situation is much closer to the Chinese experience than to the
experience of any other country. We should study their experience in conducting land reform, as well as their experience in state support of the private sector with the help of laws, taxation, investments etc. [...] We should also study the Chinese experience of setting up free-trading economic zones.”

Conservative elements meanwhile, pointed to the fact that the relationship with China “does not threaten us with the fate of a raw materials appendage to somebody’s industrial machine.” Evgenii Ambartsumov, at the time (August 1992) chair of the parliament’s committee for international affairs pointed out that “China, which today has identically stable relations with Russia and the CIS on one hand, and with the United States and the Group of Seven, on the other, could be a theoretical model of an independent foreign policy for Russia.”

Hearings on Russian foreign policy held to scrutinise Kozyrev’s draft of the ‘Foreign Policy concept’ addressed the issue of China’s place in this ‘concept’. Vladimir Lukin now advocated a balanced policy, ‘Russia’s relations with China are of particular importance, and due to their priority these relations must be placed on an equal footing with our European and American orientations.’ The draft concept allotted priority status to relations with countries of the Asia-Pacific region as well as Southern and Western Asia, because, it argued, these countries were of great significance ‘for establishing our Eurasian status and in terms of achieving a balance in relations with the West and for diversifying foreign economic activity, and also as countries that, due to their geopolitical position, have a direct influence on the situation in the CIS.’ [my italics]

**China’s unchanging Moscow policy.**

At the beginning of 1990, nearly two years before the collapse of the Soviet Union, Deng Xiaoping, asked about Chinese policy towards the USSR, asserted: “Whatever changes take place in the Soviet Union, we should steadily expand relations with it, including political relations on the basis of the five principles of peaceful co-existence and refrain from arguing over ideological differences.” Nevertheless, the leadership in Beijing had not
bargained for the collapse of the Soviet Union and the ascendancy of El’tsin, whose democratic credential did not find favour with the regime in Beijing. The new regime in Moscow was understandably therefore viewed with suspicion by the leadership in Beijing. It warned of a possible return to Tsarist imperialism, suspicious that Moscow could switch allegiance to the government on Taiwan, and fearing the overspill into Chinese society of reformist ideas. The Tiananmen experience, when students inspired by Gorbachev demonstrated against the regime, was still fresh in the leadership’s mind. In addition, the new Russia’s apparent intention to make itself an integral part of the West both politically and economically posed the question of whether Moscow would join in the international condemnation of China’s human rights record. At first it seemed China’s fears might be realised, as Kozyrev declared Russia’s first priority as being “to ensure all human rights and freedoms in their entirety […] I believe that these questions are not an internal matter of states but rather their obligations under the UN Charter, international covenants and conventions.” China sees the issue of human rights very much as an internal matter. As one Western Sinologist has put it, in the Chinese conception of human rights ‘the question of civil liberties should not be overtly politicized or “used as a tool to pursue a certain ideology and political model”’. In any case, by 1993 in Russia ‘concern about human rights in the People’s Republic of China shrank to the circle of a few government officials and academics.’

However, once it was clear that Russia’s ‘flirtation’ with the West was over, the Chinese simply restated their original philosophy. Li Peng, in a report to the National People’s Congress (NPC) in 1992 spoke of China’s ‘good-neighbour policy’ as “an important component of China’s foreign policy”. The following year, again reporting to the NPC, Li noted that “friendly relations between China and its neighbouring countries are established on the basis of national interest, regardless of whatever differences there may be between their ideologies and political systems.” He reiterated this point referring specifically to the political situation when Grachev visited China shortly before the December 1993 elections to the Russian Duma.
the 1995 parliamentary elections a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman stated that whatever the outcome China would adhere to the current course of "constructive partnership".\textsuperscript{28}

A Chinese commentary on the significance of the December 1992 summit asserted that the disintegration of the USSR had meant that many Russians had realised 'the hypocrisy of the USA and the European countries. The USA, in particular, is pressing forward steadily. Although it has promised to offer great aid to Russia, it has not followed its words with actions. Despite Gorbachev's and Yeltsin's repeated visits to the USA and Europe, the West has drawn the conclusion that Russia and the other republics are suffering incurable economic sicknesses and that extending loans to them will result in irretrievable losses.'\textsuperscript{29} Chinese predictions that differences in U.S and Russian interests would lead to clashes between the two appeared to have come true.

Chinese interests in cooperation with Russia were based on practical as well as strategic interests. Wan Li, the head of the Chinese parliament emphasised that "China's economic development needs a peaceful international environment. Therefore, China is willing to live on good terms with all other countries."\textsuperscript{30} Essential components of China's security strategy are defence modernisation, the establishment of a regional security mechanism, and the development of 'good-neighbour' relations. The friendly relations between China and its neighbouring countries are established 'on the basis of national interest, regardless of whatever differences there may be between their ideological and political spheres.'\textsuperscript{31} As David Lampton has written, 'Beijing's foreign policy framework has been stable because it has its origins in China's domestic goals and needs rather than in the international system itself.'\textsuperscript{32}

\textbf{State to state relations gather pace: The build-up to the first summit.}

As we have seen the issue of human rights did not hold sway over Russian foreign policy for long. The official report on Kozyrev's visit to Beijing in March 1992 emphasised that while the two sides had different understandings of human rights they were 'not inclined to let these differences put a brake on
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Accompanying Kozyrev on his trip was the Chairman of the State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations, Petr Aven, who expressed concern at the fall in trade between the two countries in 1991 in comparison to 1990. He noted however that the volume of decentralised and border trade had increased. An agreement on trade and economics as well as on MFN status for Russia was signed. In May deputy prime minister Aleksandr Shokhin made a trip to Beijing for further talks on economic issues.

Meanwhile, work on demarcating the border was begun with the first session of the joint Russo-Chinese demarcation committee. Both sides recognised that this was a priority area for both states. Pressing issues related to border control and demarcation necessitated frequent and regular meetings which created a new momentum in political relations. The dynamism of cross border trade took Russia slightly by surprise, but the high demand for Chinese products in the Russian Far East made it essential to exploit the potential in this type of trade.

Hearings held by the Joint Committee on International Affairs in July on the draft of the proposed Foreign Policy concept severely criticised the Foreign Ministry’s handling of foreign policy and drew attention to the dangers of neglecting China. The following month, on the same day that deputies were holding hearings on Russo-Japanese relations and the Kuril issue, the defence minister was welcoming Qin Jiwei, his Chinese counterpart, in Russia for an eight day visit to discuss arms cuts in the APR, troop reductions on the joint border and arms sales. While problems on the demilitarisation and demarcation of the border remained, the infrastructure for dialogue was being established, an infrastructure noticeably lacking in relations with Japan. At this time the furore over the Kuril islands was reaching crisis point and it seemed less and less likely that El’tsin’s trip to Japan could bring either political or economic benefits. In this context the frequent military contacts between Russia and China and the pressing problem of border demarcation and demilitarisation and control and monitoring of cross-border trade, setting
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up customs posts and so on, entailed contact on an almost daily basis. The military exchanges facilitated the establishment of trust and cooperation, a feature distinctly lacking in Russia’s dealings with Japan. During 1992 (not including the December summit meeting) there were at least ten visits exchanged between Russia and China concerning some aspect of military cooperation, whether arms sales, exchange of aircraft personnel, or discussions on nuclear technology. Apart from Kozyrev’s brief sojourn in Beijing in the early part of the year there had been few meetings in the economic and political sphere - it was the military and the industrialists who were setting the agenda. It was not until November in meetings to prepare for the summit that wider issues of cooperation began to appear. Importantly, in his meeting with Kozyrev, China’s foreign minister Qian Qichen stressed that China and Russia had common interests in preserving stability in Central Asia and that China’s plans to establish economic relations with these states would take into account their close links with Russia. Kozyrev stressed that Qian understood the need to curb Islamic fundamentalism in Central Asia and the importance of the CIS in this regard. 36

As El’tsin faced growing criticism from the Supreme Soviet of his and Kozyrev’s pro-Western policy, the chance to make political capital out of the forthcoming visit to China, and shortly afterwards India, was tempting. El’tsin now set about criticising Kozyrev’s ministry, emphasising the need for a ‘multi-vector’ foreign policy that would pay equal attention to both east and west. 37 However, the growth in trade turnover with China was unexpectedly high, so that the Foreign Ministry was now able to parry charges that the economic crisis was hampering trade by pointing to the flourishing economic relationship. 38 1992 saw trade rise to a record high of 5.8 billion U.S. dollars, imports of Chinese goods making up the larger part of this figure. 39 While China’s trade with Russia was minimal compared to trade turnover with the United States and Japan, Russia represented an important market for cheap consumer products from the adjacent areas of Heilongjiang and Jilin. As John Garver stresses, the landlocked interior of greater China needs to ‘look to its landward neighbours’ in order to emulate the success of its coastal regions.
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"From Beijing’s perspective, this is a cheaper more preferable solution than increased subsidies from the central government." The specifics of border trade will be dealt with a later section.

The Taiwan question.

At one point the issue of Taiwan looked set to cause lasting damage to Sino-Russian relations. The Russian MID in particular seriously underestimated the sensitivity of the Taiwan issue for bilateral relations. Between 24-28 January 1992, a delegation from Taiwan visited Moscow, prompting speculation that this might herald a change in the Kremlin’s China policy. In an attempt to limit the damage, the Russian MID issued a statement insisting that the delegation had been invited privately and not by the government and emphasising that El’tsin’s administration viewed Taiwan as an inalienable part of China. However, this was not the end of the matter. On 9 September, 1992 a committee was established to deal with cultural and commercial affairs with Taiwan, headed by the industrialist Oleg Lobov. The committee was apparently ‘non-governmental’, but as Evgenii Bazhanov has pointed out, ‘China wanted to know why Yeltsin had created an unofficial committee by decree and why it comprised so many government officials.’ El’tsin acted swiftly, and issued a decree on 15 September which clearly stated: ‘In relations with Taiwan the Russian Federation proceeds from the premise that there is only one China. The PRC government is the only lawful government representing the whole of China. Taiwan is an inalienable part of China. The Russian Federation does not maintain official interstate relations with China.’ Nevertheless, only two days after El’tsin’s decree Lobov went ahead with the visit, issuing a statement prior to his departure to the effect that maintaining and developing economic and trade relations with the PRC was important, but that the trip to Taiwan would not ‘cause any indignation on the part of Beijing.’ As one journalist noted, El’tsin’s decree closed ‘an unfortunate page in our relations, when a semi-official agency for contacts with Taiwan was created under Russian Federation governmental structures without the knowledge of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and subsequently disbanded."
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It was not so much a question of having neglected China in favour of Japan, as the fact that in the wave of pro-Western euphoria, attention had been focused primarily on Taiwan as an object of Russian diplomacy, and, more importantly as a possible purchaser of Russian arms. Already in March 1992, the economics minister Andrei Nechaev was cited as saying that "Taiwan’s offer to buy armaments from Russia" was being carefully studied. Once Russia had assured China of its adherence to the ‘one China’ policy the preparations for the summit could proceed.

December, 1992. The first Russo-Chinese summit

Just before leaving for Beijing El’tsin noted that some accused his government of ‘americanization, of looking towards the West all the time, that is why we are now making the second break-through into the Asian-Pacific Ocean region after the visit to the Republic of Korea." Later, at a press conference in the Chinese capital, El’tsin’s expressed surprise at the calm reaction to the summit in Tokyo, revealing the extent to which Russia was now viewing this visit as compensation for the lack of success in the relationship with Tokyo.

Certainly there were many agreements signed at the summit, twenty-four to be precise, but none of these were in themselves spectacular. In many cases they simply codified what was already the status quo. However various subcommittees were established which would hold regular consultations and sustain the level of diplomatic activity: these included an intergovernmental commission on trade-economic and scientific-technical cooperation. The Chinese pressed for the commission to tackle the problems of cross-border trade such as increasing transport capacities and the number of passport controls. These moves were important because they sought to increase government control over spontaneous trading activity which of course could lose the government important tax and excise revenue. In addition, Shokhin noted the significance of establishing control over the transfer of military
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technology, as there had been several cases of private individuals attempting to conclude deals on private visits.\textsuperscript{50}

A *balanced* foreign policy.
The new course of Russian foreign policy in Asia was re-emphasised on El’tsin’s visit to India at the beginning of 1993 where he stressed that Russo-Chinese rapprochement did not in any way mean a choice between one or other country: ‘Russian-Chinese relations are part of the main channel of our Asian policy. The principle of squeezing some other country out of it is absolutely unacceptable...’\textsuperscript{51} Bearing in mind the old animosity between China and India, this statement may well have been intended to calm Indian fears of being downgraded by Moscow in favour of Beijing. However, the deliberate vagueness of the statement could also be interpreted as a sign to Japan that Russia intended to keep its options open in Asia. The final draft of the Foreign Policy Concept further underlined the point: ‘Russia’s relations with China should be such that third countries will not be tempted to use China against Russia, and vice-versa, that China will not be tempted to use the “Russian card” in its relations with other countries.’\textsuperscript{52}

High level exchanges of visits in 1993 were again dominated by senior officials from the military and industrial spheres. Meetings in the political sphere were confined to a meeting between Kunadze and the head of the PRC chancellery for political questions, and a brief meeting between Kozyrev and the Chinese ambassador to Moscow. April saw the visit to Russia of the Commander-in-Chief of China’s navy, Zhang Lianzhong, his stated aim being to familiarise himself with the Russian navy. It is likely that negotiations were begun on the sale to China of Kilo class submarines. In May the commander of the Leningrad Military district visited Beijing to discuss further military cooperation. June saw a further visit of Chinese naval officials to Moscow for talks on the submarine deal, and at the beginning of July Russian naval officials were then invited to Beijing as guests of the Chinese Ministry of
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Defence. A five day visit to Russia by Colonel-General Liu Huaqing, vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission included visits to Vladivostok to inspect the Pacific Fleet and meetings with Shokhin and Chernomyrdin to discuss on industrial and scientific cooperation and defence conversion. In August, the Chinese Chief of General Staff of the PLA arrived, moving Grachev to declare that relations with the PRC were "one of the priorities of Russia’s military policy".\(^{53}\)

The frenzy of military contacts obscured unresolved issues such as the increase in Chinese pirate attacks on Russian vessels in the East China seas. A Foreign Ministry spokesman noted that Russian offers of talks to discuss the safety of sea lanes were going unheeded by the Chinese.\(^{54}\) An increase in illegal Chinese migration to the Russian Far East was also causing tension that required urgent attention.

Thus, while 1994 was again marked by a substantial number of visits by military officials, there was an increase in discussions of political and economic questions, including the question of the border regime. Trade turnover in 1993 was the highest ever, reaching more than seven billion dollars in total. However it was clear that a high proportion of the turnover consisted of cross-border trade, and the clampdown by Russian authorities on Chinese 'shuttle merchants' meant that 1994 showed a significant downturn in trade turnover reflecting the sharp fall in imports of Chinese goods. The fact that figures have never again reached the high of 1993 is evidence of the still primitive nature of Sino-Russian trade. Shokhin was outspoken in his condemnation of Chinese trading methods: "Without a departure from the barter scheme, which allows a couple of Chinese companies to dictate prices and choice of goods, we shall fail to keep trade with China on a proper level."\(^{55}\)

A concerted effort in 1995 regarding the border regime meant that trade crept back up, albeit by a modest amount. However, it was becoming clear that the structure of trade was not benefiting the local economies of the Far East at least not in terms of restructuring the economy. Increasingly exports to China
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were composed mainly of raw materials and industrial products. As the former Duma speaker and Security Council secretary Ivan Rybkin has written, 'in Primorskii krai the paradoxical situation arises that while local residents and enterprises endure a fuel crisis, large amounts of coal and oil products are exported to Japan and China.'\(^{56}\) Thus, the argument that rapprochement with China meant that Russia did not face the fate of a raw materials appendage is questionable.

In April 1994, a few months before the second Russo-Chinese summit, hearings were held on Russo-Chinese relations in the State Duma. Aleksandr Panov, deputy foreign minister, addressed the hearings and stressed that good-neighbourly relations with China were one of the main priorities in Russian foreign policy. Panov warned however, that China should not be viewed as a counterweight or an alternative to the West.\(^{57}\) It is noteworthy that the second 'Strategy for Russia' by the influential Council on Foreign and Defence Policy was published only a month later and warned that 'great power rhetoric' practised by high-ranking officials was not constructive and that there was diminishing attention paid to Russia in world affairs.\(^{58}\)

The second summit: from 'good-neighbourliness' to 'constructive partnership'.

According to the joint declaration issued at the summit meeting held between Jiang Zemin and Yeltsin in September 1994, Russo-Chinese relations had now reached the stage of 'constructive partnership, genuinely equal relations of good-neighbourliness, friendship and mutually profitable cooperation, based on the principles of peaceful coexistence.' It was emphasised that these relations did not have the character of an alliance and were not 'directed against a third country.'\(^{59}\) However, the constructive partnership could not disguise the fact that trade had fallen drastically from a high of over seven billion dollars to only five billion (the MFEA had projected eight billion dollars.\(^{60}\)) which was due mainly to a sharp fall in imports of Chinese goods. The two sides emphasised that economic relations still had 'enormous potential, the effective use of which is capable of playing an important role in
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the economic development of both countries.' As if to compensate for the miserable state of economic relations the declaration included a particularly detailed section on international relations including a cause on the 'inadmissibility of displays of expansionism, hegemonism, the politics of force or the creation of opposing blocs.' Those who wished to place a positive gloss on the declaration, such as the conservative newspaper Pravda, hopefully pointed to the word 'friendship' and 'constructive partnership', as like a 'return to the Russian-Chinese political lexicon from the romantic era of the distant 1950s.' It also hailed the pledge to refrain from targeting strategic missiles at each other as it increased the chances of maintaining 'a rather independent position with respect to third powers.' More cautious and centrist voices such as Lukin, warned of the dangers of complacency, noting that retargeting missiles was more a psychological factor than 'a military-strategic move'. Once again Lukin stressed that the only way to ensure substance and interdependence in the economic relationship was to make Russia and China so dependent on each other that any split would be 'unacceptably painful to both countries'. (At hearings on Russian foreign policy in 1992 Lukin had described this as a relationship of 'irreversible mutual dependence'.) Addressing Chinese business circles in Beijing that year Chernomyrdin, noting the drop in trade turnover, had called for 'new forms of interaction', namely investments by the Chinese, joint exploration of Russian natural resources, and construction of infrastructure facilities in the Russian Far East. However, previous Chinese investment in Russia had consisted mainly in the setting up of joint ventures with very small amounts of authorised capital. For example, in 1992 the number of Chinese joint ventures in Russia was forty-six, with a total authorised capital of 55,681 million roubles, while Japan, with forty-three JVs, had a far higher total authorised capital of 138,266 million. The main activity of the Chinese JVs was 'the extraction of extra profits from price differentials for raw materials and consumer goods between the two countries.' By 1995 China did not even make an appearance in the list of main investors cited by Goskomstat, while in 1997 it was unable to match even Japan's meagre share of total investment - just over one per cent.
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The summit planned for autumn 1995 failed to take place due to El’tsin’s illness, but there were numerous exchanges of visits encompassing all aspects of bilateral relations. No doubt with one eye on the upcoming parliamentary elections, Gennadii Ziuganov, leader of the KPRF, and Grigorii Iavlinskii of Iabloko, both made trips to China before the end of the year. May saw the visit to Beijing of the defence minister Grachev, who called for the creation of a multilateral security alliance, a proposal swiftly rebutted by his Chinese hosts, who were no doubt wary of the similarity to Brezhnev’s conception of an Asian collective security pact mooted in 1969. Meanwhile border issues were becoming pressing: demilitarisation was making little progress due to differences over the exact location of the demilitarised zone, while the launch of the Border Guards’ campaign, ‘Operation Foreigner’ the previous year had had further adverse effects on cross-border trade.

Nevertheless, on the occasion of Li Peng’s trip to Moscow in June 1995 it was claimed that ‘complete political unanimity’ existed between the ‘two great powers’. Russia reiterated its stance as a staunch supporter of the ‘one China’ concept, while China endorsed Russia’s invasion of Chechnia by stating that it had “complete understanding of the actions taken by the Russian side to preserve the country’s unity.” It was becoming increasingly common for Russian politicians to refer to the two countries as the ‘two great powers’: as Chernomyrdin and Li Peng declared, “the two great powers have no need of lectures to run their own lives.” This approach was demonstrated by Russia’s refusal to vote in favour of a European Union resolution in the United Nations condemning China’s human rights record. The reason given for the vote at the time was that Russia could not disregard the explanations of the Chinese that adoption of the resolution would have a “destabilising character for the internal situation in China [...]”. Finally, the MID briefing noted that ‘as distinct from other countries, including those where many of our compatriots live, Russia and China have, over the last three years conducted an open bilateral dialogue on human rights.’
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**Concern over NATO expansion.**

By autumn 1995, it had become clear that the West intended to proceed with the eastward expansion of NATO and there were calls for Russia to respond by finding ‘new allies’. In propaganda terms, it was more than ever vital to portray the relationship with China in a positive light. As the China expert Andrei Voskresenskii observed, the MID was pushing the ‘“soft variant”’ of friendly relations with China. A wide-ranging consensus emerged that saw the proposed expansion of NATO as a threat to Russian security, and essentially as a betrayal by the West. Lukin, although a moderate centrist, spoke of a possible Russian response that could include the formation of a strategic union between Russia and China and other eastern countries [...] 75

In bilateral relations, the coincidence of views on international problems was constantly emphasised, while ‘reservations’ regarding economic relations were relegated to a footnote. The final trade figures for 1995 were only slightly higher than the previous year’s and this was almost entirely due to Russian exports to China of raw materials, while imports from China had shown little recovery. The extent of concern regarding the potential damage that could be caused by media coverage of negative trends such as the state of economic relations, and problems regarding Chinese migration was evidenced in meetings between heads of Russian and Chinese media groups. Russian and Chinese Foreign Ministry officials exhorted their respective media to provide more ‘positive reports’ of internal reforms in China and Russia, as well as of bilateral relations in general. Particular attention was devoted to the fact that at the present stage it is extremely important not to allow separate issues of controversy, and in particular the growing political ambitions of certain individuals (a reference perhaps to the activities of certain regional governors), seeking to undermine the benevolent climate of relations between the two states. 76 It was clear that the relationship was to be sustained by sheer political will, if nothing else.

*1996: from ‘constructive partnership’ to ‘strategic cooperation’*
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Thus in his annual address to the Federal Assembly in February 1996, El’tsin was able to take comfort in the relationship with China, while warning of geopolitical changes for Russia linked to NATO expansion. While expressing disquiet at attempts to undermine or directly interfere with ‘legitimate Russian interests in the CIS’, he next referred by way of contrast to the agreement on confidence-building measures around the Sino-Russian border. The ‘eastern’ orientation of Russian foreign policy was now firmly entrenched, and El’tsin was to be aided in sustaining this orientation by his new foreign minister Evgenii Primakov, who had been appointed in January 1996. Primakov was an orientalist and a staunch advocate of a balanced foreign policy: ‘“A power like Russia, with enormous interests in Asia and the Middle East, cannot walk on just one -“Western” - leg.”’

The year 1996 proved another testing time for Russian foreign policy, as April 1996 saw the renewal of the US-Japan alliance in the wake of Chinese military posturing in the Taiwan straits. Russia’s relations with Japan were in stasis, and following hard on the heels of plans for NATO expansion, the pledge to renew another cold war alliance seemed a double blow. The third Sino-Russian summit in April 1996, was thus held against this backdrop, in an atmosphere of unprecedented cordiality, with the two sides declaring their intention to develop relations of an ‘equal, trusting partnership aimed at strategic cooperation in the twenty-first century.’

By the time of the fourth summit in April 1997, spurred on by the relatively high trade figures of 1996 - 6.8 billion, specific predictions of the nature of this strategic cooperation included the pledge that by the end of 1997 trade should rise to at least seven billion U.S. dollars (the figure reached in 1993), and to twenty billion by the end of the century. However, the declaration at the 1996 summit to conduct trade ‘mainly on the basis of freely convertible currency’ may have been the reason for the sharp fall in Chinese exports to Russia the following year. The highlight of the 1997 summit was the ‘Russo-Chinese Joint Declaration on a Multipolar World and the Formation of a New World Order’. Among other issues, the two sides affirmed their opposition to
any attempts by one state to ‘strive for hegemony or conduct politics from a position of force and monopolise international affairs.’ Nevertheless, despite the concurrence of views on international issues there were growing signs of strain as the economic relationship struggled to keep pace with the political and military one. Hopes of reaching the trade turnover of seven billion U.S. dollars by the end of 1997 were dashed, the final total according to Goskomstat amounting to a mere 5.24 billion. Of this figure, only 1.26 billion accounted for Chinese imports, although according to the Primore regional administration’s department for foreign trade, undocumented illegal imports account for an additional 3.6 billion a year. China’s huge trade turnover with Japan of 60 billion U.S. dollars and with the United States of 43 billion U.S. dollars for 1997 highlights the small volume of bilateral trade.

Thus, towards the end of 1997 both sides began criticising the low level of trade. China was disappointed by the Russians’ growing lack of enthusiasm for their often shoddy consumer goods, while Russia was irritated by China’s rejection of a Russian bid to supply equipment to the Three Gorges hydroelectric project. In addition, there had been optimism that Russia would be able to earn billions of dollars by building nuclear power plants in China, but due to fears that haggling over prices might mean China would put out the projects to general tender, Russia simply lowered its prices. Viktor Mikhailov, Minister for Atomic Energy bemoaned this state of affairs, complaining of Beijing’s new-found ‘cold pragmatism’.

Meanwhile as 1997 drew to a close, there were high hopes of the Russo-Japanese ‘meeting without neckties’ in Krasnoiarsk. A closer relationship with Japan would mean that Russia’s Asian policy would no longer be ‘walking on one - Chinese - leg’, to borrow Primakov’s phrase. Whether Japan could offer more than China in economic and political terms was a different matter. It was, in any case, clear that there would be no rejection of China in favour of Japan, for the core of the Sino-Russian relationship could not be reduced to economic relations alone. The next section will examine the issue of Russo-Chinese military cooperation.
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3.1b) The economics of military cooperation
By comparison, the trade in arms would seem at first glance to be one of the few bright spots in the two countries' economic relationship. Kozyrev's sojourn in Beijing in March 1992 was brief, and his remarks on human rights seemed at odds with Moscow's apparent willingness to continue arms transfers, as evidenced by the CIS Chief of Staff Valerii Samsonov, who the previous month had rushed to Beijing to reassure the Chinese that deliveries would not be affected by the USSR's collapse. After Kozyrev and Aven's trips to Beijing, the exchange of visits by Chinese and Russian military officials increased at a startling pace. April saw the visit to Russia of the head of the PLA's General Logistics Department, Zhao Nanqi, to discuss arms purchases while the Deputy commander of the Russian Air Force travelled to the PRC for an exchange of air force personnel. As Bates and Kim point out, military cooperation consisted of three components: talks on demilitarising the border, which had begun way back in 1989; the 'institutionalized military relationship' which had already begun in 1990 with fairly high level visits; the third component was discussion of technology and weapons transfers. At least ten exchanges of visits took place in 1992 on matters related to defence and military technology, including a visit by Viktor Mikhailov, the Minister for Atomic Energy in November. Thus by August, on the occasion of the arrival in Moscow of China's Defence Minister Qin Jiwei, for an eight day visit, Egor Gaidar, acting Russian premier, was able to claim: "Our military and technical ties with China are developing in a dynamic way of late". From this he extrapolated that: "Overcoming entirely the elements of confrontation which have existed between us, without a doubt, is working to strengthen the geopolitical positions of Russia and China".

Domestic factors in both countries were pointing to the wisdom of maintaining arms deliveries: since Tiananmen the Chinese had lost American and French supplies. Moreover, when in December 1992 a furore erupted over France's sale of sixty Mirage fighter aircraft to Taipei this must have
been an important signal to Moscow that its decision not to sell arms to Taiwan and to draw a veil over human rights issues by continuing, and even upgrading arms sales, was the right way to forge a new relationship with China. In addition, by 1992 ‘China’s economy was booming and the government, and especially the PLA had money to address some of the PLA’s deficiencies.’

Hence El’tsin’s statement at the December 1992 summit: ‘“We proceed from the basis that today China is one of the most solvent countries in the world”’. Strangely, Shokhin appeared to contradict El’tsin’s confidence in China’s solvency in his own comments at the summit: ‘It is very difficult to predict the volume of this cooperation in 1993 and its dynamics, because the Chinese side is short of hard currency and the Russians do not want to exchange armaments for jackets and sports shoes.’

The biggest single arms deal was the sale to China of twenty-six Su-27s. However, this had actually been concluded already in 1990, following a trip to Russia by the PLA’s Liu Huaqing, although the contract was not agreed until nearly a/fater. The aircraft were not actually delivered until 1992. A second batch of twenty-two Su-27s was ordered between 1992 and 1993, but was not delivered until 1995-96. However, the delivery was delayed by unresolved issues regarding payment terms: ‘Russia insisted that seventy per cent or more of the payment be made in hard currency, compared to 35 per cent for the first batch of Su-27s in 1992.’ The new deputy defence minister Andrei Kokoshin, visited China in October 1992 and helped lay the foundation for transferring production rights to the Chinese. In an interview shortly after becoming Grachev’s deputy he had outlined the severe problems facing the defence industry. By the time of the December summit, arms exports policies were now being described by the MID as ‘‘a major lever of the transformation of Russia’s economy on the basis of market relations.”’. At the same time, it was noted that other major arms exporters needed to ‘‘step back and open up more export possibilities for Russia.’

In general, there was widespread concern that Russia had ‘yielded’ its position as a major arms supplier to countries like the United States. This was depicted
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as not only as a financial but a serious strategic loss. Viktor Glukhikh, chairman of Gosoboronprom vowed that Russia would never leave the world arms market, declaring Russia's yielding of its former 'positions' as 'abnormal'. According to Glukhikh, in 1989 the USSR was the leader in arms exports, its share amounting to 38.7 per cent. By January 1993 this index had dropped to seventeen per cent while the US had increased its share of arms exports over the same period from thirty per cent in 1989 to fifty-six per cent in 1992. The total value of arms sold abroad in 1992 was 1.3 billion, compared to 12 billion US dollars in 1987, according to G. G. Ianpolskii, deputy chair of the Committee for Defence Sectors of Industry.\(^{94}\) The drive for hard currency earnings to prop up the ailing defence industry led Mikhail Malei, advisor on defence conversion to state that: "To Russia, the export of military hardware will be profitable even if we sell it cheaper than world prices by a factor of six."\(^{95}\) (According to Sergey Kortunov the principle of "sell to anybody who pays" was already being given priority in the Gorbachev period.\(^{96}\))

By the time of the December 1992 summit, El'tsin was convinced of the necessity of exporting arms to China, declaring that Russia was 'prepared to trade on all fronts, including in the area of the latest up-to-date weapons'.\(^{97}\) China's interest in purchasing arms was detailed in a 'secret report' of the Chinese Communist Party's Military commission which instructed the government to increase purchases of weapons from the former Soviet Union and increase China's sales to Third World countries. The report noted that this strategy would mean saving valuable currency reserves, adding that the military budget for 1992 had been increased by forty per cent from the previous year.\(^{98}\)

However, there were signs that the Russian foreign policy establishment was not at first entirely happy with the defence industry's drive to sell more weapons to China. In an article published at the beginning of December 1992, Kozyrev warned of the dangers of 'pursuing "easy dollars" from military deliveries without taking into account the political consequences'. He
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concluded optimistically that Russia was 'gradually accustoming Western partners to the thought that they will have to make room in the markets, including the high-technology and arms markets. Kozyrev made the same point again in February 1993 in a speech to the Supreme Soviet, noting the need to monitor 'structures which are independently rushing into the arms markets often without taking proper account of security interests, secrecy or even maintaining adequate prices.' The defence industry plants themselves complained that state weapons orders did not benefit them as payment was in roubles, so that there were problems paying wages. Bureaucratic procedures in approving military exports were slow and cumbersome, and required as many as nine different signatures from the relevant ministries, including the Ministry of Security and the SVR, which apparently could take between eight and fifteen months to collect. In view of this state of affairs, defence industry directors stated their intention to trade independently in arms produced over and above state orders. The president of the state weapons company ‘Spetsvneshtekhnika’, V. Brailovskii, outlined the new commercialism of Russia’s arms trading policy citing the example of Pakistan: “We are trying to “refresh” our relations. Commercial contacts with the former probable enemy facilitate this to a certain degree. At the same time, we count on India appreciating our position: it is better for us to sell weapons to Pakistan than for the United States to deliver weapons there. After all deliveries bind producers to customers: materiel requires repairs, spare parts ....’. Brailovskii went on: “If they do not buy from us they will buy from others. If we withdraw from the previously developed markets to which we are still holding on, they will certainly be taken over by foreign competitors.” The drive to compete with the West increased as Russia came into conflict with the United States over arms sales to countries such as Malaysia, Iraq and Cyprus. Thus, Shokhin declared Russia’s intention to continue to denounce the ‘dishonest competition methods’ used by the United States in the world arms markets, quoting US opposition to Malaysia’s purchase of MiG-29 fighter planes. A brief report in Krasnaja zvezda in summer 1993 cited Kokoshin, who spoke of military and technical cooperation with China as being a “necessity” for Russian industry.
Meanwhile, the head of ‘Oboroneksport’, Sergei Karaoglanov, was accused of “allowing Russia’s positions to weaken.” Meeting with the Chinese Chief of General Staff of the PLA in August of the same year, Grachev stressed that relations with the PRC were “one of the priorities of Russia’s military policy”. With regard to arms sales, he specifically emphasised the fact that determining China’s military-technical requirements would make it possible to “plan the load on the Russian Federation defence industry and to a certain extent to maintain a number of enterprises in China’s interests”. The debate over whether defence plants should be allowed to take responsibility for exporting their own products was conducted by a myriad of interested parties. Vice-president Aleksandr Rutskoi accused Kozyrev of actively blocking ‘advantageous deals’ to sell SU-27s. According to the director of one defence plant, Kozyrev was to blame for losing a major deal with Libya, which subsequently bought from the United States, as well as ruining negotiations with Taiwan for purchase of 150 SU-27s. When Kozyrev countered that the latter deal could not go ahead because the Russian Federation did not recognise Taiwan as a sovereign state, Rutskoi retorted: “Such considerations are not of great importance for the Americans: they have sold their F-16 aircraft to Taiwan.” Finally, Rutskoi concluded that Russia had lost fifteen billion US dollars in failed deals over the previous year, which was “several times greater than 2.5 billion dollars which the G-7 countries promised to grant Russia during the Tokyo summit.” The official Foreign Ministry line on arms sales to China was that it represented ‘a normal part of bilateral relations, conducted via state structures and under the requisite control.’

The most controversial aspect of the Russo-Chinese military relationship has been the sale to China of a licence for production of SU-27 fighter planes. In April 1996, El’tsin apparently agreed to transfer a third batch of eighteen SU-27s and in principle to begin producing the aircraft under licence in China. This would bring the total number of aircraft sold to China to seventy-two. According to one Russian analyst however this does not square with the facts -
there is no confirmation of a third batch. The same analyst notes also that the sale of the production licence is not as big a coup as it might at first appear: the licence entitles China to produce 200 aircraft and no more without the right of reexport to a third country.\textsuperscript{110} In fact, the programme for the production deal is in two stages, the first being local assembly from kits produced in Russia, and the second being full local production with the licence covering production of between ninety and one hundred aircraft, but according to Aleksandr Sergounin and Sergey Subbotin, "most observers say production will probably be half that, beginning at a rate of ten to twenty per year."\textsuperscript{111} In any case, some argue Russia is moving to a new generation of fighter plane, which it has refused to sell to China.\textsuperscript{112} There were those who argued that selling the production licences would mean a loss of hard currency for the defence industry, depriving them of serial production and future revenue. Others, including El’tsin and Grachev were sanguine that China would not use these weapons against Russia.

Further deals with China include the sale of four Kilo class submarines, concluded in late 1994, two being delivered in 1995 and two delivered in 1997. Estimates of the price paid by the Chinese vary. Bates and Kim speak of $250 million each,\textsuperscript{113} but others reckon the price to have been only $90 million per unit while Germany apparently sold equivalent submarines for more then $200 million each.\textsuperscript{114} It is also not clear what the final total of submarines will be. Western estimates often state that China has purchased higher numbers - one analyst maintains that China is due to purchase an additional twelve submarines by the end of the century.\textsuperscript{115}

Further naval equipment was purchased by the Chinese in early 1997. Two Sovremenny class destroyers were sold to China apparently at below market prices. According to an anonymous Russian government source, the Chinese "groundlessly lower prices and refuse to co-ordinate pricing methods" resulting in the difference between the buyer and seller price for the destroyers adding up to as much as one hundred dollars per ship.\textsuperscript{116} The substantial
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Decline in Russo-Chinese trade turnover in 1997 was blamed on the slowdown in arms sales.

As to the strategic implications of these sales, it is certain that the Kilo class submarines and the destroyers will add to China's naval projection capabilities. The submarines are apparently the best of this type in the world, their main advantage consisting in their extraordinarily quiet acoustics, making them extremely difficult to detect.\textsuperscript{117} The destroyers, while not the newest type, are a significant purchase due to the fact that they normally carry up to eight 'Moskit' surface-to-surface missiles as their main armament. According to one report the Chinese have requested 24 launchers on each ship.\textsuperscript{118} The purchases in the naval sphere have not been large but it should be noted that China has major shipbuilding capabilities of its own, so much so that one Russian naval officer asserted that despite the small volume of naval technology purchased, China could eventually "rearm those submarines with cruise missiles and missile-torpedoes"\textsuperscript{119} of their own design. As part of the overall renewal of the PLA, naval modernisation is certainly a priority. However most analysts are in agreement that for China to upgrade from a brown coastal to a blue water navy will take a considerable period of time: "The Chinese navy will remain until and beyond 2015 - an antiquated coastal navy."\textsuperscript{120}

The argument that arms sales would facilitate the revival of Russia's defence industry is a tenuous one, in particular as most of the arms deals with China have been at least partially on a barter basis. A report in Komsomol'skaia pravda cited the example of one factory which had sold submarines to China, according to the director 'on quite crushing terms.' The report claimed that Deputy Prime Minister Shokhin had signed an agreement with the Chinese stipulating that the Chinese were entitled to pay for sixty five per cent of the cost of armaments in the form of goods. The director of the factory in question refused to sign on these terms and finally accepted fifty-fifty. However the goods received under the deal's terms were apparently "old junk", and the plant saw little of the foreign currency once it had paid duty,
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the Navy for taking the submarines to China, and the Central Design Bureau for planning.\textsuperscript{121} The manager of another factory complained that sixty five per cent of the contract was paid for in running shoes and sandals whose soles came off within a month.\textsuperscript{122} This, combined with the continuing low level of arms exports, meant it became progressively difficult to claim that Russia had made the transition to a real arms trade based on market relations. The fact that Russia continues to accept barter deals from the Chinese leads one to suspect that there are few other major purchasers of Russian arms (India being an exception). In December 1996 the joint commission for arms trade and related services agreed on a new payment basis in hard currency for arms sales to China\textsuperscript{123}, but apparently this still did not guarantee full payment in hard currency, as the agreement stipulated: ""The Russian party shall use a portion of the funds paid by the Chinese Party in freely convertible currency to purchase Chinese goods and services on the territory of the People's Republic of China.""\textsuperscript{124} Despite the low volume of arms exports officials continued to tout arms sales as a measure of Russian influence. Thus El'tsin in his annual address to the Federal Assembly for 1996, drew particular attention to the fact that Russia had 'penetrated ' the markets of the ASEAN countries, in particular the arms markets.\textsuperscript{125} Sceptics merely noted that ""for our poverty-stricken MIC, whose orders have "shrunk" by comparison with the mid 1980s fifteen fold, any entry onto the world arms market is today a cause for celebration.""\textsuperscript{126}

In sum, although Chinese imports of Russian weapons have fallen off since 1997, China remains Russia's largest client. In 1991 China's share of Russian arms exports was only three per cent, compared to India's twenty nine per cent, but by 1992 China's share had already shot up to thirty seven per cent against India with thirty five. However there were no arms deliveries to China at all in 1994 and in 1995 its share was only eleven per cent, while India's was twenty-one. 1996 was a bumper year for Russian arms sales to China, a massive forty per cent of all Russian arms exports.\textsuperscript{127} Nevertheless, despite the fact that Russia has maintained second place in the world rankings of the thirty major suppliers of conventional weapons, the volume remains small
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compared to the world’s leading supplier, the United States. In 1996 for example, a good year for Russian arms exports, the figure was still only 3.90 billion against 9.26 billion U.S. sales. The aggregate figures for 1993-97 show that the United States sold 53.13 billion dollars worth with Russia trailing behind with 15.25. Despite Aleksandr Kotelkin’s pledge in 1996 that Russia could ‘come close’ to U.S. export figures, Russia reached only 3.466 billion in 1997, while its competitor attained 10.840 billion, an increase over the previous year. Figures for 1998 suggest that Russia’s arms sales are beginning a downward spiral, with the United States surging ahead by selling 21 billion dollars worth of arms (forty nine per cent of the market) and Russia’s sales down to only 2.5 billion dollars, representing a mere four and a half per cent market share. There was increasing paranoia in the Russian military-industrial complex that the United States was waiting for the right opportunity to recapture the Chinese arms market from Russia. While there were some signs that the United States was willing to consider some military-technical cooperation with China, the scandal surrounding funding of the Democrats’ presidential election campaign, and the new ‘spy’ scandal of spring 1999 strengthened the case of those who were against ‘engaging’ China, making an imminent renewal of Sino-US military cooperation unlikely. This can only be good news for Russia’s arms manufacturers. However, the mercantilist motives behind Russian arms sales were questioned by former deputy defence minister Kokoshin in his new capacity of head of the presidential security council, who declared that the choice of countries to which the Russian Federation exports arms should be dictated not by commercial, but rather by national security interests. Whether this will become the new guiding principle of Russian arms exports is debatable in the light of the need to prop up the defence industry and ‘cock a snook’ at American dominance of the global arms market. The words of one prominent analyst writing in 1997 show that arms exports are still perceived as a reliable instrument of foreign policy: “Conquering the vast Asia-Pacific armaments markets can be of considerable economic and geopolitical significance to Russia.” Whether this strategy is wise, in view of the realities of Russia’s
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geographical position, will be examined in the next section, 3.2, which looks at the demarcation of the joint border in the Far East.

6. It would seem appropriate here to cite Margot Light’s wise words regarding ‘personal and institutional pleading’, i.e. that the ‘continued existence of certain institutes depended upon establishing the centrality of the region it studied to Russian policy. It is not surprising, therefore, that many of the academics who advocated a broadening of Russian foreign policy beyond the initial concentration on the West worked at area studies institutes specialising in the Third World or the East.’ Margot Light, ‘Foreign Policy Thinking’, in Malcolm, Pravda et al, Internal Factors in Russian Foreign Policy, Oxford University Press for RIIA, 1996, pp. 33-100, pp.41 and 42.
8. Goncharov, ‘Osobyie interesy Rossi...’
21. Cited in, Professor Xu Kui, (of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences), Russia’s Relations with Central Asia and China and the Question of Integration into the Asian Economy, IREX Scholar Papers, 31 January 1996, p.7. The five principles of peaceful coexistence were: territorial integrity, mutual nonaggression, non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. Listed in Andrew J. Nathan and Robert
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OMRI Daily Digest, no. 246, 20 December 1995.


See the report in Diplomaticheskii vestnik, no. 7, April 1992, pp.19-20.

Iurii Savenkov, ‘30 chasov A.Kozyreva...’.


See statement by Foreign Ministry on 24 January, published in Diplomaticheskii vestnik, nos. 4-5, 29 February –5 March 1992, p.73.


The decree was published in Rossisskaia gazeta, 19 September 1992.


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51 Russia TV Channel Moscow in Russian, 1121 gmt, 29 January 1993, SWB, FE/1601 C1/1, 1 February 1993.

60 Figure given by Tsuneo Akaha et al, ‘Economic Challenge’ in Tsuneo Akaha (ed.), 1997, pp.49-69, p.p.58.
67 Akaha et al, in Akaha (ed.), 1997, p.58..
71 Ibid.
72 Diplomaticheskii vestnik, nos. 7-8, 1995, p.49.
75 Interfax news agency, Moscow, in English, 1113 gmt, 7 January 1997, SWB, SU/2811 B/6, 8 January 1997.
76 Diplomaticheskii vestnik, no. 8, August 1995 p.77.
77 ‘Iz poslaniia prezidenta Rossiskoi federatsii federal’nomu sobraniu’, Diplomaticheskii vestnik, 23 February 1996, p.3.
78 Interview with Primakov in Rossiiskaia gazeta, 10 January 1997.
83 Cited by Working in Ibid.
85 See Gill and Kim, China’s Arms Acquisitions From Abroad, p.146.
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86 Gill and Kim, Ibid., p.52-3.
93 Bates and Kim, China's Arms Acquisitions, p.59.
94 Kozyrev, 'Ministerstvo inostrannykh del predlagaet ...'...
95 'Vystuplenie A.V. Kozyreva na sovmesnotn zasedanii palat Verkhovnogo Soveta RF', 12 February 1993, Diplomaticheskii vestnik, nos. 5-6, March 1993.
96 See Alla Glebova, 'Rossiia ispol'zuet novuiu tekhnologiiu, rynki oruzhiia', Kommersant', 16 April 1993.
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- ITAR-TASS World Service, 17 August, 0736 gmt, SWB, SU/1773 C1/1, 21 August 1993.
- Sergounin and Subbotin in Anthony (ed.), p.213.
- Sergounin and Subbotin in Anthony (ed.), p.204.
- Interfax news agency, Moscow, in English, 1538 gmt, 10 November 1997, SWB, SU/3074 S1/3, 12 November 1997.
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121 ‘Oni postroili podvodnye lodki, a okonchilis’ skovorodami’, *Komsomol’skaia pravda*, 25 October 1994. On the other hand Sergounin and Subbotin maintain that the Kilo class submarine deal prevented this particular factory from financial collapse and an all-out strike by its workers.


132 Cited in RFE/RL Newsline, Vol., 2, no. 44, 5 March 1998. Kokoshin was deputy defence minister from May 1992 until 28 August 1997 when he replaced Ivan Rybkin as secretary of the now defunct Defence Council. In March 1998 he was made secretary of the Security Council, but was dismissed in September of the same year.

CHAPTER THREE.


'Everything intersects at the border: politics, economics, and security...'
Andrei Nikolaev, former head of the Border Guards Service.

3.2: Redefining the joint border.
The demarcation and demilitarisation of the border has been a mixed blessing: the opening of the border has brought an increase in cross-border trade on both sides. However the increase in trade has also brought an influx of Chinese traders, some of whom, according to certain sources are settling, often illegally, in the Far Eastern regions of Russia. There are of course also legal Chinese workers in these areas, those who work on a seasonal or contract basis for Russian employers, often in the construction industry or in agriculture. In addition there have been reports of criminal activity by Chinese gangs, which has increased anti-Chinese feeling. Those who aim to make political capital out of these developments have seized on the demarcation of the border as proof of an overall plan by the Chinese government to colonise the Russian Far East in order to solve the problem of China’s population growth. They charge that the border agreement originally signed between the Soviet Union and China in 1991 is unequal and leaves China with the greater share of territory. The fact that some areas of the Russian Far East were once under Chinese rule, and were later ceded to Russia could imply that China still harbours territorial ambitions vis-à-vis Russia. Conversely, the goods made available by trade across the border are vital for many of the citizens of Russia’s Far East who can ill afford more expensive imports. Another factor to be reckoned with is that the governors of some of these border regions often have their own agendas, whose aim is to assure the continuation of their political careers rather than to raise the living standards of their populations.
In the first part of this section, 3.2a), I will examine first the history of the boundary between Russia and China up until the present day. Attitudes at the centre and the periphery towards the 1991 border agreement are then analysed, before moving on to issues surrounding demilitarisation of the frontier. Finally, a section on the issue of Chinese migration to the Russian Far East seeks to show how mutual mistrust and local fears are exploited variously by the regional administrators, the central government, and the different institutions.

3.2a) Border Demarcation in the Russian Far East. Implications for Bilateral Relations.

The Tsarist Treaties and the Soviet era:
In 1689, the first border pact was signed. Russia agreed to acknowledge China’s right to land on both sides of the river known as Amur by the Russians, and Heilongjiang by the Chinese. The exact definition of the frontier was, however, vague. The year 1858 saw the initialling of a new pact, the Treaty of Aigun that put areas now forming Russia’s Primorskii krai under joint rule. This was short-lived, as two years later in 1860, under the terms of the Treaty of Beijing, Russia imposed on a weakened China (it had just been defeated by Britain and France) a new deal under which the border took roughly its present shape. One Sinologist has described how ‘on the pretext of aiding China against England, Russia persuaded the Chinese government in the treaties of 1858 and 1860 to hand over the area east of the Stanovoy range as far south as the region of what is today Vladivostok (the capital of Primorksii krai).’ In 1886 China and Russia demarcated their border for the first time, but not precisely due to the nature of the wild and largely uninhabited border zone.

During the struggle between the Bolsheviks and their opponents for control of the Russian Far East the Manchurian city of Harbin became the base for Russian “Whites”, who continued to fight the new Soviet government until the 1930s. The regime had declared “null and void all the treaties concluded with China by the former governments of Russia, renounce[d] all seizure of
Chinese territory and all Russian concessions to China, without any compensation and for ever...."² This promise, known as the Karakhan Declaration was later described by the Soviets as 'a basis for negotiations, not a concrete programme. \textit{This change of front the Chinese have never forgotten.}³ (my italics)

As relations between China and the Soviet Union started to deteriorate in the early 1960s, old resentments began to surface. During the border clashes between India and China in 1962 the USSR at first somewhat grudgingly supported China, mainly due to the need for Beijing's support over the Cuban Missile Crisis. However, the fact that the Soviets had supplied India with MiG-21 fighter planes which had not been offered to China, betrayed the Soviets' real attitude.⁴ The USSR soon took up a neutral stance on the border issue, thus angering the Chinese, who began moving closer to Pakistan.

In 1963 China described the tsarist treaties as "unequal" but agreed to accept them as basis for negotiation.⁵ However, the USSR refused to concede that the treaties were unequal or even that there were "disputed areas", leading to the breakdown of talks. Mao Zedong now openly criticised the USSR for its territorial ambitions, telling a Japanese delegation in July 1964 that 'too many places' were occupied by the USSR,. He cited, among such 'places' the Amur region, Mongolia, Xinjiang and the Martitime province, along with Khabarovsk and Vladivostok, adding that the Kurils "must be returned to Japan".⁶ Articles appeared in the Chinese press claiming that Soviet policy was a "continuation of the aggressive policy of the Russian tsars", while Moscow declared that China was continuing "the expansionist strategy of the Chinese emperors".⁷

March 1969 saw armed clashes on the eastern border on the uninhabited island called Damanskii by the Soviets, and Zhenbao by the Chinese (its status is disputed under the treaties of Aigun and Beijing⁸) leading to emergency talks between Kosygin and Zhou Enlai in September to stop hostilities. A month later formal demarcation talks began, continuing on and off until 1973 but
showing little progress. The PRC demanded prior acknowledgement of “unequal treaties” and “disputed areas”, proposing mutual withdrawal of border forces from the latter. However, the USSR refused all preconditions. The Soviets offered a mutual nonaggression pact and various compromises on the border, including acceptance of the *thalweg* principle\(^9\) to demarcate the Amur and Ussuri rivers. All these offers were turned down by the Chinese, especially as the island of Heixiazi (Black Bear island) at the junction of the two rivers was excluded.\(^{10}\) The breakdown of negotiations coincided with an increased Soviet military buildup in the Far East, which gives credence to Dittmer’s comment that ‘the talks had served at least a stabilizing function.’\(^{11}\) Talks were resumed in early 1975, but were overshadowed by the intrusion of a Soviet helicopter into Xinjiang later that year.

The deaths of Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai in 1976 encouraged the USSR to suspend the polemics, and suggest partial settlement but this was rebuffed by the PRC. Still, while there was no agreement on the problem of the border dispute itself, there was some progress on the issue of navigation rights in the Ussuri and Amur rivers. Since 1966, Soviet warships had prevented Chinese ships from using the eastern watercourse, forcing them to use the Kazakevich channel, which was too shallow for ships. Eventually the two sides agreed provisionally on navigation of the rivers leaving the Heixiazi question open and allowing the Chinese to use the eastern watercourse when the Kazakevich channel was too shallow for navigation.\(^{12}\)

In George Ginsburgs’ words, by the end of 1977, the outcome was an ‘ad hoc administrative arrangement, which shelved the territorial issue while dealing with the practical problem of civilian traffic in this section of the border [i.e. around the island on the Ussuri near Khabarovsk and] seems to have operated since then without attracting further outcry from either side.’ According to Ginsburgs, ‘the Russians soon adopted a *de facto* policy of sticking to their own side of the center line in the *thalweg* […]along virtually the entire extent of the fluvial portion of the border.’\(^{13}\)
In 1979 the Chinese abrogated the Sino-Soviet treaty in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. However Beijing indicated willingness to engage in talks “on a separate basis from those on the border”, i.e. “both sides agreeing to suspend the hopelessly deadlocked border question and focus instead on the normalization of state-to-state relations.”

This was an important precondition for the building of trust in the late Brezhnev period and the early Gorbachev years, leading to the significant visit to Beijing in 1983 of deputy foreign minister Mikhail Kapitsa. This was the first visit to China of a highranking Soviet official in more than twenty years.

The gradual rebuilding of some measure of mutual trust was illustrated by Gorbachev’s subsequent success regarding border negotiations. In his Vladivostok speech in 1986, he had referred to Russia’s border with China, and suggested demarcation by the *thalweg* principle, which, as Vladimir Miasnikov says, was not only significant in those terms, but also in practical ones, as the eastern section of the border “the riverine and island sections of the border make up more than 90%...” An indication of the impact of Gorbachev’s Vladivostok initiative was borne out by the fact that in August 1986, just one month after the Vladivostok speech, Kapitsa visited Beijing yet again to arrange for the resumption of deputy ministerial talks. Thus border talks broken off eight years earlier now resumed in February 1987. In early 1989 (just before Gorbachev’s visit) unresolved issues still included the status of Heixiazi island (Bolshoi Ussuriisk) on the convergence of the Amur and Ussuri rivers. But the Soviet side finally agreed that Zhenbao (Damanskii) belonged to China.

Despite the breakthrough in relations which led to the signing in 1991 of agreements on the course of the border, the issue of the sovereignty of Bolshoi Ussuriisk and the other island, Tabarov, covering a total of 350 kilometres in Khabarovsk krai, and of the island of Bolshoi (59 km²) in the Argun river, remained.
3.2: Redefining the joint border.

The extent to which the USSR was prepared to make concessions to the Chinese has been noted by Eric Hyer who maintains that Gorbachev and Shevardnadze apparently wanted to recognise China's claims to the islands near Khabarovsk, while Dmitrii Iazov, the defence minister, and the premier Nikolai Ryzhkov, opposed it for strategic reasons. 18

The post-Soviet era:

In a speech to the Supreme Soviet in 1992, the Russian foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev requested ratification of the eastern sector of the Russo-Chinese border in accordance with the 1991 agreement.19 He explained that under that agreement out of a total of 1,845 islands, more than half were to be given away in terms of quantity as well as in terms of overall area. The islands on the Chinese side of the channel (presumably the thalweg) Kozyrev noted, were all 'uninhabited, unclaimed and have practically no economic value.' Overall, he claimed, the agreement did not envisage any territorial concessions, and 'for the first time reflects the de facto situation on the Russo-Chinese border.' Summing up, he admitted that it had still not been possible to agree on the ownership of Bolshoi Ussuriisk and Tarabarov around Khabarovsk and the island of Bolshoi upstream of Argun. 20 Significantly, the two sides decided not to delay signing the agreement on demarcation and it was indicated that talks on the two areas in question would be continued. Until agreement was reached on these islands the status quo would remain. In response to local dissatisfaction at the paucity of information emanating from the Kremlin, a concerted effort was made by the MID and representatives of the border troops to maintain contact with the local administration of the krais and oblasts in the Russian Far East. December of the same year saw the first Sino-Russian summit where the two sides signed a Joint Declaration agreeing to continue to hold talks on those sections of the border which had yet to be agreed upon. 21 This meant that the future of the islands of Bolshoi Ussuriisk
and Tarabarov in the Amur near Khabarovsk, and of Bolshoi in the Argun would be decided at a later date in accordance with article 3 of the 1991 agreement on the eastern section. ²²

The issue of demarcating the border following the 1991 agreement proved to be fraught with difficulties. The decision to accept the thalweg principle was sometimes made unworkable by factors beyond the control of administrators. Thus Ginsburgs draws attention to the erosion of the left bank of the Ussuri: ‘Nature itself lent a hand in removing some of the old stumbling blocks: thus, geography took care of the status of the ill-fated Damansky Island when the shallowing of the Ussuri resulted in the island being joined to the Chinese bank.’ ²³ This was also the case on the river Tummanaia where, according to documents signed in 1860-1 and 1886, the left bank of the river belonged to China. However due to erosion, ‘the border ended up in the water.’ The agreement signed in 1991 restored the treaty situation under which the left bank belongs to China. A MID briefing in 1996 said that the two sides ‘are looking for a mutually acceptable variant for the passage of the border taking into account the peculiarities of the terrain.’ ²⁴

This issue has been seized upon by the governor of Primorskii krai Evgenii Nazdratenko and used as ammunition in his struggle with the centre. Nazdratenko has drawn particular attention to the area where Russia, China and North Korea meet at the mouth of the river Tummanaia (Tumen). Under the terms of the border agreement, this area is to be given to China, and Nazdratenko has fuelled speculation that China might build ports here, thus giving it access to the Sea of Japan. The fact that North Korea has persisted in denying China access to the lower reaches of the Tumen river²⁵, may be one reason for Nazdratenko’s suspicions of Chinese motives. According to Nazdratenko, if China built ports on the Tumen river, this would effectively make redundant the Primorskii ports of Vladivostok and Nakhodka, as freight would then be shipped ‘through China to Kazakstan via the Chinese Eastern Railway and then to Europe. This route is almost 2000 km shorter than the present one… ²⁶ The issue is complicated by the fact that the Tumen river basin has been earmarked for a development project under the aegis of the
3.2: Redefining the joint border.

United Nations. The formal agreement for the project was signed in May 1995 by Russia, South and North Korea, China and Japan. However the Japanese have been cool regarding the project and ‘are not willing to devote the financial resources necessary to make it viable.’ In addition, local officials in Russia like Nazdratenko believe that Russia has least to gain from the project, and China the most.

But, as the Russian MID has pointed out, the development of the area at the mouth of the Tumen river ‘was taken out of discussion already at the preliminary stage of the draft of the United Nations programme’. The Chinese themselves reject any idea that they might build a port designed for the Sea of Japan. There have been assertions that handing over this land would allow the Chinese to sail warships down the river, although the Foreign Ministry has protested that the river is far too shallow, “a little river that only a flat-bottomed Chinese junk could pass through”. The authors of this article believe that the ‘strategic importance of this buffer zone’ was highlighted by the Tumen river project. Russia was offered ‘insulting conditions’ amounting to only five per cent of revenue, the reason, the article says, being that the instigators of the project assumed a priori that the territory along the river would go to China.

In fact, Russia was able to reach a compromise on this territory so that the area where the soldiers’ graves is situated was retained by Russia in addition to a nature reserve and a lake. As the abovementioned article jubilantly points out, the Chinese received ‘the absolute minimum needed to serve their dam – one hundred and fifty hectares’. The article claims, probably with some justification, that this is due mainly to the efforts of individuals like Nazdratenko (his predecessor is blamed for not informing the residents of the provisions of the 1991 agreement) and the ataman of the local Cossack regiment, as well as Kozyrev’s successor, Evgenii Primakov.

As for the two islands in the Amur river (Bolshoi Ussuriisk and Tarabarov), at the fifth summit in November 1997, it was declared that ‘all questions relating
to the demarcation of the Russo-Chinese state border in the eastern section [...] in accordance with the Agreement of 1991 have been finally regulated.’ Although the two islands were explicitly omitted from the joint declaration, it was decided that this issue would be resolved at a later date. On a strict interpretation of the 1991 agreement then, the two sides could indeed state that all questions had been resolved, in as much as the fate of these islands was to be decided separately. The November 1997 summit also saw the signing of an agreement on joint economic use of ‘certain islands’ and their surrounding waters in the border rivers. This provided for continued use of islands ceded to one or other side by those engaging in ‘traditional economic activity’, while the right to issue the necessary documents was granted to the local authorities on either side of the border. This agreement would presumably provide also for the joint use of the two islands in the Amur, a provision which has since then elicited protests from, among others, the chair of the Khabarovsk krai Duma. A memorandum was also signed on cooperation between the Chinese and the Russian local authorities which envisaged joint consultation in the case of disputes, although it was stated that this did not include questions which fell into the sphere of foreign policy, defence or the state border.

Article Five of the 1991 border agreement stipulated that in navigable rivers the border should be the middle of the main channel (thalweg) and in non-navigable rivers the middle of the river or the middle of its main branch. Article Eight states that vessels, including military ones, may sail unimpeded down the Ussuri into the Amur river past the town of Khabarovsk and back. In addition Article Nine states that Chinese ships may sail down the Tumen as far as the thirty-third border point indicated in article 2 in order to reach the sea and back again.

In September 1994, at the second summit, the two sides again confirmed their responsibilities to observe strictly the provisions of the 1991 agreement on the eastern sector. In the same year agreements were signed on the protection of water resources in the Amur and Ussuri rivers in connection with fishing.
the September summit the western sector was also agreed on. This section is only 55 kilometres long and is located in an isolated mountainous area of the border where China, (Xinjiang-Uighur autonomous region), Russia (in the Altai) and Mongolia intersect. The Chinese ratified the agreement in December 1994, and the Russians in May 1995.

3.2b) Border Demarcation in the Russian Far East: Centre and Periphery.

The protests which have surrounded the demarcation of the Sino-Russian border have highlighted the fact that in a federal state such as the new Russia, the centre must take into account local interests when deciding on foreign policy issues. Of course the agreement on the border was signed prior to the collapse of the USSR, and ratified by a parliament elected under the Soviet system. Nevertheless the Russian government has been slow to realise the need to clarify the contents of international agreements to local populations, such as that on the Russo-Chinese border. 36

Initially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was complacent on this issue, as the comments of a foreign ministry press officer hosting a visit to the Far East in June 1992 of foreign diplomats and businessmen reveal, ‘The trip has shown that our foreign policy institution has a good working relationship with the leaders of Russia’s eastern territories.’ This was probably more wishful thinking than reality, but at least the centre was beginning to wake up to the fact that the regional authorities could not be ignored. At the same time the article admitted that the main barrier to foreign investment in the Russian Far East was ‘not the rivalry between the regions of the different branches of power within one or other oblast or krai, but the constant tug of war between the centre and the periphery.’ 37

The protests against the demarcation of the border with China drew attention, among other factors, to the need for greater consultation with the regions on issues of foreign policy that directly affected them. The establishment of a ‘consultative committee of subjects of the Russian Federation on International
and Foreign Economic Ties towards the end of 1994 was clearly a move to tackle this problem.

In his address, Kozyrev noted that ‘The Russian Federation is composed of subjects, and this means that Russian Foreign Policy should be the foreign policy of each region and at the same time an integral and total policy of the Federation - that is the regions taken together. We have great experience of working together with the regions, for example in the Far East. There have been no more instances when the president, the foreign minister or other leaders have set off on a trip to China, Japan or Korea without having first consulted with the appropriate regions. Today not one question is solved without the participation of the Federation’s subjects.’ Thus, when Kozyrev visited Beijing in early 1995 to hold talks on cooperation regarding the border, as well as on trade and economic relations, it was with the cooperation of the leaders of a number of Russian krais bordering on China.

Kozyrev’s visit coincided with the start of a concerted campaign by Nazdratenko to undermine the demarcation of the border in the Primorskii area. Nevertheless, an agreement was signed in Beijing on 17 October 1995 completing demarcation of the 4,380 kilometre border with Russia. The agreement contained however a clause which left to future generations the question of control over the three islands in the Amur and Argun rivers. The final segment, in Primorskii krai, was completed on 30 November 1995 when 1,300 hectares were transferred to China. But some of the local Russian population remained unhappy with the demarcation.

Exploitation of the border issue following the 1991 Border Agreement: the regions.

The emergence of cross-border trade since 1992 has meant an outflow of raw materials from the Russian Far East in exchange for consumer goods. Those
who seek to enhance their own political standing at the regional level charge that the Far East is being stripped of its resources by greedy Chinese who offer only substandard goods in exchange. China needs Russia as a market for these goods, which is why it is not interested in curbing illegal emigration of its citizens to the Russian border regions. The border demarcation had already been agreed on in 1991, but governors of the border regions (although noticeably not in Amurskaia oblast which has a high trade turnover with China) and sections of the media sympathetic to them (e.g. the media tycoon and politician Boris Berezovskii’s Nezavisimaia gazeta) have attempted to depict the demarcation process as a ‘catastrophe’ for Russia in geopolitical and security terms, with the governors portrayed as upholders of Russian national interests.  

It is not easy to assess the validity of these claims, in particular as the accusations against the federal centre have often been motivated by financial considerations, in as much as certain border regions have attempted to win extra subsidies from the centre by exaggerating the extent of territorial concessions to China. Nazdratenko, for example, demanded special privileges for his krai which eventually materialised in the form of government decree ‘On Urgent Measures of State Support for the Primorsk krai economy in 1993-1995’. In October 1994 he had tried to hold gubernatorial elections and it was only when leaders of democratic factions in the Duma attracted public attention to the situation in Primorskii krai that he backed down. Around the same time Eltsin issued a decree to strengthen his power to appoint new governors until 1996. Nazdratenko organised the campaign to denounce the 1991 treaty under the slogan ‘No piece of native land to China’ and an operation ‘Foreigner’ began, to clear the krai of illegal immigrants. Nazdratenko had strong support from Oleg Soskovets, first deputy prime minister until 1997 (both are old industrialists) in gubernatorial campaigns.

In February and March 1995 protests against demarcation in the Russian Far East seemed to be spiralling out of control: governors appointed by El’tsin were now opposing his policies. The Cossacks played an important role in
the drama created by Nazdratenko. For example, the rogue governor decided at one point to give over part of Primorskii krai near the Chinese border to the Ussuri Cossacks, who should 'quickly build settlements there, farm the land and protect the state from violators - that is, the Chinese.' The protests of Evgenii Nazdratenko have been given most prominence, but Viktor Ishaev, the governor of Khabarovsk krai, has also made himself heard on this issue. Both the governors of Khabarovsk krai and of Primorsk krai have displayed a tough stance on territorial concessions to China in their reelection campaigns. For example in the December 1996 gubernatorial elections, Ishaev garnered support from the 'Party of Primore', created to collect signatures on the holding of a referendum on whether Russia should cede land to China. Its supporters charge that any cession would damage Russia's strategic position in the APR. Both Nazdratenko and Ishaev have at various times threatened to secede from the Federation if their demands were not met. The cynical exploitation of the sensitive issue of territorial integrity led to a smear campaign against the mayor of Vladivostok, Viktor Cherepkov, in the 1996 gubernatorial elections. Thus, a forged news article which quoted Cherepkov as urging the krai to become independent was sent to El'tsin's office, apparently by Nazdratenko's Moscow representatives. However, the centre's anger has been mainly directed at Nazdratenko, partly because of the chaos caused by his power struggle with the mayor of Vladivostok, Viktor Cherepkov, and the constant energy crises in the krai. But Nazdratenko also has some powerful allies however, such as Aleksandr Lebed (and later Evgenii Primakov), who claimed, when Anatolii Chubais called for Nazdratenko to be sacked, that this would allow the Chinese to gain control of Russian territory. Bizarrely, Nazdratenko was named an honourable citizen and awarded the 'Order of Aleksandr Nevskii' for his 'contributions to social welfare, the economic power of Russia and helping to preserve its territorial integrity.'

**Exploitation of the border issue by federal bodies.**
The Border Guards Service has spearheaded the drive to strengthen Russian territorial integrity, by clamping down on illegal migration and attempting to
wrest oversight of cross-border trade from the rival Customs Services, leading to a struggle between the two for control of visa regimes and goods transit. El’tsin himself emphasised the important role of the border services in ‘the fight against cross-border organised crime and illegal migration’\(^{50}\), and officials of both the naval and armed forces have made comments regarding the border demarcation issue. General Andrei Nikolaev, head of the Border Guards until the end of 1997, was at the forefront of attempts to win budgetary concessions for his service, as well as to ward off attempts by the Ministry of Defence to absorb the Border Guards. By highlighting the importance of Russian territorial integrity, which has become an integral component of Russian foreign and security policies, he has ensured a prominent place for the border guards in regulation of the border: the cross-border trade with China led to a struggle between the border guards and the customs services for control of visa regimes and goods transit. In an article published shortly after his ‘resignation’, Nikolaev outlined the strategic goal of ‘border diplomacy’ as aiming for the creation and strengthening together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ‘a belt and zone of border security along the entire perimeter of the Russian border’. Further he recommended unifying in one system customs and migration control, implying these functions should also come under the aegis of the Border Guards.\(^{51}\) Vladimir Lukin, the influential chairman of the State Duma Committee on International Affairs, described the advent of Nikolaev as having vastly improved the situation concerning Russia’s state borders. Lukin called for more resources to be allocated to Nikolaev’s service, noting that ‘the border troops are in a very serious state: they are not paid, they are demoralised. […] The border is becoming symbolic.’\(^{52}\) Politicians like the former vice-president Aleksandr Rutskoi saw the issue of the border as a cue for impassioned pleas for maintaining Russian territorial integrity:

Nor can there be any question of a revision of the demarcation line of the border between Russia and China. We received Russian lands not as a present. They were discovered by Russian pioneers, Khabarov, Nevelskoy and Muravyev-Amurskiy. Our ancestors shed their blood
3.2: Redefining the joint border.

for it. One should always bear this in mind. Wherever the Russian flag was once hoisted, it should not be replaced by any other one.⁵³

Tracing the history of the dispute, Lukin notes that China originally had ‘very serious territorial claims’ on Russia which were brought to an end by the 1991 border agreement. The agreement was scrutinised in great detail and everyone recognised its fairness and the fact that it was advantageous for Russia. According to Lukin, the agreement was given to the administrations of those krais and oblasts of Russia and the Soviet Union that bordered China, and there were no criticisms at the time. (That includes the Primorskii krai administration.) Later (1992) the agreement was almost unanimously ratified in the Supreme Soviet with just six abstentions. Then came the practical work - it was decided that this should proceed until the end of 1995, after which there would be another two years on the corresponding publishing work. Lukin elaborated:

The principle of the course of the border, the demarcation has already been ratified and now the detailed questions, such as maps, concrete points - this is all the work of the government and no longer has anything to do with the legislative organs.’ Nevertheless we have decided to study this matter again. Not with the aim of revising it, but with the aim of examining it and trying to smooth out the tensions which have arisen.⁵⁴

Some government officials believed that the best policy with regard to the demarcation of the border was to complete the work as soon as possible, thereby making it a fait accompli: for example, Afanas’ev, a member of the government delegation to the border talks, said:

It is extremely important to demarcate the border as quickly as possible and sign the appropriate documents. [...] this will eliminate any sources of potential disputes or conflicts. Revising the agreement would only leave Russia’s national interests vulnerable to attack. The local population would also suffer...⁵⁵
Lukin has given some credence to the protests of local residents of the RFE: thus he noted that the maps which were put together after the Treaty of Beijing were imprecise, so that in Khabarovsk krai where the islands Tarabarov and Bolshoi Ussurisk clearly belong to Russia, there should be no negotiation, either now or in the future. He stressed however, that where the border was unclear Russia would have to compromise:

...if neither side has precise documents then let us negotiate. But on the other side of the scales are Russian national interests, and we have a fourousand kilometre long border with China. In addition the balance of forces between us and China has changed radically and not in our favour. Seventy per cent of our borders (not just with China) are not assured. All we need now is to quarrel with China over a few hectares. If anyone in the executive branch puts forward serious arguments to say that there is evidence that the border should remain as it is, then fine. Let us remember also that the Chinese have made concessions to us, not just the other way around. For example the issue surrounding Khasan and the soldiers’ graves, the Chinese moved the border so that they would remain on our territory. I would also ask the president and the government to bring order into the executive on this issue. I respect the subjects of the Federation but this discussion should not take place in full view of our neighbour and should not create problems. Pluralism in parliament is fine, but not in the executive, especially when it has serious international repercussions.56

A parliamentary commission was in fact established at the end of 1996 to review the border treaty. A spokesman said that the treaty “inflicts damage on Russia’s geostrategic interests.” 57

Eltsin, (like Nazdratenko) in his annual address to the Border Guards in 1994 also recommended enlisting the help of the Cossacks in defending Russia’s borders, 58 in line with which Cossacks were drafted into the Amur, the Ussuri and the Transbaikal military districts. (In early 1997 Eltsin decreed that they should also patrol the border with Kazakhstan. 59) An article on the border demarcation described how the ataman of the Ussuriisk cossack regiment,
Vitalii Poluianov, played ‘an active role’ in stopping the transfer of territory to China where soldiers’ graves are located. The Cossacks are now officially part of the Federal Border Services. Meanwhile, officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated: ‘Those who try to damage these agreements are not only pushing us into a historical cul-de-sac but are also acting against the core interests of Russia in its relations with China.’ A few months before his retirement the commander-in-chief of the navy, Adm. Feliks Gromov, (August 1992 - Autumn 1997) warned that border talks could give China an outlet onto the Sea of Japan, which he said could change the military balance in Asia. At present, Chinese territory ends seventeen kilometres from the Sea of Japan, with the river marking the Chinese-North Korean border north of that point, and the Russian-North Korean border south to the Sea. Gromov said the new agreement might allow Chinese vessels to sail down the Tummanaia and into the Sea of Japan. The MID called his warnings ‘groundless’, saying that the river was too shallow for warships, and that the border agreement would not in any case give China the right to use the lower seventeen kilometres of the river.

3.2c) Demilitarising the joint border.
Between 1985 and 1987 China cut its armed forces by one million. The USSR cut its forces on the Soviet-Chinese border by 80,000 in the mid 1980s and by 1991 had cut 120,000 from the Far East theatre as well as completing withdrawal from Mongolia. At the first Russo-Chinese summit in December 1992 a memorandum was signed on ‘questions of mutual reductions in armed forces and confidence building in the military sphere in the border area.’ This confirmed responsibilities arising from the intergovernmental Agreement of 24 April 1990 on ‘the guiding principles of mutual reduction in armed forces and confidence building in the military sphere in the border area.’ It also alluded to the ‘great significance’ of the ongoing talks between Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan’ in the same area. Agreement was reached on accelerating work in this area in order to conclude it by the end of 1994. Point
2 of the memorandum stated that the ‘practical measures’ of the agreement would be completed in stages by the year 2000, with the ‘aim of reducing the armed forces in the border region to a minimal level in accordance with the goodneighbourly and friendly relations between the two countries. Earlier that year already, in August, the seventh round of talks on troop reductions and confidence building in border areas had been attended by delegations from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Russia and China. The Chinese side made a reconnaissance trip around the Far Eastern military district, visiting South Sakhalinsk and Khabarovsk. Pavel Grachev, the defence minister, indicated that only troops in remote northern areas were to be reduced. It appeared that the difficulty in negotiating border reductions that Grachev had encountered meant that a separate agreement on CBMs was signed ‘as a transitional document on the way to the overall CBM and troop reduction treaty’. Grachev maintained that the Chinese were demanding cutbacks within a one hundred kilometre zone, but as China’s main military units were located in their interior, he called this unacceptable. In effect, the Chinese were demanding a fifty per cent cut in troops which made it unlikely, in Grachev’s view that an agreement would be signed in the near future. Despite this lack of success on troop reductions however, there were still plans to draft an agreement on mutual confidence building in the area in time for El’tsin’s visit in late 1995. In fact, due to illness, Eltsin’s visit did not take place until April 1996. In May 1996 Grachev met Chinese Chief of Staff Fu Quanyou. A military-technical protocol was signed, specifying the terms of the 1993 bilateral military-technical agreement and Grachev described the two countries as “strategic partners”. Reductions in border troops formed part of this agenda on this occasion.

The talks with the Central Asian states were codified in the ‘Shanghai Agreement’ signed against the backdrop of the April 1996 Russo-Chinese summit. The importance of this agreement was that it provided for multilateral as well as bilateral confidence building measures, so that the joint declaration issued at the summit stated that the agreement represented ‘an important joint investment in terms of preserving stability, security and
development in the APR, and could serve as an example for other states in the region.' This statement may have been made with one eye on the pledge by the US and Japan to revitalise their security alliance, a pledge made just prior to the Russo-Chinese summit.

On a trip to Beijing in 1992, Kozyrev said the Far East military district was included in Eltsin’s plans to reduce troops by 700,000 during 1993 and 1994. Later in 1993 during the ASEAN post-ministerial conference he changed the figure, stating that Russia would maintain only half its forces in the region, i.e. a greater number. Aleksei Zagorskii draws attention to the fact that initial Soviet-Chinese talks on reductions of border troops and CBMs that started after Gorbachev’s visit to China in 1990 have been smoothly transformed into talks on only CBMs. As understood by the Russian and Chinese military, real security guarantees were based on personal contacts and confidence between elites and did not require legal formulations in treaties, or control measures. When Russian-Chinese contacts were re-established after the abortive coup of 1991, the old elite model thus seemed to re-emerge.

An article written at the time of the April 1997 summit voiced concern at the heavy cuts being made along the border: ‘Why should our country cut its troops so severely on the border? According to the agreement which was signed today in the Kremlin, Russia is being given strict quotas as to how many ‘men with arms’ and technology we are allowed to have in the future.’ It goes on: ‘Why is it necessary at all to arm our neighbour so well, a neighbour whose population exceeds ours more than eightfold.’ Grachev’s successor as defence minister, Igor Rodionov clarified the question as to whether troops near the border would be cut only partially, or completely withdrawn in accordance with the five-way agreement between China, the three Central Asian states and Russia, signed at Shanghai in December 1996:

This will be the first agreement of its kind in Asia. However there is no question of the withdrawal of any armed forces from the border area. The agreement merely defines the upper levels for each
individual regiment, for weapons and military technology of the ground troops, the airborne troops and the aircraft of the border guards in the border area.\textsuperscript{73}

With respect to the bilateral troop reduction agreement, the Russian Foreign Ministry refused to disclose any details on numbers, merely that the reductions would be made within a one hundred kilometre zone on either side of the border, on the principle of ‘asymmetry’. ‘This means that the forces of the country with the most armaments and personnel will be subject to the biggest cuts. Kireev [Foreign Ministry spokesman] acknowledged that this principle will mainly affect Russia, since Russian troops are concentrated in the zone covered in the agreement, while the main grouping on the Chinese side has been moved back and is located roughly 300 kilometres inside Chinese territory.’\textsuperscript{74} As one analyst has argued, ‘Soviet/Russian willingness to undertake asymmetrical reductions should be regarded as a contributing factor in the success of Sino-Russian CBMs.’\textsuperscript{75} This was the twenty-second round of arms reduction talks over a period of seven years.

Li Peng’s visit to Moscow was marred by Igor’ Rodionov’s remarks to the effect that China was a potential enemy of Russia, one of a number of ‘Asian countries’ seeking sharply to increase their armed forces’ defence capabilities.\textsuperscript{76} Around the same time, the commander of the Transbaikal Military District (headquarters at Chita) complained that China had not yet ‘got round to reducing its army [...] One of the possible scenarios […] could be the concentration of such a grouping on our border.’ The television report noted that the PLA’s approach was to

base its military units approximately 300 kilometres south of the border [...] The Chinese have suggested that we withdraw our forces by a similar distance - admittedly, in a northwards direction. [...] Incidentally, our military also do not understand why China had to deploy two dozen brand-new SU-27 aircraft, which it purchased from Russia, against our Transbaykal grouping.’\textsuperscript{77}
Such concerns by the military and naval officials, combined with the problem of Chinese migration may continue to hamper confidence-building at the elite level, and could ultimately have a knock-on effect on cross-border trade.

3.2d) Border Demarcation and Chinese Migrants in the RFE:
Until December 1993, there were no regulations in place regarding foreign labour in the Russian Federation. A report on the situation in Primorski krai by the press department of the local administration noted that the number of foreigners working in in the krai in 1995 was one thirtieth of the annual number of non-Russian workers prior to 1990. Sergei Pushkarev, head of the Primore migration department, said that the krai was 'a pioneer in addressing foreign labor concerns.' For Russia the issue of illegal migrants was a new one. The dilemma has been that demilitarising the border and opening it up to trade, seen to be essential both for the revitalisation of the RFE and the development of Russo-Chinese relations, has brought with it an influx of foreigners, in particular the Chinese eager to capitalise on the new possibilities of trade and commerce. Officials at both the regional and the federal level have made their own comments on the issue of Chinese migrants. Thus Grachev urged vigilance regarding the influx of Chinese: "Persons of Chinese nationality are trying to conquer the Russian Far East by peaceful means." The director of the Federal Migration Service, Tat’iana Regent, urged "resistance to Chinese expansion". She even proposed developing a programme to settle Russian-speaking people in the Far East. In Primorski krai the campaign to take harsh measures against illegal immigrants was particularly well publicised. Thus on 15 October 1997 Nazdratenko signed an instruction 'On measures to control the foreign labour force in the sphere of services and trade'. The head of the Primorski krai migration service signalled the start of a new campaign against the illegals: "Now the uncontrolled business of Chinese "shuttle traders" will be liquidated." From now on, the managers of the Primore markets would be obliged to conclude contracts with Chinese companies and indicate in the contracts how many people from that company would be trading and in what. The same article
noted that the Primorski krai Internal Affairs administration had invited Chinese police from Harbin to acquaint themselves with the work of the Russian police. The main topics of discussion were crimes committed by Chinese against other Chinese on Primorski krai territory and discussed cooperation in investigating illegal activities. The Primorski krai authorities have tightened entrance requirements for Chinese and North Korean workers, so that now, to cross the border, they must demonstrate skills in the profession in which they are seeking work.

Chinese migration to the Russian Far East is an emotive issue, one which has been regularly exploited by officials and politicians for their own ends. Reliable figures are not available, and official figures provided by the Federal Migration Service were included in the annual statistical tables for two years only. Western analysts, often relying mainly on sensationalist newspaper reports, have cited aggregate figures of between a few hundred thousand and a million: thus Ziegler writing in 1994 gives 'current estimates of 'between 300,000 and one million' illegal Chinese residents in the Russian Far East as a whole. Charles Moltz, in an article a year later, cites an even broader spread, of 'between 200,000 to over two million'. Certain Russian analysts, however, arrive at more conservative figures: for example, Irina Kommissina, writing in 1996, gives figures for Russia as a whole in the first half of 1995 as 18,900 (she gives the figure for 1992 of 30,000). However, these figures are for those entering the country via legal channels. According to the Chief of Staff of the Pacific Border District, in Primorski krai in 1994 there were more than 50,000 illegal Chinese, while in the RFE as a whole in 1994 there were more than 150,000. Official figures of the number of foreign workers residing in Russia, provided by the Federal Migration Service of Russia for 1994, show that out of a total of 129,000 working in Russia as a whole, 20,300 were from China (15.7 per cent of the total); in 1995 out of a total of 281,000, 26,500 were from China (9.4 per cent of the total). Vladimir Portiakov, another Russian political scientist, gives figures for 1993 of between 40-150,000 Chinese in Primorski krai alone. Even liberal politicians such as Grigorii Iavlinskii have found recourse to the exaggeration...
of statistics regarding Chinese migration to Russia. Shortly before the Russian parliamentary elections in 1995, for example, he warned that an economic crisis was brewing in China which could unleash a flood of immigrants into Russia, claiming that five million Chinese were currently in Russia illegally. However, Eltsin’s presidential adviser, Emil Pain, said in 1997 claims that illegal Chinese immigrants in the southern area of the RFE totalled two million were wrong, as such a number would be "highly noticeable" among a population of 4.8 million. Nevertheless he remarked that while there were only 50,000-80,000 immigrants in 1992-93, by May 1997 that figure had risen to just short of 200,000.

As mentioned above, (3.2b) the Border Guards Services have played an important role in attempting to stem the tide of illegal migration. Under Operation ‘Inostranets’, they arrested 1,657 people on visa violation charges, seventy-five per cent of whom were apparently Chinese. Yet Portiakov also notes that Li Fenglin, the Chinese ambassador, on a tour of the RFE in September 1995, was told that the majority of the 3,423 people deported from Russia in the first eight months of 1995 were Chinese. In 1993, a similar operation codenamed ‘Signal’ was conducted in Vladivostok, during the course of which over 3000 ‘miscreants’, including a large number of Chinese with expired visas were detained. The sharp increase in illegal migration from the Chinese side of the border in 1993 led to a directive to the Border troops authorising them to open fire on anyone caught trying to cross the border from China who failed to respond to their commands. A report in 1993 detailed raids in the krai which purportedly discovered more than 15,000 Chinese in that locality, while the number of Russians was apparently only 70,000. The author claimed that the local population was tired of the rudeness and ‘predatory consumerism’ of the Chinese shuttle traders, accusing them also of inciting riots and starting fights as well as engaging in theft, murder and rape. Yet in the same year, it was reported that in 1992 alone, 245 attacks had been carried out on Chinese citizens on the territory of Amurskaia oblast. It is not clear whether the attacks were carried out by their compatriots, or by Russian nationals. While Chinese gangs operate all over
Russia, the most publicity has been given to those operating in the Russian Far East. Vladimir Miasnikov, in his comprehensive history of the Russo-Chinese border, claims that the most frequent reason for violating the border is fishing, which according to the press service of the border guards has become ‘almost uncontrollable’. However, by comparison with reports of Japanese poaching operations, the Chinese violations have been given little publicity. However exaggerated the reports of Chinese expansionism, the reality of an economically weak Russian Far East bordering an increasingly assertive and economically powerful China, cannot be ignored. While it may be true, as Vladimir Abarinov asserts, that accusations of expansionism by local authorities ‘will not have any effect on bilateral relations’, the Kremlin should develop a coherent policy to address this issue, if only in order to preempt the mythmaking of local demagogues. Efforts by federal authorities to address the economic plight of the Russian Far East do not inspire confidence. For example, the presidential plan for the long term development of the Far East has failed to get off the ground, and the Russian Far East remains one of the least attractive prospects for foreign investment.

It is clear that there is a significant Chinese presence in the Russian Far East, one which was only to be expected as a result of the opening of the joint border and the growth of trade. However, the concern is that this natural expansion backed up by the traditional territorial claims of the Chinese elite could eventually lead to the RFE becoming absorbed into Greater China. Many Chinese, like Mao earlier, feel it is unfair that Russia, with its laughably small population compared to China’s, should occupy such an enormous territory. Miasnikov describes how in China, in literary works and everyday use, one encounters the phrase “the great virgin lands of the north”, which at one time meant the Northeast and Manchuria, but now signifies Russia’s Far East and Siberia. This area is now propagandised as a place where one can quickly get rich. ‘But this is no Klondike where one has to take risks and work, but rather here, in this virgin land is a population which is easy to deceive and whom one can live off. This attracts a significant number of
criminal elements from China to Russian territory.' 98 In the words of Miasnikov:

The idea of the unity of the country holds for the Beijing as well as for the Taipei politicians, it is axiomatic for millions of Chinese who live overseas. Thus it follows that for whatever reason Chinese come to Russia's Far East, they are filled with the knowledge that they are only temporarily reconciled to the "historical injustice" expressed in the fact that Primorski krai and Amurskaia oblast belong to Russia. It is part of the official secondary and further education curriculum in China that China lost 1.5 million square kilometres to Russia under the "unequal treaties".

Miasnikov describes also the success in China in 1994 of a television series which depicted the emperor Khansi fighting the Russians for control of the Amur region. Chinese traders have even been known to tell their Russian customers in towns of the Far East "This is our land, and we can still chuck you out." 99 In the 1960s, the German Sinologist Klaus Mehnert asked young Chinese who had grown up in Mao's China what they had been taught about Vladivostok: 'Almost all of them replied that they had been taught that the place [i.e. Vladivostok] had been called Haishanwei "before the Russians took it away". Khabarovsk and Blagoveshchensk were shown on maps by the Chinese names of Poli and Hailanpao.100 This has resonance for Russia, in the sense that it is struggling to cope with the disintegration of the state itself, an issue which has been played up by regional leaders. The need for strong and reliable borders echoes this: in October 1996 Eltsin signed a decree on the inviolability of Russia's state borders.

David Kerr has perceptively pointed out that despite Russian concerns regarding the influx of Chinese migrants, just as Russia is reluctant to become purely a supplier of raw materials, China is unwilling to be a labour pool for Northeast Asia. Kerr concludes therefore that this is one of the reasons why 'attempts to pursue an anti Chinese agenda at regional level in the Far East
have failed to influence the progress of Sino-Russian rapprochement at state level.¹⁰¹

Despite rumblings of independence movements, Robert Vaillant has noted that the presence of China precludes such scenarios. He notes that the populations of China’s border regions are many times higher than those of Russia’s Far Eastern regions. However, as he concludes, these comparisons have no real value: ‘They have been made since the mid-nineteenth century when Russia began settling the Pacific coast. Their chief value comes in playing on fears, social prejudice, and on greed.’¹⁰² It is nevertheless true that Russia’s borders have never been more vulnerable. In the words of Nikolaev:

[...] in certain cases the influence of the outside world on a border population is stronger than its links with the federal centre. And if one takes into consideration the lingering scent of separatism in the air, the bitter experience of recent bids for independence, and the rivalry of a number of countries and world centres of power both with Russia and for control of Russia, then the possibility that a piece of Russia’s geopolitical ‘pie’ might be ‘bitten off’, could cease to be just an abstract idea.¹⁰³

Conclusion.

So, while Russia is prepared to make certain territorial concessions to China, this has always been in the context of a complete overhaul of the border regime, and combined with CBMs and border demilitarisation, as well as in an atmosphere of political goodwill at the highest levels. Simultaneously, emphasis on strengthening Russia’s borders has increased, by clamping down on illegal migrants and illegal economic activities in the overall context of a greater focus on Russia’s territorial integrity. The financial crisis that hit Russia in the summer of 1998 showed that Far Eastern threats of secession were hollow: for example, Nazdratenko now denounced as ‘separatism’ regional tax strikes, calling on regions to preserve the unity of Russia.¹⁰⁴ However the emphasis on territorial integrity may in the long term be detrimental to moves to integrate Russia more fully into the Asia-Pacific
3.2: Redefining the joint border.

economy. The faltering progress of the Tumen river project, hindered by Russian reservations regarding Chinese naval ambitions, is an example of this. Such projects may be the only route to the long term revival of the Russian Far East, certainly as long as the Kremlin fails to allocate sufficient investment and resources. For the moment at least, both Russia and China have other priorities than seeking to build up military capabilities on their joint border. China may be more concerned with developments in the wider Asia-Pacific, specifically the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance and developments on the Korean peninsula than in seeking to expand its territory in Northeast Asia. Russia is preoccupied with the eastward expansion of NATO and developments in Europe. These concerns will be dealt with in the last section of this chapter.

5 An article in ‘Renmin Ribao’ in March 1963 for the first time designated the Sino-Russian treaties of Aigun (1858), Peking (1860) and Il (1881) as having been ‘unequal’. See Lowell Dittmer, Sino-Soviet Normalization and Its International Implications, University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1992, note 22, p.32.
9 The thalweg principle entailed accepting the central channel of the river as the boundary.
12 China and the Soviet Union, pp.149-50.
15 Dittmer, ibid, p.73.
19 See Diplomaticheskii vestnik, nos. 4-5, 1992, p.72.
However, in the author's interview in Moscow, autumn 1997, with a counsellor in the MFA's First Asia Department, she was told that there were dachas on the island near Khabarovsk which was due to be given to China.


See Diplomaticheskii vestnik, no. 12, December 1996.


For example, Vinogradov, 'Rossiia ostaiaet otechestvennye mogily...'.

Diplomaticheskii vestnik, no. 12, December 1997, p.9.


In summer 1993, in Amurskaia oblast' and Primorskii krai, the governors were replaced; in Primorskii krai, there was growing opposition to the governor, Vladimir Kuznetsov, while the electorate of Amurskaia oblast had voted against Eltsin in the referendum.


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However, one should bear in mind that Lebed was running for the governorship of Krasnoiarsk krai at the time.

3.2: Redefining the joint border.

52 Mikhail Karpov, interview with Lukin, 'My okazalis' v ochen' plokhoi geopoliticheskoi situatsii', Nezavisimaiia gazeta. 13 March 1995.
54 Karpov, interview with Lukin, 'My okazalis' ...
56 Karpov, interview with Lukin, 'My okazalis' ...
57 ITAR-TASS World Service, Moscow, in Russian, 0940 gmt, SWB, SU/2796 B/17, 16 December 1996.
64 Diplomatscheskii vestnik, nos. 1-2, January 1993, pp.11-15, p.15.
68 Isaev and Gorodetskaia, 'Vopros demilitarizatsii ...'
69 OMRI Daily Digest, no. 89, 7 May, 1996.
74 Aleksandr Platkovskii, ' Peremney na granitse s Kitaem', Izvestiia, 31 December 1996.
75 Jing-dong, 'Sino-Russian Confidence Building Measures', op. cit., p.25.
76 Nezavisimaiia gazeta, 26 December 1996.
77 'Transbaykal district ill-prepared in event of conflict with China', SWB, Russian Public Tv, Moscow, in Russian, 0900 gmt, date?
80 'Kitaiskii vopros na rynkah Primor’ia’, (no author) Pravda, 6 November 1997.
84 I.N. Komissina, 'K probleme importa Rossiei kitaiskoi rabochei sily', in Novaia Evrazia: otnosheniia so stranami blizhengo zarubezhia, (Sbornik statlei no. 5), Russian Institute of Strategic Studies, Moscow, 1996, pp. 58-72, p.58 and p.63.
3.2: Redefining the joint border.

88 OMRI Daily Digest, 24 October 1995.
89 Emil Pain cited in OMRI Daily Digest, 6 May 1997.
92 Mayak Radio, Moscow in Russian, 1100 gmt, 10 September 1993, SWB, SU/1794 B/6, 15 September 1993.
93 Ostankino Channel 1 TV, Moscow, 1455 gmt, 4 July 1993, SWB, AU/1733 A1/5, 6 July 1993.
96 Miasnikov, Dogornymi stat’iami utverdili,, p.411.
98 Miasnikov, Dogovornymi stat’iami utverdili,, p.414.
100 Mehnert, Peking and Moscow, p.256.
104 IEWS Russian Regional Report, 10 September 1998.
3.3 The Broader Context of Russo-Chinese Relations.

CHAPTER THREE.


‘How will the United States and Japan react to such fast and active rapprochement between us? Our positions coincide and this can generally create jealousy, although there can be no grounds for that.’

Boris El’tsin, December 1992.*

3.3 The Broader Context of Russo-Chinese Relations.

Bilateral political and economic relations with China have vastly improved since late 1992. However it is in the wider Asian arena where Russia and China must interact with other states, and in particular, with the United States and Japan that the viability of the relationship will really be tested. The improvement in relations aimed at ‘strategic cooperation in the twenty-first century’ has implications for both Asia and the world as a whole. With the collapse of the Soviet empire the new Central Asian states, in particular those with large energy resources, are courted by states not always to Russia’s liking and this is seen as a threat to Russian interests in the ‘near abroad’. As China’s economic clout increases, and it seeks to play a more active part in transnational energy projects Moscow may be fearful that its economic and strategic interests could clash with those of Beijing. In the Asia-Pacific, Russia is not yet a major player and has relied largely on China for an ‘introduction’ to many of the regions’ important fora. As the political relationship has progressed, statements by the two countries on international questions have taken on a broader aspect, including a pledge to take ‘joint action’ in the United Nations Security Council and a common opposition to the perceived hegemony of the United States in world affairs. For this reason there are some analysts, both Western and Russian, who see the relationship as having a purely negative basis which, once one or the other state has resolved its conflicts with the United States (and to a certain extent Japan) will cease to have a raison d’être. However in interviews with Russian academics and government officials, it was constantly emphasised that relations with China
have an absolute value for Russia, regardless of the state of relations with either the United States or Japan. The relationship is thus characterised as a strategic goal of Russian foreign policy, that is, just as good or important as the relationship with Japan. El’tsin indeed was at pains to deny any hint of an ‘alliance’ between Russia and China, stating “it is a transition to deep friendly relations, but in no way an alliance of two states directed against any third state or states”. In an interview, deputy foreign minister Georgii Kunadze made the point even more forcefully: ‘It would be wrong to interpret the president’s visit to China that way [i.e. as a result of difficulties with Japan] To view any of our steps -much less top-level visits to Asian countries – as an attempt somehow to offset the postponed visit to Japan would be at the very least to oversimplify our approach to the APR.’

3.3 a) General Views on International Problems.

Generally, since 1995, China and Russia’s formulation of their ideas on the world order and questions of international significance increasingly converged, leading one to conclude that there must be a cross-fertilisation of views. As one Russian commentator put it, the idea of a multipolar world belongs to the Chinese, and the Russians have supported this in the hope that Russia will become one of those poles. If it cannot achieve this goal on its own, then it will achieve it in alliance with China. Russia also needs allies as counterweights to Pretenders to the ‘poles’ such as South Korea and Japan. ‘Equidistance from the main centres of power’ is the guiding principle of Russian foreign policy, including in the APR, according to one government advisor.

But in fact many of the concepts such as the idea of a multipolar world are not particularly new. The Soviet literature on international relations since the mid-1960s up to the advent of Gorbachev surmised (among other conclusions) that: ‘the world is becoming increasingly multipolar; the main adversary (the US) is fundamentally enduring and furthermore, may not even represent the main threat (China);’ As Lynch points out, while Soviet scholars should in
theory have welcomed an increasingly multipolar world in which American power was diluted, at the same time the emergence of other power centres like Europe, Japan and China, meant that ‘the necessity for the United States to treat with the Soviet Union becomes less compelling.’ Writing in 1980, one Soviet analyst revealed the fear of Chinese resurgence when he spoke of China’s goal of forming a “Sinocentric system of international relations” based upon the probability of a Soviet-American war whose aftermath would witness a world ruled by Peking. This is said to reflect the supersession of “class criteria” by China in favor of “nationalistic and geopolitical criteria”. This represented no momentary aberration in Chinese policy, according to Soviet analysts, [...] but one which is based “on a definite strategic plan and is intended for a relatively long period of time”. Global hegemony is to be achieved through regional domination, which signifies the neutralization of Soviet power, at least in Asia.

An additional complication, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, has, of course been the emergence of new states on Russia’s borders, as Primakov noted, while still head of the SVR: ‘[...] many people’s political interest in cooperation [...] continues to operate. This is because of the dislike of a unipolar world [...] and the understanding of Russia’s role as a factor of stability in Europe and the world as a whole.’ During Li Peng’s visit to Moscow in December 1996, the two sides declared themselves ‘important and independent poles in a multi-polar world’ and rejected a system of international relations ‘dominated by one power’. China also condemned NATO’s expansion plans as a relic of the cold war.

The prolific Sinologist Andrei Voskresenskii, in a wide-ranging analysis of the views of Russian academics regarding China, notes that the concept of multipolarity is interpreted by so-called ‘liberals’ as ‘either an approximate comparability of aggregate potentials of several states, none of which has an evident superiority over the others, or as “unipolar” pluralism [...] marked by the U.S. absolute comprehensive superiority that cannot be matched by any competitors - neither a “united” Europe, the territorially superior Russia, nor
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Liberals also draw attention to the fact that the level of Chinese engagement with Japan and USA is higher than with Russia. They argue that Russia’s only advantage is the political link, arguing that ‘since closer political ties are Russia’s only advantage vis-à-vis mainland China in the sphere of international relations, it would be most unreasonable to deprive itself of such an advantage in demonstrating dissatisfaction with the West’s policies toward Russia.’ Moderate liberals still think that a ‘special partnership’ is needed with the West ‘based on a number of privileges for Russia.’

Pragmatists and centrists believe that ‘the westward and eastward vectors of Russia’s foreign policy cannot be spearheaded against each other, but rather should be aimed at sustaining a complex balance that would serve Russia’s national interests. The high level of economic interdependence between Russia and China is seen as ‘the best guarantee against possible tensions within the Russia-P.R.C.-U.S. “triangle”’. According to a Russian Security Council official, the Chinese have until now been wary of tying themselves down in terms of international commitments, but he believes the April 1997 document (i.e. the Joint Declaration on a Multipolar World and the Formulation of a New World Order) does indeed commit them. The dominant triangle in the APR, in his view, should be Russia, China and the US, forming the cornerstone of security there. In other words, presumably not Japan China and the United States.

Already in the early 1980s ‘China’s long-term security strategy was based on the assumption that a multipolar world would gradually emerge as the two superpowers’ mutually debilitating competition reduced their global influence.’ This was meant to take place while China was ‘building its economic and military might to a level where Beijing would play a major role in the emerging multipolar international system.’
3.3b) Russia, China and Central Asia.

As one analyst has pointed out, for Moscow 'Asia is overwhelmingly Central Asia'. Since the increase in attempts to effect integration within the CIS, Russia has been relatively most successful at garnering support from the Central Asian states bordering China: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. (although they have not been as enthusiastic as Belarus and Armenia) As these and the other two states of Central Asia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, remain an area of regional rivalry for Iran, Turkey and China, as well as the Western powers, it is crucial for Moscow to maintain some kind of presence here. Moscow’s awareness of the interest of outside powers was evidenced by Igor Rodionov’s speech citing China, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan and Japan as potential threats to Russian security. It is unlikely to have been a coincidence that the former defence minister’s speech was made two days after Iran-Russia talks in Teheran, and one day before Sino-Russian talks on military cooperation in Moscow. The title of Rodionov’s speech left no doubt as to Russia’s own interests in the former Soviet space: ‘The Strategic Interests of the CIS Member-States in the Field of Military Security’. Rodionov also drew attention to the actions of the West, which he said were aimed at undermining the unity of the CIS and promoting conflict amongst its members in order to destabilise the region. For this reason he called on the states of the CIS to form a ‘defensive alliance’ as a countermove. The reactions of the Central Asian states showed that they were not interested in forming a bloc to counter NATO expansion. Nevertheless their security interests often coincide with Russia’s, in particular with regard to the events on the Tajik-Afghan border, while states like Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan recognise that it is in their long term interests to maintain friendly relations with both Russia and China. Thus, in a speech in London in 1997, the Kazakh foreign minister stated that the first priority of Kazakhstan’s security strategy was maintenance of ‘trustworthy and equal relations with Russia, our closest and historically friendly neighbour’ and the second priority was ‘the same neighbourly (sic) relations of trust with China’. The last on the list of priorities was the
strengthening of relations with the West, including the United States.\textsuperscript{18} Kyrgyzstan has also made it clear that in security matters at least, Russia is more important than China. At the time of Li Peng's visit to Bishkek in 1994, President Akaev's spokesman said that his employer ""highly appreciate[d] the fact that China understands why Kyrgyzstan gives priority to friendship with Russia and the other CIS states.""\textsuperscript{19}

Mongolia is geographically part of Central Asia, but it has often been ignored as it has few of the natural resources that make many of its neighbours so attractive to investors. However, in strategic terms this state is of paramount importance. Given its location, Mongolia, like Kazakhstan, must proceed cautiously, careful not to upset either of its powerful neighbours, China and Russia. From early on Mongolia has adopted a position of neutrality, a balanced foreign policy to include development of relations with the United States and Japan, but also with Russia and China. Relations with the West are seen to be important in order to offset pressures from Beijing and Moscow. Thus one Mongol official pointed out that ""cooperation with the United States is very important from the point of view of security, as well as our progress toward democracy.""\textsuperscript{20} For Russia it is vital that Mongolia remain neutral and not lean too far towards either the West, or, more importantly, to China. Arbatov describes Mongolia's neutrality and sovereignty as a 'significant factor of security for Russia in Asia, taking into account China's geographical position [...] In the event that China establishes dominance in Mongolia, Russian defence requirements in this region would treble, and communications with the Far East would become yet more vulnerable.""\textsuperscript{21} The Mongols are only too well aware of their position; in the words of one army official, a central thesis of the Mongolian Military Doctrine 'is the idea that national security and the future largely depend on the positions of its two great neighbours (Russia and China) and the nature of the relationship between them.' As Mongolia is a natural buffer zone, he continues, it should 'firmly adhere to a policy of good-neighbourliness and non-interference in their relationship.'\textsuperscript{22}
Initial optimism that Russia and the United States’s interests would coincide in the region have proved unfounded: Lukin, addressing parliament in hearings on Russian foreign policy in 1992 stated: ‘A stable and democratic Russia will be a main source of support for the US in the unstable geopolitical space of the CIS, a real partner in the constructive restraint of Islamic fundamentalism.’ But it seems that the United States prefers Turkey as a partner in Central Asia, or eventually, in Brzezinski’s view, China. Indeed Brzezinski believes that China could curb excessive Russian influence in Central Asia, which could be ‘compatible with America’s grand geostrategic interests[...]’ From the Russian viewpoint the United States is more interested in ensuring control of energy resources than in cooperating with Russia. Thus Miasnikov points out that hearings in summer 1997 of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee devoted to US policy in the Transcaucasus and Central Asia concluded that these states were a priority for American policy. ‘Presently viewed as threatening to US interests are the processes of integration taking place in the post-Soviet space …’ Thus in May 1996, then prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin told a CIS conference on energy security in Moscow that Western companies were trying to gain control of the region’s energy reserves and posed a threat to CIS security. This is confirmed by Brzezinskii’s advocacy of ‘geopolitical pluralism’, whereby the Central Asian states should be encouraged to act as independently of Russia as possible.

It is clear then that there is joint Russo-Chinese resentment of US influence, but this may not be a solid enough foundation on which to build long term cooperation. For the moment, both states are also suspicious of Turkish ambitions in the region. China is now a net oil importer, which means its interests could in the long-term clash with those of Russia. However, cooperation in the energy field is also a possibility as shared suspicion of Turkey has meant that both Russia and China prefer oil routes going via Iran. Samuel Huntington sees this as ‘likely to impel it [China] to expand its relations with Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, as well as Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan.’ It has not however, always been thus; in the words of two
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Kazakh analysts: ""The Chinese leadership was relatively well disposed to the political role of the United States' presence in the region, which restricted the extent of Iran's influence [...] as well as weakening the influence of nationalist political forces". 27

Russian policymakers are aware of China's bid for influence in Central Asia. For example, Vladimir Miasnikov of the Institute of Far Eastern Studies observed that 'for China there is now a real opportunity to fill the vacuum of political dominance left by the demise of the USSR, tracing a huge arc from southern China to the Caspian Sea and from the Pamirs to the Korean peninsula. The Chinese side is also capable of exerting pressure on the Russian leadership by exploiting the differences between the former republics and Russia. From this standpoint Russia's security threshold on her southern borders has been lowered.' 28 However he also notes that there is 'an overwhelming coincidence of geopolitical interests between the two countries.' 29

The Moslem factor.

In a meeting with Qian Qichen in November 1992 just prior to the December summit, Kozyrev emphasised the importance to Russia of Central Asia: ""It is very important ...that Central Asia remains a CIS sphere and not a sphere of extremist forces and, in particular, of Islamic fundamentalism. And in this I think, we can count on mutual understanding from our great neighbour."" 30

According to Ross H. Munro, '... relieved Chinese leaders seem to have concluded by early 1992 that neither pan-Turkic nationalism nor militant Islam was about to sweep the Central Asian republics.' 31 On the other hand, problems with China's own Moslem minorities in the Xinjiang Autonomous republic have continued. In June 1993 there was a terrorist bomb attack in Xinjiang, although later unrest apparently shifted to more rural areas in the south. 32 Since then, there appears to have been a big crackdown by the Chinese authorities, so that in February 1997 one hundred Uighurs were executed in China for alleged involvement in riots in Xinjiang. 33 The problem
affects Central Asia too, as in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan there are sizeable numbers of Uighurs, (Kyrgyzstan borders on Kashgar in Xinjiang, which is a 'hotbed' of Uighur separatism\textsuperscript{24}) and in March 1997 Uighurs protested outside the Chinese embassy in Almaty.\textsuperscript{35} It should be noted that the Uighur separatist movement is not a unified one, for example in 1988 an Uighur official claimed there were 'more than seven Uighur exile groups secretly fomenting secessionism in Xinjiang.' However today there are two main groups - the radical 'People's Revolutionary Front of the United Nationalities of East Turkestan', and the 'Freedom Party of the Uighurs', this second group being the more moderate of the two. \textsuperscript{36} In this context the border agreements signed by Russia and China with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, take on added significance. Beijing's fears that cross-border links with the new Moslem states would lead to heightened nationalism in Xinjiang, were calmed by reassurances of a general nature from the Central Asian leaders regarding the undesirability of separatist movements. On the other hand, the leaders of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have not always been happy regarding China's treatment of the Uighurs. Thus, in 1997, following the crackdown by Chinese authorities in Xinjiang, the secretary of Kazakhstan's security council said "we are concerned by the harsh measures of the Chinese." \textsuperscript{37}

China sees the region very much in economic rather than political terms, 'a new Silk Road of modern railways and highways as a transmission belt that could project Chinese wealth and influence far westward, not only through Central Asia, but to Iran and the Middle East.'\textsuperscript{38} As part of this bid to restore the 'Silk Road', new infrastructure is being developed, such as the Andijan-Osh-Kashgar highway, which links Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan with China and was opened in July 1997.\textsuperscript{39} In April 1994, Li Peng, during a visit to Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, spoke in Tashkent, noting that China was reviving its traditional ties with the Central Asian states, which he said had been 'severed by Russia and the USSR's reign in the region.'\textsuperscript{40} He also said that China would adhere to four basic principles in its relations with the states of Central Asia which included respecting their independence and sovereignty, promising that China would not pursue a
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sphere of influence in Central Asia, political or economic. This last was clearly meant as a sop to Russian sensibilities. China is clearly aware that the new republics wish to reduce their dependence on Russia, in both political and economic terms. On the other hand, closer ties with China can benefit the Central Asian states vis-à-vis closer integration with the Asia-Pacific. As one Chinese academic emphasises: 'The Central Asian countries are all landlocked countries. For the development of their trade with countries far away, they need to find outlets to the sea. In China they can find an easy access to East Asia and a good outlet to the Pacific Ocean.' The construction of a pipeline to bring Turkmen natural gas to markets in China, Japan and other Asia-Pacific countries is one such example.

Energy issues.

Oil is a crucial aspect of China's attitude towards Central Asia. At one point China hoped that the development of the Tarim Basin in Xinjiang would have the potential to supply China with oil and gas for a considerable period. However it appears that China's increased energy needs will hardly be satisfied by the reserves in Xinjiang. Thus it has transpired that 'importing Russian and Central Asian oil and gas through the pipeline development is the choice China has to make to achieve a longterm energy supply balance.'

China is the world's second largest energy consumer and between 1995 and 2015 its oil consumption will increase by 4.9 per cent each year. At present two thirds of its oil is imported from the Middle East, but Central Asia could be an important alternative source of energy for China. This then, is why China will continue to be interested in maintaining good relations with both Iran, one of the Caspian littoral states, and Russia, a key security provider in the region. However, there have been signs that Russia can no longer ensure that it lays down the conditions for the routes of these pipelines. This is further reason for China to court the Central Asian states independently of Moscow.
In March 1997, agreement had been reached on construction of an oil pipeline stretching from Kazakhstan to the Pacific coast of China. \(^{46}\) China National Petroleum Corporation has been active in bidding for contracts to develop Kazakh oilfields and in June 1997 declared its intention to construct a pipeline from the Aktiubinsk oil field in Western Kazakhstan to Xinjiang.\(^{47}\)

Given the common concerns regarding Islamic fundamentalism and economic issues, China and Central Asia have become ‘natural economic and political partners... For Central Asia the relationship is also an essential balance to offset pressures from Russia and Muslim neighbours to the south.'\(^{48}\) By the end of 1992 China ranked as Uzbekistan's leading trade partner outside the CIS. \(^{49}\) Trade has been particularly high, however, with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, although Sino-Kyrgyz trade has tended to be mainly cross-border. The primitive nature of trade is reflected in the figures, which remain low. Nevertheless turnover has gradually increased reaching a high of 64 million in 1997.\(^{50}\) Kazakhstan is China's largest trading partner of the five Central Asian states, reaching a high of 497 million dollars in 1996 and maintaining a healthy 488 million the following year. However, Russia remains far and away Kazakhstan's top trading partner, recording a massive 5.11 billion dollar turnover in 1996 and just over 4 billion in 1997.\(^{51}\)

Chinese academics' views of the Central Asian states, including their relations with Russia have been usefully summarised by Gudrun Wacker. Thus one scholar sees Russia's changed stance vis-à-vis Central Asia (i.e the bigger push for CIS integration) as linked to the tensions between Washington and Moscow regarding the expansion of NATO.\(^{52}\) Certainly Primakov in an interview shortly after assuming the post of foreign minister stressed that all integrative processes taking place in the CIS would indirectly influence Russian relations with the rest of the world, in particular with the United States.\(^{53}\) Chinese academics also believe the Central Asian states may see China as a counterweight to Russian as well as American influence. \(^{54}\) However, Wacker's thoroughgoing survey of Chinese views of Central Asia seem to indicate that the Chinese see these states' economic success as the
decisive factor in terms of whether they are able to free themselves of overdependence on Russia, rather than sovereignty, political stability or containment of Islamic extremism.

In general, one would expect the Chinese to welcome moves by Russia towards reintegrating the former republics in security terms, as China wishes to maintain stability here. At the same time China has her own interests in the region, in particular as already noted, China has become a net oil importer. China was quick to establish links with the Central Asian republics after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Russia by contrast was very slow in its diplomatic moves. The United States had also early on recognised the importance of the Central Asian states, so that by the time Kozyrev first visited the area in April 1992, 'US Secretary of State James Baker had already been there three times on official visits. Russian embassies in the region were established only after those of Turkey, Iran, China and the United States.'

The southern axis.
A related problem to Russia in Central Asia is the roles of India and Pakistan in relation to China. Thus Huntington talks of those in Pakistan 'who look forward to the “Tehran-Islamabad-Beijing” axis. However, there has been a certain rapprochement between India and Iran, who are both concerned that events in Afghanistan and Tajikistan could spill over into the wider arena. These concerns are shared by China and Russia, while Pakistan’s support of the Taleban has increased friction with Iran. Aleksei Arbatov maintains that Russian influence over India and Iran is useful in so far as it could mean additional leverage over the United States, China, Turkey and Pakistan. It is certainly the case that 'the US policy of isolating Iran has helped perpetuate the political and economic dependence on Russia of a number of these southern republics [i.e. Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan].'

As concerns India, Russia will continue to keep India in play as a useful ally in the region and as a counterweight to Chinese regional ambitions. As an
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article in *Krasnaia zvezda* observed, events in Afghanistan and the victory of
the Taleban begged the question for Moscow of its choice of strategic allies:
i.e. those governments whose interests correspond to Russian interests.
Describing India as a ‘great power’ in Asia, the article noted that India had
even more reason to be described as Russia’s strategic partner ‘than a host of
countries who were pronounced as such in the last year or so’, a clear
reference to China. 59 Andrei Kokoshin, (then still deputy defence minister)
writing in 1996 also drew attention to the fact that ‘India is seen in Russia as
one of the few and natural long-term geopolitical partners.’ 60

Despite the legacy of suspicion and hostility, there are compelling reasons for
China and India to move closer together, at least in curbing militant Islam.
India’s fears regarding its Moslem minority in Kashmir are echoed by China’s
fears regarding Xinjiang. In this they are supported by Russia, which shares
both India and China’s fears of Islam as a threat to their territorial integrity
and, indeed, secular identity.61 However, Chinese suspicions of India remain,
and some maintain that the principal motivation for Beijing continuing to arm
Pakistan is in order to divert Indian military resources away from China,
although this seems an unlikely explanation.62 China’s arming of Pakistan
however, ensures that Moscow will continue to arm India, while maintaining
‘these weapons will only be used defensively, and will not alter the strategic
balance in the region.’63

The extreme end of the spectrum is represented by politicians such as Vladimir
Zhirinovskii who believes that ‘’India and Russia together will neutralise
China in Asia. With Germany, Russia can neutralize Europe.’’ 64 Thus, anti-
Western sentiments do not always mean pro-Chinese ones.

The chairman of the Geopolitics Committee of the State Duma, Aleksei
Mitrofanov, a member of the LDPR, has proposed an anti-Nato alliance
composed of three ‘axes’: one would be Germany, Russia and Japan, the
second would be the ‘Russia-China’India Bloc opening for China the path of
territorial expansion to the West via South Kazakhstan and Iran towards
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Turkey and securing India’s leading role in the Indostan peninsular sub-region. The third would consist of German-Russian-Japanese ‘joint spheres of influence redivision (sic) in Europe, South-East Asia, Africa and Latin America.’ While such views are beyond the pale in political terms, the idea of a ‘Russia-China-India’ bloc was put forward by Primakov (although he did not himself refer to the grouping as a bloc) in December 1998 as a means of ensuring stability on the Eurasian continent.

In sum, Russia and China have many areas of joint interest in Central and South Asia, but the myriad of unresolved issues and the mutability of alliances in the region mean that they both will continue to need counterweights such as India and Pakistan. The energy issue, which entails economic and political cooperation by a number of regional players, including Turkey and Iran, as well as the United States and Japan, means that both China and Russia will have to tread carefully. However, for the time being, China is still a relatively marginal player in Central Asia both economically and politically, and Beijing recognises that Russia is an important guarantor of stability in the region as well as a counterweight to American and Turkish influence. For Russia, in domestic terms at least, it is of the utmost importance that China, unlike the West, recognises the legitimacy of its role in both Central Asia and the wider arena of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Thus at a conference on security and cooperation in central Asia held in Uzbekistan in autumn 1995, China stated explicitly that only Russia could serve as a guarantor of stability in Central Asia, and that security issues should be resolved on the basis of Moscow’s relations with the states of the region. It is also noteworthy that both China and Russia have suggested applying the five-way agreement on confidence building measures with the Central Asian republics to the Asia-Pacific region.

3.3c) Russia and China in the Asia-Pacific.

If China is still a marginal player in Central Asia, the same could be said of Russia in the Asia-Pacific. While China might view Russia as the lynchpin of security and stability in Central Asia, in the Asia-Pacific it is for the
foreseeable future, the US-Japanese security alliance that continues to provide stability. Both Russia and China are ambivalent on the merits of this alliance, but for China the implications of the September 1997 ‘Guidelines for Japan-US Defence Cooperation’ which refer to joint action in ‘areas surrounding Taiwan’, are far more serious than they are for Russia, as Beijing perceives them as legitimising future US security structures involving Taiwan. American requests to Japan that it participate in the proposed Theatre Missile Defence system which intercepts incoming missiles in the air are a major source of concern to China. Russia has also protested against such a development, charging that it would violate the ABM Treaty. For example at a meeting between Jiang Zemin and Igor’ Sergeev, the Russian defence minister in autumn 1998, Sergeev asserted that the close range ballistic missile system would tip the balance in the region. Thus both states wish to maintain the status quo in the region: as a Russian analyst has observed, this has importance for Russia in its relations with Japan, while for China this means holding on to territory in the South China seas and of course Taiwan.

For the smaller countries of the region, despite the legacy of the Second World War and a deep-seated hostility towards Japan, there is still suspicion of Chinese motives, for example China’s territorial claims in the South China seas. Moreover, as a recent study points out the collapse of the Soviet Union and the defeat of Vietnam in Cambodia reduce the need of the ASEAN states to cooperate with China. ‘China now wields considerably less influence in the region than does America or Japan.’ Notwithstanding this lack of influence, China still has a greater voice in the region than does Russia. This has nowhere been apparent than on the issue of the Korean peninsula.

The Korean Peninsula.

The importance to Russia of settling the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula, was underscored by the declaration at the first Sino-Russian summit in December 1992: Russia and China were ‘unanimous in their view that preservation of stability on the Korean peninsula, and its transformation
into a zone of nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction has an important significance for peace and development in the region." [...] the further development of China's and Russia's relations with North and South Korea will help stability and security on the Korean Peninsula. Judging from this statement on Korea, Russia clearly hoped its good relations with North and South Korea would allow it to work as in combination with China to resolve the Korean nuclear issue. (China had established diplomatic relations with South Korea only in August 1992) But in day-to-day Russian diplomacy, relations with North Korea appeared to be low down on the list of foreign policy priorities. Russia's early position on human rights vis-à-vis both China and North Korea could only alienate the two states. In some ways the attitude towards North Korea was a mirror of early attitudes towards China by El'tsin's coterie. As relations with China steadily improved, it seemed safe to repair relations with North Korea: the ideological straitjacket of the 'New Thinking' had been removed, and the new 'balanced' foreign policy clearly from late 1992 onwards, meant a rethink of the earlier demonisation of the rogue state. An early article by a Foreign Ministry official on the question of Korea had concluded that the withdrawal from South Korea of American nuclear weapons, and the planned reduction there of the US military presence would create objective conditions for the realisation of the creation of a nuclear-free zone on the peninsula to include Russia, the United States and China as guarantors.

The significance accorded to the Korean peninsula by politicians and academics is high: thus Petrovskii, writing in 1994 maintains that due to the low level of Russia's economic participation it should therefore rely on political and military instruments in the Asia-Pacific region to include paying more attention to Sino-Russian relations, taking an active part in the Korean settlement, and giving a more prominent role to the Pacific Fleet. Indeed such was the significance attached to this issue that analysts and politicians were convinced Russia would surely have a part to play in resolving it. El'tsin's declaration of Asia as a priority area for Russian foreign policy and
the optimism regarding Sino-Russian relations was apparently sufficient grounds for the legitimisation of Russian participation in resolving the nuclear issue. Thus Aleksandr Gol’ts writing in Krasnaia zvezda surmised that "life itself is pointing to Russia as an extremely important player in resolving both the peninsula’s nuclear problem and the problems of Asian security." In March 1995 Kozyrev maintained that Russia should be the one to supply light water nuclear reactors to North Korea, noting petulantly that it had after all originally been Russia’s idea to supply this type of reactor. "And it would be strange if Russia did not play the most active part in the implementation of this idea." However these were desperate attempts to maintain a profile for Russia at a point when it was clear that the resolution of the Korean issue was to be decided by the United States together with China and the two Koreas. Russian proposals in spring 1994 of an international conference (to include Japan, US, China, Russia plus the two Koreas) to turn the Korean peninsula into a nuclear-free zone were received coolly by the other parties.

While one can agree with Evgenii Bazhanov that the issue of North Korean nuclear proliferation is the one area of international significance on which Russia, China, Japan and the United States all agree, the means of dealing with North Korea have been very different. Thus Russia and China were both against imposing sanctions on North Korea when its government withdrew from the Non-Proliferation Treaty in March 1993. A press conference by the MID stressed that diplomatic channels should be relied upon in dealing with North Korea. Initially, Russia had supported UN sanctions against North Korea in the event of it not fulfilling its pledge to IAEA. China refused to support sanctions against North Korea while at the same time strongly supporting the non-nuclear status of the peninsula.

Russia was in fact quite prepared to continue to supply military materiel to North Korea. While acknowledging that El’tsin on his trip to South Korea in autumn 1992 had said Russia would discontinue military aid, at the same time Russia declared it would proceed on the basis that North Korea was a full member of the United Nations on whom no sanctions had been imposed and
therefore there are no legal obstacles to commercial supply of any kind of weapons to this country.' A caveat stated that the weapons should not violate the present balance of power between North and South, thus the supply of offensive weapons would not be contemplated. The mercantilist rationale for the supply of these weapons was plain: 'while appreciating all this and on condition that deals are paid for immediately and not on credit terms, I think there should be no obstacles to our military supplies to North Korea.' It later emerged that the Pacific Fleet had sold four Russian submarines of the Foxtrot type to North Korea. The submarines were apparently designed as attack vessels and were 'still serviceable'. As Yoke T. Soh notes,

Russia has not been consistent in its policies vis-à-vis the two Koreas because of extreme economic hardships at home. Russia has not hesitated in maintaining cooperation with North Korea when such cooperation provides economic benefits and does not pose a serious threat to relations with South Korea.'

As far as China's own interests in the Korean peninsula are concerned, Michael Yahuda has drawn attention to its mixed interests in Korea: 'Although the Chinese are allied to the North they have refused to allow it to dictate their policies towards the South [...] Even though the Chinese have become the sole suppliers of oil and food to the beleaguered North, they claim not to exercise significant influence over the regime there.' Moreover, China is ambivalent regarding Korean reunification and would most likely not welcome a united Korea in particular if its security arrangements are linked in with the US and Japan.

Regarding domestic Russian views of the Korean problem, most are agreed that policy towards Korea has been ad hoc and poorly planned. The issue has been a rallying point for those who saw the early years of Russia's Asian policy as too skewed towards Japan and South Korea. Naturally initial Russian disengagement from North Korea was bound to provoke cries of derision from the nationalist factions in the Russian parliament, but as Rubinstein points out more moderate and centrist voices like Lukin and
Rybkin have also pressed the government for explanations of its policy towards North Korea. 80

Russia’s marginalisation as a player in the resolution of the situation on the Korean peninsula has provoked a deep sense of bitterness in Russian elite circles, but also a realisation that it was their own lack of policy which was to blame for loss of influence. Since then Russia has conducted a more balanced policy, preparing perhaps for a unified Korea that might begin to invest more heavily in the Russian Far East. The ‘balanced policy’ appears to include the resumption of military cooperation with North Korea. Thus in February 1997, the MID announced that Russia was to resume ‘normal military and technical cooperation’ with Pyongyang to ‘balance’ the decision to sell arms to South Korea. 81 How much leverage this ‘balanced policy’ will actually give Russia is debatable, but a commentary in Krasnaia zvezda in early 1998 boasted that ‘Moscow is probably the only world capital which has equally close relations with both Pyongyang and Seoul.’ Despite this apparent advantage however, the article concludes by bemoaning the exclusion from the four-way talks of both Japan and Russia. 82 Thus the Russian ‘balanced policy’ towards Korea has in fact served to heighten the influence of Beijing and Washington and decreased Moscow’s leverage. As Soh remarks ‘changes in previous Soviet policy meant North Korea began to make overtures to the United States and Japan’, 83 and the United States has included China in the talks, presumably recognising that China has more leverage with the two Koreas than does Russia.

Russia, China and the U.S.-Japan Alliance.

In 1990 a major U.S. review of the strategic future of the Asia-Pacific still regarded the USSR as the major threat, but stressed that in future the US role would be as “regional balancer, honest broker, and ultimate security guarantor.” In 1992, another strategic review indicated troops were to be cut further (in 1990 a mooted withdrawal of 10,000 out of total of 110,000), but in February 1995 Assistant Secretary of Defence for International Security,
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Joseph S. Nye now had to reassure frightened Asian governments that "a new official report held that the cut-backs resulting from the end of the Cold War had finished and "no further changes in war fighting capability[were] currently planned." Vice-president Al Gore, on his way to Beijing for talks with the Chinese leadership in 1997, ruled out cuts in the Pacific theatre, specifically in Japan, stating that this was the "worst time" for such reductions.

A not untypical Russian reaction to the proposed reanimation of the US-Japanese alliance in 1996 claimed:

' shortsighted actions on Washington's part are prompting Moscow and Beijing to shift their emphasis from bilateral to geopolitical aspects of cooperation. [...] Moscow is concerned about efforts to extend NATO's infrastructure to Russia's present borders. Beijing is alarmed by attempts to lend an anti-Chinese thrust to the American-Japanese security system and to other bilateral military ties from the cold war era. [...] Not only is it [Washington's current policy] pushing Moscow and Beijing to renew their alliance of the 1950s; it could also unite Asians around China on a basis of shared anti-Americanism.'

Russian analysts such as Andrei Voskresenskii of the Institute of the Far East are at pains to point out that the renewal of the US-Japanese security alliance is of great concern to China and that one cannot rule out China requesting support from Russia in the context of their joint goal of strategic cooperation in the next century. Even in the early days of the new Russian diplomacy, foreign policy decisionmakers were particularly sensitive to suggestions that the reduction of the Russian threat to the Asia-Pacific could mean an expanded US influence in the region. For example in May 1992, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reacted angrily to a statement by the commander of the 7th US fleet, Admiral Lawrence, that the US would welcome the transformation of ASEAN into a military bloc. The Russian press release stated that with the end of the era of bipolar military confrontation, 'viewing the region through the prism of fixed military groupings was an anachronism.'
A specific concern of China is that the US alliance with Japan could 'become the keystone of an anti-China containment structure.' Therefore the correspondence of Russian views on the alliance can only be welcomed by China. However, due to the diminished power of the Russian naval forces in the Pacific, one cannot discount the fact that Moscow probably welcomes the alliance as a means of checking Chinese naval power in the future. In reality Chinese naval potential still lags far behind that of either the United States, Russia or Japan. However, taking into account the reduction in the US military presence as well as cuts in Russia’s forces, Chinese naval formations take on greater significance. As detailed in section 3.1, Russia is helping China to update its weaponry and is selling it qualitatively advanced destroyers and submarines. However, as Leonid Kiuzadzhian observes, the Chinese began modernising their navy already in the 1970s, so that from the 1980s onwards on average one destroyer or submarine as well as an average of three minesweepers were launched each year. Chinese analysts see the broadening of the alliance very much in terms of a US bid to ensure its continued presence in the region as the world as a whole as the dominant power. Xia Liping says that the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance will have a major negative effect on the adjustment of relations among large nations in the Asia-Pacific region. According to him this is because it shows that the United States and Japan have once again raised the issue of military security to the level of top priority in the relations between the two nations, and that the United States is trying to rely on military might to maintain its “one and only superpower” status. This is not in sync with the situation of the post-Cold War world where ‘peace, development, and multipolarization have become the mainstream. At the same time, the strengthening of the US-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security turned the “defense system”, which was designed to “protect” Japan during the Cold War, suddenly into a new military alliance aimed at the entire Asia-Pacific region. This not only pulled Japan into the post-cold War global military strategy of the United States but also flung wide open a door of convenience for Japan to vigorously develop its military forces.' American advocates of a China ‘containment’ policy argue that in the last decade China has ‘set goals for itself that are
directly contrary to American interests, the most important...to replace the United States as the preeminent power in Asia." At the same time American withdrawal from the region would pose a dilemma for Beijing, as the vacuum might be filled by Japan, or even a united Korea. Thus a weakening of American commitment would mean 'China would have to confront security challenges without the benefit of an outside balancing power [...]" Certainly most of the leading American analysts believe the continuance of the US-Japan alliance is key to stability in the region, in particular in relation to Chinese ambitions. Thus Samuel Huntington: ‘The core of any meaningful effort to balance and contain China would have to be the American-Japanese alliance.'

Russia, China and multilateral mechanisms.

At first the United States was reluctant to accept multilateralism in the Asia-Pacific. However, realising the need to engage China and encourage it to take part in cooperative security dialogue the US moved to encourage the establishment of a new multilateral organisation. This eventually bore fruit with the creation of the ASEAN Regional Forum. The declared purpose of the Forum was “for ASEAN and its dialogue partners to work with other regional states to evolve a predictable and constructive pattern of relationships in Asia-Pacific.” As Yahuda points out, the ARF was seen as ‘an important body for incorporating China within multilateral approaches in the hope that it would develop as a “good citizen of international society” as it inevitably grows in power.’

Russia views the forum as an important component in moves towards a more multipolar world. At a Jakarta meeting of the ASEAN Regional Security Forum in May 1996, Russia and China proposed a security arrangement for the APR based on the five-power confidence building agreement signed in Shanghai the previous month. Considering the renewal of the US-Japan security alliance, which was signed just before the Shanghai agreement, one may assume this was aimed at discovering US intentions. Russian Foreign Ministry officials have emphasised that China and Russia can assist each other in terms of gaining access to key forums: ‘[…]Russia has great potential to
help increase China’s role as a world power. And at the same time the Chinese side could seriously assist Russia’s entry to the system of regional integration in order to support a global balance of power advantageous to both states.\(^99\)

Li Peng underlined the importance to China of ASEAN as a means of promoting regional security in his report to the National People’s Congress in March 1995.\(^{100}\) It is clearly a convenient way for China to counterbalance US power while at the same time assuaging the concerns of Southeast Asia as to Chinese moves in the South China seas.

However, despite ASEAN’s concerns regarding Chinese intentions, as one analyst concludes, the paradox for a Russia wishing to side with China against the US and Japan is that on democracy and human rights ASEAN supports China, but when it comes to security issues ASEAN sides with the U.S policy as the mainstay of peace and stability in East Asia.\(^{101}\) However, it is as well to bear in mind that Russia has its own concerns regarding Chinese military potential, so that security structures such as the ARF could be a means of containing China in the future.

**Conclusion.**

As we have seen, Russia remains on the sidelines in terms of resolving security issues in the Asia-Pacific region and is not yet taken seriously by China in terms of regional economic integration. Residual distrust means that it is conceivable that, despite the rhetoric, there could come a day when China welcomes NATO expansion to Russia’s borders as a means of containing Russia in Central Asia (if membership in NATO is extended to the Central Asian states) while Russia welcomes the US-Japan alliance as a brake on Chinese expansion, in particular in the direction of the Russian Far East. For the time being, China’s territorial claims do not appear to lie in Russia’s direction. Indeed, China’s security in this area has improved since the collapse of the Soviet Union, leaving China free to concentrate on other areas. It is nevertheless useful to China in political terms to be assured of Russian support on such issues as the US-Japan alliance and the sovereignty of Taiwan. However, of far greater importance to Russia than Chinese concerns
in the South China Seas is the nature of its relations with China on the
Eurasian landmass, in Central Asia and around the joint border in the Russian
Far East.

The overarching conclusion however must be that Russia seems to be unable
to escape its obsession with American power, whether it be in the context of
the Asia-Pacific, of Central Asia, or further afield in the Middle East.
Everywhere Russia turns it comes up against the harsh reality of US pre­
eminence. Russia’s self-esteem as a former superpower is greatly affected by
this phenomenon and so it is not surprising that it should seek recognition as a
great power by China. Statements such as the following by a prominent
Russian Sinologist show that Russia continues to view relations with China
through the prism of relations with the West: “The West has only itself to
blame for the renaissance of Sino-Russian relations. This could have been
avoided if the West had been prepared to discuss global problems in a more
even-handed way.”

* El’tsin speaking to journalists at the first Russo-Chinese summit in Beijing, SWB, ITAR-
1 Author’s interview with Aleksandr Zarubin, government advisor of the first class, head of
department for bilateral relations of the presidential security council, Moscow, October 1997.
These views were echoed by Georgii Bessarabov of the Institute of Strategic Studies,
Moscow. Interview conducted October 1997.
2 ITAR-TASS News Agency Moscow World Service in Russian, 0941 gmt, 18 December
3 Mikhail Karpov, “‘Interesam Rossii otevchait stabil’nyi i protsvetaiushchii Kitai’ –
utverdaiat zamestitel’ ministr inostrannykh del RF Georgii Kunadze nakanune vizita B.N.
4 Andrei Ivanov, ‘My nash, my mnogopoliusnyi mir postroim’, Novoe vremia, no.17-18,
5 Zarubin of the president Security Council, interviewed by author, October 1997.
7 Ibid, p. 96.
9 ‘Primakov reflects on intelligence role’, Trud in Russian, as translated in FBIS, FBIS-SOV-
94-203, 15 October 1994..
‘Looking to Asia’, no. 01, January 10, 1997.
11 Andrei Voskressenskii, ‘The Perceptions of China by Russia’s Foreign Policy Elite’, Issues
13 A view espoused by Vladimir Lukin; see chapter 3.1, note 7.
14 Zarubin of the Security Council, in author’s interview.
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17 Igor' Korotchenko, 'Igor' Rodionov vystupil za sozdanie oboronnoi soiuza stran SNG. Besuslovno, takaia pozitsiia vyzovet sozhalenie v NATO ', Nezavisimaiia gazeta, 26 December 1996.
18 Speech by His Excellency Dr. Kanat Saudabaev at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House, London, Tuesday 21 October 1997, 'Kazakhstan: Regional Security and the Wider Security Policy Agenda'.
21 Aleksei Arbatov, 'Rossiia: natsional'naia bezopasnost' v 90-e gody.' (part two), MEiMO, nos. 8-9, August–September, 1994, pp. 5-18, p.16.
34 Martin, 'China and Central Asia', p.31.
37 OMRI Daily Digest, part I, no.60, 26 March 1997.
38 Munro, 'Central Asia and China', in Mandelbaum (ed.), p.235.
40 Miasnikov, 'Aziatiskie gosudarstva SNG...', in Tikhvinskii (ed.), p.163.
41 Xu Kui, 'Russia's Relations with Central Asia and China, and the Question of Integration into the Asian Economy', 31 January 1996, IREX Scholar Papers.
42 Xu Kui, 'Russia's Relations with Central Asia and China'.
43 'Turkmen President to Pay Six Day Visit to China', Agence France Presse, 25 August 1998, 1731 gmt.
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4.1 Bilateral Relations: Hostage to the Territorial Dispute.

CHAPTER FOUR.


"The development of our economic cooperation cannot be made to depend on a political solution, on the question of the Kuril Islands. Particularly now that Russia is going through such a hard time...In fact Japan is the only country that has not yet invested anything in Russia...When we have good relations and good cooperation, then maybe we will talk with Japan about the islands." 

Boris El'tsin

4.1 Bilateral Relations: Hostage to the Territorial Dispute.

When Gorbachev delivered his groundbreaking speech at Vladivostok in 1986, the Japanese did not like the emphasis on the centrality of Sino-Soviet relations and Gorbachev’s failure to acknowledge Japan as a power in its own right. Under Gorbachev the contradiction between the political-ideological downgrading of Japan and its practical economic significance became ‘glaringly apparent’. Despite a belated recognition by Gorbachev of Japan’s importance at least in economic terms, little headway was made in Soviet-Japanese relations. This was in no small part due to the Japanese insistence on a policy of seki fukabun, or the nonseparation of politics and economics. This held that until the four ‘Northern Territories’ (Kurils in Russian) were returned to Japan, no financial aid or large-scale investment could be contemplated. Thus on Gorbachev’s first official visit to Japan in April 1991 he commented bitterly that the Japanese ‘persisted in reminding us of the principle of the linkage between politics and economics.’ Daniel Yergin and Thane Gustafson have noted that Gorbachev ‘recognized the powerful irony of Japan’s becoming an economic superpower – despite its lack of resources and territory – while Russia’s military spending was driving its economy towards collapse.’ At the time, Gorbachev also faced difficulties on the domestic front, which restricted his room for manoeuvre. El’tsin, since his election as president of the RSFSR, had many times vowed not to cede any Russian territory, in accordance with his idea of a five-phase plan for solving the dispute. Further, at El’tsin’s insistence, the RSFSR foreign minister and other
Russian officials were included in the delegation to Tokyo in April 1991, which obstructed any attempts to solve the territorial issue.

This chapter sets out to examine the whole panoply of bilateral relations from Gorbachev to El’tsin. Unlike the chapter on China, it is not possible to divide this into thematic sections, as the territorial issue comes into play in all aspects of relations, political, economic and security, at least up until 1996. I will look first at general attitudes in Russia and Japan and how the two nations perceive each other (4.1a). This section is followed by a brief history of the territorial dispute, which is essential background to understanding Russo-Japanese relations (4.1b). There then follows a section concerning the course of economic relations up until 1991. The basic misconception in the Soviet Union that Japan was in desperate need of the natural resources of the Russian Far East took a long time to be erased (4.1c). Finally, section 4.1d looks at how El’tsin has dealt with this legacy from his time as leader of the RSFSR, competing with Gorbachev for power, through to the end of 1997 with El’tsin pledging to solve the territorial dispute by the year 2000. It is my contention that Evgenii Primakov as Foreign Minister (1996-1998) was able, by asserting Russian national interests, to disentangle the linkage between politics and economics, thereby leaving the ball firmly in Japan’s court. As for the issue of Russia’s interaction with Japan in the wider context, this will considered in section 4.2.

4.1a) General attitudes in Russia and Japan, 1991-2.

The view from Moscow.

The key to understanding Russo-Japanese relations is that each side has harboured misperceptions of the other’s motives and intentions. Lack of trust has been but one byproduct of this state of affairs. Since 1905 and the Russo-Japanese war, the perception of Japan in Russia has been of a militaristic and duplicitous nation whose motives consist of pure self-interest. Such feelings were naturally compounded by Japan’s behaviour in the Second World War,
and indeed continued afterwards. In the words of Semyon Verbitskii, 
"Japanese" was synonymous with "samurai", "militarist" and "spy". 
Stalin's address to the Soviet people, on the occasion of Japan's surrender, 
emphasised the continuity between the Japanese aggression of 1905 and that 
of the Second World War. Stalin stressed that the USSR had waited forty 
years for Japan's defeat and that henceforth the Kuril islands would serve 'not 
as a means of isolating the Soviet Union from the ocean and as a base for 
Japanese attacks on our Far East, but ...as the Soviet Union's direct link to the 
ocean and a defence base for our country from which to resist Japanese 
aggression.'

The view from Tokyo.
The feeling of mistrust is no less evident on the Japanese side. Thus a leading 
Japanese analyst can write: 'there is a need to get rid of the deep distrust and 
feeling of threat from Russia that has built up over the years and still prevails 
among many Japanese.'

Views of Japanese analysts, for example, Hiroshi Kimura, on relations with 
Russia tend to fall into a fairly hardline, conservative category. However, 
there are also dissenting voices, such as Tsuyoshi Hasegawa who recognises 
that Japan's attitude towards Russia has often seemed at variance with those 
of the rest of the Western world. Thus one analyst points out that taxpayers in 
all the other G-7 countries 'seem to understand the provision of aid to Russia 
in national security, not historical terms.' The mercantilist nature of Japanese 
aid is illustrated by Shibusawa's statement that even after opening up to the 
world in the second half of the nineteenth century, 'the countries outside its 
Japan's] borders were judged largely on the utilitarian ground of whether or 
not they would advance Japanese aims.'

Moreover, the degree of consensus in Japan regarding the Northern Territories 
issue, as Hasegawa points out, is worrying in the sense that in Japan, 'in an 
open democracy voicing an opinion against this consensus still virtually 
remains taboo.' A further Japanese complaint is that Moscow treated Tokyo
not as an equal power, but grabbed its money without hesitation, while refusing to reciprocate with concessions on the issue of the islands.\textsuperscript{10}

4.1b) A Brief History of the Territorial Dispute.

Under the Yalta Agreement, the entire Kuril island chain was handed over to the Soviet Union in accordance with provisions of the Cairo Declaration of 1945, which stated that Japan should ‘lose all islands in the Pacific which it has taken possession of or occupied since the start of the First World War in 1914’. According to Glaubitz, this only applied to Sakhalin, as Japan’s claims to the Kuril islands had been confirmed by the Treaty of St Petersburg in 1875.\textsuperscript{11} But Roosevelt and Churchill had agreed to return the islands to the Soviets in return for entering the war against Japan. Later, however, Churchill stated that the question of the Kurils were part of a ‘personal agreement’ between the Allies and that it was essentially an “American affair and was certainly of prime interest to their military operations.”\textsuperscript{12} Although the Americans and British apparently hoped to modify the agreement to return the Kurils to the Soviets, Moscow made it clear that there could be no backtracking. Stalin emphasised that thenceforth the islands would serve as a “base for the defense of our country against Japanese aggression”.\textsuperscript{13} According to William Nimmo, the Japanese had hoped that the USSR might even intervene with the US and Great Britain on their behalf regarding the final terms of surrender.\textsuperscript{14} After all, according to the Japanese, the neutrality pact, signed by the Soviet Union and Japan in 1941, should theoretically have remained in force for five years, and if neither party denounced it one year before its expiration, then it would remain in force for another five. In February 1945, Japan had approached Moscow to inquire whether the Far East had been discussed at Yalta. The Soviets simply replied: “Soviet-Japanese negotiations are confined to relations between the USSR and Japan and these are neutral”.\textsuperscript{15} Gilbert Rozman points out that many Japanese see themselves as having been ‘deceived’ by the Soviet Union in 1945 when it violated the neutrality treaty, and that this was a ‘humiliation’ for Japan.\textsuperscript{16}
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Even today, Japan refers to the occupation of the Kurils as illegal because the Soviet Union violated its pledge of neutrality in the Second World War. In addition, Japan asserts that the Yalta decisions on the Kurils and Sakhalin are not binding in international law, as it was ignorant of the Yalta decisions when it signed the Potsdam Declaration. Furthermore, the San Francisco peace treaty with Japan of 1951 was not signed by the Soviets, which implies that any territory seized by the latter at the end of the war remains unconfirmed in law. By signing the treaty, Japan renounced all rights to the Kurils and parts of Sakhalin, but which islands did in fact belong to the Kuril chain remained unspecified. The rights to the islands were not assigned to any one country, but were left to future international decision. Richard deVillafranca stresses that there was a consensus that Shikotan and the Habomais were not part of the Kurils. At the time the Japanese did not contest this, but later when negotiations began with the Soviets in 1955, the Japanese agenda was to claim not only all four islands, but also Southern Sakhalin. Recent analysis of the dispute has suggested that the US 'deliberately frustrated Japan's attempts to solve the dispute in 1956, telling the Japanese that if Japan recognised Soviet sovereignty over Kunashir and Iturup then the US would have the right to claim sovereignty over Okinawa and the Ryukyu islands'. By 1988 there were tentative moves by the Soviet leadership to revive the 1956 Joint Declaration which stated that the Soviet Union 'agrees to transfer to Japan the Habomai islands and the island of Shikotan, the actual transfer of these islands to Japan to take place after the conclusion of a Peace Treaty...' Following the Declaration however, and throughout the Gorbachev period, the Japanese refused to drop from the agenda the issue of the future status of the other two islands, Kunashir and Iturup, pressing the Soviets to acknowledge at least residual Japanese sovereignty over all four islands.

Vladimir Eremin, writing of the Soviet-Japanese summit in April 1991, quotes the journalist Sergei Agafonov, who commented on the "irrationality" of the Soviet side with the apparatus wanting to turn the visit into an "epoch-making event", an illustration of the 'new thinking' decorated with the
In Eremin’s view most of the blame for its failure must lie with the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MID), although their position was less than optimal at this time, Shevardnadze having resigned in December 1990, and replaced by the lacklustre Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, a career diplomat, who was unlikely to be able to launch any bold initiatives. At the time of the summit, he had only been in the post of Foreign Minister for a few months, so his authority was not strong. Igor Tyshetskii too attributes to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the wish to see the summit as the ‘apex’ of the process of perestroika in bilateral ties with Japan. This had been Shevardnadze’s view, as he saw a continuation in Soviet-Japanese relations since 1985. However, Tyshetskii notes that the Presidential Council was probably more influential at this time than the MID, as it contained a small group of officials close to Gorbachev. This seems at variance with reality as the Presidential Council was, by April 1991 largely defunct, and as Gorbachev himself had pointed out at the Fourth Congress of People’s Deputies in December 1990 had now been superseded by the Security Council. As this contained far more powerful people than had ever been in the Presidential Council it is likely that this body had a fairly major role to play in setting the agenda for the summit. For example the military (represented by General Dmitrii Izov in the Security Council) made it clear that any moves to remove troops from the islands as a concession to the Japanese could not be contemplated: one week before Gorbachev arrived in Tokyo, Izov stressed the significance of the islands for Soviet security, and declared that a decision on the islands could not be left to Gorbachev alone. His emphasis on the security aspect was underscored by the former Chief of General Staff, Sergei Akhromeev, (now an advisor to Gorbachev) who refused to consider a reduction in troops on the islands. The influence of the military was also an obstacle in moves to open up the closed port of Vladivostok

Many have said that El’tsin could have improved relations with Japan immediately after the August coup in 1991, but at the time El’tsin’s priorities lay elsewhere, and the question of resolving the dispute was valuable
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only in terms of his bid to sideline Gorbachev. However, the fact that Andrei Kozyrev, the new RSFSR foreign minister, was included in the official delegation to the April 1991 Soviet-Japanese summit, along with Vladimir Lukin, chair of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Committee on Foreign Affairs, was a sign that Russia was already thinking of its own economic interests. Indeed, there were discrepancies within El’tsin’s delegation to the Soviet-Japanese talks in September 1991, with Georgii Kunadze, deputy foreign minister, advocating the return of two islands to the Japanese in line with the 1956 declaration, and El’tsin proposing a five stage plan which would leave the decision to ‘future generations’. Nevertheless, El’tsin’s manoeuvrings did bring certain dividends: in October 1991, Tokyo announced a package of 2.5 billion dollars in aid for the former Soviet Union, the greater part of which was earmarked for the Russian Federation.

4.1c) Economic cooperation: the illusion of complementarity

Despite this apparent success, rumours were whipped up that the 2.5 billion represented the ‘price’ for the islands. As opposition to El’tsin’s accommodation with the West (which included Japan) increased, the Japanese position which held that economics and politics were inseparable (sekai fukabun) made it increasingly difficult for El’tsin to obtain a solution to the dispute without facing accusations of ‘selling out’ Russia for financial gain. Before his appointment as RSFSR deputy foreign minister, Georgii Kunadze, then still an academic at IMEMO, suggested transferring two of the islands to Japan in line with the 1956 declaration and requesting compensation for the islands’ infrastructure of ten billion US dollars. It is this linkage between economic gain and territory which has made a solution so unpalatable. Once this linkage was established, the mere mention of Japanese development of Siberia and the Far East was liable to arouse suspicions of a quid pro quo deal, with the islands as the reward. In Aleksei Arbatov’s words, linking the return of the islands to economic aid would compromise Russian foreign policy, but at the same time ‘without Japan we cannot create a market-based
infrastructure in the [Russian] Far East'. Still, initial Russian estimations of Japanese intentions reveal a startling optimism. An article in a leading Moscow weekly stated that the development of relations with Japan would be a priority for Russian foreign policy and further, ‘there is reason to believe that the problem of the disputed islands will cease to be a stumbling block for those relations in the future. Japan, it seems, does not intend to link the questions of the “northern territories” directly to the development of trade and economic links with Russia’.  

Regarding the economic relationship, Evgenii Kovrigin wrote that the onesided orientation towards Japan in the 1970s and 1980s meant that ‘vital industries of the Soviet Far East became overdependent on the state of relations between Tokyo and Moscow.’ However, by the late 1970s Japanese involvement in Siberian and Far Eastern development projects had been greatly reduced. This was partly due to the fact that Japan had by now successfully reoriented its economic structure from heavy industry to high technology, therefore it had become less dependent on Soviet fuel and energy resources. However, the huge Soviet military build-up at this time and the deterioration of détente by the beginning of the 1980s were also contributory factors. Those large-scale projects which Japan had been involved in, like the Sakhalin oil and gas project, were in any case unprofitable to the Japanese: by the mid-1990s Japan, more than twenty years after the first negotiations, had invested around $200 million, but had not received one tonne of oil and gas.  

Interestingly, in the 1960s and 1970s the Japanese policy was to separate economics and politics despite the territorial issue (the ‘Yoshida doctrine’). Lonny E. Carlile notes that diplomatic relations were handled by one group, economic relations handled by another group of actors in Tokyo. The focus at this time was on “resource diplomacy”, which meant ensuring a ‘constant supply of raw materials for Japanese industry.’ Japan preferred however to limit this economic co-operation to the private sector, so that in 1981, eighty four per cent of Soviet-Japanese trade was conducted by only seven companies. At this point apparently the Japanese government did not wish
the economic relationship to become intertwined with the diplomatic relationship. The explanation for this can be found in Gerald Segal's argument that the Soviet strategy at this time was 'to take advantage of Western technology and to some extent to build political ties that would eventually undermine U.S. alliances on either side of the Soviet Union.'

Thus the Japanese hoped that instead Gorbachev would be interested in improving economic relations 'for their own sake rather than as the means to a strategic end.' But as the economic and political situation in the USSR worsened, the Japanese saw 'what had earlier been an interest in Japan's assistance' now 'becoming a dire need', and hence a way to regain the disputed islands. The USSR continually referred to the Japan as being completely dependent on outside supplies of raw materials and energy, and therefore in need of the natural resources of Siberia, as well as constantly drawing attention to the complementary nature of the two economies. As Glaubitz stresses, 'the idea seemed to encourage the Soviet Union to overestimate the strength of its own negotiating position and to underestimate Japan's capacity for diversification in policies involving raw materials and energy.' However, rapprochement with South Korea in 1991, as a result of Gorbachev's call for closer economic co-operation, enabled the Soviets to cite this as a reason for Tokyo to drop its hard line on economic assistance. Still, the Japanese did not respond to this pressure, seeing it as the old Soviet attempt to play countries off against each other. Another problem with the concept of developing the Far East with Japanese assistance was that there was no centrally formulated plan as to how this might be effected: Igor Tyshetskii points out that in Khabarovsk, a day before the April 1991 Soviet-Japanese summit, Gorbachev mentioned that 'the Soviet leadership had neither a conception nor a special program for the development of the Far East, and such a programme would be developed immediately after his return.'

In April 1989, the number of Soviet enterprises allowed to engage in foreign trade had been expanded and many were authorised to obtain hard currency credits. The number of Japanese companies trading with the Soviet Union increased temporarily. But by mid-1991 increasing numbers of Soviet
firms were falling behind on payments to exporters and the Japanese were not receptive to Soviet requests for loans to pay off these debts.

One of the main channels for Japanese aid to post-Communist countries has been ‘Official Development Assistance’ (ODA), whose charter, inaugurated in 1992, has been described as a ‘prime example of “separation of politics from economics”’. It is true that, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Japan’s then prime minister declared the ‘primacy of political objectives’ of aid to Eastern Europe. However, there was opposition within Japan from both governing circles and the public to giving aid to Russia, and Russian relations were seen as a ‘liability for prime ministers at the polls and within the ruling party.’ Aid under the ODA scheme can only go to nations that have made a full transition to democracy and the market economy. The misfortune for the Russian Far East has been that this primary source of Japanese aid, is intended for developing regions, and the Russian Federation does not fit the category. Russia itself has been sensitive about being classified as such; witness Russia’s unease at receiving aid under the auspices of the World Bank. On the other hand, the Central Asian states and China, in particular, (which has received billions of dollars in ODA assistance) have benefited greatly from being categorised as ‘developing nations’.

4.1d) The Development of Relations under El’tsin.

January 1990- December 1991. El’tsin tries to outmanoeuvre Gorbachev. El’tsin outlined his five-stage plan for resolving the territorial dispute in January 1990. The first stage was simply to acknowledge the existence of the dispute. Stage two would entail the transformation of the islands into a free economic zone with special status for Japan, a period to last three to four years. Next came a phase which would involve the withdrawal of the military formations on the islands, which would take between five and seven years. The fourth stage would last from fifteen to twenty years and would see the signing of a peace treaty. Finally, by the time of the fifth stage, a new generation would be able to look at the problem from a new perspective.
Since that date, El’tsin had used the Kuril issue to undermine Gorbachev’s negotiation efforts wherever possible, appealing to the Russian chauvinist mood. On the eve of his election as president he stated that “‘reconsidering the borders now is out of the question: it would be blood again.’” At the time, El’tsin was posturing in his struggle to outpace Gorbachev politically; his stance, appealing to Russian national interests, was to rebound on him the following year, when conservative forces in the parliament and the armed forces made it clear that no territory could be surrendered. When El’tsin had sent Ruslan Khasbulatov (the speaker of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet) and Kunadze to Japan in summer 1991, Khasbulatov had been a firm ally. El’tsin could not have foreseen that, by the following year, his ally would become a strong adversary, who would use the issue of concessions to Japan to discredit El’tsin and in particular his Foreign Ministry. While allowing different groups to formulate varying solutions to the dispute, El’tsin would not come out in favour of any one plan, distancing himself from specific policies.

There was still optimism that Japan would now come to Russia’s rescue with financial aid, and, specifically, with large-scale investment for the Russian Far East. Indeed it appears that Japan was using the bait of economic aid to wrest concessions from the new Russian leadership even before the collapse of the Soviet Union. Thus while El’tsin had initially pledged not to make any territorial concessions, as Gorbachev’s position became more tenuous after the August coup, El’tsin now began to speak of accelerating his five-stage plan. Once Tokyo had announced its intention to earmark part of the credit package for RSFSR, Ruslan Khasbulatov, speaker of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, after meeting Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama in October 1991, became convinced that the Japanese had changed their position on the nonseparation of politics and economics. The problem was that the Japanese, having observed Russian concessions over German unification, which involved financial compensation for the Soviet armed forces, now tried to apply this precedent to the Kurils issue. As Glaubitz points out, the Japanese had misunderstood the agreement on German unification. In addition, Germany was an enthusiastic proponent of G-7 aid to Russia, even applying pressure on Japan to change its
negative stance.⁴⁹ Already before the breakup of the Soviet Union, the secession of the three Baltic republics placed a question mark over the future of the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad. Thus in a speech to shipyard workers there in early 1991, El’tsin made clear his position on redrawing borders: "If we use arguments from the past, these will destroy borders, not just in Europe but throughout the world."⁵⁰ One article in Pravda (responding to a letter from the Japanese embassy which denied seeking to do a financial deal on the islands) noted that Tokyo’s new arguments consisted of the hypothesis that ‘if Moscow resigned itself to the reunification of Germany, if it recognised the independence of the Baltics, is there any sense in harping on the inviolability of post-war borders?’ The article’s author dismissed the analogy with the Baltic states as illogical. ‘Unlike the unambiguous expression of will of the Baltic peoples, any referendums about the fate of the “northern territories”, whether within the four islands, or in Sakhalin Oblast, or in the RSFSR, would most likely not give Tokyo the desired results.’⁵¹

Russia’s optimism regarding economic cooperation with Japan was encouraged by Tokyo. In October 1991, Nakayama, in a speech on the future of Russo-Japanese relations, pointed to Russo-Japanese economic complementarity and the possibilities this offered for establishing a new relationship.⁵² In the same month, Vasilii Saplin, the then head of the Japan section of the RSFSR MID, rejected the ‘thesis’ that the package of 2.5 billion was ‘the price’ for the islands, arguing for a clear separation between the territorial dispute and Japanese economic aid.⁵³ But as the new Russian state began to deal with realities, it became clear that there could be no straightforward quid pro quo deal in the prevailing political climate, with the Japanese making their stance on the islands plain. The Japanese ambassador to Russia, Edamura, for example, said:

until the Japanese people is satisfied that new Russia is prepared to abandon the legacy that has to do with the Soviet Union’s violation of international law and to become Japan’s partner worthy of assistance
and cooperation, our democratic state will not get the nation’s approval in matters related to all-round assistance to Russia.\textsuperscript{54}

\textit{December 1991-September 1992. From optimism to stalemate.}

The high hopes of the new Russian government did not last long. It soon became apparent that the positions of Moscow and Tokyo did not in the least coincide. Tokyo refused to invest, or even to allocate financial aid, unless there was movement on the territorial issue, while Russia would not discuss transfer of territory until a peace treaty had been signed. The Japanese were prepared to sign such a peace treaty only after the transfer of all four islands. Moscow’s position was made even more difficult by the emergence of a new factor – protests from its own citizens. From now on the views of the islands’ population would have to be taken into account. In October 1991, during a session of the Kurilsk raion soviet a resolution was adopted to create a ‘Kurils Defence Committee’ and to declare the 6 June a festival of the islands’ inhabitants, this being the day that the Ainu were granted Russian citizenship, in 1778.\textsuperscript{55} On the same day, the presidium of the Kaliningrad oblast soviet of people’s deputies took a decision to send a telegram to its counterpart in Sakhalin oblast (to which the Kurils belonged) expressing its support for the stand of the leadership and population of Sakhalin regarding the Kurils.\textsuperscript{56} A few days later the Far Eastern Association of the Soviets of People’s Deputies sent to the presidents of the USSR and the RSFSR a statement, which maintained that posing the question of the revision of borders was ‘illegal and immoral’.\textsuperscript{57} With the final collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991, the border question became even more symbolic.

One of the first steps towards regularising relations was the reactivation in February of the permanent working group on the peace treaty, now in the Russo-Japanese rather than Soviet-Japanese format. The first session was held in early February, and discussed questions relating to visa free travel by Japanese to the Kurils, and of the island’s residents to Japan. It was decided to operate two subgroups: one on territorial demarcation/delimitation, the
other on further questions related to preparation of a peace treaty. The treaty and solution of the territorial issue was acknowledged to be a high priority of Russian foreign policy. 58

March 1992 saw the visit of Russian foreign minister, Andrei Kozyrev, to Tokyo for further talks. There he held three rounds of talks with foreign minister Michio Watanabe (Taro Nakayama’s replacement). The Russian MID declared that these talks were aimed at bringing relations to a level ‘characteristic of Russia’s ties with the leading Western states.’ The visit was expected to become a turning point in relations and to open a path to building links on the foundation of good-neighbourliness, trust, mutual understanding, and eventually also of alliance. In order to normalise relations, the Russian government stressed the need to solve the problem of the lack of a peace treaty based on the principles of legality and justice. This was characterised as ‘one of the last vestiges of the cold war’, and the idea of cultivating links based on the formula ‘winners and losers’ of World War Two was rejected. In line with this, agreement was reached on joint publication by the Russian MID and the Japanese Gaimusho (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) of a volume of documents on the history of territorial delimitation between Russia and Japan. 59 At the time, it had already been decided to hold a Russo-Japanese summit where a series of agreements on the development of relations in the practical sphere might be signed. One can assume that the Russian side was hoping the ‘practical sphere’ would mean investment from Japanese business. Indeed, at this stage the Japanese did indicate that government underwriting of Japanese business activity in Russia would commence, as well as assuring them of investment activity up to a total of 1.8 billion dollars on the Russian market. In addition, the Japanese stated their willingness to agree on conditions for implementing large credits of five hundred million dollars which would thus unfreeze the economic support promised to the USSR in 1991, amounting to a total of 2.5 billion dollars. A symbolic move was the agreement to open a Russian consulate in Niigata, and a Japanese one in Khabarovsk to facilitate an improvement in trade relations. Importantly, Japan expressed its support for
Russian entry into the International Monetary Fund, a move Tokyo had previously opposed.\(^6\)

As time went on, however, the Russian side began to express their impatience with Japanese stalling on investment and aid. In a press conference held by the head of the MID's information department, Vitalii Churkin, shortly after Kozyrev's trip, he admitted that

> When we think of our relations with Japan we are concerned by the fact that to a significant degree the huge potential of economic cooperation remains untapped. We are counting on being able to conduct talks in a more dynamic speed with the Japanese in terms of concluding a peace treaty. But that does not mean that following some or other economic interests, we are prepared to diverge from the principle of legality and justice ....At the same time we consider that Japan in the long-term, also has its own significant interests in the development of economic ties with our country. When the talk is of two great powers – on the one hand a European, and on the other an Asian power – then we need to think precisely about the long term perspective.\(^6\)

As the date of the September summit drew closer, the divergence in expectations between the Japanese and the Russian side became increasingly stark. Russian Foreign Ministry officials were at pains to emphasise that the islands were not 'for sale'. Georgii Kunadze emphasised that while law must be the guiding principle in talks with Tokyo, nevertheless:

> However much land we might have, however enormous our territory, we consider it to be our territory - and not an object for buying and selling and not a pretext for doing deals. I do not see how that can affect our ability to sign a peace treaty with Japan.\(^6\)

In early May, the new foreign minister Watanabe visited Russia to discuss preparations for El'tsin's September visit. Talks continued on issues concerning the signing of a peace treaty, including territorial demarcation.
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However, shortly after Watanabe’s visit, the Japanese appeared to state that a compromise on the islands was to be reached that year. The Russian MID were swift to deny this interpretation, adding that a comparison of the two sides’ positions on the issue ‘based on the immutable approaches already set out by the USSR and Japan, ...demonstrated their incompatibility.’ The Japanese reports were in all probability related to the fact that just prior to Watanabe’s visit, troop reductions had been effected on one of the Kuril islands. A MID press conference in late April had confirmed a thirty per cent cut was to take place in the number of military personnel stationed there, leaving approximately 7,000 soldiers whose main responsibility consisted purely in protection of the border and assistance for naval forces. This was in line with former USSR foreign minister Boris Pankin’s pledge in 1991 to make a thirty per cent reduction in troops on the islands. The promise had been made during the first round of talks with Nakayama (Watanabe’s predecessor). At the same time, Pankin had signalled to Nakayama the Soviets’ interest in Japanese business activity on the Kurils.

Japanese speculation about the significance of Russian troop withdrawals was refuted by Pavel Grachev, the defence minister, appointed in May 1992. The new Russian defence ministry had become a rival to the MID, which had hitherto appeared to be the fount of all knowledge on matters relating to the territorial dispute. Until then (March 1992) appeals regarding the strategic significance of the Kurils and the necessity of maintaining troops on the islands, were lone voices without support from the centre, a situation which now changed. For example, the commander of the Pacific border military district, Lt-General Mikhail Barybin, insisted that the Sea of Okhotsk should be given the status of an internal sea, which naturally implied the impossibility of admitting Japanese sovereignty over any of the islands. He railed against ‘foreign poachers’ and said that his district would establish ‘tough control’ in the zone. In a clear promotion of the border troops’ patriotic credentials he claimed that fishermen in the Far East had been forced to appeal to the Border Troops for assistance to combat the activities of poachers. His replacement, Major-General Vladimir Boruchenko pointedly stated at his first press
conference that the Kurils would remain Russian. Finally, the MID was obliged to issue another statement which emphasised that the planned troop reductions were not in any way connected to talks on territorial demarcation, but were dictated by 'general ideas about our surplus military presence.' The statement also stressed that, at his meetings with Watanabe, El'tsin had spoken of the future and not of immediate plans, although it did not rule out 'the eventual complete withdrawal of military personnel.' This ran counter to sources close to the Japanese foreign ministry, which were alleged to have reported Watanabe's concern over the halt in demilitarisation of the South Kurils. Only a couple of weeks later, the MID was obliged to issue yet another statement regarding troops on the Kurils. This time El'tsin's pronouncements in his talks with Watanabe were referred to as 'unalterable', i.e. Russia would effect a withdrawal of personnel from the Kurils leaving only a border defence.

Continuing reports in the Japanese press that Russia had now withdrawn significant numbers of armed forces from the islands began to irk Russian diplomats. Thus Kunadze speaking in July said that, while El'tsin's pledge regarding troop withdrawals was still valid, its date had still to be agreed within the administration. He added that the issue was a purely internal affair and was prompted by general considerations of military sufficiency, but also of optimising Russia's military potential. Kunadze concluded that the military establishment was ready to accept any decision taken by the political leadership.

At the same briefing, Kunadze spoke on the results of the first sessions of the working group on the peace treaty, which had taken place the previous week in Tokyo. While stating that the wording of the peace treaty had been finalised, the problem of territorial demarcation remained, with neither side having anything new to contribute at the final session of the working group. He rejected claims that the MID or government were conducting any secret talks with Japan, or doing secret deals. Russia was now committed to the
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principles of legality and justice, which made it incapable of acting in the obstructive Soviet manner. 72

Despite publicly declared sentiments, the reality remained that the Japanese would not sign a peace treaty until it had regained the Kurils, while Russia would not hand over any territory until they had a peace treaty. A few days before this briefing, Kunadze's superior, Kozyrev, on a visit to Kamchatka had sworn never to hand over the islands to Japan; although Lenin (as he recalled) wished to sell off Kamchatka for twenty million dollars, 'we have no such ideas.' 73 The parallel with the Kurils was explicit, and he added that Kamchatka was Russia's forward boundary, its security outpost in the Far East. Kozyrev took the opportunity to refer to Russian policy in Northeast Asia and the APR as a whole, noting that while Japan was an important partner for Russia, it was not the only one: what Russia needed, especially in the Far East, was a diversification of relations 'without any monopoly.' 74

There was also the question whether negotiations with Japan over the islands could mean other countries with which Russia had unresolved territorial disputes, taking advantage. The Russian MID emphatically denied the possibility of a chain reaction scenario, asserting the uniqueness of the situation with Japan; bilateral documents fixing the line of the border existed with all the other countries. However, the newly formed Russian Ministry of Defence held quite a different view, according to which transferring any of the islands to Japan was very likely to set off a chain reaction of territorial claims, and also weaken Russia's position in negotiations with China on the joint border. 75 One Japanese analyst, writing just prior to the USSR's collapse, thought that 'the Sino-Soviet border negotiations not the Japan-Soviet negotiations are the precedent for territorial border concessions.' 76 Some viewed the situation from the other end: that is that Japan would seize on current border negotiations, such as those with China or Ukraine for example, to advance its own claims. Such was the view of Andrei Voskresenskii, a prominent Sinologist, who argued that the Japanese press was watching closely how Russian border problems were resolved and looking for 'the
slightest precedent to use to their own advantage in Russo-Japanese relations.\textsuperscript{77} The editor of a leading Russian newspaper told the Japanese analyst Hiroshi Kimura that ‘so long as Russia is quarrelling with Ukraine over Crimea, Russia finds it difficult to yield over the Northern Territories.’\textsuperscript{78}

There has also been some confusion as to how to deal with the Soviet legacy in terms of obligations incurred by that regime. Thus in October 1991 while the RSFSR government was still competing with the USSR regime for influence with Japan, Vasilii Saplin stated that Russian diplomacy was now embarking on the road of independent foreign policy and must naturally take on all those problems inherited from the Soviet Union\textsuperscript{79}. However, eight months later, Kunadze said that ‘although the Russian government and Russia as a state is the continuer of the former USSR, the Russian government naturally cannot bear responsibility for those acts of failures to act, for the mistakes and even for the crimes which were carried out by the previous Soviet administrations.’\textsuperscript{80}

July 1992 saw preparations for the planned September summit begin to falter under the weight of opposition to territorial concessions. Parliamentary hearings were organised by the Committees on International Affairs and Foreign Economic Relations, and on Defence and Security. The main report was delivered by the Supreme Soviet Committee on Constitutional Affairs, headed by Oleg Rumiantsev. Although no final document was produced, it was sent onward to El’tsin for his scrutiny – the views of the foreign ministry were in any case in the minority.\textsuperscript{81} The hearings’ findings had a significant impact on the subsequent recommendations of the recently formed presidential Security Council. Evidence was presented by representatives of both the Main Naval Staff and the General Staff of the Russian armed forces, bolstered by the formation in May of a Russian Federation Defence Ministry. As well as pointing to the possibility that transferring territory to Japan could spark off a chain reaction of other claims, the Naval Staff stressed that such a move would divide the Pacific Fleet, depriving it of a warm water outlet to the ocean and allowing the naval and air forces of the enemy access to the Sea of
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Okhotsk. More specifically, a representative of the unified CIS navy said that the early warning system on the South Kurils was intended for revealing US cruise missiles, which was the first official confirmation of the presence of any military facility in the southern Kuril region connected to the nuclear strategy. The General Staff meanwhile proposed that the reduction in troops on the islands be suspended. One of the main criticisms expressed in Rumiantsev’s report was the secrecy surrounding negotiations with Tokyo, and the MID’s refusal to take on board different approaches to the territorial problem. While the report acknowledged that Russia did not have full legal rights to the islands, it claimed that Japan had none at all, apart from possible rights to the uninhabited islands of Habomai (off Hokkaido).

In addition to their strategic and economic importance to Russia, the report purported to present evidence regarding the economic value of the islands. Rumiantsev said that the combined value of the islands’ mineral wealth was several times more than any assistance that might be rendered by Japan. A newspaper article claimed that the total value of the Kurils’ mineral resources was 44.05 billion US dollars, while the deputy head of the Sakhalin oblast administration stated at the hearings that the total supplies of fish, geological, mineral and marine resources amounted to more than 87 billion US dollars. These statements are highly questionable as the mineral resources on the islands are in fact negligible, as shown by the evidence of the chairman of the RSFSR State Committee for Geology and the Use of Natural Resources, according to whom Russia would not lose any rich mineral deposits if the islands were transferred to Japan. This is borne out by Oleg Bondarenko in his survey of the Kuril islands where he describes how Soviet scholars, ‘attempting to determine the value of the islands to the USSR, feverishly searched the islands. Finally, they managed to unearth some bauxite, zinc, zircon, tin, wolfram and pig iron [...] However there are only very small deposits of all these minerals’. Fish stocks obviously represent the main economic resources of the islands. Most of the islanders are engaged in activities related to fishing, although the profits of fish-processing plants have fallen which has led to a drop in the number of those employed there. Still,
were the Kurils to be transferred to Japan, the fish industry would incur heavy losses. As Bondarenko points out, the fishermen of the Far East together with the Ministry of Fisheries have been the most vocal opponents of territorial concessions after the military. In 1992, 1.2 to 1.3 million tonnes of fish and seafood were harvested every year from the shelf around the Kuril islands. This figure represents about ten per cent of Russia's total catch. An ongoing problem is that the fish stocks are not inexhaustible - overfishing and the use of driftnets have accelerated this trend. According to one estimate in 1992, they may last only another ten years, which has in turn led to Far Eastern fisheries indulging in 'a feverish rate of fishing' before the stocks are indeed depleted. The activities of both the fishing industry but also the naval forces who damage marine resources with fuel and oil effluents have led to serious ecological damage which may be irreversible. These problems have received little attention from the Russian government.

Whatever the merits of the various arguments put forward regarding the economic, military or political significance of the islands, Japan had done itself no favours when it sought to internationalise the dispute by appealing to members of the G-7 in July 1992 to support Tokyo's stance on the islands. While the Japanese got no more than a neutral statement from the other G-7 members, proposing a swift resolution of the dispute, opposition in the Supreme Soviet to compliance with IMF demands in order to satisfy conditions for G-7 aid placed serious constraints on El'tsin's room for manoeuvre.

However, the chief constraints were engendered by the disarray in the main institutions responsible for executing foreign policy decisions. There was also constitutional confusion as to which institution was responsible for which policy area. El'tsin himself helped to muddy the waters by allowing these different groups to express widely different views on the territorial dispute. For example El'tsin had set up a committee headed by Gennadii Burbulis, who favoured the 'Kunadze option' to organise the visit to Japan. Burbulis was at this time acting vice premier, and as such very close to the president.
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Kozyrev was seen by some as Burbulis's 'underling', as the latter played a prominent role in foreign policy making until his removal in December 1992. The committee was set up in May 1992 at the same time as the creation of the new Presidential Security Council. It was peopled with numerous deputies with whom Burbulis was obliged to share different scenarios for solving the territorial problem. It was impossible to prevent these deputies from leaking their details to the press, who then presented them as definite plans. However, the Security Council, which was composed in the main of conservative military and industrial figures opposed to concessions to Japan, was far more influential than Burbulis's committee, which now had to compete with Kozyrev for El'tsin's attention. Indeed Kozyrev expressed some disquiet when the remit of the Security Council appeared to increase, noting his preference for a greater role for the governmental, rather than presidential structures, as in the government there were more people "of a reformist tendency".

Meanwhile there were visits to Japan, first by deputy prime minister Mikhail Poltoranin, from 3-8 August, and then by Iurii Petrov, head of the presidential administration, from 24-27 August. Poltoranin apparently sought to ascertain the Japanese view on a 'transition period' in resolving the dispute, a stance which El'tsin had already discussed in Washington with Bush. Poltoranin now added an extra dimension to the visit by seeking to involve the United States in resolving the territorial issue stating 'this is no longer a bilateral problem, but a question of internationalization.' This was puzzling, as the previous month, Burbulis had expressly warned the Japanese not to internationalise the dispute at the G-7 meeting in July. Now Poltoranin appeared to contradict him evoking a swift response from the MID which denied that his comments reflected official positions. Meanwhile the Supreme Soviet Committee for International Affairs and Economic Relations issued a statement on 25 August to the effect that recognising any form of Japanese sovereignty over the islands would be "extremely dangerous". At this time Petrov was in Tokyo to 'test the waters'. Petrov demanded greater economic aid from Japan while emphasising the impossibility of territorial
concessions. Some have seen Petrov’s trip as a bid to replace Kozyrev as foreign minister. However, it is difficult to give much credence to this hypothesis, as he was certainly in a more powerful position as presidential chief of staff than he could have been in the besieged foreign ministry. On his return he said in an interview with Izvestiia that Japanese tactics of linking the territorial problem to other issues could not achieve progress in bilateral relations. The Japanese wanted Russia to recognise Japanese sovereignty over the islands first, and only then would other issues be discussed.

Watanabe was in Moscow for a working visit to finalise plans for the summit from 29 August to 4 September. By this time, El’tsin must have realised that to visit Japan now would be political suicide. Indeed, just prior to Watanabe’s arrival in Moscow El’tsin had expressed his dissatisfaction with the lack of Japanese support for Russian economic reforms. Watanabe countered by listing the contributions that Tokyo had made and warning that if Russia failed to return the Habomai islands and the island of Shikotan Russia would retain the reputation of a country that broke its promises. He added that not returning the islands would mean no investment or economic cooperation.

On the other hand, statements continued to be made on both sides to the effect that the visit was to be of historic significance and would herald the commencement of a gradual move towards full normalisation of relations on the basis of common values of freedom and humanity. Only five days after Watanabe had returned to Tokyo the visit was cancelled.

The cancellation.

On 3 September, the day before Watanabe’s return to Japan, the Russian presidential Security Service announced that while studying the security arrangements made for El’tsin’s forthcoming trip to Japan, it had found several factors which would make it impossible to guarantee the president’s security while in the Japanese capital. They cited the protests of Japan’s extreme right wing groups who were demanding the return of the islands and protesting against Elt’sin’s visit, as well as protests by extreme left-wing organisations who wanted Elt’sin removed from power for betraying the
proletariat. It was argued that during El’tsin’s visit these organisations planned to stage massive rallies and demonstrations in order to ‘apply psychological pressure to the Japanese government’s stance on the territorial question.’ The Russian presidential Security Service stated further that Japanese security services would not be able to guarantee El’tsin’s safety and had banned members of El’tsin’s security services from bringing firearms with them. The head of the Security Service announced his departure for Japan to assess security measures so that if these were not adequate he would recommend to El’tsin that he postpone his trip until the situation had improved. The aim of these measures would be to guard El’tsin against ‘powerful psychological pressure and persecution and, on the whole, against causing moral and political damage to the young Russian state’. At a Russian-Japanese TV bridge held on 5 September, El’tsin still claimed that the visit would go ahead, but that he had fourteen separate proposals for resolving the stalemate. He made it clear that Japan could not expect an unconditional surrender of the islands and once again criticised the low level of economic relations between the two countries: ‘It seems to me that all this is being made dependent on a solution to the Kuril islands issue. This is unfair, these two issues should be separated.’ In what may have been a last-ditch attempt to squeeze economic assistance from the Japanese El’tsin said that the third phase of his five-phase plan which dealt with demilitarisation of the islands would now be accelerated, so that although this was originally to have taken ten, it would now be completed within two years.

However, as the date for his departure approached the voices of those in favour of a compromise on the islands was all but drowned out by those resolutely against any negotiations whatsoever. Kozyrev and Kunadze were voices in the wilderness echoed only by a handful of academics who hoped to reverse the neglect of Japanese studies under the Soviet regime. On 9 September, a three hour session of the Presidential Security Council was held, whose members included vice-president Aleksandr Rutskoi, the secretary of the council Iurii Skokov, vice-premier Egor Gaidar and the first deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet Sergei Filatov. Rutskoi was absent on this
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occasion, (although in his memoirs Kozyrev claims Rutskoi was present), but the Defence Minister Pavel Grachev, the minister of foreign affairs Kozyrev, minister of security Viktor Barannikov and the state secretary Burbulis attended. As is evident, the 'hardliners' were by no means in the majority, but El’tsin himself could tip the balance. Among the different arguments put forward against El’tsin making the trip were that Miyazawa’s position was unstable and that the trip might be used in pre-election campaigns. For this reason it would be better to make the trip after the elections when it would be clear if the situation had stabilised. In any case El’tsin was clearly persuaded by the arguments of the more conservative grouping which reflected broadly the current of public opinion and the views of parliamentarians. According to Kozyrev’s account, ‘a whole chorus in the shape of Rutskoi, Skokov and Barannikov suddenly, as if they had rehearsed, began in an hysterical manner to demand the postponement of the trip. Their main arguments were not this or that complication in Russo-Japanese relations, but the impossibility of ensuring the president’s personal security.’ Kozyrev claimed that he was in favour of postponing the visit due to the lack of preparation, i.e. there were fourteen different variants for resolving the dispute but not one had been put in motion. El’tsin himself in his memoirs, while eschewing any confirmation of whether the ‘security’ argument was the deciding factor, admits that if there had been any point in making the trip in the first place then ‘we would never have paid any attention to this subtlety.’

After the cancellation various different explanations were given for El’tsin’s failure to go to Tokyo. On 10 September his press spokesman, Viacheslav Kostikov, stated that internal disputes in Japan were the main reason for postponing the trip and denied that El’tsin had been put under pressure by other members of the Security Council. Japan’s attitude towards economic assistance to Russia, in particular its unwillingness to advance loans for natural gas development, was cited by El’tsin as an additional reason for postponing the visit and this was echoed by Viktor Chernomyrdin, who stated that agreements on oil and gas were inadequately prepared. While the
Japanese cited Russian domestic difficulties for the postponement of the trip, the Russians pointed to Japanese 'electioneering' and the ultimatum-like demands of the current cabinet on the islands. Meanwhile, despite the postponement of the president's trip to South Korea, El'tsin informed Seoul that the meeting would definitely go ahead in November, while Japan was apparently told that, due to the complicated situation in Russia, it would be difficult for El'tsin to leave the country in the months of October, November and December. The conversation with the South Korean president took place before the one with Miyazawa, so that by the time El'tsin spoke to Tokyo, they had already been informed by Seoul of the intention to postpone both visits.

**September – December 1992: Immediate Repercussions.**

Only days before the proposed visit to Tokyo, Kozyrev had been emphatic that 'Russia was not a copy of the USSR, but an original phenomenon and a democratic state,... developing new principles in mutual relations with Japan...'. In a postmortem on the now postponed trip, Kozyrev summed up the dilemma facing Russo-Japanese relations: 'our position – our official state position – remains the same as the Soviet Union's used to be. In other words, we don't really have a new policy. The Russian leadership has not yet adopted a new stance.' While admitting this Kozyrev noted that it was Russia's priority to be good neighbours with everyone, particularly with such states as China 'with which we have a vast border and with which we are about to forge fundamental and long-term neighbourly relations'. Finally he stressed that if Russia pulled itself up politically, then the economy would follow. Whether this last was achievable or not would remain to be seen. Suffice to say that opponents of territorial concessions now made it clear that good relations with Japan should not depend on economic assistance. The governor of Sakhalin oblast, Fedorov, argued that the fate of Russia and the Far East depended solely on the Russian people and not 'on the favour of some rich and prospering neighbour.' He concluded that no foreigners could solve Russia's economic problems and 'many are beginning to understand this.'

In the meantime, the South Kurils administration was planning to lease part of
the island of Shikotan to a Hong Kong construction company in order to
develop tourist facilities on the island. In Fedorov’s view some foreigners
were obviously better than others.

Coming so soon after the cancellation of El’tsin’s trip to Tokyo this seemed a
deliberate move to reassert Russian sovereignty over the islands. Japan
protested that the deal was illegal as the northern territories belonged to Japan.
Although the Russian MID had not been consulted regarding the contract, it
was nevertheless obliged to rebuff Tokyo’s protests by stating that the islands
were still under Russian sovereignty. While the regional authorities
appeared to be acting unilaterally, the incident was enough to prod El’tsin into
promising to sign a decree on the social and economic development of the
Kuril islands. Moscow now appeared to believe that joint sovereignty would
be the key to solving the problems of the Far East, allowing the Japanese some
say in the islands’ future.

Bilateral relations now required considerable work to bring them up to at least
the level they had reached before the collapse of the Soviet Union. Kozyrev
met Watanabe at United Nations headquarters on 23 September. He
expressed the opinion that Moscow felt Tokyo had shown little understanding
of Russia’s internal difficulties. In response, when he suggested an exchange
of visits at the foreign ministerial level, the Japanese insisted that Kozyrev
travel to Tokyo first. Regarding the continuation of financial aid, Tokyo
assured Moscow that it would not retaliate by withdrawing aid, and would
remain committed to the twenty four billion dollar package agreed by the G-7.
The US acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger pressed the Japanese
to assist Russia’s economic plight. Watanabe felt moved to retort that ‘other
countries’ knew little about Japan’s relations with Russia but that they would
understand once Tokyo explained the situation.

The effects in diplomatic terms of the visit’s cancellation were to make all
Russian actions even obliquely connected to bilateral relations charged with
meaning. There certainly appeared to be an increase in the number of
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statements by officers of naval forces regarding the state of the Pacific Fleet. Dire warnings were issued as to the combat readiness of the naval forces. In early October the commander of the Pacific Fleet, Admiral Gennadii Khvatov, pointed to the low living standards of the sailors and the general drop in morale, demanding a stop to cuts in the fleet’s officer personnel. According to Khvatov if this was not achieved then in two or three years Russia would no longer have a fleet on the Pacific. He further emphasised that the combat readiness of the fleet, ‘a major factor of ensuring Russia’s interests in the enormous Asian and Pacific region has to properly maintained.’ His comments came while Andrei Kokoshin, the first deputy defence minister was touring the Russian Far East, no doubt to bolster morale after fears that Russia might lose its window on the Pacific by ceding territory to Japan. Kokoshin himself reassured the fleet that the leadership of the military establishment would that year almost double the sums earmarked for the technical needs of the Pacific Fleet. A week or so later, the Japanese newspaper *Tokyo Shimbun* reported an alleged forthcoming transfer of warships of the Black Sea and Baltic Fleets to the Pacific Ocean. These new warships, the paper reported, citing ‘’sources in the Pacific Fleet command’’, were to be deployed at Petrovavlovsk-Kamchatskii, which in its opinion would ‘’worsen Russo-Japanese relations’’. Sure enough, the ‘Admiral Panteleev’, a new and modern anti-sub ship cast anchor at one of the Pacific Fleet’s naval bases, having been transferred to the Pacific from one of the Baltic shipyards. According to the news report, the ship’s personnel were ‘ready to defend Russia’s eastern maritime boundaries.’ Thus the armed forces had grown in confidence, boosted, first, by the appointment of a Russian Federation Defence Ministry which would now be focused specifically on the security dilemmas of the new Russian state, and second by the cancellation of El’tsin’s visit, which appeared to give support to their interpretation of the risks involved in making concessions to Japan. Evgenii Shaposhnikov, commander-in-chief of the CIS armed forces, added his voice to the chorus, and told a Japanese news agency that Moscow could yet reconsider its promise to demilitarise the Kuril islands.
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In the meantime, the governor of Sakhalin had announced on a visit to Hong Kong that the South Kurils would be given FEZ status, under a project approved by El’tsin. This was in the wake of the announcement by the Hong Kong firm due to lease land on Shikotan that it had broken off the leasing agreement.\(^{125}\) Now the plan for the islands was to be joint sovereignty and development with the Japanese. Thus Rumiantsev calculated that boosting the development of the islands would eliminate "Japanese unilateral claims because Japan will be left nothing but the chance to join us in the joint development of these islands."\(^{126}\)

After the cancellation of El’tsin’s visit to Tokyo, a conference on aid to the CIS states at the end of October highlighted the fact that the Japanese government did not intend to make any moves towards providing large-scale aid to Russia, but would instead begin focusing its attention on the five Central Asian republics. It was made clear in a policy paper released by the Japanese foreign ministry prior to the conference however, that ‘Japanese taxpayers could not be persuaded to pick up the additional burden of providing aid if “those countries were to receive assistance while continuing to build aircraft carriers”’, a statement clearly aimed at Russia.\(^{127}\) While some aid was allocated to Russia, it was a paltry sum – one hundred million dollars in humanitarian aid was allocated for all the former Soviet republics excluding the Baltic states, with Russia’s share (concentrated on the RFE) amounting to sixty per cent. In addition the policy statement concluded that the former republics should "implement foreign policy that is based on “law and justice”, a hint to Russia about the Kurils. Despite Watanabe’s assurances to Kozyrev that Japan’s share of the twenty-four billion dollar aid package pledged by the G-7 would not be affected by the cancellation of El’tsin’s trip, in early December Russia had still only received two billion of the twenty-four promised in April. These developments seemed to contradict Gaidar’s statement in September, that despite the territorial dispute economic interests would effect a rapprochement between Russia and Japan.\(^{128}\)
There was still concern that there were too many players in the foreign policy arena. In November the MID was obliged to issue a statement confirming that it was the main channel for all statements on foreign policy. This came in the wake of statements by Aleksandr Shokhin, deputy prime minister, who had spoken on the territorial question in connection with El'tsin’s visit to Tokyo for the G-7 meeting and also on the timing of El’tsin’s rescheduled visit. December saw the submission to the Supreme Soviet of El’tsin’s decree on the social and economic development of the Kuril islands, which the MID declared would not in any way influence the process of talks with Japan on the peace treaty. In the same month, deputy prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin replaced Egor Gaidar as prime minister, a clear signal to Japan that Western-style reform was no longer on the agenda. Arkadii Vol’skii, leader of the Civic Union centrist grouping, seems to have given details to the Japanese of Chernomyrdin’s cabinet during a trip to Tokyo, including a promise that the minister of foreign economic relations, Petr Aven, would be removed from his post. Aven resigned from his post only four days later.

The appointment of Chernomyrdin and the rejection by the parliament of both Gaidar and Burbulis simply confirmed what had already taken place: a clear rejection by the Supreme Soviet of the ‘romantic democratic’ course symbolised by Gaidar, Burbulis, Kozyrev and Kunadze. The rejection of Gaidar was the abrogation of ‘shock therapy’ for the economy, while that of Burbulis could be interpreted as a rejection of the conciliatory foreign policy of Kozyrev, due to the closeness of their views.

January-October 1993: Picking up the Pieces.

1993 began with a visit to Moscow by a Japanese parliamentary delegation. The delegation was met by Khasbulatov who stressed that all political parties and forces were in favour of active and friendly relations with Japan. In the same month there were Russo-Japanese interparliamentary consultations on trade and economic questions, which were held in Tokyo. This was the first such session since October 1990. Neither side expressed itself satisfied with the state of economic relations and both expressed concern at the sharp drop in
the volume of bilateral trade in 1992, which did not correspond to the two countries’ economic potential. While the Japanese side pointed to the unregulated nature of political relations and the lack of a peace treaty as having superimposed themselves on economic ties, Tokyo now appeared to soften its stance on seikei fukabun, proclaiming instead a policy of ‘expanded equilibrium’, or the parallel development of political and economic ties. Surprisingly, a poll by the Japanese newspaper Nihon Keizai showed that more than forty per cent of Japanese believed that the only sensible policy was to render Russia economic aid while negotiating a solution to the territorial problem. (One Russian analyst surmised that Tokyo’s softer stance was due to the upcoming G-7 summit, where Japan would not want to ‘look stupid’ in front of the other members. On the other hand, it may not have been unrelated to the success of the Sino-Russian summit in December 1992) The Japanese side outlined problems linked to trade and economic relations: the unregulated nature of Russian indebtedness to Japanese firms; the frozen bank accounts of representatives of Japanese firms in Moscow and Russo-Japanese JVs; the lack of clarity on future of two large scale projects in the area of Russo-Japanese economic cooperation (Sakhalin and the exploitation of timber resources in the RFE). The solution of these problems, it was argued, would help to open the way to Japanese investment, and attract Japanese companies to participation in regional development programmes in the Far East. These interparliamentary consultations were significant as, in October 1992, just after El’tsin’s cancellation, the Supreme Soviet had issued a statement to the effect that it was “ready for active parliamentary contacts making it possible to gain a better knowledge and understanding of one another’s position”. At the time, presumably still smarting from El’tsin’s diplomatic rebuff, and aware of the part the legislature had played in the cancellation, the Japanese foreign ministry opined that the Supreme Soviet statement would not have a direct influence on the course of the Russian-Japanese talks on the territorial issue.

Towards the end of February consultations were held at deputy foreign ministerial level on the activation of dialogue between Russia and Japan. The
Russian side was hoping for a transformation of the G-7 into the G-8. Japan was not happy with such a prospect and, shortly afterwards the chief secretary of the Japanese Cabinet of Ministers, Yoko Kono emphasised that the announcement by Kozyrev that Japan would invite El’tsin to Tokyo for the July summit of the G-7 was merely wishful thinking on Kozyrev’s part, and was not official Japanese policy. It appeared that Tokyo failed to understand the internal wrangling then taking place between executive and legislature. As the crisis in Russia deepened, the Ninth Congress of People’s Deputies agreed to hold a referendum which would effectively ‘make or break’ El’tsin as president. Meanwhile Japan’s Export-Import bank said it would grant Russia credit of one hundred million dollars which had first been announced in December 1990. Tokyo said the granting of the credit had been delayed due to the unstable situation in Russia and because Russia had not presented an account of its plans for using the allocated amount.

In the run-up to the G-7 summit, due to be held in Tokyo in July, Kozyrev spoke at the G-7 ministerial meeting on 14 April and spelt out Russian requirements if it were to be integrated into the world economy. He emphasised that long-term partnership was needed and that a unique role could be played by Russo-Japanese cooperation. The Japanese government too, said that it believed assistance to Russia and the territorial problem were not linked together, an approach the MID stated it valued highly. Whether Tokyo had finally realised the importance to El’tsin’s government of moral support from the G-7 countries in the context of accusations of treachery and double-dealing by the West is not certain. But on 15 April the G-7 approved an aid plan of 28.4 billion US dollars for Russia (although most of this had already been promised). Coming shortly after Clinton and El’tsin’s meeting at Vancouver to discuss security and economic issues, one can surmise that the US exerted some pressure on Japan to show more support for Russia in its current difficulties. In any case, after victory in the April referendum, El’tsin now felt free to rid himself of those who opposed his plans for economic reform, and forthwith dismissed the secretary of the Security Council Iurii Skokov and the deputy prime minister Khizha. He now brought in Oleg
Soskovets as deputy prime minister to replace Khizha. Soskovets's background was in the defence industry, similarly to Lobov, so that one could now expect greater attention to be paid to the revival of the MIC. His involvement in arms sales to China was indicative of these interests and his interests in the area of defence will not have endeared to Japan.

Parliamentary elections were now scheduled to be held that autumn. However, disagreements between El’tsin and Rutskoi continued to escalate and Khasbulatov once again attacked the West, accusing powerful international financial-industrial groups of seeking to colonise Russian regions and incorporate them into a 'system of their global interests.' This comment came as the Russian regions were threatening to withhold taxes from the centre and turn themselves into republics. Bearing in mind the imminent elections, the regional leaders will have been aware that Russian politicians would now seek to court them in a bid to preserve their own power. Residents of the Kurils were also seeking to take advantage of these developments. In spring 1993 a state of emergency was declared on Kunashir due to an almost total lack of diesel fuel. Leaders of the Kurils' local administration said a similar situation was developing on Iturup and that if appeals to regional authorities went unheeded, they would appeal to Japan to send diesel as humanitarian aid. The commander of the air defence unit on the Kurils confirmed that one of the three military aviation units on Iturup was being withdrawn, a move linked to the earlier Gorbachev agreement. The agreement had envisaged a thirty per cent mutual reduction in troops on Hokkaido and the Kurils.

The new governor of Sakhalin, (appointed by El’tsin, not elected) Evgenii Krasnoiarov, moved swiftly to ensure that Tokyo would not seek to take advantage of the situation: "until we reach the level of Japanese living standards any transfer of the islands is out of the question". He was unable, however, to stop Japan from sending 1,500 tons of diesel fuel to the South Kurils in response to the islanders' appeals, as well as several tons of sugar, – an embarrassing situation for the central authorities. A positive
development, at least at the regional level, was an agreement between the governors of Hokkaido and Sakhalin to hold a personal meeting in early June in Vladivostok to establish a regular air and ferry service. Contacts had been disrupted during preparations for El’tsin’s visit in 1992 and Fedorov had refused to hold any talks which might place in doubt the sovereignty of the islands. In a further sign of the incremental building of trust, a Japanese consulate opened in Vladivostok on 8 July after a break of close on thirty years.

In early June the first Russo-Japanese economic symposium was held in Moscow, attended by Soskovets and Lobov as well as directors of enterprises, bankers and so on. While the meeting was significant symbolically, coming just prior to the G-7 summit, there was still little to celebrate in the economic sphere. Bilateral trade in 1992 had reached only 3.248 billion US dollars, down twenty per cent on the previous year. Japanese trade amounted to only 4.3 per cent of total Russian trade, while Russia’s share of Japanese trade was a mere 0.5 per cent. Japanese investments in the Russian economy were also miserable, a miniscule 0.1 per cent of total Japanese foreign investment in 1992. The problem of Soviet debts remained unresolved and the Japanese were frustrated by the lack of clarity as to which Russian institution was responsible for dealing with this issue. It was noted that as long as the question of outstanding debts remained unresolved, a lack of confidence in the Russian economy on the part of Japanese businessmen would continue.

A couple of days earlier, in a bid to do battle with the likes of Khasbulatov and Rutskoi, Kozyrev told a session of the Council on Foreign Policy that ‘foreign investments are not at all the sign of some kind of colonial or slave economy.’ He criticised those who believed that these investments were ‘practically synonymous with selling the fatherland’, and emphasised that Russia would continue to use its political partnership with Western Europe to obtain favourable conditions. There was no mention of Japan.

Again the Japanese displayed a complete lack of understanding for the Russian domestic situation. Japan’s deputy foreign minister Muto caused
outrage in June when he called the G-7 plan to create a privatisation fund for Russia of 4 billion dollars “absurd”, declaring that the only conceivable sum could be “500 million or less”. He drove the point home by criticising the long process of privatisation in Russia, the lack of experienced managers and so on.\textsuperscript{156} A typical view was that of Hiroshi Kimura who believed that Japan could not ignore public opinion, which felt that Japan should not necessarily give more aid than other G-7 member states ‘to a country, which has seized and kept their territory’. Therefore, if the other G-7 states wished Japan to undertake a major financial role in financial assistance to Russia, they should urge Russia to solve its territorial dispute with Japan.\textsuperscript{157} The view of some in Russia, however, was that in any case the West’s promises of financial aid should not be taken seriously. According to Oleg Lobov, deputy prime minister, most industrialised nations of the West had received from Russian more than they had given it: “the enormous market place of the former Soviet Union” had opened to the West, while Russia waited in vain to receive six billion dollars of stabilisation aid.\textsuperscript{158} Ultimately Japan was not able to have a statement on the territorial dispute included in the final declaration of the summit. Point five of the declaration at the Tokyo G-7 summit merely noted that the G-7 firmly supported Russia’s reform efforts and that it expected Russia would ‘develop its diplomacy on the basis of the principles of legality and justice and continue to play a constructive and responsible role in the international community.’\textsuperscript{159} This pleased Russia and made it easier for El’tsin to then express his gratitude to Japan for its support of reform in Russia, noting at his meeting with Miyazawa the

\[ \text{[...]} \text{importance attached to the precise understanding by the Japanese side of the internal political circumstances in our country. The understandable attempt of the Japanese to intensify the process of talks should not spill over into attempts to apply pressure on Russia or resort to forcing the issue. In the present difficult transition period it is inadmissible to place on the Russian people the additional burden of the problem of the islands. And the quicker the reforms are carried} \]
through and the economic situation has stabilised in the country, the quicker the Russians will be able to take it on board calmly and without emotion.

El’tsin offered an olive branch by noting that it was not just a question of economic assistance with reforms but also cooperation in the areas of culture, health, education and science. The president was signalling to Japan that Russia would refrain from harping on the issue of Japan’s lack of economic assistance if Japan would refrain from raising the territorial issue.

The summer of 1993 was notable for the numerous trips to the Russian Far East undertaken by senior Kremlin officials and government members in a bid to gain support for El’tsin’s new draft constitution. Economic issues related to the Russian Far East had become highly politicised, in part due to competition for control of natural resources between the centre and periphery, and in part due to pressure on individual politicians representing specific industries to deliver. Thus Chernomyrdin emphasised that the future of the Russian Far East lay in ‘developing the Sakhalin shelf with partners from other countries and in the consolidation of economic ties with China.’ On the same trip to Iuzhno-Sakhalinsk he pointedly stated that Russia would not be ceding the Kurils to anyone, nor was the subject up for discussion. Only a couple of weeks previously, Rutskoi, speaking in Vladivostok had declared that Russia “should not give away even a millimetre of land to anyone”. He added that the Russian government’s indecision created a precedent for some countries to seize land, for example China. Soskovets, touring the Russian Far East at the same time as Chernomyrdin, drew attention to the loss of important ports in the Baltic and Black seas, which meant that the significance of the Pacific Fleet had increased. Referring to the RFE as Russia’s ‘strategic base’, he proposed giving free rein to the local authorities. At a conference of leaders of enterprises of the region, Soskovets warned that the government would have to change its position on granting credits to defence enterprises in order not to see industrial potential ‘destroyed’. Earlier that month the governor of Primorskii krai together with the command of the Pacific Fleet had appealed to the Ministry of Defence to provide urgent financial aid to the fleet.
Most enterprises serving the fleet it said were on the verge of complete standstill while the navy’s debts to the defence complex had increased.\textsuperscript{167} Once again the issue of Russia’s relations with Japan was being used as a touchstone for foreign policy debates. Just prior to a private visit to Japan in September 1993, Burbulis claimed that Chernomyrdin’s remarks that Russia would reject negotiations with Japan did not reflect the views of the presidential office:

> There is the strategic policy of the state, and there are the concrete living conditions of concrete people on concrete territories. Today, we must match the demands of the strategic interests of both Russia and Japan with the interests of those concrete residents on whose territory this political issue is unfolding today.”\textsuperscript{168}

Burbulis assured his hosts that Chernomyrdin’s remarks were only his personal views and that there were many different opinions on the dispute within Russia.\textsuperscript{169} In response to Burbulis’s remarks, Galina Sidorova, an adviser to Chernomyrdin, said that the MID was laying the groundwork for El’tsin’s visit and that only the president could speak officially on Russo-Japanese relations.\textsuperscript{170} Shortly before E’ltsin set off for the October summit, Chernomyrdin reiterated his opposition to a transfer of any of the Kurils to Japan. However he did not believe that the Japanese would raise the issue, as it was not “‘the main thing’” in bilateral relations today.\textsuperscript{171}

Meanwhile Japan’s Defence Agency was avidly monitoring the withdrawal of combat aircraft from the Kuril islands. The Japanese press buzzed with reports that despite the apparent removal of forty MiG-23s from Iturup, the airspace around the islands would still be covered by the MiG-31 and Su-27 long-range aircraft stationed on Sakhalin.\textsuperscript{172} There was also speculation in the Japanese press that the obsolete fighters might be replaced by up-to-date aircraft, reports which were denied by Russian defence officials.\textsuperscript{173} The Russian Ministry of Defence expressed its amazement that the Japanese should take such an interest in what was surely “‘an internal affair of
Russia”\textsuperscript{174}. According to an article around this time the residents of the Kurils were alarmed by the withdrawals as it seemed to be “one more sign that preparations are being made to turn the Southern Kuriles over to Japan”\textsuperscript{175}, while the governor of Sakhalin oblast, Krasnoiarov, claimed that the removal of the planes would complicate the situation in terms of defending the border and protecting local resources and sent ‘the wrong signal to the Japanese’. At the end of July El’tsin dismissed Minister for Security Barannikov for ‘violation of ethical norms and serious failures in the leadership of the ministry, including the Border Troops.” While this was connected to events along the Afghan-Tajik border, the establishment of a separate Border Guards service on 9 August\textsuperscript{176} also had implications for Russo-Japanese relations as the new service was charged with tightening control of illegal fishing activities and providing a skeleton military formation on the Kurils. Thus during the October summit El’tsin noted that while Russian military formations on the islands had been reduced, ‘We have to retain the border guards at all costs[…].\textsuperscript{177} Also towards the end of July the publication of Japan’s White Paper on Defence for 1993 identified Russia’s armed forces in the Far East as introducing a substantive element of instability in the Asia-Pacific region. The MID protested that the White Paper effectively bracketed Russia and North Korea together as states threatening security in the APR\textsuperscript{178}

As the date of the summit approached, it became ever clearer that Russia was not about to make any concessions on the territorial issue but neither were the Japanese about to meet them halfway. El’tsin’s ministers and advisers had ensured, by the flow of differing opinions on Russo-Japanese relations that the Japanese would be well aware of the consequences of ignoring Russian public opinion and institutional infighting. After the storming of the parliament building in early October where El’tsin’s opponents had barricaded themselves, it would have been impossible for the Japanese to expect any unilateral moves by El’tsin’s team. As one MID official said just a few days before the showdown with Rutskoi et al, “The Japanese will hardly want to complicate life for President Yeltsin and bring pressure to bear on him, since this would only give his adversaries additional trump cards”\textsuperscript{179} El’tsin arrived
in Tokyo for the summit on 11 October, only seven days after his defeat of the parliament’s supporters. On departing for Tokyo, El’tsin told reporters that he hoped Japan would not raise the Kurils issue. Hopes for wideranging economic cooperation were not on the horizon either, as Gaidar confirmed. The former premier (and at that time, first deputy prime minister) emphasised that this could take place only once mutual understanding had been achieved, and therefore Russia would not raise any new substantial issues at the summit. He concluded: "We believe that Russia’s domestic stability, its economic stability above all, depends on itself. That is the reason why we do not plan to bring up any new large-scale issues this time." The reason for this stance was clear enough: if Russia did not expect economic cooperation then Japan could not expect any movement on the islands. Instead the summit was symbolic and a chance to make up for the failed summit of the previous year. As Kozyrev had then noted, every presidential visit is worth its weight in gold. It is the main and most effective weapon in our diplomatic arsenal, particularly at a time when Russia is economically weak and we have no economic trump card in our foreign policy.

The background to the summit was thus one of extreme caution on the Russian side. El’tsin had been obliged to make a number of concessions to the conservative mood of the country, disillusioned with Gaidar’s economic ‘shock therapy’. The increased importance of the military since its support for the storming of the parliament building had strengthened strategic arguments against a compromise on the islands. The military now opposed complete demilitarisation of the islands, despite El’tsin’s promises to the Japanese.

The October 1993 summit.
At the summit a package of sixteen documents was signed, including agreements on cultural exchange, economic assistance, and technical matters. A MID report on the summit noted that the meetings were significant in terms of the Japanese readiness
for the balanced development of the whole complex of Russo-Japanese relations, which opens up the real possibility of a more active regulation of commercial cooperation between Russia and Japan.\textsuperscript{184}

The main document issued at the summit was the Tokyo Declaration on Russo-Japanese relations and the Declaration on longterm trade and economic and scientific-technical relations. Others dealt with prevention of maritime incidents, more effective cooperation in atomic energy security, and the establishment of new general consulates. On the peace treaty the Tokyo Declaration stated that Russia was the state-continuer of the Soviet Union and would fulfil precisely all agreements and responsibilities which had been undertaken by the Soviet Union. It stressed however, that this would depend on the development of bilateral relations and the domestic situation in both countries, but would be drawn up on the basis of the principles of legality and justice. For the Japanese side, Hosekawa suggested that meetings should be held at the foreign ministerial level not less than twice a year. This suggestion was aimed at activating the working group on the peace treaty.\textsuperscript{185}

Of particular importance to the Japanese was El’tsin’s apology for the treatment of Japanese prisoners of war. Hosekawa hailed the apology as a move towards building a ‘basis for spiritual reconciliation between the people of our two nations.’\textsuperscript{186} It was now possible for the Japanese to view Russia in a warmer light, as a nation prepared to take responsibility for past errors, which had a ‘psychological as well as a political significance.’ The importance was noted of El’tsin’s apology for the treatment of Japanese POWs. PM Hosokawa said that a new moral-ethical base had been created for our relations which had a psychological as well as a political significance.’\textsuperscript{187}

On the economic front the Japanese were keen to point out that Japan was in third place, after Germany and the United States, in terms of aid to Russia and that the package of economic aid approved in July by the G-7 would be disbursed. A press conference held by the MID stressed that the concept that used to exist of ‘the islands or nothing’ had lost any foundation. Now in the
Japanese government the doctrine regarding Russia was one of “expanded equilibrium” (in Japanese, *kakudai kinko*) which has been adopted to signify a general move forward in the areas of politics and economics.\(^{188}\) In fact, the concept of ‘expanded equilibrium’ had been outlined already in 1989, and there was some confusion as to whether Japan really had dropped the linkage of politics and economics.\(^{189}\) Thus an article in *Izvestiia*, surmised that El’tsin’s statement embarrassed his hosts as

> ‘no one in Tokyo had renounced that principle. [...] They not only confirmed the policy of linking the development of economic relations to progress in the political sphere [...] as a fundamental principle, but hastened to reassure the general public that Moscow had been given no new promises.”\(^{190}\)

For the Japanese *kakudai kinko* was rather an expansion of overall ties linking expansion of assistance to progress on the territorial dispute. However, in terms of warding off criticism from potential critics in Moscow, the new concept of expanded equilibrium, if not fundamentally any different to *sekei fukabun*, was still a good card to play on the home front. Both El’tsin and Gaidar maintained that the Japanese failure to insist on a direct linkage between politics and economics had made the visit possible and Gaidar emphasised that the time for Russia to rely on humanitarian aid was ‘over’, expressing his hope that Japan would now expand investment in Russia, particularly on Sakhalin.\(^{191}\) However, shortly after El’tsin’s return to Moscow, the Japanese finance minister stated categorically that Tokyo would continue to adhere to the policy of nonseparation of politics and economics, insisting that Japan’s policy had not changed in the slightest.\(^{192}\) On the territorial issue, Japan’s stance also remained unchanged, that is an insistence on the return of all four of the Southern Kuril islands.\(^{193}\) In summing up the visit, the MID emphasised that the Russian position on the islands was that the issue

> ‘must be examined according to how bilateral relations develop and when the appropriate moral-psychological climate has been created, which would allow us to take such crucial decisions…’\(^{194}\) - a statement in tune with the five phase plan.
4.1 Bilateral Relations: Hostage to the Territorial Dispute.

In a press conference just after El’tsin’s visit in October 1993, the MID spokesman failed to contradict a journalist who said that the islands had no economic or military interest for either Japan or Russia. Instead, he insisted on the Russian government’s obligations to the Kuril population and the need to take into account opposing views regarding the islands’ value.\textsuperscript{195}

October 1993-December 1995: Stalemate

Just after El’tsin’s visit the atmosphere in bilateral relations was soured by the dumping of waste in the Sea of Japan by the Russian navy. Underfunding of the Pacific Fleet meant there was little left to take care of environmental concerns, an issue close to Japan’s heart. Russia had been dumping radioactive waste here since 1959, but in April 1993 Japan had granted Russia one hundred million US dollars to finance safer disposal methods plus a working group to tackle the problem in the long term.\textsuperscript{196} The Russian Ministry of the Environment protested that the dumping did not violate any international obligations and corresponded to the provisions of the 1972 London Convention. A second planned dumping of radioactive waste was abandoned. Representatives of the Pacific Fleet were unrepentant and asserted that Japan was making a fuss which was "obviously in pursuit of political aims".\textsuperscript{197} A few days later Viktor Mikhailov, minister for atomic energy, spoke in Japan at a symposium on safety in the nuclear power industry. He told Japan’s director-general of the Science and Technology Agency that disposal of radioactive waste from Russia’s nuclear-powered submarines was caused by financial problems. He tactlessly suggested Japan solve the problem by purchasing uranium form the dismantled nuclear warheads.\textsuperscript{198} Dumping was halted, temporarily at least, but probably due to pressure from the MID, rather than an independent decision by the Pacific Fleet. In autumn 1993 Kunadze was removed from his position as deputy foreign minister and replaced by Aleksandr Panov.\textsuperscript{199} This must have appeared to be a clear signal to Tokyo that Moscow’s stance would henceforth be more uncompromising regarding the territorial issue. As Neil Malcolm points out ‘the coming of greater harmony [in foreign policy] was marked soon after by the departure of Kunadze…’.\textsuperscript{200} Indeed a Japanese newspaper surmised that Kunadze’s
removal was viewed in Tokyo as a portent of things to come. The Russian MID had never really recovered from the recriminations levelled at it the previous summer when it was labelled a bastion of 'Japanophiles' led by the 'Kozyrev-Kunadze group', a 'fifth column of agents of Japanese influence., in the words of one nationalist academic.

1994 was a fallow year in Russo-Japanese relations. Although consultations on the peace treaty resumed, one journalist commented that: 'Less and less often does Moscow make any acknowledgement of the territorial issue [...]'. Meetings of the working groups set up to deal with specific issues continued to take place, but few concrete results emerged. In February joint consultations were held in the framework of efforts to activate political dialogue in accord with agreements reached during the summit. Apart from the observation that there was a need to strengthen and revitalise trade links, nothing substantial resulted. The following month saw the visit to Russia of Tsutomu Hata, deputy prime minister and foreign minister. Japan, as part of its support for Russian reforms, had pledged to open a series of study centres for market reform, in order actively to support small and medium-sized enterprises. Both sides stressed the need to continue active contacts to assist the gradual development of political dialogue in order to strengthen goodneighbourliness, partnership and trust.

During Hata's visit it was also agreed to resume sessions of the working groups on the peace treaty. The Russian side as usual expressed its concern at continued poaching by Japanese fishermen in the South Kurils zone. Both sides pledged to give priority to preparation for a summit during which the Japanese prime minister would visit Moscow. However, further Japanese speculation on troop withdrawals irritated Russia, and a statement by the MID emphasised that the matter was a 'purely internal affair and not in any way a subject for talks with Japan, nor was it related to the problem of the peace treaty between Russia and Japan.'

In May, Russia was irritated by Japan's continued objections to Russia's fully-fledged participation in the G-7, the next summit due to be held in Naples that
July. There seemed to be little prospect for a turnaround, leading one journalist to comment that the top Moscow leadership had lost interest in political talks with Japan and that the level of diplomacy had ‘fallen to that of Poland’. The summer was marred by continued Russian accusations of poaching by the Japanese. Since the border guards had separated off from the Ministry of Security and become an independent force headed by the determined General Andrei Nikolaev, there had been a concerted effort to clamp down on poaching in the Sea of Okhotsk, codenamed ‘Putina-94’ (‘Trawl-94’). The importance of this operation was highlighted on Border Guard Day, 27 May, when El’tsin singled out the ‘Putina’ operation for special praise in an address to the border guards: ‘“At last they have dealt a blow to those who are tearing our national assets to shreds.”’ He concluded that it was vital for Russia to improve the protection of the border in its maritime regions, in particular in the Arctic and Pacific and to ‘“take measures to defend Russia’s economic interests.”’. In one incident, Russian border guards fired on a Japanese vessel wounding a fisherman in the process. The Japanese position was that the fishermen were not poaching but simply fishing in their own waters, as Tokyo, and in particular the Gaimusho regarded the islands as Japanese, not Russian. In the meantime the chief administrator of the Southern Kurils district, Nikolai Pokidin proposed that the Japanese be allowed to fish on payment of a fee without fear of harassment. However due to Japan’s official policy that the islands belonged to Tokyo, the wording would have to be phrased very carefully, as otherwise the Japanese would in effect be ‘“paying the occupiers for their own fish”. On 4 October a serious earthquake devastated the Kuril islands. The quake was yet another litmus test for the state of bilateral relations, as residents already angry about the lack of economic support from the centre and falling living standards appeared to favour returning the islands to Japan. An opinion poll conducted shortly after the earthquake showed that eighty nine per cent of those polled in Primorskii krai, and sixty per cent of those polled in Moscow said that they favoured the return of the islands to Japan. The main reasons given for this view were economic, as El’tsin’s programme for social and
4.1 Bilateral Relations: Hostage to the Territorial Dispute.

economic development of the islands had failed to tackle the islands’ problems. Just a month before the earthquake, seeking to take advantage of the islands’ economic plight, the governor of Primorski krai, Evgenii Nazdratenko sought to transfer administrative jurisdiction over the islands from Sakhalin oblast to his own region. Nazdratenko claimed that such a transfer would help to solve the Kurils’ economic problems more quickly. However a statement by the Sakhalin oblast Duma asserted that the governor’s real objective was to take over “the very rich fishing areas and thereby increase his chances in the upcoming elections for krai governor.” Nazdratenko pointed out that the islands’ residents had appealed to Japan for aid rather than the central government, presumably not expecting much satisfaction from that quarter. Japan pledged one hundred million yen in humanitarian assistance but rejected a proposal by Soskovets to develop the islands jointly. The Japanese foreign minister stated that Tokyo could not accept any proposal “which proceeds from the premise that the four Northern islands are under Russian jurisdiction.” The idea was to establish a free economic zone, which had been part of the original plan, but which had been suspended due to lack of funds. According to one report Soskovets was dissatisfied with the amount of aid pledged by Japan. While the Russians appeared to resent Japan’s insistence on humanitarian aid and insisted on full scale economic assistance such as investment, on 4 October El’tsin asserted: “Russia regards foreign investments only as an additional reserve to pull it out of the crisis”, stressing that Russia had “considerable financial resources to invest in the economy.”

On 6 October 1994, a Japanese poaching schooner was sunk by Russian border guards near the South Kurils. A Japanese official said that the incident coincided with the peak of an ‘unofficial dialogue’ between Russia and Japan on fishing around the Kurils, and noted that this did not help to ‘direct it in a more constructive way’. However the local commander of the Russian border troops, Nikolai Kudinov, claimed that seven hundred foreign fishing boats, mostly Japanese, had intruded into territorial waters that year. Kudinov warned the Japanese that Russia had “enough strength and means in
order to defend our national interests and prevent predatory pillaging of our wealth".\textsuperscript{216} Naturally the already falling population of the islands had decreased still further after the earthquake. However the MID was at pains to refute claims in the Japanese press that ten thousand inhabitants had requested permanent resettlement on the mainland, anxious not to draw attention to the dire conditions on the islands.\textsuperscript{217} Grachev meanwhile appeared to contradict El’tsin’s pledge on demilitarising the islands when he stated on Sakhalin that "Russian forces were, are, and will be on the Kurils".\textsuperscript{218}

There had been a distinct lack of high-level meetings between Russia and Japan in 1994, and the invitation to the Japanese prime minister to visit Moscow did not seem to have materialised. The visit of deputy prime minister Soskovets to Japan between 27 November and 1 December was significant as the first high-level visit that dealt almost exclusively with economic rather than political issues, i.e. there was no real discussion of the territorial dispute, just a brief reconfirmation of the provisions of the Tokyo Declaration as well as the need to ensure progress on the signing of a peace treaty. During his stay, Soskovets met with the prime minister Murayama, the foreign minister, Kono, and the minister of foreign trade and industry, Ryutaro Hashimoto. A declaration was issued whose most significant points included for the first time a general understanding on the need to reach agreement on developing cooperation on fishing rights in the near future. Significantly, point eight of the declaration stated that

> proceeding from the importance to the world community of the Russian Federation's transition to a market economy and its integration with the global economic system, Japan would support Russian participation in or entry to those international economic organisations of which it is was not yet a member.

A memorandum was signed on Russian entry to GATT/WTO. It was also decided to establish an interparliamentary commision on trade and economic issues, ‘bearing in mind the solution of wide range of problems between the two countries in this sphere’. Regarding the use of humanitarian credits from the Export-Import Bank of 500 million dollars which was announced on 8
October 1991, Kono agreed to consider a request to reorient the credits to finance projects which support economic reform as well as those with humanitarian aims on the condition that priority be given to projects in the Far Eastern regions. There were also pledges by the Russian side on improving the investment climate, including improvements in the tax and legal system.

An invitation was extended by the Japanese to PM Chernomyrdin, and El’tsin invited Murayama to visit Russia. The Japanese apparently saw the purpose of Soskovets’s visit as one merely to obtain loans. An article in a leading Japanese weekly asserted that there was a close connection between Soskovets’ visit to Japan and Sakhalin oil concessions: “The basic diplomatic strategy of the Russian side is to draw as much and as possible from Japan using oil development as a dummy” – a Russian government source stated. The same source said that the Japanese Gaimusho had lured Soskovets to Tokyo with the bait that Japan would finance the Russian enterprises privatization plan and economic reconstruction.

1995. Signs of a breakthrough?
In January 1995 an earthquake hit Kobe in Japan. Russia was one of the first countries to offer humanitarian aid, which certainly improved Russia’s image in Japan, according to a brochure on Russo-Japanese relations published by the Gaimusho. Just prior to the earthquake the publication of excerpts from Kozyrev’s forthcoming memoirs disclosed confidential information regarding Japanese proposals on the territorial issue, including the revelation that the Japanese had apparently offered Gorbachev a huge sum for the Kurils. The following month saw further dumping of radioactive waste in the Sea of Japan and a promise by the Pacific Fleet to dump more in subsequent weeks amid loud protests from the Japanese. As Kozyrev was due to visit Tokyo in March, this could not have come at a worse time. The fact that Kozyrev was in effect merely ‘stopping off’ in Tokyo on his way back from Beijing will have made it clear where Moscow’s priorities lay.
In March 1995 Kozyrev paid an official visit to Tokyo, his visit having been postponed from December. Indeed the postponement of the visit further dismayed Tokyo. The Japanese had indicated in December that, if Kozyrev did not visit in January then Japan would have to rethink its policy towards Russia. In summing up the results of the visit, the main trend noted was the necessity of stepping up diplomatic efforts to maintain a reasonable level of dialogue conducive to resolving problems of bilateral relations. However, nothing specific came of the visit bar an agreement to commence talks on fishing rights in Moscow between 13 and 14 March. Nevertheless, considering the friction between the two states regarding this issue, even setting a date for talks was a significant event and Kozyrev expressed optimism on the issue. Of equal importance was the inclusion in Kozyrev's delegation of Boris Gromov, then deputy minister of defence, and military expert of the MID. Although no documents were signed, it was an important step in building confidence between the two countries' military establishments. There appeared to be confusion in Moscow over the demilitarisation of the Kurils, as Kozyrev apparently informed Tokyo during his visit that there were problems in withdrawing troops from the Kuril islands. A Japanese report purported to show that the troops were to be increased from 4,000 to 10,000. Unfortunately during Kozyrev's trip, a misunderstanding arose on the Japanese side regarding Russian support for Tokyo's bid to be a permanent member on the United Nations Security Council. The Japanese press reported that Russia had given its support to the bid, but Kozyrev was obliged to clarify that while it understood Japan's desire to become a permanent member of the council, there were many other deserving candidates. Another report cited a senior Russian diplomat who claimed that on his trip to Tokyo, Kozyrev had called for the signing of a peace treaty before Japan could become a permanent member of the Security Council. Relations were further soured by El'tsin's comments on the motivation behind Japanese aid for disaster relief following the earthquake on Sakhalin in May of the same year. He
stated bluntly that Japan was offering assistance in order to pressurise Russia on the territorial issue, saying:

It is well known that in Japan there are rather influential forces that have always linked the handling of questions of contacts with Russia in the economic, cultural and humanitarian areas with matters that have nothing to do with them, including the so-called territorial dispute.

August saw celebrations in Moscow marking the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. The Russian Minister of Defence took the opportunity to remind veterans that “the victory over Japan led to Russia’s recovery of land that had been torn away from it”. He clarified to the press that he was referring to the Kuril chain, adding that since the creation of the Russian army three years previously, the army had become “a united and effective entity, a guarantor of the stability and integrity of the state.”

The following month after a long period of calm, Russian border troops fired on Japanese poachers, wounding a fisherman in the waters near the South Kurils. The chief of staff of the Border Troops’ naval forces stressed that it was the “tough stand” taken by his men in protecting Russia’s natural resources that prevented the state from incurring economic losses of “several trillion rubles”. Despite these incidents, three rounds of fishing talks took place in 1995, in March, May, and in September. The significance of these talks was that while they did not involve direct discussion of the islands’ sovereignty, they represented an important symbolic advance, as previously Japan had refused to even contemplate such talks.

In November preparations were being made for the visit to Moscow of the Japanese foreign minister Kono, for the first session of the bilateral intergovernmental commission on trade and economic issues, co-chaired by Kono and Soskovets. As part of the preparations sessions of three subcommittees were held: on improving conditions for the development of trade and economic relations; on the question of assistance for the
continuation of market reforms in Russia; on economic relations with the Far Eastern regions of Russia. The positive dynamic of bilateral trade was noted: $3.9 billion in the first nine months of 1995, which was a rise of fifty-four per cent over a similar period in 1994. The significance was noted of the Mitsui-Lukoil deal, which provided seven hundred million dollars for the supply of equipment to repair oilwells. The two sides also assessed positively the progress of the large-scale project of assistance for the development of foreign trade and industry in Russia initiated by the Japanese minister for trade and industry and known therefore as the ‘Hashimoto plan’. 


January 1996 saw the appointment of Evgenii Primakov who at his first press conference advised Japan to deal with the Kurils as it had dealt with the Senkaku islands vis-à-vis China. The new foreign minister explicitly told Japan to exercise ""the same wisdom which it at one time exercised with regard to China"", i.e. referring to Japan and China’s decision to ""set aside this question for future generations, while at the same developing relations in order to create a more favourable climate for resolving it in the future."" This was a completely different approach to that of Kozyrev, and even of El’tsin’s five phase plan. China and Japan have long had a territorial dispute over the Senkaku (Diaoyutai in Chinese) islands, but nevertheless agreed in 1978 to set aside their differences and sign a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. (Interestingly in May 1990 Gorbachev had accused Japan of hypocrisy for maintaining relations with both China and Korea, with both of whom Tokyo had territorial disputes.) In 1989, Georgii Kunadze, while still an academic at IMEMO wrote that surely there was a parallel between the Senkaku problem and the Kurils issue, in which case Tokyo should drop its claims against Moscow. The following year however, Kunadze had changed his mind and now wrote that the parallel was superficial, as in fact the two disputes were quite different.
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At first, Tokyo lodged protests with the MID regarding Primakov’s remarks, asserting that they represented a ‘deviation from the line’, i.e. from the 1956 declaration. However, Primakov and the MID made it clear in subsequent statements throughout the year that Primakov’s remarks represented a new stance in Russian policy both towards the territorial dispute and bilateral relations. A MID statement on the issue noted that recently relations had improved but that

the dynamic of relations still seriously lags behind global changes in world politics, and in essence we are only at the initial stage of exploiting the potential of our corresponding interests. 237

At his first press conference Primakov stated that the first priority of Russian foreign policy was the creation of the best external conditions for the strengthening of ‘the territorial integrity of our state’.238 This should have been warning enough to Japan that a return of the islands was now practically inconceivable. Later that year Eltsin confirmed the ‘Principles of Russian Federation Border Policy’ which enunciated a range of basic threats to Russia’s national interests and security, including ‘“territorial claims; the incomplete demarcation of the Russian Federation state border from the standpoint of international law […]”’. A basic provision of the document then was that ‘“any, and all territorial claims against the Russian Federation on the part of neighbouring states are rejected”’. The Japanese embassy responded swiftly, saying that ‘“the question of ownership of the islands of Iturup, Kunashir, Shikotan and Habomai cannot be resolved by changing borders.”’239

In March the Japanese foreign minister Yukihiko Ikeda arrived in Moscow. The Russian side initiated, and the Japanese side supported, the idea of using the fortieth anniversary of the reestablishment of relations in order to elaborate a new philosophy of bilateral relations. Primakov used the occasion to enunciate the new parameters of Russian foreign policy, stating that one of the essential elements in the new philosophy of relations was a policy of realism, the basis of which was ‘a dynamic movement towards trust based on the principles of equality and mutual advantage.’ The importance was stressed of continuing active political dialogue at all levels and it was decided to use the
Nuclear Safety summit to be held in Moscow in April of that year as a spur. It was also planned to begin regular exchanges between the two military establishments, beginning with a visit to Moscow of the Japanese defence minister in the spring. Tokyo declared itself satisfied with the meetings and Russia’s declaration that only 3,500 troops remained on the Kuril islands was welcomed as a positive sign. In addition talks were begun on payment of the USSR’s eleven billion US dollar debt to Japanese companies, which had been a sore point in relations for some time. However, a request by the Russians for a two billion dollar subsidy was rejected, as the Gaimusho thought it ‘premature’, while earlier Japanese loans were yet to be disbursed and the debt situation remained unclear. The first session of the intergovernmental committee on trade and economic issues was held during Ikeda’s March visit, chaired by Soskovets and Ikeda. The Japanese side expressed great interest in the Federal programme for the development of the Far East and Transbaikal (This was a presidential programme announced at the start of 1996, billed as the Federal Programme for Economic and Social Development of the Far East and Transbaikal, 1996-2005. It had originally been mooted in 1987, billed as a development programme up to 2000, the idea being that the centre should double capital investments in the region). The new programme, as Pavel Minakir points out, however, was vague on the source of finance for the projects envisaged by it, and left investment to the vagaries of the market.

The new emphasis was placed firmly on ‘the resolution of so-called “island-related” issues’, in the words of Alexander Panov, then deputy foreign minister, but shortly after appointed ambassador to Tokyo. Thus the question of fishing rights for example was placed at the forefront of diplomatic efforts so that progress on matters relating to the territorial dispute could be used to give impetus to broader areas of cooperation. There was now a greater frankness regarding the limitations of bilateral relations, which it was hoped would force the Japanese to move away from the territorial issue. Panov stated candidly that Moscow did not at present see any possibility of taking any political decisions on the territorial issue. He added that Russia did not fully approve of the concept popular among Japanese political and business
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...circles of 'expanded equilibrium'. Relations appeared to be on the up, as evidenced by the high turnover in bilateral trade for 1995 (higher than with China), and therefore the time was ripe for concentrating on such issues as fishing rights and giving an impetus to broader areas of cooperation.\(^{243}\)

Having asserted Russian territorial integrity as an inalienable component of his foreign policy, Primakov was able to make headway in other areas of bilateral relations aimed at building trust. For example in July 1996 a Japanese warship visited the port of Vladivostok to take part in a parade of warships dedicated to three hundred years of the Russian fleet and also conducted joint exercises with a Russian warship. This was in line with the agreement on the prevention of incidents at sea signed in October 1993. Although incidents involving Japanese poaching vessels continued that summer, these did not affect the ongoing fishing talks, now into the seventh round. The Federal Border Guard was able to report that incursions into Russian territorial waters had decreased, from one hundred and twenty-five recorded incidents in 1995 to only seventeen in 1996.\(^{244}\) Perhaps the Japanese were anxious not to jeopardise the negotiations over fishing rights.

From 14-17 November 1996 Primakov visited Japan, and both sides agreed to increase cooperation on all fronts in order to strengthen mutual trust as an important precondition for the eventual signing of a peace treaty. The Russian side once more proposed joint economic development of the Kuril islands, but the Japanese were cautious regarding any such agreements. Significantly, Russia welcomed Japan’s increased role in the international arena, including her election as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council.\(^{245}\) Talks were held between Primakov and the new prime minister Hashimoto, as well as Ikeda. Both sides expressed satisfaction with the activation of political dialogue and confirmed their intention to push them further within the framework of the strategy spelt out in October 1993. Views converged on the importance of increased cooperation on all fronts in order to strengthen mutual trust as an important precondition for the signing of a peace treaty.\(^{246}\) Such was the change in atmosphere in bilateral relations that Primakov, in a round-
up of Russian foreign policy at the end of 1996 Primakov drew attention to the ‘positive advances’ made in relations with Japan. 247

1997 began with further sessions of the working group on the peace treaty. In May the foreign minister Ikeda held talks with Primakov on various aspects of bilateral and multilateral relations. Tensions arose, however, when the Japanese showed continued reluctance to accept Russia as a member of the new ‘G-8’. 248 A further session of the intergovernmental commission on trade and economic issues took place in Tokyo in June, at which the Japanese produced a plan for joint cooperation on creating conditions for attracting Japanese investments to Russia. In addition the subcommission on cooperation with the Russian Far Eastern regions was expanded to include the governors of Siberia and the Far East. 249 May had also seen the visit of Russian defence minister Igor’ Rodionov250 to Japan – an unprecedented event which, considering Rodionov’s comments on the threat posed to Russia by the United States and Japan, (amongst other countries), should have made it clear that such comments were designed principally for domestic consumption. 251

One of the most significant events of 1997 was the speech by the Japanese prime minister, Hashimoto, in July, which signalled a turnaround in Japanese policy towards Russia. In this speech to high-level Japanese businessmen, Hashimoto spoke of a new ‘Eurasian Diplomacy’, or more precisely a “’Eurasian Diplomacy viewed from the Pacific’”. The idea was to elaborate a policy that would encompass Russia, Central Asia, China and the Caucasus. With regard to economic relations with Russia he suggested focusing on strengthening economic relations ‘especially in Siberia and the Far East region, and in particular, in the energy sector.’ He stressed however that it was essential first to create an environment conducive to investment. 252 In 1997 further rounds of fishing talks were held, although it was still emphasised that any agreement resulting from the talks should have ‘a practical, commercial character and will not affect the political sphere.’ At the same time the Russian MID noted that it believed ‘the conclusion of the agreement could serve as an example for future solutions to certain other, no
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less complex problems of Russo-Japanese relations. The eleventh round of fishing talks was held in Tokyo in September, with the next round to be held in Moscow in October 1997. The significance of these talks for both sides was clear from Hashimoto’s landmark speech of July 1997;

[...] I would name the Framework Negotiations concerning Japanese Fishing Vessels Operating near the Four Northern Islands as an example that the principle of trust has moved us forward even on the most difficult issue.

Nevertheless Hashimoto clearly did not envisage leaving the territorial problem to future generations to resolve, stating his belief that ‘it is the responsibility of our generation to now show the way forward toward the resolution of this issue.’

The Russian response to Hashimoto’s speech was overwhelmingly positive, and only four days later Primakov met Ikeda at the ASEAN forum on regional security to arrange an informal Russo-Japanese summit in Russia, preferably somewhere other than Moscow. Primakov noted that the ”specific decision to hold such a meeting is a positive reaction to the statement by Hashimoto.” Primakov was emphatic however, that the territorial issue would not be on the agenda.

Meanwhile, in September Hashimoto was elected president of the Liberal Democratic Party, and he immediately replaced the foreign minister Ikeda with Keizo Obuchi. According to Saplin, the head of the Russian MID’s Second Asia desk, Obuchi was the best person to put into practice the new principles of Russo-Japanese relations enunciated by Hashimoto. Saplin noted that Obuchi was viewed as a leading member of groupings interested in closer relations with Russia and had met several members of the Russian leadership in the past. Later that month, Obuchi and Primakov met in New York and issued a declaration which was significant for the fact that no mention was made of the territorial dispute. (General Aleksandr Lebed’s comments in the same month while on a trip to Tokyo to the effect that Russia had no historical claims to the islands and should hold a referendum passed
almost without remark\textsuperscript{257}.) Instead Obuchi and Primakov drew attention to the positive results achieved in negotiations on fishing rights and in the expansion of consular districts: in an unprecedented move the Japanese pledged to include Sakhalin oblast in the consular district of its General consulate in Khabarovsk. This meant in effect that Japan recognised Russian sovereignty over southern Sakhalin. Finally, the two foreign ministers emphasised the positive trends in bilateral relations, which confirmed a mutual desire for ""further development of mutually beneficial links and expansion of interaction between the two countries in international affairs.""\textsuperscript{258}

In the run-up to the November summit, the Japanese deputy foreign minister Minoru Tamba and a forty-three strong delegation paid a visit to the Kuril islands (1-2 October), apparently to examine the infrastructure prior to launching joint economic development with Russia. Tamba was the highest-ranking Japanese official ever to visit the islands.\textsuperscript{259} Almost immediately after Tamba's visit, the head of administration of the South Kurils district Vladimir Zema begged Tokyo for financial help, which, he said should go directly to the islands, and not via Moscow. Finally, Zema asserted that if a referendum on the fate of the islands were held there and then, the result would be a decisive yes to secession from Russia.\textsuperscript{260} There was no response from Tokyo to the appeal, but Tamba had apparently been shaken by the dire economic conditions on the islands.

At the informal summit held in Krasnoiarsk, Siberia, that November E'Itsin and Hashimoto pledged to solve the dispute by the year 2000 (by which time in any case a new president would be in the Kremlin); but the main achievements of the summit were that another step had been made towards building mutual trust and goodwill, which as Lukin had noted in 1991 was the best foundation for future relations.\textsuperscript{261} Importantly, regional initiatives had increased in salience, and meetings were to be set up at regional level on issues of economic relations between the regions of the Russian Far East and Japan.\textsuperscript{262} The then governor of Krasnoiarsk krai, Valerii Zubov expressed his feeling that the very fact of the summit being held there was of immeasurable
significance for Siberia and the Far East and would promote closer cultural and business ties between Russia and Japan. While Japan was now the leading trading partner of the Far East (ahead of China) this trade consisted mainly of Russian exports of seafood products and raw materials. It was clear that outside help was necessary for the economic rejuvenation of the Far East, but without a solid promise from the central Russian government to create the necessary investment conditions, large scale projects would not be possible. Viktor Ishaev, governor of Khabarovsk krai complained in October 1997 that the Programme for Economic and Social Development of the Far East remained unfulfilled, as there was no funding and no staff to implement it.

Grigorii Karasin, deputy foreign minister responsible for Asia, interviewed just prior to the summit, underlined the importance Moscow now attached to the participation of the regions in foreign policy, as well as the importance of taking into account public opinion. The importance of the regions was further illustrated by the trip to Tokyo of the chairman of the Russian Council of the Federation (parliament’s upper house), Egor Stroev. In his meetings with Hashimoto, Stroev drew attention to the need for greater contacts at the regional level but also an increase in inter-parliamentary links. This last was particularly significant, as it was from the Duma that anti-Japanese sentiment had emanated in the past. Now that the government worked more closely with the legislature, harmony in foreign policy was easier to achieve.

After Krasnoiarsk, Primakov praised the results of the summit and emphasised that informal meetings should become the “engine of Russo-Japanese relations”. Regarding the peace treaty it was decided to raise the level of the negotiation process on this issue, so that the commission was now to be headed by the chiefs of the two countries’ foreign ministries, rather than deputy ministers. Importantly, Primakov added that Russia hoped that representatives from the Russian regions could be included in the commission.
Krasnoiarsk and beyond.

An article in the Japanese monthly *Tokyo Sekai* following the November 1997 summit recalled that ‘a group of specialists on Russia and the Gaimusho’s so-called “Russian school” had been patiently observing El’tsin. The Gaimusho gradually came to realise that Japan would not be able to respond to changes in international politics in the post-Cold War era if it continued to subscribe to a rigid policy of the nonseparation of politics and economics. Pointing to the various efforts to modify the sekei fukabun in the past, such as kakudai kinko, and later the ‘multilayered approach’, the author noted that neither of these ‘had enough impact to move the Kremlin because they were both idea-driven and did not accompany diplomatic efforts with them’. Significantly, Hashimoto’s Eurasia speech was written by officials who were mainly from the MITI, and there was no input from the Gaimusho, an indication that economic issues were to the forefront. Soskovets had been impressed by Hashimoto’s ideas when he met him in November 1994, and had communicated this to El’tsin, so that when El’tsin first met Hashimoto in April 1996, he was already au fait with his ideas.269

The Krasnoiarsk summit did not bring anything significantly new in terms of economic relations, but Japan showed a willingness to support Russia and its pledge to assist the implementation of large scale energy projects in Siberia and the Far East was a positive sign. Whether Russia and Japan will one day join forces and embark on economic cooperation on the Kurils remains to be seen. In the international arena Japan signalled its support for Russian entry to APEC and the WTO, in return for which Russia confirmed its support for Japan’s bid for a seat on the UN Security Council. For Russia the significance of the summit was official Japanese support for economic projects, which in due course should increase the confidence of at least some Japanese business to invest in Russia. This has been the main achievement of the ‘El’tsin-Hashimoto plan’. This seachange is reflected in recent recommendations for Japanese ODA:

Japan should place priority on ODA to Siberia and the region around the China Sea and should create an environment in which it can
actively participate in resource exploitation. The Eurasian continent is enormously promising not only as a market but also as a treasure-house of natural resources […]\textsuperscript{270}

**Conclusion.**

In this section I have tried to show how the territorial dispute has impeded the regularisation of relations between first, the Soviet Union, and then Russia and Japan. On the Russian side there was a gradual realisation that they would have to make a definite break with the past. This was difficult: firstly because the Soviet optimism regarding relations with Japan was based on the illusory belief in the complementarity of the two economies and the willingness of Japan to invest in the Russian Far East. Moreover, Moscow now had to reckon with new factors in foreign policy: an active legislature and the need to reckon with public opinion; institutional disarray leading to confusion over policies; the need to prevent the further disintegration of the state.

The disarray in the institutions was particularly noticeable in Russian dealings with Japan, due to the 'monopoly' that the MID exercised in foreign policy for the few months while there was no Russian Defence Ministry. Once the defence establishment had a mouthpiece, it became clear that the MID's approach to Japan was confined to a few academics and diplomats and was not shared by society at large, let alone the Defence Ministry.

These were the internal factors that made rapprochement difficult. However, it was Japan's lack of understanding for Russia's internal problems that made resolution of the problem particularly difficult. This stemmed in large part from Japan's approach to foreign policy, which has been incremental in nature, but also dominated by an ultra-conservative foreign ministry. Tokyo has also overestimated the extent of the Russian desire for economic cooperation. While Russia does welcome economic assistance, it is not prepared to sacrifice territory in a *quid pro quo* deal.

So, while bilateral relations were focused solely on the territorial issue,
dialogue was not possible, and relations entered deadlock. Dialogue became possible because Russia realised that forcing Japan to the negotiating table to discuss issues in and around, but not exclusively on the territorial issue, would eventually bring results — the agreement on fishing rights is a prime example. The assertion of Russian territorial integrity as a state policy, together with Primakov's new and uncompromising stance which now dovetailed with the views of the Russian military, meant that Japan had no option but to broaden cooperation. In addition the clear consensus that had now been reached on the territorial issue, meant that executive and legislature were now 'in sync', and the appointment of Primakov strengthened this trend. Territorial concessions were off the agenda for good.

The Krasnoiarsk summit was a low-key affair, but both sides had learned that setting expectations too high could only lead to disappointment. Now the task was building trust and goodwill in order eventually to have a framework within which to continue dialogue. However, it will be some time before this dialogue bears real fruit. The lack of a peace treaty is still an anomaly in Russo-Japanese relations and it is not certain that the territorial dispute will be resolved in the near future. There are still those in Japan who look for opportunities to reclaim the islands. Thus one Japanese academic cites the resolution of Russia's dispute with Ukraine over the Crimea as a 'frame of reference' for settlement of the Kurils issue. The author surmises that Russians' emotional ties to the Crimea are 'far more intense than that for the Northern Territories.' Some months after the Krasnoiarsk summit, deputy foreign minister Grigorii Karasin gave a pessimistic view of bilateral relations:

In 1993 we signed the Tokyo declaration whose key concepts are realism and historical justice. I am afraid that the gap in interpretations of these concepts between the two sides remains.

The next section deals with Russo-Japanese relations in the broader context. Here we shall see that differences in interpretations in the bilateral sphere carry over to the international level, and that these two states' definitions of their roles on the world stage are at opposite poles.
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30 Aleksei Arbatov and Boris Makeev, ‘Kuril’skii bar’er’, Novoe vremia, no. 40, October 1992, pp.16-19, and no.41, pp.24-6, no.40, p.17, No.40 p.17.)
35 Glaubitz, Between Tokyo and Moscow, p. 123.
39 Glaubitz, Between Tokyo and Moscow, p. 112.
44 Glaubitz, Between Tokyo and Moscow, p.212.
48 Glaubitz, Between Tokyo and Moscow, p 208.
57 TASS World Service in Russian, 1734 gmt, 22 October 1991, SWB, SU/1212 A3/3, 25 October 1991. The Ainu were the original indigenous inhabitants of the islands, i.e. before Japanese or Russian explorers arrived. None remain today.
60 Diplomaticheski vestnik, no.7, 15 April 1992, p.21.
61 Diplomaticheski vestnik, no.7, 15 April 1992, p.60.
63 ‘Zaiazenie MIDa’, Diplomaticheski vestnik, nos.9-10,15-31 May 1992, p.27.
64 See the press briefing held by Sergei lastrzhembskii and Galina Sidorova, Diplomaticheski vestnik, nos. 9-10, 15-31 May 1992, p.40.
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68 "Zaiavlenie MiDa", 22 May 1992, Diplomaticheskii vestnik, no. 12, 30 June 1992, p. 35.
70 Briefing by lastrzhembskiy on 26 May, Diplomaticheskii vestnik, no. 12, 30 June 1992, p. 51.
72 Ibid., Kunadze press conference, p. 75.
76 Kimura, 'Recent Japan-Soviet Relations', in Drysdale, (ed.), p. 78.
86 Ibid.
92 Oleg Bondarenko Appendix J in Allison et al, p. 10.
93 Andrei Kozyrev, Preobrazhenie, Moscow, 'Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia', p. 298.
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104 Ostankino Channel 1 TV, Moscow, 1500 gmt, 6 September 1992, SWB, SU/1480, A1/1, 8 September 1992.
105 See Kozyrev, Preobrazhenie, p.299.
106 Preobrazhenie, p.299
110 Kononenko, 'Pochemu B. El’tsin ne poekhal v Iaponiiu'.
117 See Aleksei Pushkov’s interview with Kozyrev, 'Russia and Japan did not give up their principles. There was no vote on the cancellation of the visit', Moskovskie novosti, no.38, 20 September 1992, in SWB, SU/1491 A1/4, 21 September 1992.
120 Russia’s Radio, Moscow, 0900 gmt, 4 October 1992, SWB, SU/1506 C2/1, 18 October 1992.
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132 Chernomyrdin had been appointed first deputy prime minister at the end of May 1992, with responsibility for fuel and energy, together with Georgii Khizha, another centrist, and member of the directors’ lobby.
133 Diplomaticheskii vestnik, nos. 3-4, February 1993, p.48.
143 Diplomaticheskii vestnik, nos. 9-10, May 1993, p.25.
145 See chapter 3.1 of this thesis.
147 ITAR-TASS World Service in English, 0908 gmt, 5 April 1993, SWB, SU/1657, B/5, 7 April 1993.
149 ITAR-TASS World Service, Moscow, in English, 0806 gmt, 12 April 1993, SWB, SU/1664, B/14, 16 April 1993.
150 Especially in the light of ex-governor Fedorov’s assertion that the RFE would rely on its own resources, see p.00 of this section.
154 Meetings of this council are held several times a year, bringing together Foreign Ministry officials, academics and members of the business community. See Malcolm, ‘Foreign Policy Making’, in Malcolm et al, p.121.
155 Diplomaticheskii vestnik, nos. 11-12, June 1993, pp.13-14.
156 Diplomaticheskii vestnik, nos. 13-14, July 1993, pp.61-3.
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pp.3-22.

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The omission of Kunadze from the delegation accompanying El’tsin was symptomatic of
this cautious approach.

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He was appointed ambassador to Seoul. See Diplomaticheskii vestnik, nos.1-2, January 1994, ‘Novye naznacheniia’, p.62. Panov remained deputy foreign minister responsible for Asia until 1996, when he was appointed ambassador to Japan, and was in turn replaced by Grigori Karasin.


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‘Vizit Tsutomu Khaty v Rossiiu’, Diplomaticheskii vestnik, nos.7-8, April 1994, p.20.

Diplomaticheskii vestnik, nos. 7-8, April 1994, p.67.

Leonid Mlechin, Izvestia, ‘Iaponskoe posol’stvo boretsia za zvanie samogo aktivnogo v Moskve’, 28 May 1994, p.3. He also noted that Japan had fifty per cent more staff in Washington than in Moscow.


According to Gennadii Gerasimov, (MID spokesman), in early 1990 a survey had shown that eighty-five per cent of Soviet citizens had rejected the idea of the islands being returned to Japan. However, as Glaubitz points out, ‘the rejection was based on the argument that the return of the islands would set a “dangerous precedent”’. See Glaubitz, Between Tokyo and Moscow, p.95.


4.1 Bilateral Relations: Hostage to the Territorial Dispute.

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221 Iaponia i Rossiia: V interesakh podlinnogo vsaimoponimaniia, Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1996. I am grateful to the Japanese embassy in Moscow for this publication.
225 ITAR-TASS news agency, (World Service), Moscow, in Russian, 1000 gmt, 4 March 1995, SWB, SU/2245, B/11, 7 March 1995.
228 Interfax news agency, Moscow, in English, 1321 gmt, 5 March 1995, SWB, SU/2245, B/11, 7 March 1995.
235 See Glaubitz, Between Tokyo and Moscow, p.84.
237 Diplomaticheskii vestnik, no.2, February 1996, p.84.
244 Gennadii Charodeev, ‘Moskva shlet podkreplenie pogranichnikam v Kuril’skuiu zonu’, Izvestiia, 30 August 1996, p.3.
4.1 Bilateral Relations: Hostage to the Territorial Dispute.

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A joint sauna session and a fishing trip will no doubt have helped this process along.


ITAR-TASS news agency (World Service), Moscow in Russian, 0315 gmt, 24 September 1997, SWB, SU/3034 B/12, 26 September 1997.


It is interesting to note that in September 1997, China and Japan signed a bilateral fisheries treaty which Tokyo described as “virtually shelving the dispute over the Senkaku Islands”’. See Allen Whiting, ‘Chinese Foreign Policy: Retrospect and Prospect’, in Kim (ed.) China and the World, pp.287-309, p.304.


CHAPTER FOUR.


"Our policies on Japan until recently underestimated Japan's position and roles. [...] Until recently, the power relations in international politics were decided by the military. Now to speak of the Russian Foreign Ministry and the whole Russian government, they recognize Japan's position as a world power not only in economic, but also in political matters."

Vasilii Saplin of the MID.

4.2 Russia and Japan: problems of international cooperation.

Russia's relations with Japan outside the bilateral framework have been for the most part non-existent. It was not until the advent of Gorbachev that this situation was to some extent remedied. As one commentator noted, any moves to improve relations were "merely spinoffs of Soviet policy toward the United States and/or China".  The constraints of the US-Japan alliance on Soviet policy, but equally so on Japanese foreign policy have only relatively recently begun to ease. Even today however, Russian commentators criticise Tokyo for seeing its relations with Russia 'as before, through the prism of military-political relations with the United States.' Gorbachev's 'New Political Thinking' appeared to herald a new approach to security in the global arena, including the Asia-Pacific. Optimism regarding the direction of relations with Japan meant optimism too with regard to Russia's future role in the Asia-Pacific region. One of the reserves of the 'New Thinking' regarding Japan, according to Vladimir Ivanov, lay in 'acknowledging the global role and responsibility of Japan for the future of international relations and the situation in the APR'. Japan's emphasis on multipolarity was considered a boon, as Japan would become one of the new 'poles', implying the reduction of US influence. In fact, as we have seen in the previous chapter, difficulties in the bilateral sphere hampered cooperation in the international sphere, so that Japan would ritually 'punish' Russia for intransigence on the territorial issue by first refusing to allow Russia to join the IMF, and later to be part of the G-7, while Russia responded by failing to support Japan's bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.
4.2 Russia and Japan: problems of international cooperation.

4.2a) Russia and Japan: approaches to the Asia-Pacific

The problems surrounding the territorial issue highlighted Russian security concerns, which outweighed the desire for economic assistance from Japan. For this reason, Russian dreams of developing the RFE and integrating with the APR, allowing Moscow to move away from military and security considerations have proved unrealisable for the immediate future at least. In addition, there is a dilemma at the heart of approaches to Japan. A Japan uncoupled from the US-Japan alliance would be, as Soviet thinkers realised, 'the best possible present for Japanese militarists and right-wingers[..]'. Thus by 1991 the prevailing view, one which carried over into the early El'tsin period was that the US military presence in the APR was a factor of stability and security in the region. As normalisation of relations became plagued by the territorial issue however, the arguments of the military appeared once more to carry more weight than those of the diplomats, so that eventually the latter were also obliged to make statements in support of maintaining Russia's military potential in the Far East.

For Japan's part, the existence of a Soviet threat had been a consistent component of Tokyo's views on security in the APR. In 1990 for the first time the White Book on Defence omitted the traditional reference to the Soviet threat, although this was apparently when Kaifu believed Gorbachev was about to hand over the islands. Nevertheless the following year, 1992, too the reference was omitted. In 1993 the White Book noted that while Russia maintained huge, modernised and rationalised armed forces, social and economic conditions made it difficult for Russia to maintain its former level of activity. The next edition again pointed to the quantitative reductions in the Russian Far Eastern forces but this time drew attention to their modernisation which "coupled with the uncertainty surrounding these military formations mean that these forces represent an element of instability in the region."
4.2 Russia and Japan: problems of international cooperation.

While Russia has made cuts in its Pacific Fleet, these have been quantitative, while in fact, Japan charges, Russia is updating its fleet with new technology. (on the other hand the combat readiness of the fleet is constantly being called into question due to social and economic problems, and compared to the United State’s naval potential is considerably lower. Japan views Russia as a possible threat if only because of its internal problems, and one analyst notes that there is a danger inherent in Russia’s frustration ‘as they compare their own unstable government, depressed economy, and waning military power with China’s growing economic, conventional-weapons, and nuclear might.’

Certainly statements by top naval officers would appear to confirm this, for example the commander-in-chief of the Russian naval forces, Feliks Gromov stated in 1993 that while the quantitative strength of the naval strategic nuclear forces would drop by around fifty per cent, the forces’ qualitative strength would be brought into line with contemporary requirements. Calls by Russian defence officials for the upgrading of the naval forces noticeably increased around the time of debates over the Kurils issue. However while the possible handover of the islands was a cause of concern to the Russian armed forces, one should bear in mind that this was in the context of the establishment of a new Russian defence ministry and the overall need to emphasise territorial integrity to legitimise the new Russian state.

Russian fears regarding the resurgence of Japanese militarism arise from the growth of Japanese economic power, which, as one Russian military analyst observes, allows Tokyo to build its relations with the United States on an equal basis. This, Russia argues, makes Japan more confident of its ability to act independently, which combined with territorial claims, ‘an inherent component of Japanese policy’, could introduce new and negative elements into the APR. These arguments are not without foundation, for in the words of one Japanese businessman, the reason why Japan has been able to make forceful arguments on the territorial dispute is entirely due to the increased strength of Japanese ‘national power’. However, the views of the Russian military are not homogenous, and are not necessarily those of the civilian leadership. On the other hand a consensus has emerged which indicates that all are agreed on the necessity of maintaining an adequate military presence in
the Far East. There has been criticism of the decision of autumn 1992 to remove tactical weapons from ships and to reduce submarine orders by fifty per cent: the critics argue that this coupled with the implementation of the 1993 START II agreement, could lead to a serious loss of strategic nuclear capability in the naval forces of the RFE. The notion that Japan could become a formidable military power in the next century is often advanced – for example, General Georgii Mekhov cited strategic arguments for not ceding any islands to Tokyo. Mekhov noted the calls in ‘certain Japanese circles’ for a revision of the peace constitution and for a significant buildup in the air and naval forces, concluding that one should not rule out a scenario whereby a reduced Russian military presence, in particular in the Far East, would result in a military and strategic vacuum to be filled by Japan. This argument had been put forward also by Colonel Viktor Stefashin in 1993, who stated that Japan’s aim was to increase its political influence on a global scale by using diplomatic and economic means in order to achieve greater independence in the defence sphere, and ultimately to raise Japan-US strategic relations to a level of ‘global partnership’. This, according to Stefashin, is the cornerstone of the Japanese Armed Forces’ development plans because it corresponds best to Japan’s aim of becoming a ‘full-blown great power’.

This consensus regarding strategic nuclear forces was spelt out in the federal programme ‘World Ocean’ published in early 1997, where the section on Russian military-strategic interests emphasises the need to maintain the naval strategic forces as ‘the most effective means of containment’. On the other hand, there is an ambivalence in Russia regarding the prospect of a more independent Japan. While the military see this as a potential threat to Russia’s security, there are others who see this as an opportunity for Russia to step in. Thus Aleksei Pushkov notes that in Japan ‘they are beginning to assess more coolly their military-political dependence on the USA. Even more so, because the constant “trade wars” with the America give rise to additional mutual tension...’

Elizabeth Van Wie Davis notes that for Japan the idea of becoming a permanent member of the UN Security Council 'represents another option to the direct projection of military power. Japan feels that its global status...has earned it a permanent voice in the Security Council.' However, it is clear that initial Russian reluctance to support this bid stemmed partly from the idea that a greater political role for Japan would automatically lead to a greater military role. Moreover, Russia's own claim to great power status would then be undermined, based as it is, not on its economic, but its political standing, albeit as an erstwhile superpower. Shortly after the cancellation of El’tsin's visit to Japan in September 1992, Kozyrev expressed amazement that 'Italy and even Japan are in the G-7 while Russia, with all her riches, is not. It is simply because we were frozen inside a totalitarian regime. As soon as we defrost ourselves and become a normal democratic state, then of course our place is there [the G-7]...'

Japan pressed strongly for the inclusion in the declaration at the 1993 G-7 summit of a clause exhorting Russia to hand back the islands to Japan. However, unlike 1992, the G-7 failed to accede to Japan's request. Russia feels that it is automatically entitled to become a G-7 member. As Kozyrev observed, in some cases Russia wielded more political influence than 'other G-7 members' (a dig at Japan) if only, as he stated because Russia is 'an old member of the Security Council, and ...there are only four permanent members of the Security Council in G-7.' The Japanese view of the G-7 has tended to diverge from the other members, in particular regarding economic assistance to Russia. As one Japanese analyst has put it:

The Japanese tended to view the situation in a more detached manner, arguing that a lot of money could simply be wasted unless we made sure that the conditions for success existed and unless the assistance we were offering would be well spent for a good cause. Europeans, on the other hand, saw aid as vital because El’tsin’s failure would mean a 'catastrophe' for Europe.

Japan's interest in promoting democracy sometimes appears to pale beside its pursuit of economic aims. For example, in 1991 the then Japanese finance
minister Ryutaro Hashimoto persuaded the other G-7 members to soften economic sanctions against China\textsuperscript{22}. The G-7 is viewed by Japan as a prime example of aid diplomacy which has become the conduit for Tokyo to influence world politics. As Japan is the only Asian power represented in the G-7, it can claim with some justification to represent Asian interests, or even to be a role model.\textsuperscript{23} In this forum Japan's economic clout gives it a higher political profile, as Kuniko Inoguchi emphasises, the G-7 summits have 'expanded Japan's scope for political manoeuvring. In the Japan-US relationship the power balance tended to appear lopsided ...But in G-7 consultations, the EC countries often clash with the United States, and Japan is able to strengthen its position by cooperation and coordinating interests with various countries.'\textsuperscript{24} 

Just as Russia feels it has an innate right to be a member of the G-7, so too does Japan feel it is 'unnatural' for a country that plays an important role in international cooperative action not to be a permanent council member.\textsuperscript{25} In both the G-7 and the United Nations, the argument runs, Japan should use its bilateral relations to promote international cooperation. Changing the criteria for membership of the council from those who defeated fascism in the Second World War to economic success would call into question Russia's own membership of this body. One reason for Russia's change of heart regarding Japan's membership is that China has consistently opposed Japanese membership of the Security Council. Other Asian nations have also opposed a Security Council seat for Japan. South Korea said it would support a seat for Japan, but only one without power of veto, while India stated its belief that as a representative for Asia, Delhi would be 'more worthy' of a permanent seat. However objections have not been confined to Asian countries. Led by Italy, around twenty countries, half the member countries on the working group for Security Council reform, were against the expansion of the permanent security council member countries. Not one ASEAN country leader is actively in favour of Japan's gaining a Security Council seat according to one Japanese analyst.\textsuperscript{26} For this reason it cost Russia little to continue to oppose Japanese membership. However, knowing how much outside support means to Japan in symbolic terms, Russia finally relented and gave its support to the Japanese
bid at the Krasnoiarsk summit, but only once it had secured Japanese support for its own bid to join APEC and the G-7. Japan has also played the ‘China card’ by opining that Russia must make an economic as well as a political contribution to world affairs, adding that if Russia were admitted to the G-7 then Japan would propose China as its foreign trade was twice that of Russia.27

4.2c) The China Factor.

Russia regularly calls for the US to cut its forces alongside Japanese reductions, although these calls are largely ignored.28 The new ‘Guidelines on US-Japan Defence Cooperation, published in September 1997, do not give rise to optimism regarding further cuts, stating clearly that 100,000 troops will still be needed in the Asia-Pacific. There is no change then since 1994, when 35,000 troops were withdrawn from the East Asian theatre. Since then, further reductions have been put on hold.29 Rumiantsev, the former head of the Supreme Soviet committee on constitutional affairs, and author of the report on the territorial dispute asserted that the US and Japan were not curtailing the size of their groupings or systems ‘either in this region or on the distant approaches to it’.30 Ostensibly the reason for the lack of deep cuts in the US forces is the rise of China as a naval and military power in the twenty-first century. Russia is not specific about which states threaten its security in the Far East, but it is clear that from a geostrategic viewpoint, Russia must be prepared to counter potential threats from China, the US-Japan alliance and North Korea. The new Russian emphasis on China as a strategic partner may be a good reason for the US and Japan to further strengthen commitments in the Asia-Pacific. Indeed Japan has expressed concern regarding Russian arms sales to China, albeit not vociferously. Around the time of the first Sino-Russian summit in December 1992, the Japanese minister of international trade and industry said that while Tokyo supported economic reforms in Russia it was concerned about arms sales.31 Two days later another Japanese official told a news conference that he hoped Beijing would “keep within a certain limit and exercise moderation”.32 Japanese comments around the time of the CIS aid conference a month earlier had
emphasised that Japan could not render economic assistance to states which engaged in weapons proliferation. Russia denied that its arms sales would upset the regional balance and at the December 1992 summit, El’tsin told Tokyo and Washington to stop speculating about Russia "creating yet again some sort of a union bloc between the PRC and Russia....There is no such bloc, especially not in the military field."^33 Japan sees China’s modernisation of its armed forces as pushing India and Pakistan to update their nuclear arsenals, but also as encouraging North Korea to test its nuclear weapons. Japan’s concern regarding nuclear testing has been denounced as hypocritical by China however, as its protection from the US nuclear umbrella does not qualify Tokyo to criticise other states’ nuclear testing. Russia’s sale of arms to South Korea and Malaysia has also worried Japan. Not having military capabilities of its own, Japan must rely on the US nuclear umbrella for protection, situated as it is close to three nuclear powers. Japanese analysts also argue that the nuclear umbrella is also essential to allay fears that it might build up its own nuclear capacity. However, there have been indications that Japan might indeed be prepared to develop its own nuclear weapons programme. One Japanese foreign minister stated his opinion that Japan should be ready to take this step due to the possibility of nuclear attack from North Korea.

In the 1970s when Japan was looking to invest in the Russian Far East China was apparently ‘bitterly opposed to Japanese aid for Siberian development’, fearing that this would contribute to a Soviet defence buildup. Today, Japan is the biggest trade partner for the Russian Far East, although officially the centre is oriented towards China. A witness at US Senate hearings on US-Japanese relations signalled that Japanese interest in the region would grow if ‘the economic zone in Western Siberia could be, in essence, separated in economic management from the entire Soviet Union, to become a more efficient part of the Japan Sea economic zone...’^39 This kind of regionalism is fraught with difficulties for Russia, because of its sensitivity to centrifugal tendencies in the Russian Far East. Despite Moscow’s early toleration of regional independence it has since moved to tighten control over the foreign policies of its regions. On the other hand, Moscow has indicated that it is in
favour of economic independence for the regions, as long as this does not translate into political independence. It is possible that Japan may see Russia as a counterweight to China in the Far East, despite historical fears of offending China. Aleksei Arbatov believes that Russia and Japan are brought together by common economic interest in the development of the natural resources of the Far East, 'the prevention of hegemony in the Asia-Pacific Ocean region, and maintenance of at least a semblance of stability on the Korean peninsula.' Further, he states that the key to security in Siberia and the Far East lies, 'along with maintaining a reasonable defence potential, in the development of balanced relations with other powers in the region, and above all – with Japan."

Since Hashimoto's 'Eurasia' speech, there has been a renewed interest in the Russian Far East on the part of Japanese business. Thus, the president of Michinoku Bank believes that the Japanese government "should take the place of central government to nurture the Far East so that it will be able to harvest the fruit from there in the future. I think all the statesmen in the Far East would agree to this. They want Japan to do lots of things because Moscow is not capable..."

There has recently been an acknowledgement by Japanese analysts of the positive role China has played in Russo-Japanese relations. Thus the director of the Nomura institute stresses that 'China was a "catalyst" in changing the relationship between Japan and Russia to one that seeks active cooperation' As he notes Russia and China's 'strategic partnership' is their biggest diplomatic weapon. Changing the target of the US-Japan security treaty from the Soviet Union to China, and expanding its scope to include Taiwan is anathema to China. Officially Japan and the US deny that the reanimated alliance is explicitly aimed at China, but it does the 'implicit goal of maintaining a balance in regional security at the level of major-power relations'. Long-term Chinese actions will decide whether this general and implicit aspect of the alliance develops into overt China-oriented security strategies."
4.2 Russia and Japan: problems of international cooperation.

Despite Japan's advocacy of multilateralism, this does not tend to extend into the military sphere. In March 1995 a military delegation to Tokyo led by General Boris Gromov proposed confidence building measures in the military sphere including invitations to military exercises, joint actions of naval forces and mutual visits of warships. However the Japanese were wary of agreeing to these proposals and stated its preference for tackling all problems on a bilateral basis, 'Japan-United States, Japan-China and Japan-Russia.' However, the following year the head of the Japan Defence Agency, Hideo Usui visited Moscow and met with Primakov, an unprecedented event. While there were no concrete results, the trip assisted dialogue on global issues, including security in the APR. From now on meetings at the ministerial level began to address other issues than simply the bilateral territorial issue. Meetings now addressed questions such as Russian participation in APEC and the situation on the Korean peninsula. A further contribution towards confidence building in the military sphere was made when the commander-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet, Kuroedov visited Japan in November 1996. Russia now acknowledged Japan's interest in becoming a member of the UN Security Council, without actually supporting it. A significant breakthrough came with the visit to Tokyo of Igor' Rodionov in May 1997. Despite his speech of December 1996 listing Japan as a threat to Russian security, he now emphasised that Russia no longer viewed the US-Japan alliance as a threat to its security: "Russia is not worried by the close relations between the USA and Japan in the sphere of security in the Asia-Pacific region." Russia and Japan have since pledged further to strengthen military ties by holding joint naval exercises, although the Japanese delegation requested that China be included in any talks between Russia, Japan and the United States on security in the APR. Japan worries that the United States 'might forget about Japan' due to its engagement of China and this may have been an additional reason for Japan's decision to make changes to its Russia policy in 1997. Thus one Japanese analyst believes that China has already usurped Japan in Washington's Asia policy. Japan has often tried to take on the role of mediator between Washington and Beijing, but its political weakness, and the continuing suspicion between China and Japan makes this a difficult task. It could be that improved relations with Japan and Russia can have a beneficial
effect on relations between China and Japan, making it possible for Japan to interpret Beijing's wishes to the White House. As noted above, Russia's decision to support Japan's bid to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council was important for Japan, but in particular because it could even impact favourably on China's attitude. The Japanese political analyst Shigeki Hakamada observes that improvements in Russo-Japanese relations will contribute to improvements in Sino-Japanese relations. 53 Certainly there are those in Russia who hint that Tokyo cannot 'ignore' Moscow's improved relations with both Beijing and Seoul, and even warn that Japan could end up isolated, as other states flock to take advantage of 'the huge Russian market, its raw materials and intellectual potential'. 54 At the same time Tokyo must realise it is unrealistic to expect Russia to join any overt moves to contain China. An article in the Japanese daily 'Yomirui Shimbun' says that Japan is looking at using good Russo-Japanese relations to restrain China. 55 Russia must maintain a 'balancing act' 56 between the three major players in Northeast Asia, given the geopolitical realities, but it will nevertheless welcome a Japan that is prepared to remove the territorial issue from the bilateral agenda and give Russia the support it needs in international fora.

The main worry for Japan is that Russo-Chinese strategic cooperation will be a destabilising influence on the Asia-Pacific region, in particular due to the fact that Russian attempts to repair relations with North Korea and strengthen its military positions take place when there is distinct lack of attention paid to Russia in this region. 57 A reunited Korea is also a cause for concern, because Korean nationalism might make it more hostile to Japan, as well as an economic rival to Japan. 58 Indeed Russia has attempted to play 'the South Korean card', although this was shortlived, as it soon became clear that South Korea was not about to commit large-scale aid to Russia either. Andrei Zagorsky stressed that unlike the Gorbachev period South Korea was not seen as an available replacement for Japan in Moscow's Asia-Pacific policy and 'has not acquired a strategic position in Russian calculations'. 59 As China's economic power grows and its armed forces acquire ever more up-to-date weaponry, its confidence to challenge the United States may increase and
Beijing could put pressure not only on Taiwan but also on Japan and other Asian countries. This at least may be the underlying rationale for the redefinition of the US-Japan alliance in 1996 and the drawing up of the ‘New Guidelines’ which appear to redefine the main threat to regional security as emanating not from the north, Russia, but from the west, i.e. China and North Korea. While eschewing direct references to the question of their sovereignty, American officials have also indicated that the disputed Senkaku (or Diaoyutai in Chinese) islands, claimed by Japan, China and Taiwan, are included in the remit ‘areas surrounding Japan’.  

4.2d) Japan and Central Asia.

Although Japan does not share the same security concerns of Russia and China in Central Asia, the region has acquired increased significance for Japan since the mid-1990s. Japan’s energy needs are mainly sourced from the Middle East, but due to the instability of this region, in the long term Tokyo may need to look to alternative sources. An obvious source is the Russian Far East, but we have seen the problems associated with developing existing resources here, although since 1997 the Japanese have expressed somewhat greater enthusiasm, for example regarding the Sakhalin project. In 1992 Japan began to look at the Central Asian states as recipients for Official Development Assistance but its political profile there was still marginal. Many Russian analysts have warned that Japan’s economic influence in Central Asia will have negative repercussions for Russia, as eventually Tokyo’s economic influence may become political and even have an effect on these countries’ military affiliations. Japanese involvement in these states is seen as yet another example of the West (Japan being viewed mainly as part of the West in Russia) seeking to undermine Russian influence in the region as a whole. Thus an analyst at the Russian Institute of Strategic Studies, a think-tank sponsored by the presidential administration, makes it clear that Russia’s task is to

‘pursue a course directed at defending the interests of the Russian economy, and to develop integration with these countries [Central
4.2 Russia and Japan: problems of international cooperation.

Asian] in order to counteract those plans and projects which could disrupt essential ties and obstruct the reestablishment and preservation of Russian influence in the region. Articles in the Russian press devoted to Japanese economic investment in Central Asia have generally reflected hostility and draw unfavourable comparisons between Japanese investment in Central Asia and its lack of interest in the Russian Far East.

The nationalist journalist and Japan expert Igor' Latyshev compares Japanese businessmen to ‘cockroaches and mice’ who conduct ‘economic espionage’ in Central Asia and other areas of the former Soviet Union, concluding that the Japanese elite is pleased that some former republics are distancing themselves from Moscow. He stresses that the ultimate and destructive goal of Japanese capital investment is to weaken these countries’ links with Russia. This is in marked contrast to the favourable light in which China’s Central Asian policy is viewed.

Valerii Kistanov sees the emphasis on Central Asia as part of Japan’s overall drive for ‘re-asianisation’, i.e. balancing its involvement with the United States and Europe. Certainly Hashimoto in his now famous ‘Eurasian doctrine’ speech of 1997 emphasised that Japan felt ‘deep-rooted nostalgia for this region stemming from the glory of the days of the Silk Road’. Japan itself is not completely clear about its identity in this region, and as Zbigniew Brzezinski has pointed out is ‘not perceived as truly Asian by many Asians...’ This is a legacy of the debates in the nineteenth century regarding Japan’s future: whether it should break away from Asia and move towards Europe or lead a ‘greater East Asia’. Like Russia perhaps, Japan is not entirely at ease in either Europe or Asia and both worry that they may come lower down on Washington’s agenda, as it tries to deal with China in the next century.
4.2 Russia and Japan: problems of international cooperation.

Conclusion.

As we have seen in the first section of this chapter, the territorial dispute has overshadowed all aspects of Soviet-Japanese, and later Russo-Japanese relations. Since the Second World War the Kuril islands had served as a defence against 'Japanese aggression', and like the rest of the Russian Far East was put into the service of the military, while economic development came only low on the list of priorities. The deterioration in the economic situation in the Far East seemed already under Gorbachev to be an insoluble problem. For a while the islands appeared to be a means of solving the issue, but the politicisation of economic issues engendered by the new thinking meant that the notion of exchanging the islands in return for economic aid came to seem akin to a betrayal of national interests.

This trend became more noticeable once El'tsin arrived on the political scene: his appeals to a new Russian nationalism, in part to outmanoeuvre Gorbachev politically, backfired. Now when El'tsin himself tried to set out terms of negotiation with Japan, the nationalist tendencies which he had fostered rose up to oppose him and his policies, specifically in relation to the Kurils issue. For this reason, the idea of rejuvenating the Russian Far East in partnership with Japan came to seem an impossibility, and the ongoing improvements in the relationship with China highlighted the deadlocked nature of Russo-Japanese relations.

The internal rivalry between government and presidential structures, but also within these structures themselves (for example between the MID and the Ministry of Defence) drew attention to the fact that there was no overall strategy in place for dealing with Japan. In particular the ineffectual nature of the MID and its overly romanticised notion of Russian foreign policy meant that when defence officials made statements on the strategic value of the Kurils, or on the need to maintain Russian defence capabilities, these seemed all the more convincing. By December 1992, the shortlived reign of the romantic democrats was over, and a new pragmatism was coming into focus: the Russo-Chinese summit that same month, and the appointment of the
industrialist Chernomyrdin confirmed the shift in emphasis at the highest levels.

The politicisation of economic issues continued apace: industrialists ensured that the defence industries would continue to receive subsidies, and the West was attacked for its attempt to impose Western models of development on Russia and stripping Russia of valuable resources. The mood was not conducive to rapprochement with Japan. At the same time the industrialist lobby dearly wished for help from Japan to develop the oil and gas industries of the Russian Far East.

The events of October 1993 further politicised the military and raised its profile vis-à-vis the civilians at the foreign ministry. Moreover, the increased frequency of Russo-Chinese military exchanges, as well as Russian arms transfers to Beijing, were also reducing the role of Kozyrev’s foreign ministry. It was not until the arrival of Primakov at the beginning of 1996 that the Foreign Ministry could once more hold its own and take the initiative in foreign policy, including policy towards Japan. Primakov understood that only by disentangling the territorial issue from Russian relations with Japan could progress be made. He also understood that comparing Japanese intransigence on the Kurils issue with its more flexible stance on the Senkaku island dispute with China would send a clear signal to Tokyo that the idea of a revival of the 1956 declaration or any other such compromise on the islands was henceforth off limits. Moreover, it was now up to Tokyo to think up new initiatives, rather than vice-versa.

The result was that Tokyo did indeed make some effort to rethink its policies towards Russia. By recognising the significance of good political relations with Russia, Tokyo was taking an important step towards reducing the mercantilist nature of Japanese foreign policy. If good relations with Russia could be seen as a goal in their own right, then in the long term there might be progress on the islands, but as a byproduct, rather than as the centrepiece of relations. Progress on the issue of fishing rights highlighted the success of both the Russian, and the new Japanese approach.
In the wider arena, relations between Russia and Japan have always been complicated by the presence of the United States. Russia has an ambivalent relationship to the US-Japanese alliance. In the Soviet period the alliance was of course the enemy, but under Gorbachev this precept came to be questioned, in particular by new thinkers such as Kunadze. Even the military acknowledged that the alliance was a necessary evil in order to restrain Japanese militarism. At the same time, since the end of the cold war, various Russian military experts have expressed concern that Japan’s growing confidence and increased power as a nation will encourage it to aspire to equal relations with the US, and that this may lead to Japanese revanchism. However, the rise of China also underlines the fact that the US-Japan alliance would be the only means of checking Chinese military power. Japan may also see Russia as a possible counterweight to China, or even as a means of increasing its political weight in the global arena, as some in Japan worry that China may replace Japan as Washington’s main partner in the region. At the same time Japan does not wish to marginalise China by getting too close to Russia, so that both Japan and Russia may wish to keep each other in play to offset pressures from the bigger powers of the US and China. Ultimately Japan does not have a pressing need for good relations with Russia and remains secure under the US nuclear umbrella. On the other hand, cooperation in the Russian Far East could be a good opportunity for both to counter Chinese predominance in the longer term, as well as securing vital energy resources. Neither would wish to alarm China however, by making overt moves towards a partnership that appears to alienate Beijing.

Japan’s claim to be a world power is based principally on its economic capacities, but Tokyo is now seeking to translate this into political clout, which may bring it into conflict with its Asian neighbours, but possibly also Russia. This conflicts with Russia’s continued need to emphasise its political and military influence in order to compensate for its low economic profile. Moscow and Tokyo do have areas of common interest, as Arbatov has stated, but until now the stakes have not been very high. The uncertainty surrounding the future development of China may well be the spur to raise the
stakes. For the moment, the disequilibrium between Russia's political influence and Japan's economic presence has held relations back. Still, supporting each other's membership in international forums is a small but symbolic gesture that shows that pluralism may yet be the answer.

2 Mikhail Titarenko, Rossiia i vostochnaia Aziiia, Voprsov mezhdunarodykh i mezhtsivilizatsionnykh otoshenii, 'POO Fabula', Moscow, 1994, p.95.
8 Adm. F. Gromov, 'Rossiia na m ore', Rossiiskaia gazeta. 16 April 1993.
12 General Mekhov, 'Voennyi aspekt territorial'noi problemy', Krasnaya zvezda, 22 July 1992, p.3.
13 V.Stefashin, 'Fundamentals of Japan's Current Military Doctrine' , Voennaia mys'l (Military Thought), 11 November 1993, pp.75-80, p.77.
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27 Interfax, 5 June 1997.
35 Remarks of Chinese foreign minister Qian Qichen, see Terashima, ‘Seeking An Integrated Strategy’.
40 At his first press-conference, in January 1996, Primakov said he would tighten control over the foreign ties of the regions, see Diplomatscheskii vestnik, no.2, February 1996.
41 At a symposium on improving Russo-Japanese relations, Primakov said that the days when Moscow controlled all the economic ties of the Far East were "long gone". He pledged that the regions should be given both legal and material means to manage their own foreign economic relations, in particular, as the APR would be the world’s most important political and economic area in the twenty-first century. See OMRI Russian Regional Report, Vol. 1, no.4, 18 September 1996.
42 I am grateful to Sergei Chugrov of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), Moscow, for this insight. Interviewed by author 1 October 1997.
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48 Reported in Diplomaticeskii vestnik, no.5, May 1996, p.29.
56 The ‘ravnopriblizhennost’, or ‘equivocality/equidistance’ so favoured by the more pragmatic Russian politicians. See for example the comments of the security council official in the present author’s interview, chapter 4.1.
57 See Kistanov, ‘Iaponiia i perspektiva’, p.50.
58 The present author’s interview with Valerii Kistanov, researcher at the Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow, October 1997.
61 I would take issue therefore with Martha Brill Olcott’s view that Russia ‘seems unperturbed’ by Japanese proposals to build a pipeline from Turkmenistan to China, see her Central Asia’s New States, U.S. Institute of Peace Press, Washington D.C., 1996, p.149.
66 See chapter five of this thesis.
68 Address by Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto to the Japan Association of Corporate Executives, 24 July 1997.
70 See Terashima, ‘Seeking an Integrated Strategy’. 

Conclusions.

a) Chronological Analysis.

This thesis began by showing that, despite his limited time, Gorbachev recognised the importance of deideologising Soviet foreign policy and creating an atmosphere to build trust. There are those who accuse him of concentrating too heavily on the West, but he must be credited with acknowledging the importance of normalising relations with China by making unilateral concessions in the security sphere. He recognised also the limitations of Soviet military power in the Asia-Pacific, which made the beginning of dialogue with Japan possible. Gorbachev set the ball rolling in terms of building confidence in the region, but was not able to fashion a strategy that could be passed on to his successor. The ‘New Thinking’ as the basis of Soviet foreign policy relied on an amorphous concept of universal human values and balance of interests, which, while pleasing the West, left a poor legacy for the new Russia in learning how to cope with the changed geopolitical realities of implosion.

Early El’tsin.

El’tsin also placed too much emphasis on relations with Europe and the United States in the initial months, seeing in Japan solely the solution to the economic woes of the Russian Far East. Chapter two showed how this realisation of the limits of exogenous forces in solving Russia’s internal problems has tempered Russian foreign policy in all areas. Scepticism regarding the West’s readiness to assist Russia, and suspicion regarding its motives, has in the Asia-Pacific, been focused on Japan, which was perceived by Russia as part of the West economically and politically, if not
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China’s independent foreign policy and articulation of its national interests has therefore been more to Russia’s liking.

After the cancellation of El’tsin’s visit to Japan in September 1992, a more pragmatic strain has appeared in Russian foreign policy, albeit one that required a final reshuffle of institutions and politicians in order to carry this out effectively. The perception arose that Russia had expected too much of the West, both economically and politically, which had failed to deliver. In this context, Japan became a symbol of betrayal, one that was seen as taking advantage of Russia’s weakness and territorial fragility. Congruence in Russia between domestic concerns and international orientation appeared to increase. Some Western analysts have tended to view the choice facing El’tsin’s Russia as one between Gorbachevian ‘new thinking’ or ‘an isolationist or neo-imperialist framework’, while in fact something quite different has emerged. It was due in part to the ‘scaremongering’ of Kozyrev and other ‘romantic democrats’ that the West came to believe this was the only choice available to Russia. Thus, as Aleksei Pushkov has argued, while from 1988 to 1992 Moscow ‘forgot about geopolitics’, the West showed it was alive and well. The Kozyrev approach to foreign policy according to his critics, consisted of subjugation to the West in all matters. The result of these policies, they argue, has been the expansion of NATO eastwards, which is the ultimate demonstration of the West’s cynicism and self-interest. Again, as Pushkov has convincingly argued, the United States had a ‘stereotyped’ view of Russia which meant that when Moscow did begin to articulate its own interests, on Bosnia, European security, NATO, many in Washington saw this as ‘a one hundred and eighty degree turn’. In fact, it was the culmination of a growing trend, albeit obscured by the fact that the Foreign Ministry had dominated Russian foreign policy in the initial stages when this foreign policy was neither shored up by consensus within society as a whole nor within the governing circles.

The so-called ‘schism’ between ‘Atlanticists’ and ‘Eurasianists’ is a mirage: the Atlanticists were a tiny minority, and to be found mainly in the Foreign Ministry. ‘Eurasianists’ were also a minority, represented by maverick
academics and nationalists who harked back to the geopolitical ideas of Mackinder and advocated Russian domination of the ‘Eurasian heartland’, i.e. the former Soviet Union, in particular Central Asia and the Caucasus. The debate was won by the new pragmatists, who did not see Russia’s future as lying only in Eurasia, or in Asia, but rather in both: Russia should balance both the westward and eastward orientations (Stankevich, Lukin, Rumiantsev, Migranian, Karaganov, Arbatov). The trademark of all these pragmatists, (apart, perhaps, from Arbatov) was their emphasis (in varying degrees) on China, rather than Japan as the most important partner for Russia in the East. As the debate over Russian foreign policy intensified from mid-1992 onwards, the uncertainty surrounding events in the near abroad brought the need for a new concept of foreign policy into sharp focus. The appointment of the industrialist –centrist Iurii Skokov to run the presidential Security Council in mid-1992, and that of the centrist Viktor Chernomyrdin first to deputy, and then to the post of prime minister in late 1992, was the beginning of the move towards consensus based around a new pragmatism. This pragmatism ran also to the defence of the military-industrial complex, signalling a rejection of full-scale privatisation (and conversion of the defence industry) and a renewed emphasis on arms sales as a means of earning hard currency. The appointment of a Russian minister for defence in May 1992 meant that the military now had a mouthpiece to articulate its own views, views not entirely in harmony with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. By late 1992, El’tsin was criticising the Foreign Ministry for having neglected the Asia-Pacific and for allowing Russia to be viewed as a state which always said ‘yes’. The final draft of the Foreign Policy concept, honed by several different agencies and ministries, and now bearing little of Kozyrev’s input, pointed to attempts to undermine the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation as a threat to Russian national security – a clear riposte to any attempts by Japan to take advantage of Russia’s territorial fragility. China was awarded special status in the concept, as the region’s most important state, in both geopolitical and geoeconomic terms. The emphasis on maintaining Russia’s position in the world arms markets and the West’s continued denial of access to high technology made it clear that Russia’s interests would from now on no longer always coincide with those of the West.
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Impact of NATO expansion.

If the West still held out hope for a return to the heady days of Russian 'Atlanticism', the proposed eastward expansion of NATO in 1993 meant that the lid on the coffin of the romance was well and truly nailed shut. Now even more liberal pragmatists such as Aleksei Arbatov surmised that the 'new political thinking' had led to 'NATO vanguards on Russia's doorstep'.\(^6\) Despite El'tsin's crushing of the opponents of Western-style reform in October 1993, the Russian electorate gave a huge boost to Zhirinovskii's party in the December elections, signalling their discontent with economic reform and the West's empty promises of aid. The military's participation in crushing the defenders of the White House meant that El'tsin was now in their debt, and he accordingly renamed Armed Forces Day, 'Defence of the Fatherland Day' in 1993. In 1994, while cooperation with China increased, relations with Japan stood at an all-time low, with Japan's lack of support for Russian participation in the G-7 talks seeming to highlight once again the redundancy of Kozyrev's conciliatory policies.

However, while the relationship with China seemed to go from strength to strength, the pragmatists were well aware of the need to guard against a future threat from its eastern neighbour. Both Karaganov and Arbatov pointed to the potential threat from China, as well as that from NATO, as an argument for retaining strategic nuclear forces.\(^7\) The retention of strategic nuclear weapons was also emphasised as a way of compensating for Russia's weaknesses, as a 'last vestige of prestige', in Karaganov's words.\(^8\) The establishment of a separate Border Guards service introduced a new player: the head of the new service emphasised that one of his main tasks would be the preservation of Russian territorial integrity and the protection of Russia's resources. In 1995 accusations against the West of taking advantage of Russia's vulnerability were rife. El'tsin advocated greater activity in the East and praised relations with China.
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From universal human values to national interests.

The new Russian foreign minister Evgenii Primakov, appointed in January 1996, emphasised that Russia should articulate its own national interests, while remaining on good terms with the West, as well as with the East. This is a policy of 'equidistance', one which has arisen from a sober assessment of Russia's geopolitical position. Throughout 1996 emphasis was placed on fostering integrative tendencies within the CIS and strengthening Russian territorial integrity. In October the drafting of a new law on borders, as part of a new security concept rejected any territorial claims by other states. Finally, in December 1997, a new 'Concept of National Security' stated explicitly that a priority of Russian foreign policy was ensuring the inviolability of borders and the territorial integrity of the state.

b) Thematic Analysis.

The importance of China.

The debates over the future of Russian foreign policy were mirrored by debates over the prospect of cooperation with China. It was recognised fairly quickly that building good relations with Japan could after all, not happen overnight, and that amicable relations with China were pressing, if only to defuse tensions over the joint border. The miserable level of relations with Japan, and the latter's economic muscle implied an unequal relationship, with Russia playing the minor role. Relations with China on the other hand, could be portrayed as one of equals, while at the same time providing 'a theoretical model of an independent policy for Russia'. Finally, the question of the foreign policy orientation of the new states of the CIS, in particular the Central Asian ones, was of prime concern to Russia, and this was duly noted in the draft foreign policy concept. Initial reservations over China's human rights record were soon put on the backburner as dialogue intensified due to the need for continual negotiations over the joint border and the opening up of the border to trade with China. It was not long before the Foreign Ministry's pre-eminence was placed in doubt by the increasingly high profile of the industrialist lobby. The China factor was a handy card for El'tsin to play in
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his disagreements with the Supreme Soviet over Russia’s relations with the West and economic reform.

Military industrialist groupings.

Military contacts, which had resumed already in mid-1992, had a momentum of their own, which sometimes sat uneasily with the earlier reservations of the Foreign Ministry and military assessments of China as a potential threat to Russian security. However, the military contacts were useful in building trust, at least at the elite level, and arms sales could be touted as proof of Russia’s resilience in the face of Western attempts to oust Russia from world markets. In addition the representatives of the industrialist lobby were able to make a case for continued subsidies to the military-industrial complex, which in regions like the Far East were sometimes the only hope of survival. A close inspection of actual Russian sales shows that these have been lower than sensationalist news articles both in Russia and the West have reported. More worrying perhaps to the Ministry of Defence is the sale of production licences to the Chinese, and the fact that Russia has been prepared to sell at significantly below market prices purely to gain a foothold in this promising market. However, developments in the economic sphere by 1997 were taking a downward spiral, and the awarding of the contract for the Three Gorges Dam to a Western conglomerate rather than to Russia showed that the loyalty of the Chinese side could not be guaranteed. This has implications for Russia’s future dominance of the Chinese arms market, as it cannot be ruled out that other countries, such as France, for example, could begin to compete with Russia to supply Beijing. It appeared however, that as long as Russian officials could still make political capital out of such sales, they would continue to be hailed as signs of a major Russian presence in the Asia-Pacific. (until Russia has achieved economic integration it will have to rely on military instruments)
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The Border in the Far East.

Russian and Chinese demarcation of the joint border tested the strength of bilateral relations and showed that earlier acceptance by Moscow of separatist tendencies in the Russian Federation as a whole, but in particular in the Russian Far East could no longer be tolerated. Japanese claims on the Kuril islands threw into relief the importance Moscow now placed on territorial integrity. The Sino-Russian border negotiations became an important symbol of this integrity – Moscow had to ensure that Tokyo could not seize on the talks to substantiate Japanese claims. The handling of these negotiations has also been a test case for centre-periphery relations - a new factor in Russian foreign policy. Moscow now had to take account of public opinion, a lesson it was obliged to learn after the fiasco surrounding El’tsin’s stymied trip to Tokyo in autumn 1992. Russian regions were now increasingly included in talks with Beijing on a variety of topics, which was surely a positive development. Problems related to the influx of Chinese to the Russian Far East have been a cause for concern, although figures have often been exaggerated for local political reasons. The drive for territorial integrity has bolstered the standing of the Border Guards Service, in an ongoing battle between the latter and the Ministry of Defence, which has attempted to absorb the Border Guards. An important role was played by the latter in restricting the flow of migrants to the Russian Far East, thus boosting its authority as a protector of Russian national interests.

There is a dilemma in Russian relations with China in the Far East: while Moscow needs more than ever to assure its borders, at the same time regional initiatives tend to emphasise porous borders – for example, the Tumen river project, and Japanese ideas about the future of the region: Sea of Japan concept. Others have criticised the demilitarisation of the border area, in view of the fact that China may one day reassert territorial claims to the Russian Far East. However, if Russia is ever to transform this erstwhile military bastion into an economic powerhouse, demilitarisation is surely a prerequisite. But Russian geopolitical concerns about China will mean that the
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transformation of the Far East into a viable investment opportunity will take many decades. China’s continued need for weapons may mean that converting defence enterprises in the region is put on hold, further decreasing the attraction for outside investors. As the world becomes more interdependent, the issue of sovereignty in the traditional sense is expected to erode. For Russia however, in the 1990s sovereignty became more rather than less important.

Uncertainties.

Russia and China’s membership of the United Nations Security Council reinforces the sense that here are two great powers able to influence the course of international politics, perhaps even to counteract American hegemony. Despite the joint condemnation of a U.S dominated unipolar world in favour of a multipolar one, it is not entirely clear whether China will make room for Russia to be one of these poles or whether there will be a new Pax Sinica. Old Russian fears of a Sinocentric system of international relations could yet be realised, although this is still a long way off. One of the mainstays of Chinese nationalism is the need to redress territorial injustices, which may mean Chinese actions in the South China seas or around Taiwan. However, this is not necessarily of immediate concern to Russia. Of far greater significance to Russia is Chinese policy in Central Asia. China’s energy needs could in future be met by the vast oil reserves of this region, which could bring it into conflict with Russia in a tussle over control of oil and gas pipelines. However, cooperation could also be a possible scenario. For the moment China’s profile in the region is not significant, but that could change with the growth of Chinese economic and military power. For the moment China is happy to let Russia ‘police’ the area, thus assuaging concerns regarding a spillover of Islamic fundamentalism into Greater China. Tensions could still arise on the southern axis however, where India, Russia’s ‘friend’, and Pakistan, China’s ‘client’, are now nuclear powers. (Primakov’s notion of a Russia-China-India bloc as a means of ensuring stability in Eurasia was not taken seriously in Beijing.) However, China can make economic cooperation attractive, luring the landlocked Central Asian states with promises of
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integration into the Asia-Pacific via China with its outlet onto the Pacific.\textsuperscript{10} American suspicions of Russian motives vis-à-vis CIS integration have meant that Washington generally prefers Turkey, a NATO member, as its main partner in Central Asia, or even China, if that could put a stop to ‘excessive Russian influence’ there.\textsuperscript{11} The alliances in this region are constantly in flux, so concrete predictions are not wise. However, it is certain that Russia will need to ensure a favourable security environment in Central Asia, as well as in the APR. For this reason the four-way agreements on troop reductions and confidence building signed in 1996 are of the utmost significance. For Moscow, Beijing’s recognition of Russia’s role as a guarantor of stability in Central Asia is of immeasurable value.

In the Asia-Pacific the image is reversed: here China is the main player, taking a key role in settling issues around the Korean peninsula, while Russia has remained marginalised in political terms. In addition China would probably be happy with the status quo on the peninsula, while Russia would welcome reunification.

The reanimation of the US-Japan security alliance, and in particular plans to create a theatre missile defence around Japan is of great concern to China, and ostensibly to Russia, although it might have cause to welcome this as a means of checking China. Indeed the regional ambivalence regarding China’s role in the APR mirrors Moscow’s own: China’s presence is a counterweight to the US-Japanese alliance, but at the same time, China remains an unknown quantity. There is an inherent disequilibrium between the two powers. Russia is a democracy, however imperfect, while China remains an authoritarian power, which may yet use force to redress territorial grievances.

\textit{Japan and Russian territorial integrity.}

If Russia had no choice but to engage with China, due to the need to demarcate the border, in the case of Japan, it soon became clear that active dialogue would be far more difficult to construct, while the territorial issue continued to dominate relations. Japanese intransigence is in large part to
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blame for the subsequent polarisation of the debate over Russia’s ‘Asian orientation’. The fixation on the territorial issue made it impossible to escape the past and turn over a new page in relations. As the issue of territorial integrity within the former republics, and the Russian Federation itself (Kaliningrad) became more salient, making concessions to Tokyo came to seem ever more dangerous. The fact that Russia could not be assured of the prospect of future Japanese investments, made a transfer of territory even more unlikely. In the struggle with his domestic critics moreover, El’tsin could not contemplate a move which would appear to sanction the exchange of territory for economic gain.

The Japanese overestimated the Russians’ desire for investment in the Far East and underestimated the importance of Russian territorial integrity, while the Russians overestimated the Japanese need for Russian resources, and underestimated Japanese stubbornness vis-à-vis sekei fukabun. Unlike the demarcation of the Sino-Russian border, which was but one issue among many, there were no further opportunities for convergence between Tokyo and Moscow bar the islands.

Internal Constraints.

The emergence of a challenger to the Foreign Ministry’s hitherto pre-eminent role in foreign policymaking in the shape of the Ministry of Defence had made itself felt in a number of ways: first, the Ministry, as its predecessor had done under Gorbachev, called for a halt to troop withdrawals on the Kurils, and then outlined the strategic arguments for not ceding the islands. It was difficult for El’tsin to ignore these arguments – events in the breakaway republic of Transdniester (Spring 1992) were uppermost in people’s minds. In the Security Council, set up at the same time as the appointment of a
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Minister of Defence, were powerful industrialists who favoured subsidies to the Military Industrial Complex and generally preferred close relations with China. (The appointment in the same month of Chernomyrdin, Soskovets and Khizha also in May demonstrated this). Due to the fact that the territorial dispute had in effect become a touchstone for Russian foreign policy debates, each of the players in the political arena now sought to define himself in relation to his policy on the territorial issue.

It was clear that Russia had not evolved a policy capable of dealing with Japan, but neither had Japan evolved one capable of dealing with the new Russia. The cancellation of El’tsin’s 1992 trip was unavoidable, but for a while seemed to close off all channels of communication between the two states. Moreover, it appeared to give credence to those who saw relations with Japan as involving an undermining of Russia’s strategic position, the armed forces and navy in particular. The industrialists like Chernomyrdin, looking for loans to bolster oil and gas development in the Russian Far East, expressed disappointment in Japan, which had nothing to offer Russia. These industrialists sought to maintain the Russian Far East as a ‘strategic base’ and urged El’tsin to continue subsidies.

Russia’s rapprochement with China, and the mooted expansion of NATO meant there was soon little room left on the foreign policy agenda for relations with Japan. However, eventually there was recognition that small but significant steps such as negotiations on fishing rights would help to improve dialogue. The dismissal of Kozyrev and the appointment of Primakov, who declared Russian national interests rather than universal human values as the main priority of his ministry, made it clear that there would be no concessions on the islands. The new foreign minister’s emphasis on frankness highlighted the gridlocked nature of Russo-Japanese relations, in contrast to the lively and frequent Russo-Chinese interchanges. Primakov’s insistence that the territorial dispute was not up for discussion forced Tokyo to reconsider its Russia policy. The drafting of a document rejecting all territorial claims against the Russian Federation confirmed this policy. As far as Moscow was concerned, the matter was closed.
Towards a balanced foreign policy in the East?

1996 and 1997 saw substantial changes in the Russo-Japanese relationship: political dialogue increased, as did confidence-building measures in the military sphere. The Russian insistence on taking the territorial issue off the agenda had paid dividends; now Russia could truly begin to speak of a 'balanced foreign policy' in the East.

In the international sphere difficulties in bilateral relations translated into lack of dialogue on global issues. Here once more Japan refused to separate economics and politics. Russia’s pledge to overcome the Soviet legacy was fraught with problems. In its bid to remain a great power, Russia could point only to its UN Security Council seat and its nuclear weapons – in terms of economic power Russia was no match for Japan. This disequilibrium has dogged attempts at dialogue in the international arena. Thus Russia has been reluctant to support the Japanese desire for a permanent Security Council seat, while Japan has denied Russia a role in the G-7. Russian optimism that improved relations with Tokyo would mean the economic rejuvenation of the Russian Far East and hence economic integration with the Asia-Pacific has proved groundless. Attempts to maintain Russian military potential have been necessary to compensate for Russia’s low economic profile. Russian military analysts point to Japanese economic power as boosting Japan’s political confidence, which could translate into military power. For this reason, they argue, Russia should not make cuts in its Pacific Fleet as any resulting vacuum could later be filled by Japan.

Russia, China and Japan: the future.

There is now a new dimension to Russo-Japanese relations: both play the China card. Thus, Russia, aware of Beijing’s opposition to the granting of a permanent UN Security Council seat to Japan, relented on this issue, aware of the importance to Tokyo of such support. By the same token, Japan has
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drawn unfavourable comparisons between China and Russia’s economic prowess when the subject of G-7 membership has come up.

While Russia’s rapprochement with China provided compelling reasons for the U.S. and Japan to increase security commitments in the Asia-Pacific, there are also compelling reasons for Japan to engage with Russia. (Japan’s support for Russian membership of APEC is a case in point.) Hashimoto’s Eurasia speech was certainly linked to the closer relations between Beijing and Moscow, as Japanese analysts have acknowledged. Japanese interests in Central Asia reflect its need for alternative sources of energy, but Tokyo will also have been aware of the increasing Chinese presence there. It is possible that in the future Japan may come to Moscow’s aid in its Far Eastern regions, if only to forestall this Chinese presence. If Russia can drop some of its suspicions regarding Japanese economic management and accept ‘open regionalism’, then a Far East with Japanese capital is not inconceivable. However, if Russia continues to fail to provide the necessary economic conditions and financial incentives there, then the Chinese shuttle traders may be the only economic presence.

Regarding China, there are lingering fears about Chinese intentions towards the Russian Far East, as chapter 3.2 has shown. Russian arms sales are mainly based on economic rather than strategic considerations, while potentially placing in jeopardy Russia’s own security. Still, for the time being fears focus more on issues such as illegal immigration and border concessions rather than longer term territorial demands. This analysis has shown that in relations between China and Russia, rapprochement, though prickly, and beset with problems, works better in terms of legitimising Russian foreign policy within the elite, but also in terms of Russian national identity and role problems. This is in part because of Russia’s ambivalent relationship with the West: until Russia has regulated this relationship, in both economic and political terms, China will continue to appeal to that part of the elite for whom Western economic power rankles.
Conclusions.

The resentment and suspicion of that geo-economic line which entails cooperation with Western financial institutions has been played out in Moscow’s relations with Japan, something which Tokyo has been slow to understand. As the opportunities for convergence have been minimal, the territorial dispute remained a festering wound that could constantly be massaged to erupt and make rapprochement problematic. It is to Primakov’s credit that he was able to end this vicious circle by asserting territorial integrity as an unassailable tenet of Russian foreign policy.

3 Pushkov, ‘Vneshniaia politika’.
4 For example El’giz Pozdniakov, ‘Rossiia- velikaia derzhava’, Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn’, no.1, 1993, pp.7-17.
5 Their views are detailed in chapter 2 of this thesis.
8 Karaganov, Where is Russia going?, p.29; Aleksei Arbatov, ‘U Rossiiskoi armii est’ veroiatnyi protivnik’, Nezavisimoe voennoe obozrenie, no.4, December 1995.
9 See chapter 3.1.
10 See chapter 3.3.
11 Zbigniew Brzezinski, see chapter 3.3.
The South Kurils (Northern Territories)
The Russo-Chinese Border, showing areas in dispute.
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IEWS Regional Report  
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