Chapter 13
Russia's Complex Engagement with European Union Norms: Sovereign Democracy versus Post-Westphalianism?

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13.1   Introduction

Russia is in a unique position in relation to the European Union (EU). It is part of the wider European space; it is not a prospective member; it is a global power with significant economic and military clout; it has interests and presence both in Europe and in Asia; and it shares a high level of interdependency with EU Member States. Furthermore, as a result of the break up of the Soviet Union and the eastern enlargement of the EU, there is interest on both sides in the 'shared neighbourhood': the states of the southern Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) and of eastern Europe (Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine).

These unique circumstances make Russia a vital case study in examining the encounter between EU norms and local practices. In this chapter I assess Russia's response to EU norms and how it reflects dominant Russian foreign and domestic policy thinking. Overall, I argue that the Russian response can be characterised as varying between resistance and rejection. At the same time, Russian policy makers challenge the very idea that Russia is a passive receiver of European norms from the EU, in some circumstances promoting Russia as an equal partner in developing common European norms: in other words, as a norm-maker rather than a norm-taker (Haukkala 2008). However, in some areas, Russia is willing to adopt what it regards as technical norms to promote greater trade with the EU.

This chapter will examine the particularities of the Russian response in three sections. In the first, it explores how the Russian response to EU norms is couched in terms of understandings of Russian identity but also increasingly as a rejection of the notion of pan-European norms. The second section shows how Russian policy makers distinguish between EU technical norms (relating to commerce and trade) and socio-political norms (relating to political system and practices and human

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rights). They aim to build pragmatic relations with the EU on the basis of the former, while rejecting any linkage with the latter. Distinguishing between specific norms developed and promoted by the EU, and the norm of regional integration itself, the final section argues that Russia's promotion of regional integration in the former Soviet space drawing on the EU model does not necessarily contradict its resistance to specific EU socio-political norms. However, Russia's adoption of the rhetoric of regional integration in the post-Soviet space is perceived by EU actors as a threat and a challenge to EU norms.

This analysis will focus predominantly on relations with the EU as an entity, rather than with its Member States. For simplicity, this chapter will often refer to 'Russia' and the 'EU', while acknowledging that they are not unitary actors. This research draws on a range of secondary literature on EU norms, EU-Russia relations, Russian perceptions of Europe/the EU and Russian foreign policy. In analysing the Russian position, the chapter refers to primary documents: significant declarations by Russian foreign policy makers, in particular, the President's annual address to the Federal Assembly and the 2013 Foreign Policy Concept. These help us to contextualise Russian policy, to discern the main themes and rhetorical nuances, and to analyse how Russian policy makers wish Russia to be perceived abroad.

13.2 Russia's Evolving Relationship to EU Norms: From norm-taker to Sovereign Equal?

In the initial period after the break-up of the Soviet Union, Yeltsin's Russia accepted a role as 'norm-taker' in becoming a Western-style liberal democracy and returning to the family of European, democratic states. In broad terms, Russia was a passive adopter of Western European political and economic norms of democracy and the market economy, and welcomed and encouraged help in its transition, through, for example, the EU's Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) scheme. According to Lukyanov (2008, p. 1109), the main aim of the 1994 Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between the EU and Russia was the 'Europeanisation' of Russia: without membership, Russia would 'nevertheless gradually approach the "European model", adopting EU norms and rules. The subsequent shift to a more assertive position has been well-documented and a number of explanations have been offered (Headley 2008; Lynch 2001; Shearman 2001). There are three factors that are relevant for an analysis of Russia's response to its encounter with EU norms.

Firstly, there was the apparent failure of the economic reforms. The reforms—known as 'shock therapy'—constituted a rapid and untrammelled application of neo-liberal economic theories, and their catastrophic impact had the effect of undermining the normative power of the West as a whole, including the democratic model with which the economic reforms were associated. Secondly, the reforms met resistance from those who disagreed with the transition to a full market economy, particularly but not only in the form in which it was being conducted. Many

opponents believed that it was an alien imposition of values that were out of line with traditional Russian practices—if not the state-managed communism of the Soviet period, then a longer-standing communal approach (Mäkinen 2011). Here, critics also questioned whether liberal democracy imported from the West suited the more communal and authoritarian Russian historical practices. Thirdly, these responses were also couched in terms of another normative prior: the notion that international affairs were primarily constituted by the pursuit of state interests. Western states were perceived to be pursuing their own national interests, which not only did not coincide with Russian interests, but might even be contrary to Russian interests.

The policy response was to differentiate Russian from Western interests and to assert Russia's great power status. These ideas have underpinned Russia's overall foreign policy approach since the mid-1990s, particularly in the Putin era since 1999. Russia's attitude towards the EU has been encapsulated within this overall framework, but has undergone some shifts of emphasis in relation to shifting policy priorities and developments in relations with the EU, accompanied by shifts in conceptions of Russian and European identity.

Throughout much of the 2000s, there was an emphasis on Russia's European identity and also on its status as a major power that should be treated as an equal by other major powers. Particularly around the time of the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe, President Putin made a number of speeches asserting Russia's 'European-ness'. These ideas formed the basis of an article published in *Le Figaro*:

> The Russian nation has always felt part of the large European family, and has shared common cultural, moral and spiritual values. On our historical path—sometimes falling behind our partners, other times overtaking them—we have been through the same stages of establishing democratic, legal and civil institutions. Therefore, the Russian nation's democratic and European choice is entirely logical. This is a sovereign choice of a European nation that defeated Nazism and knows the price of freedom. (Putin 2005a)

According to this formulation, Europeans share both a common geography, history and culture, but also a set of values—freedom and democracy. Indeed, there is an essential link between the two since European values derive from European culture/history or have evolved with it (Headley 2012a). Putin (2005b, online) made this explicit in his annual address to the Federal Assembly in April 2005:

> Above all else Russia was, is and will, of course, be a major European power. Achieved through much suffering by European culture, the ideals of freedom, human rights, justice and democracy have for many centuries been our society's determining values.
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> For three centuries, we—together with the other European nations—passed hand in hand through reforms of Enlightenment, the difficulties of emerging parliamentarianism, municipal and judiciary branches, and the establishment of similar legal systems. Step by step, we moved together toward recognising and extending human rights, toward universal and equal suffrage, toward understanding the need to look after the weak and the impoverished, toward women's emancipation, and other social gains.
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> I repeat we did this together, sometimes behind and sometimes ahead of European standards.

These extracts demonstrate that Putin believed that in the past Russia had not been merely a passive recipient of European values and norms as developed in the West,

but had also contributed actively to the development of European values and norms. Putin thus staked a claim to Russia's historical role as a norm-maker, which was also an assertion that Russia should be an equal partner in developing pan-European norms in the present.

However, Putin also questioned the extent to which pan-European norms should be developed and how deep and standardised they should be. It is useful here to distinguish between values and norms: values can be understood to be the broad ethical principles underlying specific ways of behaving in a range of contexts and policy areas; these specific ways of behaving—norms—are manifestations of those values (Headley 2012a). Putin claimed to accept the idea of Russia sharing common European values, placing Russia in the wider European cultural space, but argued that there were different ways of manifesting those values in specific cultural contexts. He concluded his *Figaro* article with the assertion that 'both large and small nations have equal rights, including the right to choose an independent path of development' (Putin 2005a),[1] which can be considered to be in tension with the notion of common European norms.

During Putin's second presidential term (2004–2008), the notion of common European norms receded, and the conception of different paths of development for different states came to the fore. For example, in his 2007 annual speech to the Federal Assembly, Putin (2007, online) declared:

> Our foreign policy is aimed at joint, pragmatic, and non-ideological work to resolve the important problems we face. In broader terms, what I am speaking about is a culture of international relations based on international law—without attempts to impose development models or to force the natural pace of the historical process. This makes the democratisation of international life and a new ethic in relations between states and peoples particularly important.

The slogan that came to be attached to this viewpoint was 'sovereign democracy', developed by the administration's loyal ideologue, Vladislav Surkov, although never officially endorsed by Putin (Mäkinen 2011; Sakwa 2008). This is supposed to be democracy in the international sphere, meaning that efforts to shape another country's development in a particular direction modelled on one's own experience is undemocratic. It is also a rejection of the idea of Europe-wide norms, the notion that specific ways of operating should be uniform across the continent; hence, it signifies opposition to the standardisation inherent in 'Europeanisation'. Nevertheless, it is presented in terms of democratic values, and therefore 'European values'; and Western European countries are considered to be displaying 'double standards' if they fail to recognise the equal rights of other sovereign states.

This outlook chimes with the approach of some communitarian political theorists who reject the idea of detailed universal rights and norms. For example, Walzer (1994) defends a notion of rights that allows for minimal cross-cultural absolute

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[1] There are strong echoes here of Mikhail Gorbachev's concept of the Common European Home/House which served a similar purpose, although Putin does not use this metaphor perhaps because it is too closely associated with Gorbachev. Gorbachev also defended the 'right of every different nation to choose its own path of development' (Gorbachev 1987; Haukkala 2008, p. 50–51).

human rights and universal norms, but these are quite limited or 'thin'; he sees 'thicker' rights and norms being generated in each nation or culture. He argues that there are basic, 'minimalist' features of terms such as 'truth' and 'justice' that are understood by everyone, but the actual content of them is usually 'maximalist', arising out a particular society's values and norms. He uses this point to assert that there are a number of different 'roads to democracy', and a variety of 'democracies' at the end of the road. For example, he writes that he supported the 1989 Tiananmen Square demonstrators in their broad aims, but it is up to the Chinese people to develop their own form of democracy, which would have significant differences from the form of democracy in the United States, for instance. He concludes:

> Since I know very little about their society, I cannot foist upon the Chinese this or that set of rights—certainly not my preferred set. So I defer to them as empirical and social individuals. They must make their own claims, their own codifications (a Chinese Bill of Rights?), and their own interpretative arguments.

One problem with Walzer's 'thick/thin' distinction is the question of how we determine the boundary of communities in which morality is maximalist, i.e. at what level a particular society is constituted. Walzer assumes that it is at the level of nation-states and, in their defence of state sovereignty, Russian policy makers have tended to endorse this view (although I will show in the final section that Russian rhetoric has begun to identify cultures at the 'civilisational level', without necessarily implying that shared socio-political norms should be developed at that level). EU leaders, on the other hand, assert that it should be at the European level, and regard the EU as the leader in developing norms to reflect European values. So, the dispute between Russia and the EU is about whether there should be pan-European norms and, if so, how 'thick' or 'thin' they should be (see Headley 2012a for elaboration). In an article assessing Putin's 'project' from International Relations (IR) theory perspectives, Browning (2008) effectively makes the same point, but in the language of the English School of IR theory. He points out that the English School distinguishes between 'pluralist' and 'solidarist' variants of international society, such that debates are 'based on competing claims about the "thickness" of the normative content of international society' (ibid., p. 7): solidarists focus on universal human rights of individuals, while pluralists argue that states are 'at the heart of international society and have moral priority', so that states can only agree on minimal norms. In this debate, 'Russia is typically understood as favouring and defending a pluralist model of international society premised on a Westphalian model of sovereign equality' (ibid., p. 7).

I believe that there are some problems in the implicit identification here of a 'modern', sovereign Russia facing up to a 'postmodern', post-Westphalian EU,[2] not least because it seems to answer the question of what kind of entity the EU is in a way that has not yet been settled. Furthermore, Medvedev (2008, p. 221) argues that '[f]or all its postmodern imagery and the "rejection of power"…, the European Union is a direct descendant of the Western missionary tradition'. He suggests that

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[2] For more explicit examples of this contrast, see Krastev (2007); Mezhuev (2008); Secrieru (2010).

the EU's approach is actually as 'bureaucratic' as Russia's, transposing the process of enlargement to relations with its neighbours rather than developing a political strategy vis-à-vis fully independent states. It is also based on a modern, rather than post-modern, 'othering' which seeks to transform the 'other' through 'European-isation'—essentially, a retreat to a 'colonialist interpretation of Westernness as goodness' (Medvedev 2008, p. 231)—rather than accepting its differences. Klinke (2012) makes an analogous point, directly challenging the 'postmodern label'. He argues that the EU displays archetypically 'modern' thinking in its conception of itself as postmodern: it sees itself as embodying the next stage of the development of humankind, in a teleological idea of progress.

In other words, the EU's assumption that it is a norm setter and has the right answers for the development of other states is a continuation of the 'civilising mission', a feature of the modern era, backed by its ability to exert power over weaker states. Although Whitman (2013, p. 174) suggests that the notion of Normative Power Europe (NPE) rejects any 'affiliation with colonial or neo-colonial practice', some EU policy makers do seem explicitly to endorse it (former President of the Commission, Romano Prodi for example; see Björkdahl 2005, p. 259; see also Korosteleva 2011). In any case, it is generally perceived in this way in Russia (Secrieru 2010, p. 9). For example, Tsygankov and Fominykh (2010, p. 23) of Moscow State University refer to the 'geopolitics of perception', arguing that EU actors believe that the EU 'plays an irreplaceable role and lays claim to indisputable advantages over all other models of development'. As Medvedev (2008, p. 211) puts it, Russia's bureaucratic centralism inevitably resists this tendency. Hence, the clash between Russia and the EU can be understood within a longer-term perspective of responses to Western European assertions of normative superiority, without necessarily framing it in terms of 'modern' versus 'postmodern'.

13.3   Contemporary Russia-EU Relations: Partnership for Modernisation?

During Dmitrii Medvedev's presidency (2008–2012), there were attempts to renew relations between Russia and the EU under the label 'Partnership for Modernisation'. The Partnership was to be built on recognition of interdependency and of the mutual benefits of cooperation over security and economic issues. There are different interpretations of the degree to which it has succeeded. For example, Baranovsky and Utkin (2012, p. 70) argue that it has finally got off the ground after a slow start, and is offering real funding opportunities for joint ventures. However, a more typical assessment is provided by Moshes (2012, p. 20), who argues that it was clear by the end of 2011 that the Partnership 'had essentially failed to make a difference. It did not go beyond declarations, multilateral and bilateral.' The EU and Russia have been unable to overcome their differences over fundamental issues and specific areas of interaction have proven more capable of creating division than understanding. These problems reflect divergent views of the purpose of the

Partnership and the wider nature of relations between Russia and the EU, questions that relate directly to Russia's response to EU norms.

From the Russian perspective, the Partnership suits Russian priorities, and indeed, 'modernisation' has been the buzz-word of Russian rhetoric at least since President Medvedev's article *Rossiia, vpered!* ('Go Russia!' or 'Russia, forward!') appeared in September 2009. It refers to the belief that Russia needs to move away from its reliance on export of natural resources, especially energy resources, and to develop a high-technology economy. In order to do so, it should look to the West as a source of ideas, technology and investment. However, the Russian authorities believe that Russia can do this without changing its socio-political system or the fundamental nature of its economy. This is what Olga Kryshtanovskaya describes as the Andropov approach (Mäkinen 2011, p. 152), but it is also reminiscent of Gorbachev's belief in interdependency, opening up to the West, but maintaining different 'paths of development'. Not only is this seen as possible, but it is believed that the EU will respond in kind because of its interdependency with Russia: as equal partners, both can stand to benefit.

Russian policy makers believe that trade can develop between the EU and Russia without deeper political or economic convergence; this is what Nikitin (2006, p. 6) calls the 'pragmatic, conservative' interpretation of the EU-Russia partnership. In line with arguments laid out above, they reject EU conditionality and interference in Russia's internal affairs, and defend Russia's right to its own 'path of development'. Associated with this strategy is an attempt to separate technical norms from socio-political norms. Russia is prepared to adopt legislation harmonising aspects of Russia's trade and business environment often by incorporating parts of the *acquis communautaire* (Tumanov et al. 2011, p. 125). This is because the EU is seen a norm-maker or leader in this area, and there is no point Russia wasting time and resources in developing its own equivalents. Furthermore, it is irrelevant whether EU norms in this area are better than alternatives that might be developed—the market strength of the EU and its importance for Russian trade means that there are strong practical reasons to harmonise with it (this is what Börzel and Risse 2012 call 'compliance pull'). Adopting common, 'thick' technical norms lays the basis for creating a common economic space between Russia and the EU—or, as Putin (2012, online) put it, 'a common economic and human space from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean'—hence promoting trade, jobs and higher living standards.

Whatever the future of technical partnership, it is clear that the EU (though not necessarily its individual Member States) rejects the delinking of its technical and socio-political norms. It sees them as inherently interconnected, believing that Russia cannot modernise its economy and become part of a wider shared economic and human space with the EU without also conducting political reforms. This is a matter of ethics, ideology and practicality. Firstly, there is a belief in the totality of liberal democracy, its ethical importance. In this respect, the decline in partnership is partly due to the widely-perceived regression in Russian democracy over the last decade. Secondly, in contrast to its individual Member States and economic agents within them, the EU is an inherently normative project, a fact which Manners's (2002) concept of NPE encapsulates. Particularly in Europe, its normative credibility is at

stake; for example, as Moshes (2012, p. 21) points out, the EU cannot apply conditionality to countries such as Belarus while engaging fully with Russia without conditions if it wishes to be perceived as genuine and consistent in its promotion of its values in Europe.

However, it is also a practical question about the possibility of separating technical from wider socio-political and economic norms. At a broad level, there is doubt over whether there can be real engagement if human rights and the rule of law are not respected in Russia. On a more pragmatic level, without some level of trust, it is difficult to engage in trade and investment—and Russia is often perceived as an unreliable partner. For example, its image as a reliable energy supplier to the EU was badly shaken by the stand-off with Ukraine in early 2009, despite Russian efforts to show that it was Ukraine that was the instigator (Feklyunina 2012). Similarly, the tensions surrounding the TNK-BP joint venture seemed to show the unreliability of joint investments for Western companies, although in finally selling its stake BP has made a vast profit (Neate 2013). The point is whether, in the long term, Russia can be trusted to abide by the technical norms and legal standards that it is willing to adopt, without wider political change (Lukyanov 2008). For example, Moshes (2012, p. 21) suggests that the Partnership for Modernisation has failed because EU decision-makers had to recognise that a purely pragmatic approach did not work: 'the lack of rules, of an independent judiciary and of transparent contract enforcement makes European companies vulnerable to possible abuses in Russia'.

Delays in Russia's accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) seemed to reinforce this view since they were partly due to Putin's unwillingness to allow the infringement on sovereignty and power that adherence to such standards entail (Åslund 2010; Moshes 2012). However, now that Russia has joined the WTO, it is possible that this wider international framework may provide the necessary legal guarantees. Although this might help Russia in its attempt to separate political from technical norms—in the way that China, for example, has been able to—Russian actions in response to the EU's Eastern Partnership, discussed further in the final section, do cast doubt on its adherence to standard ways of behaving in the global economy even as a member of the WTO.[3]

In the EU's opinion, the Russian authorities' use of the economy for political purposes, and the insecurity this creates for other countries, makes Russia untrustworthy. This is particularly an issue with regard to energy. The EU perceives Russia as using its resources for geopolitical purposes and also regards the prominent state role in the energy sector as illegitimate. Indeed, through the 1994 PCA it has sought 'more active cooperation [with Russia] in developing the Law of Competition and gradual transition to market principles in the field of natural monopolies and state support' (Bordachev and Romanova 2003). However, Russian state control of the energy sector has increased since the turn of the century. In this context, the EU's

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[3] Interestingly, former UK ambassador to Moscow, Anthony Brenton suggests that the EU should launch proceedings against Russia through the WTO over its partial trade embargo on Lithuania, widely interpreted to be punishment for Lithuania hosting the Eastern Partnership summit in November 2013 (The Guardian 2013).

Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) is designed to secure energy supply and prevent the Russian government from interfering in this economic area for political purposes. However, the Russian leadership perceives the ECT as a means to gain benefits from Russia without Russia receiving any reciprocal benefits (Secrieru 2010). By demanding access to Russian resources but restricting Russian ownership of infrastructure outside Russia, as they see it the ECT is the kind of self-interested action conducted at Russian expense, with normative window-dressing, that characterised the West's action towards Russia in the early 1990s. This is why Russia declined to sign the ECT, regarding it as a way for EU countries to gain 'energy security' (security of supply) and access to Russian assets, while Russia would gain nothing tangible in return: no 'security of demand' (in recognition that Russia also depends on the European market for its energy exports) and restricted Russian access to European markets and assets.

The dominant Russian perception, then, is that the EU is pushing its interests in the name of values/norms (see, for example, Baranovsky and Utkin 2012; Tsygankov and Fominykh 2010), while Russia is reasonably standing up for its own national interests and in doing so, is no different from EU Member States. Yet, DeBardeleben (2012) suggests that, in fact and perhaps ironically, Russia is promoting norms in the name of interests. She writes that '[r]ather than engaging in an explicit dialogue on the normative preference in Russia for a state-led approach to ownership and energy policy, the dispute over the Energy Charter comes couched in accusations and counter-accusations about protectionism and double standards' such that the 'normative basis of the conflict is obfuscated and redefined as a simple conflict of interest' (ibid., 427). Certainly, in referring to principles in order to defend its position, and in raising the issue of security of demand, Russia is proposing a principle that suits its own interests but can also be generalised. Indeed, Secrieru (2010, p. 15) takes this as evidence that Russia is 'showing zeal to switch its post-Cold War status from a "norm-taker" to a "norm-maker" in the European context'. In defending national control of natural resources, Russian officials also appeal to the principle of different paths of development as discussed above, just as Gorbachev did before them, even if Russia is certainly no longer a socialist state.

Although the EU may deny that its actions 'stem from a geopolitical logic' (Lukyanov 2008, p. 1114), in reality, then, for both the EU and Russia, 'interests interact with norms to drive policy' (DeBardeleben 2012, p. 424). Russia challenges the idea that the EU is only driven by norms, but also challenges the EU's self-declared role as norm-maker in economic matters, as well as the very idea of pan-European norms in relation to the level of state control of the economy. Hence, it perceives certain economic norms promoted by the EU as being in the category of socio-political norms that should be determined primarily at the state level, and should not affect trade relations. In other words, the EU is seen as presenting 'thick' socio-political norms as 'thin' technical norms, which shows that the question of where the boundary between technical and socio-political norms lies is itself a contested political question which may vary between states, cultures and traditions.[4]

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[4] This is of course an issue within the EU itself, for example over privatisation of state-owned industries and assets, or the elaboration of budgetary and debt rules.

It is relevant here to note that, from a critical political economy perspective, Parker and Rosamond (2013) identify what they call a blind-spot in the Normative Power Europe position: its neglect of economic norms. They refer to the 'constitutive importance of economic liberalism ("market cosmopolitanism") to the EU's post-Westphalian character' (ibid., p. 229). In other words, the EU promotes neoliberal economic norms that have the effect of undermining state sovereignty. It is therefore challenged by states such as Russia that seek to defend their sovereignty and also their right to exercise a strong state role in the economy. Whether the Russian state really is that different from EU Member States or other European states such as Norway in regard to its role in the economy, particularly in the energy sector, is debatable. For example, the 2013 Russian Foreign Policy Concept (FPC) declares that the Russian Federation 'provides state support to Russian enterprises and companies in getting access to new markets and in development of traditional ones while counteracting discrimination against Russian investors and exporters' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation [MFA] 2013, para 34d), which would not look out of place in the description of any country's foreign policy approaches. However, it is more the way that it does this that is problematic along with the merging of political and economic elites.

Besides energy, the greatest source of tension between the EU and Russia is the Eastern Partnership and Russia's own programme of integration in the former Soviet space. Here, it seems that Russian policy makers are themselves susceptible to the accusation of double standards, since Russia's rhetoric of non-intervention in the politics and economics of sovereign states belies its own interference in the domestic affairs and foreign policy choices of the former Soviet republics. I will now turn finally to investigate Russia's programme of Eurasian integration which is apparently modelled on EU integration.

13.4   Civilisational Identity and Eurasian Integration

In his conceptualisation of NPE, Manners (2008) suggests that integration in the EU is inherently a normative project because, by moving beyond a state-centric notion of sovereignty, it challenges normal ways of state behaviour and the structure of international relations, presenting the possibility of a post-Westphalian world. This does not mean that regional integration on the EU model is a norm (Lenz 2013)—one of the on-going debates in EU studies is precisely whether the EU is *sui generis*—but in its own policies the EU promotes regional integration using ethical arguments that it brings peace and prosperity, which is part of its own self-narrative. At the same time, many states in the world are seeking to build regional integration projects, looking to the EU as a successful model. These states include Russia (Moulioukova 2011; Secrieru 2010).

Russia is aiming to deepen integration within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). A Customs Union was created between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan in early 2012, and Russian policy makers aim to transform it into a

Eurasian Economic Union over the next few years, and hope to enlarge its membership. The FPC calls the establishing of the Eurasian Economic Union a 'priority task' and states that Russia is 'aiming not only to make the best use of mutually beneficial economic ties in the CIS space but also to become a model of association open to other states, a model that would determine the future of the Commonwealth states' (MFA 2013, para 44). Furthermore, the FPC declares that this new union is being formed 'on the basis of universal integration principles'. In an echo of the narrative of EU integration, the FPC argues that with current global developments, '[r]egional integration becomes an effective means to increase competitiveness of the participating states' (para 19). Russia seems also to be emulating the terminology of the EU, not just in the name, but in the institutions, such as the Eurasian Economic Commission which Russia wants strengthened as a 'common standing regulatory body of the Customs Union and the Common Economic Space' (para 48d). The ultimate aim is the 'completely new freedom of movement of goods, services, capital and labour' (Putin quoted in Secrieru 2010, p. 10).

To underpin their policy priority of developing regional integration in the post-Soviet space, the Russian authorities represent Russia as part of a wider Eurasian civilisation, a region of countries sharing a common history, culture and to a certain extent language. For example, the FPC states:

> Russia intends to actively contribute to the development of interaction among CIS Member States in the humanitarian sphere on the ground of preserving and increasing common cultural and civilisational heritage which is an essential resource for the CIS as a whole and for each of the Commonwealth's Member States in the context of globalisation. (MFA 2013, para 44)

This echoes the EU's own identity rhetoric. However, there appears to be some tension evident in the FPC between the idea of Eurasia as a separate civilisation and as part of a wider European cultural space. For example, paragraph 44 claims that the envisaged Eurasian Economic Union 'is designed to serve as an effective link between Europe and the Asia-Pacific region', while paragraph 56 asserts that '[i]n its relations with the European Union, the main task for Russia as an integral and inseparable part of European civilisation is to promote creating a common economic and humanitarian space from the Atlantic to the Pacific' (MFA 2013). However, the tension might be resolved by considering these as overlapping, or perhaps nested, identities. Presenting it in this way can help to prevent clashes between regional integration projects but also serve the Russian policy aim of greater practical integration with the EU, perhaps in the form of inter-regionalism between the envisaged Eurasian Economic Union and the EU. After all, as Tumanov et al. (2011, p. 125) observe, the 'ultimate goal of the CES is Russian integration with the EU markets'; and this is backed by public opinion which wants Russia to have a partnership with both the EU and the countries of the CIS equally (ibid., p. 136).

An additional contradiction lies in, on the one hand, the assertion of state sovereignty and respect for different paths of development of different nations and, on the other hand, the civilisational rhetoric. Indeed, the framework for the operation of such paths of development and the values they represent seems to have shifted to the civilisational level. For example, in the section contextualising Russian foreign policy, the FPC states:

> For the first time in modern history, global competition takes place on a civilisational level, whereby various values and models of development based on the universal principles of democracy and market economy start to clash and compete against each other. Cultural and civilisational diversity of the world becomes more and more manifest. (MFA 2013, para 13)

Similar arguments are presented for the acceptance of diversity as opposed to standardisation at the civilisational level as were presented at the state level:

> In these circumstances imposing one's own hierarchy of values can only provoke a rise in xenophobia, intolerance and tensions in international relations leading eventually to chaos in world affairs. Another factor which negatively affects global stability is the emerging trend towards international relations dominated, as in the past, by ideological factors. (ibid., para 14)[5]

Although the FPC suggests that forging a 'partnership of cultures, religions and civilisations' will prevent a clash of civilisations (ibid., para 14), this is also a warning to the EU not to impose its norms in the former Soviet space.

Such allusions to commonality of norms/values above the nation-state level in Eurasia are likely to be seen as threatening by other states in the region, especially given the history of Russian domination (see Headley 2012b; an example is Sushko 2004). In practice, however, there has been little talk of common socio-economic or political norms linked to this civilisational identity or emerging through integration in the CIS, although there is a prevalent perception among the elites in Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine and Russia that the 'legal and political culture of [West] Europeans' contrasts with the 'communal and authority-abiding living in Eastern Europe' (Korosteleva 2011, p. 15). Instead, such integration is advocated on the pragmatic grounds that it suits the common economic interests of states in the region and is therefore of instrumental rather than inherent value (Vinokurov 2013). Such an approach shows again the Russian view that technical norms can be separated from deeper socio-political norms, and hence it does not mean that EU socio-political norms should be used in building Eurasian integration. The Eurasian context therefore supports Börzel and Risse's (2012, p. 9) assessment that '[e]mulation of institutional models such as the EU in different regional contexts could well be completely independent from any effort by the EU to promote certain norms or regulations'. And, despite talk of alternative paths of development, Russia is not promoting itself as a model to be emulated, unlike in the Soviet period (and it is certainly not perceived as a model by other states).

For these reasons, Eurasian integration is likely to remain intergovernmental in essence. As Lenz (2013, p. 219) puts it, the 'most fundamental ideational structure limiting EU ideational diffusion in regionalism is policy-makers' attitudes towards sovereignty'. We can see that in the security sphere, Russia is a founding member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, whose founding norms/aims include

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[5] Since the early 1990s, Russian foreign policy makers have categorised Russian foreign policy as pragmatic and non-ideological. If we define an ideological foreign policy as one based on a worldview which relates to a belief in the ethical superiority of a state's internal socio-political and economic system, then we can see that both the US and Soviet foreign policies during the Cold War were ideological; if the NPE concept is right, then so too is EU foreign policy today.

sovereignty of states (non-intervention in internal affairs), and defence of territorial integrity against separatism. These norms can be expected also to underpin integration in Eurasia and are analogous to the 'ASEAN values' of non-intervention and sovereignty, and the 'Pacific Way', the purported norms of mutual respect and dialogue among Pacific Island countries (Börzel and Risse 2012; Huffer 2006). The forms that integration has taken in South-East Asia and the South Pacific reflect this difference from the EU. Whether in practice a common market can be established without supranational political integration is debatable;[6] but even if a future Eurasian Economic Union can be governed intergovernmentally, it is an open question whether Russian authorities will accept the equality inherent in intergovernmentalism, let alone submit to the authority of bodies that may not be supranational in the EU sense, but will still need to exert impartial authority over all the Member States.

Russian proposals for an EU-type integration process have been greeted with scepticism by the EU, in stark contrast to its promotion of regional integration elsewhere in the world. One reason is that, this is not somewhere else in the world—it is in the EU's 'neighbourhood'.[7] While Russia is seen as contradicting European norms, the EU aims to project its interpretation of them in the wider European space, reflecting its belief that the EU is a norm-maker, other countries are norm-takers, and Russia is governed by a disrespect for those norms and is a challenge to them.

Russia's pressure on CIS countries to join the Russian-led integration project is taken as an example of this. The FPC warns:

> While respecting its Commonwealth partners' right to build relations with other international actors, Russia stands for the full implementation by the CIS Member States of their commitments within regional integration structures with Russian participation, ensuring further development of integration processes and mutually beneficial cooperation in the CIS space. (Russian MFA 2013, para 50; see also the Russian MFA declaration in response to the launch of the Eastern Partnership, Secrieu 2010, p. 17)

But Russia has moved beyond declarations. There have been an increasing number of instances of Russia using crude economic levers to pressure countries into choosing integration within the CIS and declining free trade agreements with the EU. For example, Russian authorities have excluded Moldovan wines from the Russian market for precisely this political reason, while couching the decision in terms of spurious quality concerns; and it is well known that Russia has threatened to raise the cost of energy supplies to Ukraine if it signs a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with the EU, or alternatively, offers to reduce prices if Ukraine signs up to the Eurasian Union (BBC News 2013; The Guardian 2013).

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[6] ASEAN does seem to be shifting towards a more European Union model (Wunderlich 2012), which may be part of a trend among regional organisations towards supranational governance (Lenz 2013).

[7] Interestingly, Secrieu (2010, p. 17) points out that Russian policy makers reject the notion of a 'shared neighbourhood' because, in line with the civilisational rhetoric, they conceive of the former Soviet republics as part of a common space—i.e. not separate from Russia—and divide the wider Europe into 'Brussels Europe' and 'Russia's Europe'.

As Korosteleva (2011) points out, both the EU and Russia seem to believe that the countries 'in between' have to choose one integration project or the other. On the EU's part, this is for the normative reasons outlined above, but also for practical considerations. For example, according to a spokesperson for the EU High Representative Catherine Ashton, if Armenia were to join the Customs Union, it would not be compatible with a DCFTA with the EU because a 'customs union has a common external trade policy and an individual member country no longer has sovereign control over its external trade policies' (RFE/RL 2012; see also Füle 2013).[8] But the EU also has economic interests in promoting greater integration between itself and countries such as Ukraine and Moldova (Tumanov et al. 2011), a political incentive in preventing them integrating more closely with Russia, and a security incentive in dealing with perceived threats.

In pursuing these interests, it also uses trade instruments. For example, the European Commission's suggestion that it may increase the quota of Moldovan wine imports shows that its trade policies are not independent of political considerations in relation to the wider context of these countries' relations with Russia (Füle 2013). Furthermore, it is clear that this is not a partnership; as Korosteleva (2011, p. 6) argues, the EU offers a 'false choice to the outsiders, or, more precisely, no choice at all: it is either co-operation on EU terms or no co-operation at all', and the partnership is more about 'projecting the EU model' (ibid., p. 8) onto outsiders. In promoting its norms, the EU does not only deal in 'soft power' (the attractive pull of its ideas). As Björkdahl (2005, p. 269) puts it, conditionality is 'in a sense a coercive means of persuasion and a way of imposing rather than diffusing norms'. The EU is exercising such 'hard power' conditionality in the Neighbourhood (for example, in linking a DCFTA with Ukraine to political reforms and improvements in human rights).

On their part, Russian policy makers deny that the countries in the former Soviet space have to choose between Russia and the EU (Lukyanov 2013), and criticise the EU for viewing it as a zero-sum game. However, their warnings against these countries cooperating with the EU belie these claims, as do their actual policies. Russia's coercive policies are also instances of 'hard power'. The difference from EU conditionality, however, is that the EU does not use these means to pressure countries into joining the EU or even into developing FTAs—it uses the offer of close association as a reward for adoption of EU norms. Russia uses economic instruments to pressure countries into developing a close association with it, but without linking it to reform of socio-political practices; these instruments are predominantly threats to withdraw already-existing trade advantages, such as lower energy prices or access to Russia markets. This is a tactic which in the long term could well be counterproductive (Treisman 2013; Valdai Club 2013). Arguments in favour of a union in the former Soviet space may have some validity, but not if the project is backed by coercion; while rhetoric about the inevitability of reintegration in the former Soviet space can also undermine the normative position (Headley 2012b).

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[8] In response, Armenian officials have said that they would try to make provisions for a free-trade zone with the EU compatible with membership in the Customs Union which is now envisaged (Jozwiak 2013).

In fact, nearly all political forces in Ukraine and Moldova, for example, recognise the necessity and benefits of close trade links with both the EU and Russia and do not want to have to choose between them. Being forced to choose will be politically divisive and potentially destabilising (Korosteleva 2011). Russian policy might be more effective if it put its rhetoric that this is not a zero-sum game into practice. Furthermore, the very fact that Russia is able to use these punitive instruments shows that there is already a high level of interconnectedness in the CIS because of the legacy of the Soviet Union (see Headley 2012b and 2012c for elaboration). These are quite different circumstances from those that gave birth to EU integration (Libman and Vinokurov 2012). Russian policy makers could make more of the fact that, in many respects, the CIS already has features that the EU took many years to develop and seems to regard as normatively valuable. For example, there is visa-free travel among most of the CIS countries, whereas Russia continues to opine the lack of visa-free travel arrangements with the EU (Baranovsky and Utkin 2012; MFA 2013, para 58). In response to recent debate in Russia about illegal immigration, Putin continues to warn against the introduction of visas for travel in the CIS (RU facts 2013). Nevertheless, according to one of his advisers, Sergei Glazyev, in the long term deeper integration in the Customs Union, including a unified passport and visa system, may ultimately lead to the need for stronger controls on its external borders: 'such is the logic of the integration process in the Customs Union' (RU facts 2013). Deeper integration among a group of members of the CIS may therefore restrict access to it by people from countries outside the group, creating barriers where there was once free movement, while the possibility of maintaining free movement would be an incentive for countries to join the Union. In this case, Russia would be following the EU's lead.

13.5 Conclusion

The complexity of Russia's response to EU norms is a reflection of Russia's unique position in relation to the EU as well as the on-going debate over its identity. Russia's power, its geographical position and the interdependency between itself and EU Member States set it apart from other non-EU European states, but also from other non-European states that interact with EU norms. In fundamental ways, Russia is a rejecter or resister of EU norms. Russia has diverged in its internal evolution from the EU Member State model and refuses any EU attempts to influence its 'path of development'. It frames this resistance in terms of universal norms of state sovereignty and non-intervention. On the other hand, Russian policy makers do engage with the EU over its normative programme and at times promote Russia as a norm-maker. However, they demand that it be considered an equal to the EU in developing European or global norms.

In broad terms, Russian policy has shifted from promoting the idea of Russia as an equal developer of 'thick' Europe-wide norms as part of an assertion of Russia's European identity, to the rejection of the notion of Europe-wide norms. Russian

policy makers accept the idea of broad universal values and some 'thin' universal norms, but argue that it is up to each state to develop its own 'thicker' socio-political norms reflecting the culture of that country. This position may serve the interests of the current Russian political and economic elite, but it is also promoted as an ethical position framed in terms of sovereignty and 'democracy in international affairs', against an EU—and wider West—that is using its power to undermine the sovereignty of other states, often in pursuit of its own interests. At the same time, Russian policy makers are prepared to adopt 'thick' technical norms that ease international trade but are not built on particular socio-political tenets. However, they disagree with their EU counterparts over whether these can and should be separated from 'thick' socio-political norms, and also over whether particular norms presented as 'technical' by the EU are actually socio-political—such as the degree of state involvement in the economy, which Russian policy makers see as a sovereign choice reflecting different 'paths of development'.

In many ways, this Russian position is not unique but is shared by the elites of other 'rising powers', in the 'BRICS' group of Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, for example. States such as China and India also challenge Western normative hegemony, in the name of the values of democracy (at the international level, i.e. between states) and equality. They do not always question the development of 'thin', universal norms—indeed, the idea of sovereign equality between states is just such a norm which they see Western states as challenging. However, they argue that these norms must be elaborated in an open debate between equals. Often they see the differences of opinion over such norms as evidence of cultural diversity, which makes any universal norms likely to be 'thin' in content. Unlike prospective EU members, they also have fewer material incentives to conform to EU norms.

Russia's resistance to EU norms and also to the idea of pan-European norms being imposed by the EU is partly reflective of the dominant Realist outlook on international relations in the Russian elite. They perceive the policies of all states or state-like entities to be governed by national interests. However, they believe that it can be in the interests of all states to recognise certain norms of behaviour in international affairs. But they reject the idea that the EU has unique normative power. This outlook blinds them to the fact that normative language is not always window-dressing for interests, either for the EU or for Russia itself. However, Russian policy makers are placed on the defensive by a sense that their own input into the development of norms is rejected out of hand by EU policy makers because Russia is perceived as only pursuing its own interests and its policies as having no normative essence. To use Risse's (2000) terms—drawing on March and Olsen (1998)—EU actors therefore challenge Russia in terms of the 'logic of appropriateness', laying claim to the right to declare what is appropriate behaviour for a European state, while perceiving Russian actions to be governed only by the 'logic of consequentialism', i.e. of rational pursuit of self-interest (ibid.); whereas in fact, Russian policy makers are also at times using the 'logic of argument'—that is, making ethical arguments in defence of their position within an arena of debate among what they consider to be equals.

This is not to say that both EU and Russian actions and rhetoric are not governed also by interests, and not just state interests but also the interests of certain domestic actors. I do not have space to examine the domestic environment of norm creation and norm reception in Russia and in the EU, but certainly Russia's rhetoric and action is shaped not only by the outlook of the elite, but also by the interests of both the economic and political elite. However, critical perspectives also warn that we should not take the EU's normative language purely at face value either.

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