



**IRAK SAVAŐI SONRASI GELİŐEN DÜNYA DÜZENİNDE RUSYA: EKLEKTİK BİR
YAKLAŐIM**

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ÖZ

Irak Savaőı sonrası dönemde ABD tek taraflılıđının arka planında Rusya, çok kutuplu bir dünya düzenini teővik etme ve Sovyet sonrası alanda hegemonik etkisini sürdürme çabalarını artırdı. Geride bıraktığımız iki on yılda Rusya Suriye'ye ordusunu gönderdi, Afrika'da lejyoner askerler kullandı, Gürcistan'da iki adet ayrılıkçı devlet kurulmasına yardımcı oldu ve en sonunda Ukrayna'yı işgal etti. Rusya'nın dış politika yapımını etkileyen ana faktörler nelerdir? Bu makale, Rusya'nın iddialı dış politikasının, Rusya arasındaki etkileşimler ve uluslararası yapıda deđişen dinamikler nedeniyle ortaya çıktığını savunmaktadır. Sovyetler Birliđi'nin yıkılmasından sonra ciddi bir güç kaybına uğrayan Rusya sistem ve bölgesel seviyede güç ve etkisini geri kazanmayı hedeflemektedir. ABD'nin hegemonik gücünün azaldığı uluslararası bir bağlamda, Rusya, "yakın çevre" ve çok kutuplu dünya düzeninde hegemonik etkisini sürdürmek için iyi bir konumdadır. Bu makale, Rus dış politikasının nasıl pratiđe döküldüğünü özgün bir çerçeve ile kapsamlı bir şekilde ele alarak Rus dış politikasını açıklamaya yönelik devam eden çabalara katkıda bulunacaktır. Bu makale bir literatür taraması ile başlamaktadır. Takip eden bölümde makalede kullanılan eklektik çerçeve detaylı bir incelemeye tabii tutulmaktadır. Sonraki bölümde Rusya'nın dış politikasının oluőtuđu Irak Savaőı sonrası dönemde uluslararası sistemin dinamikleri incelenmektedir. Son bölümde ise Rusya'nın bu dönemdeki dış politikasının stratejik, ekonomik ve sosyal düzlemdeki pratiđi ele alınacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Rus Dış Politikası, eklektik kuramlařtırma, ABD-Rusya İliőikleri.

**RUSSIA IN THE EMERGING WORLD ORDER IN THE POST-IRAQ WAR
PERIOD: AN ECLECTIC APPROACH**

ABSTRACT

Against the backdrop of the US unilateralism in the post-Iraq War period, Russia increased its efforts to foster a multipolar world order and maintain its hegemonic influence in the post-Soviet space. For the past two decades, Russia sent its army to Syria, used mercenaries in Africa, helped form two breakaway states in Georgia, and more recently invaded Ukraine. What are the main factors that influence Russia's foreign policymaking? This article argues that Russia's assertive foreign policy has emerged because of the interactions between Russia and changing dynamics in the international structure. Having lost significant power after the dissolution of the USSR, Russia aims to recoup power and influence at systemic and regional levels. In an international context where the US hegemonic power has diminished, Russia became well-positioned to maintain its hegemonic influence in its 'near abroad' and multipolar world order. This article will contribute to the ongoing efforts to explain the Russian foreign policy with an original framework, which expansively addresses the way in which Russian foreign policy takes place. The article begins with a literature review. In the following section, the eclectic framework used in this article is examined in detail. Afterwards, the dynamics of the international system in the post-Iraq War period, when Russia's foreign policy was formed, are examined. Finally, the strategic, economic and social practices of Russia's foreign policy in this period will be discussed.

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Introduction

Since Russia became a formidable European power, the main factors that influence Russia's foreign policy has remained a burning question for scholars and policymakers. Despite changing international conditions and Russia's transformation for the past century, two schools of thought remained dominant with other thoughts contributing to the discussion. At one end of the spectrum are those that view Russia as a normal state that follows the national interests of the Russian nation. At the other end of the spectrum are those that focus on the domestic factors such as the leader's qualities, identity, elite interest, and imperialist character of the Russian state.

I argue that an accurate analysis of Russia's foreign policy in the post-Iraq War period should consider the global normative, military, and economic dynamics together with the interactions of these dynamics with Russia's strategy, capacity, and imagination. This article aims to handle this task with an eclectic framework, which analyzes Russia's foreign policy in a multidimensional (strategic, normative, and economic) and multilevel (domestic, and systemic) framework. This research will bring a wholesome explanation to Russia's place in the post-Iraq War era world geopolitics by explaining the interaction between the geopolitical dynamics of the international order and Russia.

Using this framework, I argue that Russia, which aims to establish hegemony over the post-Soviet region and foster multipolarity at global level, is well-positioned to achieve these goals in the post-Iraq War global world order where the US hegemonic influence is declining. Russia's ability to do so varies in accordance with its capacity in strategic, normative and economic structures. Strategically, Russia can check the US hegemony through its nuclear power and seat in the UNSC. Economically, Russia smartly uses its natural resources to increase the dependence of European countries, sowing the seeds of discord within the Western alliance. Normatively, Russia attempts to keep the post-Soviet identity alive through various soft power institutions while challenging the Western liberal narrative through its media.

This article starts with a review of the literature that attempts to address the question of what are the main factors that determine Russian foreign policy. After this section, I present this article's theoretical framework and demonstrate how it can help explain the Russian foreign policy. Then, I examine the central tenets of the post-Iraq War period, and the Russian capacity and strategy in strategic, economic, and normative dimensions. I conclude this article by discussing how the interaction between Russia's inner dynamics and outer limitations produce Russian foreign policy in the post-Iraq War period international order.

1. Review of the Literature

The realist framework provided one of the most popular analytical frameworks to examine Russian foreign policy. Realist framework assumes that Russia has fixed national interests and those national interests are determined by conditions beyond the control of Russia. The analyses that follow this logic mostly attribute the changes in

Russian foreign policy to the changes in the international context within which Russia operates. For example, in his 2008 article, Sakwa explains the transformation of Russian foreign policy in the post-Cold War era with reference to the changing balance of power between Russia and the West (Sakwa 2008, 242). Mearsheimer, as the progenitor of offensive realism, argues that Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 was simply an attempt to counter the NATO enlargement (Mearsheimer 2014, 78). The most critical challenge of Realist framework is its downplaying of domestic factors. Some scholars use the neoclassical variant of the realist paradigm to include Russia-specific factors into their analyses. In addition to that, Realism also tends to ignore economic and normative factors with its focus on power relations based on hard power.

The rising popularity of constructivism reflected upon the literature on the Russian Foreign Policy as well. Scholars that use constructivist frameworks could consider ideational factors in their analyses of Russian foreign policy (Kanet 2012, 394). For instance, Thorun underlines the role of ideas in Russian foreign policy after the Cold War (Thorun 2008). Yeşilbursa focuses on how Gorbachev changed Russian foreign policy with his 'new thinking' (Yeşilbursa 2019). Aside from these, there is well-established literature on Russian strategic culture (Snyder 1977; Ermath 2009). Some other scholars focus on the issue with alternative frameworks, which provide different perspectives. Critical geopolitics (Toal 2014), post-structuralist framework (Morozov 2015) and post-colonial frameworks (Spetschinsky and Balgova 2014) are among these frameworks. Focusing on one aspect of Russian foreign policy could provide an explanation. And all these explanations have merit in their own way. However, they do not aim to explain Russian foreign policy or Russia's place in the international order by including factors from different levels (individual, state, and system) and different dimensions (strategic, economic, and normative).

I argue that to capture the reality of Russian foreign policymaking, one needs to consider both external and internal factors while evaluating the position and power of Russia in strategic, economic, and normative dimensions. Most studies that promote one dynamic as being more important for determining the course of the Russian foreign policy do not completely ignore the other. However, the frameworks used to understand Russian foreign policymaking are not designed to assess every dynamic in their own logic and with their own impact. I propose that an appropriately designed eclectic framework may help considering many dynamics that influence Russian foreign policymaking and this is what this article sets out to do.

2. Theoretical Framework

In this work, I utilize an eclectic framework to analyze Russia's foreign policy in the emerging world order. Analytic eclecticism has been popularized in the International Relations (IR) discipline by Sil and Katzenstein's seminal work. In their 2010 book, they advise an expansive and flexible view of causality to explain the complex nature of political phenomena (Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 21). In analytic eclecticism, one can selectively integrate various analytical frameworks to create an eclectic theory, which can help to examine different dimensions of a phenomenon (Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 10). In our case, analytic eclecticism enables us to consider several factors that influence the Russian foreign policy-making process.

The literature is not rich in material that adopts an analytic eclectic approach in assessing Russian foreign policy. Among the few scholars who contribute to the literature with such perspective, Götz makes a call towards that direction and provides an eclectic framework that could help interpret Russian foreign policy. His framework goes beyond the discussion of whether external or internal factors made a larger impact on the Russian foreign policy with an eclectic design (2017, 243). However, his discussion of ideas is limited to their impact on state action. He also does not utilize his framework to produce a comprehensive account of Russian foreign policy. Balta, in her article on Turkey-Russia relations, also emphasizes the need to utilize an analytic eclectic approach (Balta 2019). In this work, I use an eclectic framework to examine various dynamics that influence Russian foreign policymaking.

In line with the main question of this research, I attempt to unpack the dimensions of Russia's power and the factors that drive Russia to employ its power in a certain direction. However, the concept, especially the dimensions of power, remains underdefined to meet the explanatory power attributed to the concept (Bilgin 2008, 6). The framework of this article is based on the idea that state power is circumstantial. Accordingly, I assume that state capacity depends on the type of power held and the international dimension within which such power is exercised. I focus on the state's military, economic and normative power(s) and argue that just like the military power, economic and normative power should also be considered and evaluated in their own dimensions rather than considering them as instruments of military/political/strategic power. Moreover, I also consider how states may utilize their power in one dimension to achieve their goals in another dimension. For example, having a large diaspora could be considered normative power as the holder and promoter of the values and identity a state nurtures at home. That same diaspora could also contribute to the state's economic power through remittances and strategic power if they form a militia group. However, in some cases, strength in one dimension could create weakness in another. As Mesbahi demonstrates in the case of Iran, the revolutionary position of Iran in the world system deprives it of meaningful alliances while such a stance enables Iran to build capacity via non-state actors (Mesbahi 2011, 17)

To evaluate the factors that influence the way a state (in our case Russia) possesses and utilizes their capacity, the context within which power is exercised should be considered. In his seminal work, after providing an extensive literature review, Waltz, as the pioneer researcher in neorealist tradition, suggests that the relative power distribution is the most important dynamic guiding state action (Waltz 2001, 160). Yet, besides not considering different dimensions of power, Waltz's analysis does not consider the 'interaction' between state and system and only focus on how the system impacts state behavior. With his attempt to demonstrate the interaction between the international system and domestic politics Gourevitch analyzes the impact of the international system on domestic politics (1978, 84). Similarly, in order to deal with the question of Iran's position in the international system, Mesbahi adopts a pragmatic framework and proposes that the assessment of any state's position in the international system must consider its interactions with three interrelated structures (military, economic and normative) of the international system (Mesbahi

2011, 11). In this research, I assume that state strategy stems from the interactions between state-level factors and system-level factors. Therefore, instead of choosing between state or system-level variables, I consider the interactions between state and system-level variables to explain how state power is utilized.

Such a framework examines state strategy with an analysis of the interactions between state power(s) and the international structure(s). In this work, in order to determine the place of Russia in the emerging world order, I focus on three dimensions of power: strategic/military, economic/developmental, and cultural/social, as well as power at two levels: systemic and domestic. Strategic power refers to the ability of states in protecting the security and well-being of their citizens through military power in and outside of their borders. Whether a country has nuclear power or not, its capacity to wage urban warfare and its intelligence are the most important indicators for a country's strategic power. The economic assets of a state are made up of its economic power. A state's GDP, PPP, access to natural resources, and creditworthiness make up of state's economic power. The social/normative (or soft) power is conditional upon the way a country identifies itself and the context where its normative power is used. To what extent a country could exert influence abroad through its diaspora, coreligionists or persons and institutions willing to defend the strategic goals of that country out of ideological affinity may determine the normative power of this country.

When it comes to military power, this paper focuses on the state's armed forces, strategic weapons, and the geopolitical advantages and disadvantages for offense and defense. Borrowing a neorealist assessment, I assume that the state is supposed to act as a unitary state when using its armed forces. They also act within an international structure that is formed in accordance with the distribution of power among recognized states (Waltz 2001). However, this explanation will not be enough in explaining certain cases where state capacity does not correspond to maneuvering area. International law and status also limit the amount of power a state can use to advance its interests. This paper also considers these elements aside from the interactions between dimensions.

In the economic dimension, multinational corporations, cartels, and even individuals could be considered as actors besides states. While the states tend to act like a unitary body in a geo-economic structure, money, unlike guns, is available for the use of people and institutions. The neorealist analysis of economic power is based on Waltz's assertion that economic and military power cannot be weighed separately and that states are ranked in accordance with the sum of their power in all dimensions (Waltz 1979, 131). There have also been attempts to include economic power as part of the instrument of state power (Gilpin 1987). On the other hand, Luttwak, from a neoliberal institutional perspective, points out the separate logic of economic relations between states (Luttwak 1990, 17). In this work, I admit that economics does have separate logic with states cooperating to succeed with lesser control on how the money flows. However, to accurately evaluate a state's economic power, one needs to consider cases where a state employs its economic power to achieve strategic ends (Wigell and Wihma 2016, 606). Therefore, this paper holds a middle position between these two spectrums.

In a geonormative setting, the state's ideology, religion, and history could be considered normative. There is a popular conceptualization of normative power by Nye as soft power (Nye 2011). He draws attention to the relevance of soft power to conceptual the ability of states to achieve their ends using the power of attraction (Nye 2011). In this article, I treat the concept of soft power as the sum of tools a state can use to real its strategy in normative structure and advance its interests in geostrategic and geoeconomic settings. Unlike economic and military power, the type of normative power brings its own advantages and disadvantages. For instance, while the Soviet Union had a better position to develop relations with states that tend to adopt the socialist system, Russia could build brotherly ties with Serbia based on a common dominant religion.

The next step is to explain Russia's strategy that develops in interaction within the framework of the circumstantial conditions of the context where power is exercised. In employing these capacities, states act within certain domestic, regional, and systemic limitations and opportunities. These limitations and opportunities stem from the dynamics in place or from certain events taking place. Moreover, using a constructivist outlook, I assume that states also become active agents of the systems in which they operate in all three structures within the framework of the structural dynamics in different systems and in proportion to their agential power.

In accordance with these premises, I will examine Russia's foreign policy through consideration of Russia's interaction with forces at different dimensions and different levels. Therefore, I will be analyzing Russia's capacity and strategy at military, economic, and normative dimensions.

3. Main tenets of post-Iraq War international order and Russia

The international order that emerged following 9/11 produces opportunities, challenges, and threats for Russia. The international backlash towards the US invasion of Iraq laid the groundwork for an international order where the degree to which the US allies bandwagon them decreased and the degree to which the US adversaries balanced them increased. Such a situation gave way to a tendency in the literature to describe the international order that emerged after 9/11 as one that moved away from unipolarity towards multipolarity.

The transition period after the dissolution of the USSR was a learning process for the Russian political elite to discover the place of Russia in the new world order. In the initial phase of its foundation, the Russian Federation under President Yeltsin was determined to respect the newly independent former member states of the Soviet Union and change its anti-Western stance to become a normal member of the Western international society (Dannreuther 1997, 10). Yeltsin, who had under him Liberal technocrats such as Deputy Foreign Minister Gaidar and Foreign Minister Kozyrev, attempted to transform the stagnant and centralized economy of the Soviet Union into a market economy through shock therapy. However, neither could Russia become a respected member of the Western international society nor did the domestic reforms succeed. The shock therapy method and voucher privatization, which were employed to ensure the transition to a market economy, only enabled the transfer of state assets

to a handful of oligarchs. The Western economic assistance through IMF remained inadequate. The 1998 economic crisis and the declining oil prices exacerbated Russia's political and economic stability. The Chechen insurgency began to ring alarm bells for Russia's territorial integrity.

At this juncture, the expansion of NATO through the inclusion of multiple former Warsaw Pact countries to the organization, and the NATO intervention to Kosovo in 1999 played a significant role in Russia's adopting a balancing strategy against the US (Kanet 2002). The domestic opposition to the way Russia was treated by the West as well as the economic and political instability brought about a retreat from pluralism in domestic politics and a shift in Russia's foreign policy (Kanet 2018, 179). As a result, Russia adopted a more independent and assertive stance aiming at a multipolar world order and increasing Russian influence in the post-Soviet space. Such a stance was clearly reflected in Russia's national strategy document promulgated in the year 2000 (Putin 2000a). Thus, Russia's growing negative attitude towards the way US-led NATO alliance project power laid the groundwork for the assertive foreign policy Russia came to fully adopt during the 2000s.

Having been hand-picked by Yeltsin, the new President Vladimir Putin continued Russia's assertive foreign policy strategy in a fast-changing international environment. Following the 9/11 attacks, Putin first aimed to elevate Russia's status through bandwagoning the US and became one of the first leaders to offer support to the US in his fight towards international terrorism after 9/11. Russia was so eager to appear in solidarity with the US that the Russian Foreign Policy Council advised Putin to drop the emphasis on multipolarity (Turner 2009, 165). However, this policy lasted only until the US decision to invade Iraq unilaterally. Considering the move as dangerous for regional dynamics and contrary to its interests, Russia joined several other countries that had opposed the intervention and helped to steer the international politics further away from US-led unipolarity. Russia's attempts to trump up its efforts to counter the US hegemony increased in parallel to regional developments that reassured the Russian ruling elite that the Western global and regional designations were running counter to Russia's security interests. Russia especially considered Color Revolutions and Arab Uprisings as Western manipulations to increase their strategic influence against Russia in the post-Soviet space and in the Middle East. These developments caused Russia to feel encircled and to consider the relations with the US as a zero-sum game where chances for cooperation are slim. Russia came to a point where it rejects post-Cold War international order as one that is constructed to the advantage of the US (Kanet 2018).

4. Evaluation of Russia's foreign policy in post-Iraq War international order

In this section, I attempt to explain the main factors that impact Russian foreign policymaking by utilizing the eclectic framework presented in this article. My framework is based on the examination of the interactions between the strategic, economic, and normative strategies of a state with the respective systemic dimensions. To explain the case of Russia, I examine the interaction between Russia's strategic, economic and

normative power and strategy and the dimensions of the international system. Then, I discuss how these connections influence Russia's foreign policy.

a. Strategic Dimension

In the post-Iraq War global structure, the military capacity of the US far exceeds any other state in the international system if military spending is an indicator (The World Bank 2021). However, the disappearance of the rather confining atmosphere of bipolarity provided other less powerful agents of the world system with an opportunity to assert themselves regionally and even globally, providing them with a wider maneuvering area (Baker 2020). While initially, during the 1990s, the US seemed to be in an advantageous position, the challenges of maintaining its primacy began to manifest themselves in less than a decade. The international system in the post-Iraq War period has been described as the non-polar world (Haass 2008), no one's world (Kupchan 2012), the post-American world (Zakaria 2008). These accounts by scholars coming from different intellectual backgrounds and using various frameworks and metrics point to a condition where the US primacy is questionable or even non-existent. Then, the Bush-era US overextension through the Iraqi invasion was contested not just by China and Russia but also by US allies like France and Turkey. The overlap of interests between the allies and competitors of the US created a condition where the US hegemony began to face a significant challenge.

The contemporary world geopolitics provides opportunities and puts limitations on Russia, a nuclear power with a seat at the UNSC with military capabilities far below that of the US. After the end of the Cold War, Russia kept the nuclear weapons and the UNSC seat of the Soviet Union. In a strategic environment where the US is no longer the hegemon that dictates its will everywhere in the world, Russia has a maneuvering area for challenging the global governance US attempts to impose. However, the expansion of NATO and the dissolution of the Soviet Union significantly weakened the position of the Kremlin against the West. Russia's experience as the successor of a superpower, its imperial past, and unique geopolitics brought about a strategy to help Russia to achieve this aim in a particular way. Officially, Russia aims to maintain its privileged position in the post-Soviet space and to promote a multipolar global political system (Medvedev 2008; Putin 2016). Nuclear weapons remain the most formidable factor of coercion even after the dissolution of the end of the Cold War. The nuclear arms race made up the most significant part of the global security dynamics during the Cold War when the USA and the USSR dangerously competed to outdo one another in achieving a more dangerous nuclear capability. Following the dissolution of the USSR, Russia lost territory, economic power, and its ideology but retained its superpower status at the nuclear power dimension. Accordingly, Russia continued to develop its nuclear stockpile and placed a greater emphasis on nuclear weapons in its strategic doctrine (Putin 2000b; Putin 2010). Russia not only modernized its Soviet-inherited nuclear weapons but also developed novel designs of strategic weapons systems in parallel with the developing technology (Ashley Jr. 2019). In March 2018, Putin unveiled the latest developments in Russia's nuclear technology when he demonstrated the new class of weapons could easily hit the continental US (Putin 2018). Russia's emphasis stems not only from the transfer of Soviet strategic

thinking to the post-Soviet period but also from the continuing securitization of Russia by the Western security institutions.

The Russian Army is another significant element of Russia's strategic capability. Even though it had to decrease its military spending during the transition, Russia maintained a formidable army with significant manpower backed by a Soviet-inherited military-industrial complex. In its near abroad, where Russia aims to maintain its hegemonic influence, the Russian army was so far used in multiple military interventions, including the 2008 Georgian war and the Annexation of Crimea in 2014. Russia also assisted Assad to stay in power in Syria, which can be considered an example of how it utilized the Russian Armed Forces to successfully challenge the US influence. Moreover, Russia also makes extensive use of private security companies and local militias in its attempt to achieve strategic goals in troubled regions. The activities of Russian private security firm Wagner in Libya in support of warlord Haftar could be an example of that. In addition to this, the manner in which Russia utilized local Russian militia in Eastern Ukraine demonstrates Russia's flexible military doctrine (Boulegue and Polyakova 2021). This also shows that the millions of ethnic Russians living across the post-Soviet space can be a strategic asset for Russia.

Besides physical military interventions, Russia's arms sales to countries deemed to be in partnership with Russia can be considered as a way of fostering a multipolar world order by challenging the US hegemony. Despite the decreasing volume in comparison to the Soviet-era, Russia continues arms exports to old Soviet allies and especially to countries known for their opposition to the US; Venezuela is an example (Kramer 2019). Another example of how Russia uses arms sales strategically could be Russia's sale of the S400 missile defense system to Turkey, which has created a significant rift within Turkey's relations with NATO (Dalay 2019). Such transactions can be considered as foreign policy actions that benefit Russia in both strategic and economic dimensions.

Russia's seat in the UNSC is not only a symbolic indication of Russia's status in the international system but also an effective instrument for Russia to permit or allow collective action by the UN in response to global crises. Since the end of the Cold War, Moscow challenged the US-led interventions to Yugoslavia, Iraq, and most recently Syria. To promote a multipolar world order, Russia suggests the expansion of the membership to the security council. However, in line with its desire to protect its privileged status, Russia maintains a conservative position in preserving the status of the permanent members in the UNSC. These two points are explicitly suggested in the latest official Foreign Policy Concept of Russia (Putin 2016).

In the light of the analysis provided in this section, it can be argued that the current world order makes it easier for Russia to extend its strategic reach beyond the post-Soviet space. However, Russia has to meet the challenges in maintaining its *primus-inter-pares* position in the post-Soviet space. Having been freed by the limitations of the Cold War and Russia's economic and political challenges during the 1990s, Russia has been able to further its strategic interests regionally and globally under Putin through its military/political power. Regionally, Russia's still formidable military and military-industrial complex enable it to control the events in its immediate

neighborhood not only through arms sales but also through direct military interventions. At the global level, where Russia aims to foster a multipolar world order, it uses its seat in the UNSC to either prevent or allow certain multilateral steps from being taken, maintains a strong nuclear capability, show its willingness to utilize nuclear force if necessary, and conducts military interventions beyond its immediate neighborhood. Under Obama, the US sought a detour from this policy by giving more emphasis on countering China in Asia and decreasing military commitments in the Middle East (Obama 2010; Clinton 2011). Yet, under him, an inadequate US military action in the course of the Syrian Civil War increased the influence of regional actors such as Russia, Turkey, and Iran. This policy, which was pursued under Trump in another form through his willingness to 'end the endless wars,' enabled Russia to gain a foothold in regions once far from its immediate interests.

b. Economic/Developmental Dimension

With the dissolution of the USSR, the greatest obstacle to the globalization of the world economy was eliminated, and market capitalism became the only game in town in the global economic system. As the Soviet Union stopped providing developmental assistance for those states willing to replicate the Soviet experience, the free market economy made inroads into Eastern Europe and post-Soviet space. All newly independent former Soviet member states adopted market capitalism in varying degrees. Eventually, in 2004, seven former Eastern Bloc countries joined the EU while Russia began requesting IMF funds to amalgamate its economy to the rest of the world. However, the wave of economic crises that began with the Asian Financial Crisis in 1998 and then spread out to other parts of the world depopularized market-friendly policies throughout the developing world (Gore 2000, 799). In the 2000s, the economic rise of China is considered a serious challenge to the US global hegemony (Mearsheimer 2006). The US remains the wealthiest country in the world in terms of GDP (The World Bank 2021). But China is projected to surpass the US by 2028 (Wu and Hancock 2021).

Russia's position in the world's economic structure is not as grand as its strategic ambitions. Although the Soviet Union was one of the two superpowers of the world system throughout the Cold War, it could never match the US neither in the production of basic food materials nor in providing a successful development model. Russia is no different in terms of its ranking of economic power. As of 2019, Russia's GDP was smaller than Canada and Italy's (The World Bank 2021). Russia achieved this ranking as a result of the rise of oil prices during the 2000s. Russia does not promote an alternative economic system to market capitalism, in contrast to the Soviet Union, which had a claim of a superior economic system. During the 1990s, state assets ended up in the hands of a handful of oligarchs, and then Putin increased the control of the state over these assets during his Presidency. Such a process of transition instigated the literature to call Russia's economy a statist market economy (Lane 2008) and patrimonial market economy (Schlumberger 2008). In the post-Iraq War era, Russia benefited from this newly found economic power to fund its strategic goals. The significant place of economic resources in Russia's foreign policy strategy is

explicitly mentioned in the latest Foreign Policy Concept with a mention of economic resources as a means for furthering foreign policy agenda as well (Putin 2016).

One of the most important economic instruments that Russia made use of in its foreign policy is developmental assistance. During the Cold War, the Soviet development assistance aimed at transforming the recipient country's economic structure by supporting state-led hard industry in the recipient states (Guan-fu 1983, 71). Russia's development assistance does not have such an aim and takes place within the framework of its intensifying cooperation with the OECD and BRICS (Zaytsev 2021, 476). It is noteworthy, however, that the direction of developmental assistance Russia provides overlaps with the list of non-European Soviet allies with Cuba, Nicaragua, and Guinea coming right after post-Soviet countries (Zaitsev and Knobel 2017, 15). Here, there is a certain level of overlap between Russia's soft power and economic power, both supporting each other. Russia's making use of developmental assistance to strengthen its hegemonic role in the post-Soviet space could be considered within the framework of its national strategy. Besides advancing Russia's strategic interests, Russia also aims to bolster its soft power through funding projects that promote Russian culture and language abroad. Such activity emerges at the intersection of normative and economic structure and will be analyzed further below.

Russia also used its natural resources to advance its strategic interests. In the post-Soviet space, Russia uses oil and gas sales to maintain the political loyalty of the former members of the Soviet Union. During the Cold War, the USSR also followed a similar policy towards its satellite states in Europe (Maresse and Vanous 1983). One example of how this policy was sustained is seen in Ukraine. After the dissolution of the USSR, Ukraine began to purchase Russian gas at subsidised prices, which went even lower when the transit fees Russia paid to Ukraine were considered (Newnham 2011, 138). Following the Orange Revolution in 2004, when pro-Russian Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma was toppled, Russia immediately increased the price of natural gas for Ukraine. After the heightening of tensions between Ukraine and Russia in 2014, Russia turned to Turkey to build a new natural gas pipeline to circumvent Ukraine. In Europe, Russia uses its almost-state-controlled energy industry by increasing its share of oil and gas supply to Europe and maintaining its dominance of pipelines that transport the natural resources of the Caspian Sea to the West. The proximity of Russia to Eastern Europe helped Russia increase its control over the oil and natural gas market in Eastern Europe and in the post-Soviet region. For instance, the US strongly supported the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline project in an attempt to diversify the transportation lines of Caspian Oil. In response, Russia increased its influence in the energy market of the region with Blue Stream (direct pipeline to Turkey through Black Sea, circumventing a Balkan route) and South Stream (direct pipeline to Southern Europe through the Black Sea and Turkey, circumventing Ukraine). Most recently, the Nordstream 2 (direct pipeline to Germany through the Baltic Sea, circumventing Eastern Europe) caused controversy across Europe and in the US as a project that increases Europe's dependence on Russia (Wintour 2018).

The Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) is one of the vehicles for Russia to increase its economic control over at least a portion of the post-Soviet space. Although

it could include only four other post-Soviet countries, EEU plays a significant role in supporting Moscow's political influence and warding off Western overlay.

Russia's participation in BRICS is yet another component of Russia's attempts to promote a multipolar world order. The concept of BRIC as a bloc for emerging economic powers was first promoted by investment bankers in 1993, which anticipated the emergence of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) as the organization we know today (Sachs 2003). The literature treats BRICS either as an attempt to dissent against the international economic system or a grouping of developing countries in an attempt to strengthen their global economic standing (Sergunin 2020, 134). Whichever is the case, it can be suggested that BRICS provides a platform for Russia to assert yet another challenge to the Western hegemony and to promote a multipolar order although it is debatable to what extent other BRICS countries share Russia's aspirations.

Even though Russia can hardly be considered as a great power when economic indicators are considered, its smart use of economic resources helps Russia achieve its regional and global strategic gains. In the post-Soviet space, Russia continues to provide oil and natural gas at subsidized prices while it does not hesitate to cut the gas or raise the prices if the importer country steers away from Moscow's line in foreign policy. Similarly, Russia's domination of Europe's import of natural gas provides Russia an advantage by way of softening the stance of the Europeans towards Russia's aggressive policies. As is the case with the strategic dimension, the economic dimension of the current geopolitical brings about certain opportunities and challenges to Russia.

c. Social/Normative Dimension

At the initial phase of the post-Cold War era, there was an expectation of a Western-dominated international order. Some, like Fukuyama, went as far as to suggest that it was the end of history (Fukuyama 2006). However, from the mid-1990s, the application of such a project began to show signs of failure when the international community could not remedy successive humanitarian crises in Somalia, Rwanda, and Bosnia. The latest development towards the same direction was the US invasion of Iraq when the disruptive impact of the invasion to Iraq and to the region further diminished trust in the global leadership and regional role of the US. The allies and potential allies of the US began to see the US as a power that dictates its own interests with military power. Accordingly, the US normative power significantly diminished with others no longer aspiring to emulate the social and economic achievements of the US (Moravscik 2005). As a result of this, in the post-Iraq War period, a multipolar, if not bipolar, world order emerged with various societal models (socialist, European, Islamic, etc.) competing with the American brand of liberal democracy.

Following the dissolution of the USSR, Russia disowned the normative heritage of the Soviet Union through which a web of the socialist alliance was maintained during the Cold War. Russia had to utilize channels other than common communist ideology to support its strategic goals and bolster its normative power. In the post-Iraq War era, within the framework of its two main strategic aims, Russia attempted to build bridges

with the post-Soviet nations through ethnic Russianness, Orthodoxy, and a common Soviet past while targeting fringe political groups in the West in an attempt to destabilize and weaken the political environment in Europe and in the US. Such a tactic conforms with Russia's strategy of fostering a multipolar world order through opposition to US hegemony through delegitimizing unipolarity. Similarly, in the post-Soviet space, Russia aims to build and strengthen a Moscow-led hierarchy through emphasizing common values via various soft power institutions. It should also be noted that while Russia inevitably uses soft power, it has a satirical approach towards the term itself due to the way it was brought to Russia's attention within the framework of the Color Revolutions and Arab Uprisings. In an article published under Putin's name, it is argued that most of the time, soft power instruments are used to provoke extremist groups and intervene in the domestic affairs of other sovereign states (Putin 2012).

Russia transformed and continued to use Soviet-era soft power instruments by adapting them to meet its strategic needs in the post-Iraq War period. In contrast to the Soviet period when communist ideology was the focal point of Russian identity, or during the 1990s when Russia was undergoing a transition period, in the post-Iraq War period, Russia emphasized Russian culture, norms, and values via its soft power institutions. Russia's soft-power instruments not only support Russia's geostrategic and geoeconomic goals but also bolster Russia's efforts to reconstruct its identity in the post-Iraq War period.

*Rossotrudnichestvo*¹ is among the most important soft power instruments of Russia. It aims to promote Russian culture and language abroad through developmental projects. *Rossotrudnichestvo* can be considered as a continuation of VOKS,² which was founded in the Soviet Union to develop cultural relations with other countries through development projects and cultural activities. Founded in 2008 under the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this institution originally targeted the former members of the Soviet Union. In the following years, its representatives spread to other parts of the world and opened representatives in more than 80 countries (*Rossotrudnichestvo*). In former members of the USSR, such as in Kazakhstan or in Azerbaijan, the representative offices conduct activities that emphasize shared history, such as the Soviet victory against Nazi Germany. In other countries, like in Turkey or Italy, the representative offices conduct activities to promote Russian culture and maintain places that are of historical importance to Russia. *Rossotrudnichestvo*, therefore, aims to support Russia's hegemonic influence in the post-Soviet space, establish Russia's post-Soviet identity and increase Russia's cultural influence worldwide.

¹ Federal'noye agentstvo po delam Sodruzhestva Nezavisimyykh Gosudarstv, sootchestvennikov, prozhivayushchikh za rubezhom, i po mezhdunarodnomu gumanitarnomu sotrudnichestvu - Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States Affairs, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation.

² Vsesoyuznoe Obşçestvo Kulturnoi Svyazi s Zagranitzey – All-Union Society for Social and Cultural Connections with Foreign Countries

Russkiy Mir (Russian World) was founded in 2007 to promote Russian culture and language through various cultural activities abroad through cultural activities. The institution organizes activities that aim to promote Russian literature, culture, and language through book presentations, exhibitions, roundtables, and film-viewing events under the roof of Russian Centers (*Russkiy Mir* 2021). *Russkiy Mir* is active mainly in the Balkans and former member states of the Soviet Union. Its activities should be considered within the framework of Russia's security doctrine, which considers the protection of Russia's spiritual and moral values as a security matter (Putin 2000a). *Russkiy Mir* also acts as a transmission belt between the Russian state and the Orthodox Churches in the post-Soviet region and Balkans (Payne 2015). It is important to note that during the Soviet era, such cooperation was limited (Walters 1986, 136).

Russia also funds or directly operates a number of think tanks or foundations to promote the Russian way of thinking worldwide. One of the most important of such institutions is the Institute of Democracy and Cooperation (IDC). Its headquarters are in Paris. Founded by historian Natalya Narotçinskaya, also a former member of Russian Duma, IDC organizes roundtables and conferences to amplify the way Russia considers certain political issues (IDC 2021). Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC) is founded by the common initiative of the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is based in Russia's capital, Moscow. RIAC publishes research articles about issues related to Russia's foreign policy agenda. Gorchakov Fund is another international civil society organization aimed at increasing Russia's soft power. Founded in 2010, the Gorchakov Fund provides support through grants to projects in an attempt to enhance the international activities of Russian NGOs.

State-owned media institutions are another important arm of Russia's soft power activity. Russia Today (RT) was founded in 2005 within the framework of the public diplomacy breakthrough that took place after the color revolutions in the former Soviet countries to broadcast TV via cable and internet for overseas audiences. Broadcasting in English, Spanish, Arabic, and Russian languages, RT's broadcast purpose is to make the agenda of the Russian state come to the fore more strongly in matters concerning international politics. As RT's slogan (Question More) shows, RT's broadcasting aims to delegitimize the dominant narrative in the West. Rossiya Segodnya was founded in 2013 by order of President Putin to gather RIA Novosti television and the Voice of Russia under a single roof. Sputnik, established in 2014 under Rossiya Segodnya, broadcasts internationally over the internet and radio waves. It can be considered an institution similar to Radio Liberty. All these institutions help Russia to foster a multipolar order at the normative dimension either by promoting Russia's view or delegitimizing the dominant narrative in the West.

Russia's normative capacity is quite limited compared to that of the Soviet Union. Unlike its predecessor, Russia is deprived of the position of the main promoter of a globally applicable popular socio-economic system. On the one hand, this situation provides Russia an opportunity to more strongly utilize its own culture, language, literature, and religion. On the other hand, Russia is unable to act as a superpower in such a geo-normative condition. Accordingly, Russia takes a defensive position and

uses various foreign policy instruments to delegitimize the dominant US-led Western liberal narrative.

5. Conclusion

This article analyzed Russia's foreign policy in the post-Iraq War international order. Using an eclectic framework, I demonstrated how Russian foreign policy in the post-Iraq War period has emerged because of the interactions between the Russian state and the international structural conditions. With the help of the framework I used, I analyzed Russia's evolving military, economic and normative power and how Russia used its power in these structures within the framework of its national strategy.

The findings of this research show that Russia's national strategy in the post-Iraq War has two pillars: maintaining Russia's hegemonic influence in the post-Soviet region (particularly in the Black Sea and the Caucasus regions while not resisting a certain level of Chinese influence in Central Asia and Western influence in the Baltic region) and fostering a multipolar world order. Relying on its natural resources, military-industrial complex, and the global and regional legacy of the Soviet and Imperial normative influence, Russia utilizes soft power instruments, military power, diplomacy, and strategic use of economic resources. In its near abroad, Russia attempts to maintain its privileged position through economic and energy dependence, political influence and shared post-Soviet or Orthodox culture. At the global level, Russia utilizes natural gas pipelines, soft power instruments, and political machinations to sow the seeds of discord within the West while furthering its own interest and influence.

An analysis of the interactions between Russia's strategy and the international context during the post-Iraq War period shows that Russia benefits from various instruments to real its foreign policy goals. These instruments, the way Russia is able to use them, and the types of these instruments depend on the corresponding dimension. In a strategic dimension, Russia remains a strong, albeit weaker than the Soviet Union, global power with a seat in the UNSC and nuclear weapons. Using its seat in the UNSC and its nuclear capacity, Russia can check the US global hegemony. Russia uses its armed forces to maintain its influence in the post-Soviet space. Beyond that, in places like Libya and in Syria, Russia takes benefit from both its army and private military contractors. In the economic dimension, Russia is neither a substantial economy nor has an original developmental system to be replicated worldwide. Despite these, Kremlin's control over the major oil and gas companies in Russia enables Putin to put Russia's oil and gas exports to use, to real its strategic goals. Utilizing its enormous reserves, Russia provides gas and oil at subsidized prices for political gains in the post-Soviet region and increases its political influence in Europe. In the normative dimension, Russia is not the main promoter of communism, but it can utilize cultural, religious, and linguistic bonds to generate soft power. Russia utilizes several soft power institutions and media institutions to strengthen its hegemonic influence in the post-Soviet space and promote its narrative on political issues in Europe.

This article will primarily contribute to the ongoing discussions of the factors that influence Russia's foreign policymaking. With the help of its eclectic framework, it provides a wholesome picture of Russia's foreign policy within the framework of the post-Iraq War world order. It's second, perhaps more important, the contribution is the

framework and model used in this research. The eclectic framework of this research can be used to explain how a state, other than Russia, makes foreign policy within the framework of the existing structural dynamics.

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