

UNIVERSITY OF TAMPERE

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THE IMAGE OF NATO IN SOVIET AND RUSSIAN MEDIA
Changing Circumstances, Unchanging Myths

Master's Thesis
Department of Journalism and Mass Communication
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ABSTRACT

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This study concerns the NATO image in Soviet and Russian media. The empirical research of this work centers on the analysis of political cartoons depicting NATO in the main Soviet daily *Pravda* and Russian newspaper articles concerning NATO in President Putin's time. The method of study is content analysis with the qualitative approach. This work examines the changes NATO's image has undergone in the depiction by Soviet and Russian media depending on time and circumstances.

The Soviet media served as a mouthpiece for those in power and all published material was under the strict control of the Communist Party. The main Soviet daily at the time, *Pravda*, was a propaganda tool for the Soviet echelons of power during the Cold War. The world was divided into two hostile camps, "capitalists" and "socialists," and propaganda was one of the main weapons in this war. The mass media were used as a battlefield. The image of the enemy on the pages of *Pravda* was clear – it was the NATO military bloc and the USA as its leader. However, this image did alter with time, as did the perception of NATO, and this Thesis analyses these changes and their significance.

When the USSR collapsed, there were big changes in the field of the Russian media. After the "wild 1990s," a chaotic time for the Russians, Vladimir Putin came into office and set a different tone in NATO-Russia relations; this was depicted in the Russian media. However, as there were both governmental and independent media in existence now, it is important to analyze how the same event in NATO-Russia relations is interpreted in these two different types of media. In this Thesis, *Nezavisimaya gazeta* has been selected to represent independent media, while *Izvestia* is an example of government-oriented media.

Much time has elapsed and the political map of the world has changed; the USSR is no longer, while Russia has come to be its successor – so the question is whether the image of NATO has also undergone great changes in the shift from Soviet to Russian media. The research conducted in this Thesis indicates that, despite the great alterations on the world political scene, there is a great amount of continuity in Soviet and Russian media approaches to NATO.

The Image of NATO in Soviet and Russian Media: Changing Circumstances, Unchanging Myths

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FOREWORD

I was born in a country that does not exist on the political map any longer. Its name was the USSR. It disappeared, just like the mythical Atlantis. The Communist ideology was blamed for all its sins and declared to be wrong; but, the time when I was born, this ideology was considered around me the only right one. And when I was a child, I liked to look at political sketches in newspapers and humoristic magazines. Some of them were funny, some were not understandable, but from my very childhood I remember the pictures of a fat, ugly man with a scary expression on his face. Though the precise figure of that man could vary, he was always recognizable – with a bomb in one hand he was about to sling and wearing a black cylinder hat with the white note above the forehead: “NATO”. Sometimes it was not a human being, but a spider-like creature in the same hat stretching its disgusting tentacles to the familiar geographical contour of my country, with the big red letters across it – the USSR.

Thus my political education started quite early. I was brought up in a country I have always loved. As children we were taught that our country was the most powerful, strong, and people-orientated – the best place to live in. It was the biggest in the globe and full of treasures of the soil. Everything, all the boundless forests and wide beautiful rivers, lakes and mountains, minerals in the soil and harvests on the fields – everything belonged to the very lucky Soviet people: us. We made friends with the other good people, but some others were not good; some strange, hateful creatures wanted to start the Third World War. Friendly good peaceful people were communists; the name of the enemies was – capitalists.

In this way, from the beginning of my life, I received a notion about the entire world. The main part of it was our wonderful communistic society and the other peace-orientated brotherhood countries. The unknowable darkness surrounding us was populated by enemies. Similarly to how, according to Copernicus’s heliocentric system, the Sun is the center of our galaxy and the planets revolve around it, I was brought up with the idea that the USSR was the centre of the world and the unknown unfriendly something that surrounded it wanted to ruin our world. We could not let them overcome us; we had to struggle to defend ourselves.

Times have changed. The USSR does not exist any longer. I was there during the perestroika and went through many painful events together with my compatriots. I brought up my own children there. Later, I left Russia and moved countries. Traveling made my horizons wider; I thought a lot about many

things. I still regard myself as a patriot of my country. I thought about the myths, legends and prejudices that have been shaping and comforting the Russian society for years. Russia is a closed country and it develops on its own way. Though Russians travel abroad nowadays, and media broadcast the news 24/7 and the Internet provides plenty of information that was not possible to get before, sometimes it seems to me that Russia is surrounded not only with the real state borders, but above them is an invisible magic glass that distorts, in fairy-tale fashion, the vision and understanding of the events that happen outside Russia. Information transforms somehow and Russians still live in an improbable isolated land. It is not because of the media; the access to foreign sources of information is easy nowadays, and the Russian media provide information about domestic and foreign events that could be objective. It is not about the information itself, it is about how Russians (who used to live in a closed society for decades), take the information and how they assimilate it.

Thus, in order to come back to the very beginning of my life and to answer the questions that have tortured me for decades, I decided to devote my Thesis to NATO-USSR (Russia) relations. I, a Cold War child, a person “from another side of the border”, was able to get a Western point of view on these relations, to read the sources and to learn about different points of view – very different from the one that I was brought up with.

While writing this Thesis was an exhilarating task, it came also with certain pitfalls and crises. This Thesis would not be possible without the invaluable help and patience of my professor in charge Kaarle Nordenstreng. His guidance and advice during the entire time of my work on the Thesis gave me the confidence and inspiration I needed. I also want to thank the second reader of my Thesis, Jukka Pietiläinen, who read this work and gave invaluable constructive commentary, shedding light on some of my unwise structural decisions. I also would like to mention my fellow students, as they were always wonderfully supportive. Finally, I would also want to thank my daughter, Maria Steinson. Though busy with her own studies, she always was helped and inspired me. Without her love and support this work would never be accomplished.

Tampere, 20.11.2010

Svetlana Steinson

Chapter 1. Introduction. Research Problem and Research Method

The research problem of this Thesis is how the image of NATO in Soviet and Russian media changed over time and how the media was used by those in power to reflect their ideological agendas. The task of this Thesis is thus rather far-reaching and research methodology should be established before one proceeds any further with it, for this topic could be approached in a number of different ways. For the purpose of media studies such as this one, scholars normally use qualitative and/or quantitative methods, as these methods offer a variety of tools and techniques to analyze media messages. Qualitative and quantitative methods are nowadays accepted as equally valid research tools; as Alasuutari points out, the main difference between them is that the later is based on statistical regularities of the text corpus, and how they are associated with each other,¹ but “qualitative text analysis helps us to elucidate how something is said rather than how many times something is said.”² When facing the problem of choosing the most appropriate method for fulfilling the research goals of this Thesis, both of these options have to be taken into account.

Quantitative research method is a method that allows for establishing statistical patterns. In media studies, a researcher may, for instance, wish to calculate how many times certain words – epithets or particular wording – have been used in specific texts, so as to support the author’s argumentation or to determine a trend. It is certainly important for media research to determine the fluctuation of certain trends, i.e. certain epithets increasing in usage or becoming more rare; the degree of argumentation shifting to another angle because of greater (or lesser) usage of some definitions and epithets. Such a method allows for comparative analysis, which can then produce conclusions based on real data – however, it is only valid insofar as there is real data to be drawn from specific sources. Another disadvantage of quantitative research is that it does not tell much about the context from which the data is procured. In the attempt to apply the quantitative method to this particular Thesis question, there arose the immediate issue of a lack of specific variables to determine and the overwhelming importance of the aforementioned context.

In the effort to discover how the image of NATO changed in Soviet and Russian media over time, perhaps one had to search for statistical regularity of appearance of certain negative or positive epithets in media texts; yet, the epithets are so numerous that it would be impossible to take all options into

¹ Alasuutari, P., Researching culture. Qualitative Method and Cultural Studies (1995), p. 11.

² Seth, R. Von, From the Soviet to the Post-Soviet Russian Press: Democracy and the Elusive Public Sphere (2008), p. 111.

account. It might have been possible had this research focused on views expressed by one person only through time; but the argumentation of this Thesis will be build on analyzing different media messages created by the different authors, with the gap of the time and representing different Soviet and Russian media. Different journalists inevitably use different definitions and wordings to support their argumentation. It is not easy to compare the number of times an epithet was used across different publications, because authors might use synonyms, different terms, or even put a message “between the lines”. Choosing only a limited few epithets at random and observing their frequency would naturally fail to produce meaningful research conclusions. Thus, the quantitative method, while its usefulness cannot be contested in other research pursuits, is not entirely relevant for the purposes of this Thesis.

On the other hand, qualitative research considers in depth the meaning of a message sent by the author(s) of a text to its audience. Using it, it is possible to analyze why in one particular case a certain word makes such a big difference to the overall message of a publication; where it emphasizes a certain attitude, where it creates ridicule, and where it makes a pithy allusion. Succinctly put, “a central objective in various qualitative text analyses is to reveal aspects of mediated language that are basically implicit with the aim of elucidating how reality is interpreted and constructed.”³ In deconstructing the messages implicit in political media communication, content analysis is naturally key. Krippendorff notes, “Mass communication is, of course, the traditional domain of content analysis.”⁴ In this Thesis research also, content analysis presents itself as the optimal tool for deciphering the messages conveyed in Soviet and Russian media, for it allows for deeper appreciation of the context of those messages and their hidden meanings.

The challenge of the qualitative method lies in choosing the sources for analysis. Since this method does not rely upon statistical frequency of certain terms, it does not demand a great breadth of research samples; on the other hand, it does require careful consideration of pieces selected for content analysis. In order to answer the research question of this Thesis, mass media communication of the USSR and then of modern Russia had to be taken into account. As concerns the USSR, the main Soviet daily, *Pravda*, has been selected for research purposes, for *Pravda* was established by Lenin, which made it, beyond any other publication, the main reflector of Communist Party ideology and policy. What was written in *Pravda* was the law for the Soviet people and one can point out that *Pravda* was the official propaganda machine of those in power. However, being the official mouthpiece of the Communist party, *Pravda* was under very strict censorship. Its editorials offer little variation, as the ideological

³ Ibid, p. 108.

⁴ Krippendorff, K., Content Analysis. An Introduction to its Methodology (1984), p. 25.

“lining” is visible in every single article. They offer insights of their own, to be sure; but there was another feature of *Pravda*, which offered yet more interesting possibilities.

Almost in every edition of *Pravda* there were political cartoons, which showed in simple graphic ways the official position of the government. More importantly yet, those political cartoons were mostly devoted to developments in international relations, using satire to criticize the West, and particularly “imperialists”, in any possible way. No criticism was ever aimed at events in the Soviet domestic sphere, for the USSR was “the country of good news”; but the imperialistic enemy was almost daily defeated with scorn and ridicule. NATO, as the Soviets’ bitter enemy, was the perfect target of this severe critique. It is interesting to study how and in which way these cartoons depicted the issue. As has already been mentioned, political cartoons concerning different political affairs were very common in *Pravda* and they were printed almost every day. Not least importantly, they had a recognizable stylistic imagery that carried from one cartoon to another – and which lends itself well to analysis.

Thus, the analysis of Soviet media will focus on political cartoons that were printed in different historical periods: two for each of the 1960s, the 1970s and the 1980s. The Soviet attitudes towards NATO underwent considerable changes with the changes in the political situation; for example, the message in the *Pravda* cartoons at the time of the détente (1970s) are different from that in the cartoons of the 1960s, when the Cold war started and Khrushchev was in office; and different, once again, from the cartoons of the 1980s, when severe critique of the USA and President Reagan set the tone of the day. The political cartoons in *Pravda* document these changes with stark clarity and it is important to demonstrate those changes, for they carry within themselves also a demonstration of trends and the internal logic of Soviet ideological fluctuations and their depiction in the media.

When it comes to analyzing the Russian media, however, the analysis no longer centers on political cartoons, for the cartoons of the post-Soviet era lack the ideological cohesion necessary to represent the views of the whole. On the other hand, during the time of Putin’s presidency it is of more value to compare the differing textual accounts of the same events – not least for the simple reason that there *could* be differing accounts, unlike in the Soviet time. Two types of the Russian media have been selected for analysis – the government-oriented newspaper *Izvestia* and an independent newspaper *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. The progression of changing attitudes is observed through the analysis of newspaper articles in *Izvestia* and *Nezavisimaya gazeta* with two-three year gaps in between them, between the years 2000-2006. The first study will consider the media reactions to Putin’s statements

about the perspectives of NATO-Russia relations in a BBC interview in March 2000, three weeks before he was elected president. The second case study will consider the NATO Rome Summit, to which Putin was invited and where the NATO-Russia Council was established (May 2002). The third case study will analyze newspaper texts concerning the NATO Riga Summit (November 2006). Through the analysis of media portrayal of these milestones in the Russia-NATO relations, a clear picture of the NATO-Russia relations in this era will emerge.

In this Thesis, research will be conducted into the depiction of NATO in Soviet and Russian media with the aid of content analysis as a primary tool. As the result of this research, on the basis of determining general trends and directions, conclusions will be reached regarding the change – or lack thereof – in the attitudes in the depiction of NATO in the Soviet and the Russian media through time. Concerning the structure of this Thesis, it is divided into two parts. After the Introduction (Chapter I), Part I “Theoretical Overview” consists of three chapters. It starts with Chapter 2 “Historical Overview”, Chapter 3 “Propaganda and Ideology”, and finishes with Chapter 4 “From Soviet to Russian Media”. Part II “Empirical Research” includes Chapter 5 “ Political Cartoons as a Weapon in the Ideological War” and Chapter 6 “NATO Image in the Russian Media in 2000s”. Chapter 7 “Conclusion: Findings and Results” concludes the Thesis.

PART I. THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

Chapter 2. Historical Overview

The history of NATO-USSR and NATO-Russia relations has been the subject of much academic study, analysis and interpretation. The relationship affected many nations and states all over the globe: in Europe, North and Latin America, Asia and the Middle East. These relations began as a confrontation between two hostile blocs that started after World War II. Ideology, politics and the economy (at the time) were globally subordinated by and developed according to these relations, affecting the everyday lives of millions of people. As Krieger points out, it was “a global struggle for power which impacted on many different spheres of public life.”⁵ Entire institutions were established within various states and within the military blocs to formulate policies and strategies against each other. There were arms races and proxy wars; the relationship between the USA and the USSR, the NATO and the Warsaw Pact states was defined as the “Cold War”, and it was fortunate that this conflict never resulted in a “hot” war. These relations, and the Cold War as an issue underlying them, set the tone for an epoch and continued for decades. Thus NATO-Russia relations are still of great interest to historians, theorists and military and civil analysts.

There are two main approaches in the field of International Relations research to the studies of NATO-Russia relations. One of them is Realism, which is “mainly concerned with a focus on the state and the political relations between states.”⁶ Thus, according to the Realist theory, the Cold War was seen as an inter-state conflict.⁷ According to the Realist paradigm, self-interested states operate in an anarchic international system by forming a balance of power. In the post-World War II world, Europe was left weak and ravaged by war, and the United States and the USSR emerged as the two superpowers capable of determining the future direction of world politics. Therefore, the Cold War environment saw the emergence of bipolarity: “Only the United States and the USSR have the ability to threaten each other’s survival.”⁸ According to Realism, then, NATO-Russia relations represented a conflict of two hostile blocs vying for power in a world that was simultaneously shaped by the bipolar nature of this relationship.

⁵ Krieger, W., “The International System”, in Cold War History, edited by Dockrill S. R. and Hughes G. (2006), p. 19.

⁶ Saull, R., Rethinking Theory and History in the Cold War (2001), p. 32.

⁷ Ibid, p. 31.

⁸ Brown, C., Understanding International Relations (2005), p. 43.

On the other hand, as an alternate theory of International Relations, the Historical Materialist approach considers these relations as a conflict between two social systems: “there were two distinct social systems, which had little in common, and, indeed, were different and antagonistic.”⁹ These two distinct systems each had their ideologies and their values to defend. Furthermore as Saull pointed out, talking about the international politics of the Cold War: “it reflected the interaction, antagonism and conflict between two different and mutually hostile forms of political rule.”¹⁰ Thus, according to this approach, misunderstanding, aversion and even conflict between two systems were inevitable.

One could say that the Cold War was both a conflict between two hostile superpowers and one between two different social systems; this conflict was an expression of the mutual lack of acceptance of one another’s ideology, ideas and way of life. Moreover, for both sides one of the major factors fuelling the Cold War was the fear of an “enemy figure” and a “first strike”, inflamed and initiated by those in power and spread by the mass media. Thus, if one can paraphrase Woodrow Wilson, both sides were standing against each other from a “defensive rather than offensive point of view.”¹¹ For both NATO and the USSR, their relationship was a zero-sum game, in which the gains made by one side would necessarily result in losses for the other; the belligerence of each other’s intentions was considered to be a given. Thus as according to the Western point of view, “It is not all surprising that the United States and the states of Western Europe should ally to defend themselves against invasion by the Soviet Union at the end of 1940s.”¹² It was considered indubitable that the Soviet Union would continue its expansion into Europe and across the globe with hostile intentions. On the other hand, to the Soviet ideology, as Mastny pointed out, “whatever defensive plans the West might have, ‘objectively’ they did not matter, since a capitalist alliance was aggressive by its nature.”¹³ The Soviet Union hence viewed the entire capitalist system as unequivocally antagonistic to the Soviet regime, and NATO as the vanguard of the West was seen as a definite threat. Thus, at the time, ‘Stalinism’ and ‘Atlantism’, i.e. state politics and ideologies of USSR and USA with their allies, were considered antagonistic and the hostility of the two opposing blocs would last for decades.

The changes in the superpowers’ leadership (e.g. Stalin’s death, changing Soviet CPSU leaders or presidential elections in the USA) did not change the main strategy of two hostile blocs or their

⁹ Op. cit. Saull (2001), p. 15.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 59.

¹¹ Chomsky, N., Necessary Illusions (1989), p. 182.

¹² Weber, S., Multilateralism in NATO: Shaping the Postwar Balance of Power, 1945-1961 (1991), p. 2.

¹³ Mastny, V., “Imagining War in Europe” in War Plans and Alliances in the Cold War, edited by Mastny, V., Holtmark, S. G., Wenger A. (2006), p. 27.

perception of each other's policy for the duration of the Cold War. This antagonism has deep roots and in order to understand NATO-Russia relations one has to take in account the pre-history of their relationship and also the history of the USA-Russia relations in the first place. This section therefore provides a brief history of the USA and NATO relations with the USSR and Russia since the Bolshevik revolution in 1917 until the present time.

2.1. The USA and the USSR: 1917-1945

It is possible to claim that antagonism between the USA and the USSR is dated from the Bolshevik revolution in Russia in 1917. The revolution occurred in the midst of the First World War; this war brought destruction to the livelihoods of millions of people and disappointment to the masses in Europe and all over the globe. As McNair argued, "As hundreds of thousands died in battles for a few metres of land here and there, opposition of the war increased, spearheaded by the Bolsheviks and their socialist allies in the Third International. When they took power in Russia the Bolsheviks withdrew from the war and agitated for an international proletarian revolution to replace the imperialist conflict".¹⁴ As at the time capitalist countries faced their post-war problems and economic depression, the fear of the "export" of the revolution and the "Red" threat seemed quite real to those in power. The situation worsened and genuine mutual hostility arose from the time of the Russian civil war (1917-1923) when Britain, USA, France and Japan supported the anti-Bolshevik "white" forces with the invasion of several Russian regions. The Bolsheviks won the civil war and came to power, but bitter enmity between two antagonistic camps that consequently produced "the image of enemy" started from that time.

The Russian media at the time accused the capitalists of being inhuman exploiters that receive a surplus of money through slave labor of the working class. In juxtaposition, Soviet Russia portrayed itself as an example of a "free" socialist society, a "state for the people" in which the working class ruled and the capitalist exploiters got their just deserts. At the time, Vladimir Lenin in his articles and public speeches announced the impending defeat of "World Imperialism" and promised freedom for the masses which would necessarily result from the victory of socialism. Naturally, in such a light, Russia as the beacon of hope for the workers everywhere was threatened from all sides by the capitalist enemies. As Black described, "The notion that Russia surrounded by enemies poised to take advantage of any weakness was recast in the USSR as 'capitalist encirclement' and rationalized with Lenin's assumption

¹⁴ McNair, B., Political communication (2003), p. 159.

that the world was divided into two immutably hostile camps, capitalist and socialist.”¹⁵ The enmity between the USA and the USSR was defined in ideological terms, with the differences between them irreconcilable. The conflict between the USA and the USSR transcended traditional territorial and political conflicts between states; the early battles were waged exclusively on the ideological field.

In 1918-1920 the USA faced the first wave of the “Red scare”. It was “initiated by a coalition of corporate, media and government interest, led by the US Steel Corporation, which in 1917 experienced major industrial unrest.”¹⁶ The fate of the Russian workers had the potential to inspire the proletariat elsewhere; the USA government, however, was swift to take steps to curb that sentiment. The actions they took were ideological in nature. As Murray Levin describes it: “newspapers, with rare exceptions, portrayed the revolution as an orgy of mass murder, individual assassination, rape, pillage, and slaughter... Bolshevik rule was described as a compound of slaughter, confiscation, anarchy, and universal disorder”.¹⁷ Thus, even since before the Cold War, the USA employed weapons of propaganda against Soviet Russia. This ideological campaign was successful: “the American Communist Party’s membership has fallen from 70,000 to 16,000. More significantly... the Red Scare established ‘militant anti-communism’ as ‘a core American idea’.”¹⁸ Since the very inception of the Soviet regime in Russia, the American government stood in staunch opposition to it; the relationship would be reconsidered only briefly during the Second World War, and that owing to pragmatic considerations.

World War II brought a striking change to Western-Soviet relations. As McNair argues, “Philosophical and political disagreements with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union were placed on one side in the interests of defeating a common and far more dangerous enemy.”¹⁹ In the face of another enemy, Hitlerism, the former hostility was temporarily suspended as Britain, the USA and the USSR became allies. Though Stalin had recently conducted “purges” and was at the time carrying out repressions on all levels of the Soviet society, the myth about the Soviet threat had been revised in the West. Since the invasion of Nazi Germany into the USSR, the USSR became an *a priori* partner and had to be supported in its struggle. Winston Churchill had famously said that he would make at least a favorable reference to the Devil in the House of Commons if Hitler were to invade hell. The attitude reflected Western political opinion at the time: Stalin was still an enemy and nobody would particularly lament

¹⁵ Black, J. L., Russia Faces NATO Expansion (2000), p. 6.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 160.

¹⁷ Levin, M., as quoted in op. cit. McNair (2003), p. 95.

¹⁸ Op. cit. McNair (2003), p. 161.

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 182.

the drastic weakening of the USSR by the German forces, but the USSR was fighting against Germany and as such had to be aided. Even though the Allies hesitated to open a second front through the first few, most difficult years of the war, they did send provisions and ammunition to the Red Army. After the Yalta Conference in 1945, President Roosevelt stated: “The two great Republics, American and Soviet, standing shoulder to shoulder will together guarantee the peace and order of the world.”²⁰ On the other hand, when it became clear to the Anglo-Saxon powers that the USSR would not only survive and defeat Germany, but also could “redraw the map of Europe, perhaps of the Middle East and of East Asia”, their policy towards the USSR changed.²¹ The relationship reverted back to the fear and distrust that would dominate world politics for decades to come.

2.2. After World War II: The Birth of NATO

When the Second World War was over, the political map of the world had changed in two ways. Firstly, “After 1945, the United States and the Soviet Union became the leading powers in international relations.”²² The USSR and the USA became “superpowers”, surpassing the economic, military and political capabilities of all other states. Secondly, the world socialist system came into existence as Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, East Germany, Albania and Mongolia became communist countries under Soviet pressure. Furthermore, the communist appeal continued to spread. In some European countries, e.g. Belgium, France, Italy and Finland, communist parties won elections. Communist ideas also became popular in Latin America and in such Asian countries as Vietnam, India, Japan and China. For the US observers, “In the 1940s the notion of a global threat to freedom and democracy was complemented by the ‘threat’ of internal communist subversion.”²³ Consequently, the Western world faced the second “Red scare” wave. In the USA anticommunist suspicion came out in aggressive anticommunist investigations and “witch hunting” under the ideology of Senator Joseph McCarthy (McCarthyism). The two changes – the emergence of the USA and the USSR as superpowers and the spread of communist ideology – naturally led to the imminent antagonism between the two hostile blocs, that of the USA and NATO against the USSR and its satellites.

²⁰ Roosevelt, F. D, as quoted in Critchley, J., The North Atlantic Alliance and the Soviet Union in the 1980s (1982) p. 14.

²¹ Op. cit. Krieger (2006), p. 27.

²² Lundestad, G., “The European Role at the Beginning and Particularly the End of the Cold War”, in the Last Decade of the Cold War, edited by Njølstad, O. (2004), p. 60.

²³ Op. cit. McNair (2003), p. 183.

Both the USSR and the USA decided to consolidate their power through alliances. Stalin, in accordance with Lenin's idea of a world revolution, started first from the USSR's immediate neighbors. According to Weber, "The Soviet Union...constructed its alliance system so as to exert maximum possible control and influence over its subordinate states. It did so by imposing a series of bilateral security arrangements, label "Treaties of Friendship and Mutual Assistance", on each of its Eastern European neighbors between 1945 and 1948. The organizing principle for this alliance system was 'divide and conquer'."²⁴ The Western bloc followed with defensive alliances. First came the Dunkirk Treaty of 1947; France and Britain signed a bilateral treaty "which pledged them to unite in case of renewed German aggression."²⁵ In March 1948, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, France and Britain became signatories of the Treaty of Brussels, which was effectively the precursor to NATO. It was a military alliance spurred on by the fear of communist expansion; US participation was considered to be necessary. In such an environment, with hostility between the communist and the capitalist blocs already tangible, NATO was conceived.

The birth of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was the consequence of the desire for a defensive alliance among the Western states; the agreement was signed in the USA (Washington DC) on 4 April 1949. The members of the organization included the five abovementioned Treaty of Brussels states as well as the USA, Canada, Portugal, Italy, Iceland and Denmark. In 1952 Greece and Turkey joined the organization. Moreover, and more alarmingly from the Soviet point of view, on 9 of May 1955 West Germany became a NATO member. The Soviet reaction was immediate: on 14 May 1955 the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) was signed. The USSR and all the European states of the socialist camp became members. "After the foundation of the Warsaw Treaty Organization in May 1955 and the formation of the Unified Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact with the Joint High Command at its head, the military-political confrontation between the USSR and the USA developed into a confrontation between the NATO and WTO military blocs. Starting in the mid-50s, this conflict was determined primarily by the rapid development of military technology. The most important goal was the creation and development of strategic nuclear forces."²⁶ NATO was founded for strategic defensive reasons; much in the same fashion, the WTO followed, and then the two newly formed blocs found themselves engaged in a power struggle that would eventually encompass the entire globe.

²⁴ Op. cit. Weber (1991), p. 6.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Op. cit. Mastny (2006), p. 47.

NATO-Russian relations thus started off on a note of adversity and the conflict only escalated thereafter. The arms races added the threat of mortal danger to the previously ideological field of battle. Both the USA and the USSR increased their armed forces – the former by a million, the latter by three. In 1952, the USA tested its hydrogen bomb, which was exponentially more destructive than the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945; in 1953, the USSR tested its own H-bomb, following which both countries set out to improve on the nuclear devices and on their delivery systems. The USA deployed medium-range bombers in some of its European NATO allies, capable of carrying the nuclear bombs over to the USSR; the Soviet Union, meanwhile, tried to develop a system which would enable it to strike directly at the USA, but for the time being could only reach the NATO members in Europe. By 1960, the USA had tested the first Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), which the Soviet Union quickly followed. However, it was not the existence of the weapons themselves, but the reasons for developing them that posed the greatest danger in the Cold War environment. As Saull points out, “the world objectively became a more dangerous place after 1945; that danger was not reducible to the presence of certain military technologies, but rather was due to the nature of the international social and political turmoil and struggles that this period witnessed, which were not outside the shadow of the bomb.”²⁷ In the best traditions of the Realist paradigm, both the Soviet and the NATO blocs got caught in the security dilemma: increase in one side’s power caused anxiety and increase on the other in response, fear-induced competition ensuing between them. Fear for their own survival coupled with the belief in the other side’s malicious intent spurred on armaments and vitriolic rhetoric for both NATO and the USSR. The well-known Latin proverb ‘*Si vis pacem, para bellum*’ - ‘if you want peace, prepare for war’ - thus became the guiding principle of the Cold War environment. Since the inception of NATO, Soviet-US relations, already determined by their pre-NATO history, included the very real threat of military confrontation with increasingly deadly weapons in addition to the ideological struggle.

2.3. Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)

The Cuban Missile Crisis is widely known as the perilous point when the Cold War could have turned “hot”. During two weeks in October 1962, from the 14th to the 28th, the world was very near to World War III. At the time John F. Kennedy had recently become President of the USA, anticommunist trends in US politics continuing all the while. For his part, the Soviet leader at the time, Nikita Khrushchev who had replaced Stalin, made critical statements concerning the imperialistic tendencies of the USA

²⁷ Op. cit. Saull (2001), p. 70.

and the cornerstone of his foreign policy was fierce competition with the USA in all spheres, especially in the arms race. The Soviet interest in Cuba was primarily strategic: “at the core of Soviet policy towards Cuba were the goals of consolidating the revolution and using Cuba as a kind of ‘revolutionary bridgehead’ for the penetration of Latin America, and in so doing to secure Cuba, ideologically, politically and military within the Soviet-dominated international communist movement.”²⁸ More worryingly for the USA, the geographical position of Cuba presented the Soviets with a “first-strike” capability: deployment of weapons in Cuba posed a severe threat.

Thus when Russians placed their missiles on Cuba, American reaction was swift. This particular deployment of weapons went beyond the distant arms race of the previous years: suddenly, the nuclear threat was brought much closer home to the US mainland and became that much more real. On the beginning of October, the US retrieved photos of Soviet missile bases in Cuba. In the face of the great threat, opinions in the US government diverged: Kennedy was urged to respond with aerial bombardment and invasion of Cuba, but he disagreed and decided on a naval blockade. Only decades later did the Defense Secretary of the time, Robert McNamara, learn that in October 1962 there were Soviet tactical nuclear weapons on Cuba, which the local commanders had the authorization to launch in case of a US invasion. Kennedy chose to exercise caution in a highly explosive situation; his restraint and back channel diplomacy prevented the conflict from uncontrollable escalation. On the 28th October, the USA and the USSR reached a tentative solution, with the USSR pledging to remove missiles from Cuba in return for the USA not invading the island. Khrushchev also demanded that Jupiter missiles from Turkey be removed, which the USA insisted not to include in the official deal since the missiles were technically under joint NATO control. Both sides had their public image to project: neither wished to lose face by backing down, which is what made the Cuban Missile Crisis much more dramatic. The entire world waited for the outcome with baited breath; the protagonists, who wanted a nuclear war no more than the rest of the globe, tried to disengage from a dangerous situation with as much grace as possible.

The Cuban Missile Crisis had made the USA, the USSR and NATO come to certain conclusions. The USA and the USSR were, for the first time, shown the direct implications of their unyieldingly hostile positions in the light of the arms race: having come to the brink of nuclear war, they saw that they needed to exert collective effort to extricate themselves again. The need for a certain degree of cooperation became apparent. In June 1963, a ‘hot line’ was established between Washington and

²⁸ Ibid, p. 148.

Moscow, through which the US and Soviet leaders could discuss their problems directly. The NATO members in Europe, on the other hand, realized their precarious position in relation to US-Soviet relations: during the Cuban Missile Crisis, they too were nearly dragged down into the war without the USA even consulting them for their opinions on the crisis. They still stood by the US, but realized that, for the US statesmen, the security of the USA came first and that of Europe second, which created worry among the European allies. It was after the Crisis, for example, that France embarked on its own nuclear program, feeling the need for greater security. The Cuban Missile Crisis was an eye-opening experience for all members of the US-NATO-USSR triangle.

2.4. The Détente

In the late 1960s, a relaxation of tensions between the Soviet and the US blocs occurred. Both camps were facing a ‘thawing’ of the Cold War, in the West named “détente”, in Russian “razryadka”, i.e. discharge, or lessening of tension. This French word entered diplomatic vocabulary in 1966, represented at a meeting of the North Atlantic Council. “As a political term, détente implies a process of reducing the tension or attitude of mutual hostility between the Atlantic Alliance and Warsaw Pact in Europe; and for this purpose NATO suggested the ‘balanced reduction of the forces confronting one another’.”²⁹ Though some theorists named détente a ‘romantic period’ in West-East relations, it was the time when both sides lived under the fear of a ‘converging strike’ that, to Mastny, “presumed the release of nuclear weapons by both sides at exactly the same time, thus fudging the question who will fire first.”³⁰ Thus, part of the reason for the détente was the doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD): with both sides in possession of nuclear weapons, ICBMs capable of delivering them and ABMs (Anti-Ballistic Missiles) there to deter the first strike, the systems automated so that a strike from the US would immediately be followed by an automatic response from the USSR, it was irrational for both sides to use nuclear weapons since such an action would be self-destructive in nature. Thus, both sides recognized the necessity for cooperation and Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) commenced in 1969.

In Europe the decreasing of the tension became possible because Willy Brandt, the head of the West Germany government at the time, had embarked on the so-called *Ostpolitik*. He was first of West Germany’s leaders willing to recognize the *de facto* existence of East Germany and secure agreements with the USSR and its Eastern European allies. It should be kept in mind that the existence of two

²⁹ Op. cit. Critchley (1982), p. 19.

³⁰ Op. cit. Mastny (2006), p. 31.

Germanies on the political map was a sensitive issue for Europe. As Ostermann points out, “Germany’s role in the rise of the American-Soviet confrontation is a central one. Divided Germany became the major European battleground between the United States and the Soviet Union; it was the prize possession for both sides.”³¹ Thus when Brandt started making bridges between West and East Germany, his policy also brought a relaxation of tensions with other Eastern European countries and overall led to the normalization of relations with the USSR decrease in tensions. Lundestad notes, however, that “This German policy met with a great deal of skepticism in Washington and even in several European countries, including Paris.”³² Yet, it was largely because of *Ostpolitik* a huge step on the way to European cooperation was done, as firstly in the modern history have started negotiations between West and East concerning human rights, that well known as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

The early 1970s saw increased cooperation between NATO and the Soviet bloc. As McNair argued, “By the late 1960s and the arrival of Richard Nixon as US President, it seemed that the worst years of the Cold War were over, with both sides embracing the policy of détente, amounting to a mutual acceptance of each other’s differences and legitimate interests. In Western media anti-Sovietism softened, as Nixon and Brezhnev signed historic arms control, economic, and cultural agreements.”³³ In 1972, Nixon visited Moscow on the first ever summit between the US and the USSR heads of state; in 1973, Brezhnev traveled to Washington. In 1974, the third Nixon-Brezhnev summit occurred. Later the same year, Ford and Brezhnev met to discuss the initiation of SALT II. In 1972, a US-Soviet trade agreement was signed, indicating a departure from usual practice. As everything in the Cold War context acquired a political dimension, President Nixon approached trade liberalization as a tool of “lessening of cold war tensions”.³⁴ The Helsinki Talks, initiated in 1972, resulted in the Helsinki Accords of 1975, in which both sides of the conflict recognized the human rights of their own and each other’s citizens. In 1975, the USA and the USSR even cooperated to send a joint space mission. The relationship between NATO and the USSR was stabilizing; both sides recognized each other’s claims and were willing to work with the existing status quo, making the international scene both more cooperative and more predictable within the bipolar relationship.

³¹ Ostermann, C. F., “Germany and the Origins of the Cold War”, in 50 years with the Cold War, edited by Kleve, K. L. (1999), p. 47.

³² Op. cit. Lundestad (2004), p. 66.

³³ Op. cit. McNair (2003), p. 184.

³⁴ Jackson, I., “Economics”, in Cold War History, edited by Dockrill S. R. and Hughes G. (2006), p. 167.

On the part of the USSR, under Khrushchev and Brezhnev both the foreign policy rhetoric and the situation inside the country softened. Khrushchev declared the 'Policy of Peaceful Coexistence', declaring that the eventual triumph of communism was quite possible without war. The Soviet media, though under strict CPSU censorship, underwent a limited relaxation in standards. Some magazines started to publish materials concerning issues previously forbidden, e.g. Stalin's labor camps and repressions. Exhibitions of modern art were opened in contrast to the time when all modern or 'pro-Western' art had been declared imperialist, bourgeois and unacceptable, and some cultural exchange programs, such as a Russian Ballet world tour, commenced. Some moves were made towards widening trade between the West and the USSR.

All in all, even though in 1960-1970 there was some easing of tensions in the NATO-USSR relations and limited cooperation in some areas had started, it should not be forgotten that the relations were overshadowed by the prospect of MAD and that both sides were still "armed to the teeth."³⁵ The inherent conflict between the capitalist and the communist systems had not dissolved, either, so the relaxation of tensions during the détente should be considered as relative to the high tensions that had permeated the international system at the time.

2.5. End of Détente

The period from 1979 until 1985 is often named the "Second Cold War" in International Relations literature. Formally, the détente came to an end with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, but relations had been souring for a while. "By the late 1970s... détente was under a strain. In the United States and Britain radical right-wing politicians were coming to power, which included in their ideological armoury a fierce anti-Sovietism."³⁶ Conservative government came to power in Britain in 1979 with Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister, "determined on the extinction of socialism at home and already designated the 'Iron Lady' abroad."³⁷ Ronald Reagan became the US President in 1981. "Between them, Ronald Reagan's Republican administration and Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government revived the Cold War and initiated a decade of East-West hostility. These were the years of the Korean Airline Disaster; the boycotts by West and East respectively, of the Moscow and Los Angeles Olympic games; of public discussion by senior NATO figures of the possibility of limited nuclear war in

³⁵ Jensen, F. P., "The Warsaw Pact Special Target", in 'War Plans and Alliances in the Cold War: Threat Perceptions in the East and West', edited by Mastny, V., Holtsmark, S. G., Wenger, A. (2006), p. 135.

³⁶ Op. cit. McNair (2003), p. 184.

³⁷ Greenwood S., "Helping to Open the Door? Britain in a Last Decade of the Cold War" in The Last Decade of the Cold War: from Conflict Escalation to Conflict Transformation, edited by Njølstad, O. (2004), p. 322.

Europe; the Soviet invasion to Afghanistan and the US invasion of Grenada.”³⁸ The relationship between NATO and the USSR had thus reverted to open hostility and mutual mistrust.

The Soviet Union at the time was facing both economic and political problems. Both East and West suffered economic problems in the 1970s, oil prices soaring and economies going into recession. In addition, the Soviet Union's economy had been stagnant since the mid-1960s and had very low growth, part of the reason being heavy investments in the military sector. On the foreign policy front, the USSR was concerned by the possibility of a Sino-American alliance; already since 1971 the People's Republic of China, previously unrecognized in favor of Taiwan, had been courted by the US through the pragmatic prompting of Henry Kissinger. In Eastern Europe, the Soviet republics were as keen as ever to show their discontent: in 1980, a crisis occurred in Poland when millions of people joined the mass movement “Solidarity” to protest against Soviet troops. That prompted a crackdown from the Soviet Union, adding to the already unfavorable picture on the world stage following the highly condemned invasion of Afghanistan. Thus, the end of détente saw a difficult period in Soviet politics.

The NATO-USSR relationship soured rapidly after 1980. Jimmy Carter reacted harshly to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan: despite Soviet assurances that they were only aiming to prevent a hostile regime from blossoming on their border, Carter assumed that the USSR was planning to assume superiority in the Middle East. The US position there was recently undermined by the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the following embassy hostage crisis. Carter called for a great increase in military expenditure, imposed a grain embargo on the Soviet Union and boycotted the 1980 Moscow Olympics. Upon coming to power (in 1981), fiercely anti-communist Reagan initiated the largest peacetime buildup of arms in US history, stockpiling neutron bombs and speaking of a possible limited nuclear exchange in Europe, which naturally made both the USSR and the European NATO members rather concerned. Back in February 1982, Brezhnev had said that the international tension was at its worst since 1945, and it only became worse. In 1983, Reagan gave the famous Strategic Defense Initiative speech, known also as the “Star Wars” speech for its utopian vision of the world free from the nuclear danger with the developing of a defensive missile shield. Whether or not it was technologically feasible, the USSR saw it as a grave threat as it granted the USA a potential first strike capability. “President Reagan’s talk of a ‘Star Wars’ defense system reified notions that the United States might be seeking defense capabilities so that it could launch an attack without fear of Soviet retaliation.”³⁹ In

³⁸ Op. cit. McNair (2003), p. 184.

³⁹ Leffler, M. P. “The Beginning and the End: Time, Context and the Cold War”, in The Last Decade of the Cold War: from Conflict Escalation to Conflict Transformation, edited by Njølstad, O. (2004), pp. 40-41.

response, Soviets nuclear forces and air units in East Germany and Poland were placed on alert. In November 1983, the USA deployed the Intermediate Nuclear Forces in Western Europe, capable of striking the USSR in five minutes, which naturally served to aggravate the already precarious situation. Moreover, in 1983, Reagan called the USSR the “evil empire”, thus reducing the Cold War conflict to a Manichean distinction between good and evil, where no compromise with the opponent was at all possible or permissible. In addition to the military buildup and threatening moves, the USA introduced vicious rhetoric which went beyond the ideological struggle between communism and socialism; the Cold War conflict had never seemed so irreconcilable, which is why the fall of the Soviet Union in only a few years came as such a shock to most observers.

2.6. Gorbachev and Collapse of the USSR (1985-1991)

When Gorbachev came to power in 1985, the USSR already was on the verge of collapse because it faced serious economic problems. The enormous arms race with the goal of communist superiority had been worsening the situation for decades. CPSU policy-making echelons knew better than anybody else that the USSR at the time was on a road to nowhere. Gorbachev, as head of the CPSU, started his work with attempts to improve what was possible to improve. He did not want to abolish the system; quite the opposite, he claimed that he wanted to renew socialism with its humanistic values and intended to revitalize the stagnant system. His general strategy for the revival of the Soviet Union’s declining fortunes involved the reduction in Cold War tensions and more cordial relations with the NATO states. In 1987, the main CPSU daily, *Pravda*, published Gorbachev’s “New Political Thinking”, which entailed “precedence of political over military measures of deterrence; the principle of reasonable sufficiency as a means of military defense, and confirmation of the Soviet rejection of first strike with nuclear weapons; the universality of security issues; and an end to USSR-U.S. confrontation in seeking solutions to regional conflict.”⁴⁰ Gorbachev might have felt that the Soviet Union was stretching itself too thin in the effort to keep up with the US politically and militarily under the heightened tensions of the “Second Cold War”. It was not feasible for him to pursue reforms within while fending off enemies without; by achieving a more amiable relationship with NATO, Gorbachev could win a breathing space and room for maneuver, or simply create a better international atmosphere.

The foreign policy of the USSR thus changed its course as Gorbachev implemented his ideas. He proclaimed the existence of a “common European home”, stressing the unity of European states and

⁴⁰ Op. cit. Black (2000), p. 15.

attempting to decouple Western Europe from the USA. Gorbachev also pursued arms control and disarmament; when Reagan suggested the elimination of INFs, expecting refusal, Gorbachev surprised him by agreeing to the initiative and proposed various, oftentimes unilateral overtures which completely changed the tone of the relationship between the US and the USSR. Gorbachev also desired the lessening of tensions in the Third World and was prepared to relax control over Eastern Europe. Naturally, such sentiments rather endeared him to the Western public and antagonized opinions at home. CPSU officials felt that the USSR was losing its pre-eminence under Gorbachev's leadership, whereas the European NATO members welcomed the new cooperative Soviet leader and even Reagan softened his views.⁴¹ Gorbachev was eager to meet with foreign leaders and journalists and explain his domestic and foreign policy to them, projecting the image of a much more approachable Soviet leader. Of the Eastern European states, Poland was the first to react to the changed environment: in the summer 1989, elections were held there, with members of "Solidarity" winning and a non-communist Prime Minister coming to power. Eisenhower's "domino effect" then did occur: one by one, communist governments in Eastern Europe disintegrated. The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 signaled the impending end of the Soviet supremacy in the East.

The Cold War, however, was not over as long as the status of Germany remained unresolved. For obvious reasons, 1989 is often cited as the year in which the Cold War ended, as the importance the divided Germany had to NATO-USSR relations was so immense that the issue had to be put to rest before the final chord was played. Both NATO and the USSR considered a unified Germany as a country with great potential. For the US, "the greatest threat had always been the spectre of a united Germany harnessed to an aggressive communist alliance spearheaded by the Soviet Union."⁴² For the USSR, a divided Germany had been the cornerstone of Soviet policy ever since the end of World War II, for fear of a renewed German threat to the Soviet security. The idea of a unified Germany integrated into the Western system was repellent even to someone as liberal as Gorbachev; however, he had decided to let events unfold whatever the strategic implications. West Germany's Chancellor Helmut Kohl began pressuring for reunification immediately upon the fall of the Berlin Wall and Gorbachev, to NATO's delight, stood by and did nothing. "The Cold War, therefore, appeared to end when the deideologization of Soviet foreign policy was coupled with the co-option of German power in a Western coalition. As a consequence of these developments, both the ideological threat and the strategic nightmare that had inspired the United States Cold War anxieties vanished."⁴³

⁴¹ Op. cit. Lundestad (2004), p.76.

⁴² Op. cit. Leffler (2004), p. 49.

⁴³ Ibid.

There is much discussion among the theorists regarding the causes, motivations and consequences of Gorbachev's policy. Whether Gorbachev's conciliatory foreign policy was just a consequence of his pursuit of internal strengthening of the USSR or the result of actual belief that his actions abroad would lead to the reinforcement of Soviet influence rather than its collapse, Gorbachev played an instrumental role in the developments during 1985-1990. "Events would not be unfolded as they did, however, without the agency and leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev."⁴⁴ Applauded in the West for his courage in changing the NATO-USSR dynamics and for his "glasnost" and "perestroika", Gorbachev was not exactly celebrated at home. He tried to move the rigid Soviet machine much too quickly in much too new a direction, without having consolidated his power first. He convinced the foreigners of his sincerity before impressing on his countrymen the need for the change in policy, which meant that he had a very narrow support base. The Soviet Union disintegrated on his watch; the grateful West gave him the Nobel Peace Prize, the Russians ousted him from power and Boris Yeltsin became the first Russian President. Naturally, it would be wrong to say that Gorbachev had single-handedly ruined the thriving and vital Soviet Union; the state was, after all, becoming hollower every day. "However, anybody studying the documents cannot seriously insist that what occurred was the only possible outcome."⁴⁵ The collapse of the Soviet Union was not at all inevitable; it might have happened later even without Gorbachev, but at that particular point, in 1989-1991, Gorbachev played a crucial role in the USSR's disintegration.

2.7. After the Cold War

Immediately after the fall of the USSR, NATO called for the Rome Summit, in which a new strategic concept was approved. This concept involved a new decision to include among NATO's concerns situations with intra-state conflicts, ethnic conflicts and economic crises. At this Summit a special institution was established to deal with ex-Warsaw Pact members – the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC).

Boris Yeltsin, who became the first president of Russia in 1991, continued Gorbachev's pro-Western line of policy at the beginning of his term in office. Yeltsin granted Russia a new constitution, announced the shift to democracy and market economy and insisted on the importance of Russia's

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Cox, M., "The 1980s Revisited or the Cold War as History – Again", in The Last Decade of the Cold War: from Conflict Escalation to Conflict Transformation, edited by Njølstad, O. (2004), p. 4.

good relations with the USA, NATO and Europe. As Black noted, “during the early years of Boris Yeltsin’s regime as a president of an independent Russia, his government maintained a strongly Western and reformist orientation. Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev pushed integration with the West against growing pressure from nationalistic and Communist forces.”⁴⁶ Moreover, at the time Yeltsin seemed to be a figure that had a “strong hand” to keep the domestic situation in order. As a newly born state, Russia had to discover new ways to conduct its domestic and foreign affairs, stepping away from the Soviet mould. On the other hand, the country inherited all of the USSR’s problems and had to face the consequences of its collapse. The economic problems that had plagued the Soviet Union carried over to Russia; the borders became an issue, unprotected as they were since the satellite states in Eastern Europe no longer served as a buffer between Russia and NATO; the question of Chechen separatism, which would evolve into a long and bloody conflict, also came to a head at the very beginning of Yeltsin’s presidency. Thus, despite Yeltsin’s pro-Western leanings, he had to contend with the problems Russia had inherited from the USSR’s collapse.

Russian relations with NATO started souring very soon. The various parties in the State Duma, divided though they were on most issues, had a common anti-NATO bias. “Most observers in Moscow attributed the current divergence of Russian and American policy in the world arena to a combination of forces that included American post-Cold War opportunism and Russian’s own inability to put its house in order.”⁴⁷ The feeling of their own inadequacy and internal disorder, coupled with the American pro-active policy abroad, fermented anti-Western sentiments. When Russia joined NATO’s Partnership for Peace Program (PfP) in 1994, it caused a great wave of debates in the State Duma as well in the Russian media. As Black argues, “Some Moscow observers saw the PfP as a NATO vehicle for undermining the CIS.”⁴⁸ There were also the fears that the PfP was just a façade for luring the Eastern European members over to NATO’s side and thus undermining Russia’s security. Yeltsin, on his part, expected NATO to recognize Russia as an equal partner with former superpower status and respect the Russian spheres of influence. He was willing to cooperate, assuming that those conditions were observed. Feeling that NATO disregarded Russian interests in those questions, Yeltsin too adopted a more antagonistic stance. In 1996, after a re-election during which Yeltsin came under much pressure for his pro-Western leanings, Yeltsin appointed Yevgeni Primakov as his Foreign Minister. Primakov had more Eurasia-oriented ideas and “preferred multipolarism to integration with the West, opposed the American tendency to use NATO as a vehicle for world domination, and was willing to

⁴⁶ Op. cit. Black (2000), p. 8.

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 105.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 10.

look for new strategic partners for Moscow.”⁴⁹ Thus, under Primakov, Russian foreign policy was aimed less at establishing cordial relations with NATO and more at regaining Russia’s lost pre-eminent position in world affairs. Russian-NATO relations, suffered accordingly.

The year 1997 saw the continuation of increasing Russian hostility towards NATO. In January 1997, Yeltsin was mostly away from office because of his ill-health; indeed the situation concerning his health was so serious that the State Duma even voted to remove him from office. “The vote was not binding... but the level of anxiety over the lack of leadership in Moscow was made clear. The absence of strong hand at the center made NATO expansion appear more threatening and kick-started the latent assumption that the West would take advantage of Russia’s temporary weakness.”⁵⁰ In February 1997, an Anti-NATO group in the State Duma was organized, (headed by Sergei Baburin), which soon became the Anti-NATO Commission. Baburin was the author of an article praised in Russian media in which he stated that since the Second World War Russia was “facing the greatest threat.”⁵¹ On 27th May 1997 Yeltsin signed the Russia-NATO Founding Act which received a mixed reaction in Russia. Some politicians took this Act as a humiliation to Russia that from now on officially accepted NATO enlargement; others looked at the issue with more optimism, thinking that from then on Russia might take part in European decision-making, being a full member of G-8 and World Trade Organization.⁵² In such an environment, the Kosovo crisis was bound to have an explosive impact.

The Kosovo crisis was a milestone in NATO-Russia relations. “The Russian policy elite appeared to understand at once... that NATO’s war in Serbia... was to be a case study No. 1 of the world after NATO expansion.”⁵³ The Kosovo crisis demonstrated the extent of Russia’s weakness: despite fiery rhetoric in support of Serbia, the Russian government could not do anything to prevent NATO action. Russia vetoed the UN Security Council resolution on intervention in Kosovo, but NATO disregarded that decision and decided to intervene, regardless. It was a severe blow to Russia’s prestige as well as a demonstration of NATO’s military and political superiority. The crisis had implications for internal politics, as well. The outrage at NATO’s bombardment of Serbia caused a temporary unity between the government and the public. However, the Russians grew quickly disillusioned in the government, seeing its inability to make good on any of the threats issued towards NATO. Russia’s weakness

⁴⁹ Ibid, p.14.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 24.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 43.

⁵² Ibid, p. 56.

⁵³ Lynch, A. C., “The Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy in the 1990s”, in Russia After Communism, edited by Fawn, R. and White, S. (2002), p.174.

became apparent not only abroad, but at home, too, which further undermined the government's stability and caused much bitterness towards NATO on both the government's and the public's parts. After Kosovo, it became apparent to Russia that NATO had no fear of Russian power any longer and that Russian influence did not count for much in international politics.

Thus, although the Cold War was, for all intents and purposes, over, there were still many sensitive issues concerning Russia-NATO relations. The Russian public sphere's perception of the Western attitude towards Russia at the time was so negative, that "in 1999 some writers began to characterize Western policy generally as anti-Russians and anti-Slav."⁵⁴ The Russian government considered the creation of a "sanitary corridor" or the drawing of a "red line" which would denote borders NATO cannot step over. The Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov made a statement concerning the issue: "There is a red line which we regard as a cardinal change directly related to our security. This line goes along the border of the former Soviet Union, including the Baltic states. If matters come to this, we will have to fully revise our political relations with the North Atlantic alliance, which we do not want to do, because we favour the continuation of cooperation."⁵⁵ Suspicion about NATO's motives ran rampant in Russia; Lenin's fear of being surrounded by enemies was thus resurrected decades later in an entirely new environment. Faced with a terrible economic situation at home following the economic crisis of 1998 and chaos in domestic politics, Russia dreaded that the USSR's old Cold War enemies would take advantage of the situation. It was in this atmosphere of fear and distrust towards NATO, coupled with a lack of prestige abroad, that Vladimir Putin became acting President on 31 December, 1999.

⁵⁴ Op. cit. Black (2000), p. 105.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p.101.

Chapter 3. Propaganda and Ideology

In order to preserve its own existence, every state must defend the advantages of its political system and advocate its beliefs and its vision of political and social goals. Those in power are supposed to persuade their nation that the existing political system, social institutions and the way of life in their country are better than anywhere else. Moreover, the government has the option of using institutions such as the mass media as tools for raising national self-consciousness and national pride in its citizens.

3.1. Propaganda: Roots and Definitions

Propaganda in this respect is a pivotal instrument for attaining the goal of instilling certain beliefs in people. Nowadays everybody knows the meaning of the word and maybe some perceive propaganda as a modern invention, although arguably it is not the case. One could follow that idea of propaganda as a meaning of setting some beliefs and practices in social life to be rooted in ancient Athens. Thus, twenty-four centuries ago, ancient Greeks, from whom we inherited the meaning of many words on which we base our definitions of many concepts and notions (e.g. *demos*, *cratos*, *sophos* and so forth), among different gods had Peitho, the goddess of oratory and persuasion. As Gronbeck argued, “[S]he was a persona with magical powers, akin to the Muses in charge of the other arts, one who had power to charm, to seduce, to enthrall, to put human beings into a trance or dream state. Thus the arts of political discoursing would be associated with seduction and the unreality of dreaming from their earliest Western conceptions was a judgment that has followed them across time.”⁵⁶ It is also worth mentioning that persuasion was considered to be “a sense of gameness, as political discourse became associated with the tricks and wordplay that probability-based thought would bring.”⁵⁷ It would therefore be fair to say that propaganda is not a particularly novel concept – and the term ‘political games’ harks back to the beginnings of politics themselves.

Notably, just as any game includes a great deal of work for the imagination, politics too involves the creation of myths and images. Myths are powerful; they appeal to the imagination, stir up people’s emotions and make one *believe*, the way cold hard facts might not. It is therefore hardly surprising that politicians of all times have tried to capitalize on the power of emotions. Thus, as far back as in Ancient Greece, the echelons of power considered the emotion-based enchantment to be an important

⁵⁶ Gronbeck, B. E., “Rhetoric and Politics”, in “Handbook of Political Communication Research”, edited by Kaid, L. L. (2004), pp. 136-137.

⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 137.

mode of manipulating peoples emotions – since it is in human nature to react emotionally first and only then adjust their views according to rationality, though still through the lens of personal opinion. The politicians of today, just as their counterparts in the days of yore, wage battles ‘for the hearts and minds’ of their constituencies. The way to win more supporters or sway potential voters is to present oneself as superior to all opponents – thus, one gets terms such as ‘smear campaign’, ‘spin doctors’ and ‘publicity war.’ Whoever creates the better mythology is likely to win the game.

Therefore, in order to run a country successfully, those in power must create some concepts that would reach emotionally into the citizens’ hearts and minds. Rulers endeavor to “touch the right chord” playing on basic humans fears and instincts as: fear of hunger, fear to lose one’s loved ones, desire to be protected, etc. They create an image of their country fulfilling all human needs – not only successfully, but also in the way that is best suited for that country. Governments strive to create a sense of internal cohesion, of national pride in their populace, stressing the advantages of their political and economical system and – no less importantly – the superiority over alien national political and economical systems. History knows very painful examples of such institutions; for instance, Hitlerism’s “propaganda machine” created the myth of superiority of Germans over other nations and thus proved the idea for people of Germany that they the world was their, for improving. A less tragic example would be the famed ‘American dream’, which holds the American society together. Propaganda thus contains a message from the government to their people, at once a shield by which the state defends its ideals and a sword to be unleashed in case of a threat.

3.2. Theoretical Framework: the Realist and Constructivist Rationale

As an instrument of control, propaganda fits neatly into the realist view of politics. Propaganda aims at making people believe what the government would like them to; as such, it is an exercise in control. Beyond state borders, propaganda is used for convincing the international arena of the superiority of one state over another, especially if they are engaged in a dispute, the way the USA and the USSR were during the Cold War. According to Hans Morgenthau’s famous statement, all politics, including international politics, is a struggle for power; propaganda is thus but a tool in this power game between states. In the anarchic international system, states will use any advantage they can in order to pursue their selfish national interest. Propaganda, and the moral victories it can bring, is very clearly one such advantage. It was not enough, during the Cold War, to have massive reserves of missiles or instant

strike capacity, but the image of each superpower became a factor of great importance. Obviously, neither superpower had a chance of persuading the other; but the real targets of most propaganda were the citizens of their own states and states in the global periphery. To borrow Kangas's metaphors, they portrayed themselves as 'Knights' protecting 'Treasure' from malicious 'Beasts.'⁵⁸ The only 'hot wars' of the Cold War period were, after all, proxy wars – and the degree of propaganda success was at least to some extent manifest in the number of allies each superpower had managed to obtain. In the realist paradigm, then, propaganda was a tool used by both blocs in order to further their own ends.

Constructivism, on the other hand, is a theory that stresses the importance of identity and perceptions on relations between states. "A state understands others according to the identity it attributes to them, while simultaneously reproducing its own identity through daily social practice."⁵⁹ Propaganda would, in this instance, be advocating the identity each of the superpowers upholds – which would create a twofold effect. On the one hand, both the Soviet bloc and the U.S.-NATO bloc would strive to promote their own ideas throughout the world with the use of propaganda. Propaganda would thus clearly delineate exactly what each bloc stands for and what it stands against. It would trumpet the identity each of these blocs far and wide, creating patterns of predictability in their behavior – and, in effect, solidify the bipolar system. On the other hand, both blocs could also become constrained by their identities and lose maneuverability through establishing roles for themselves they could not break out of. Propaganda would in this sense not be merely a tool for states to use, but an outcome of the desire to uphold their identities – an outcome they would not necessarily be able to keep control of. After all, having propagated the predominance of, for example, civil and political rights, the NATO bloc could not randomly turn around and start advocating Soviet-supported economical, social and cultural rights instead. Propaganda in this instance seems to have a force of its own and not a necessarily beneficial one. After all, the Cuban Missile Crisis shows just how perilous it can be for states to be locked into certain roles – the force of momentum could have carried both superpowers towards a nuclear war. The constructivist paradigm thus offers a different, though no less valid, view on propaganda and the political machinations it entails.

⁵⁸ Kangas, A., The Knight, the Beast and the Treasure. A Semiotic Inquiry into the Finnish Political Imaginary on Russia, 1918-1930s, Academic Dissertation. University of Tampere (2007), pp. 17-18.

⁵⁹ Hopf, T., "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security* (Summer 1998): p. 175.

3.3. Role of Ideology in Modern International Relations

Arguably, the twentieth century had been the century of ideology. Ideological battles permeated the international system. Liberalism, communism, capitalism, Marxism, Leninism, and Maoism – all of these terms are very familiar to any student of the twentieth century international relations. In this field, ideology has been taken as “the basic conceptual tool to analyze the international system.”⁶⁰ Ideology has served as a rallying point, it has inspired millions of people to fight for their cause, and it has defined state practices. Ideology is what the government uses in order to prove the advantages of their internal system and discredit anything different; ideology is what is being propagated. Ideology in a public sphere includes beliefs, myths, practices and the like. In the fierce competition between NATO and the USSR with its allies, one can point out that the Cold War was to a great extent an ideological one. “Ideology ... mattered profoundly throughout the Cold War.”⁶¹ Every statement that governments of the two hostile camps made, every bit of media coverage, every move had an “ideological lining”. Waging a propaganda war for the sake of their ideology became part of the nature of both superpowers.

The relationship between ideology, propaganda and military matters should also be noted here. Both the socialist bloc and the capitalist bloc insisted on the superiority of their ideology; that superiority was meant to translate into better practical capabilities – better economy, better social order and better military. The military dimension was especially salient, since, to borrow Hobbes’s phrase, “the nature of War, consisteth not in actual fighting; but in the known disposition thereto.”⁶² The looming threat of possible hostilities meant that both blocs and the superpowers within them also needed to present themselves as the most militarily powerful. At the same time, however, they needed to maintain the image of their enemy, so for their domestic constituencies they needed to underline the constant danger posed by the other side. “The United States and the USSR were similar in terms of each depicting the other as an external military threat and of the ideological and military responses to that threat.”⁶³ This was a game of careful ideological balancing, where putting too much emphasis on the enemy’s might could result in loss of popular confidence, but too little attention to the threat the enemy posed reduced the strength of the propaganda. After all, in order to defend the world against a threat, both blocs needed a viable threat to be there in the first place.

⁶⁰ Nuti, L., and Zubok, V., “Ideology”, in Cold War History, edited by Dockrill, S.R. and Hughes, G. (2006), p. 73.

⁶¹ Op. cit. Cox (2004), p. 8.

⁶² Hobbes, T., Leviathan, edited by Tuck, R. (2001), 13: 62.

⁶³ Op. cit. Saull (2001), p. 78.

3.4. Soviet Approach to Propaganda

If one starts talking about Soviet point of view on propaganda and ideology, one cannot avoid mentioning the guru of Soviet research in this field, Academic Georgi Arbatov. He was propagating the official Kremlin position at the time. For instance, in his work “The War of Ideas in Contemporary International relations”, he sets out basic ideas of the Soviet perception of the ideological confrontation between the two hostile camps. His work shows clearly that the cornerstone of Soviet policy and the perspective of IR is the idea of the struggling classes. First and foremost Soviet scholars took every state as a society besieged by class struggle: “Ideology and the war of ideas emerged together with classes, the class struggle and statehood.”⁶⁴ Thus out of this statement one can discern that for the Marxist-Leninist theory, the relations between and within states must be studied only from the class struggle point of view. It is obvious though that when scholars and ideologists are confined to one position or angle from which they study and explain every issue, it narrows and perverts the objective picture of international relations.

History may look different if it is learned from the Marxism-Leninism theory perspective. The class struggle is the cornerstone of Marxism-Leninism, thus the understanding of IR is quite particular as well: “and once these ideas are shaped the only relations they can have between them are those of struggle.”⁶⁵ Thus according to this theory there is a striking difference between two systems. The proletariat with its desires and needs is at the heart of the socialist system – and the socialist society does everything to support and serve these people, mirroring their desires even in high politics. In contradiction, capitalists suppress and enslave the working class and enjoy their superiority built on exploitation, slaving and surplus economic policy. This statement is highly subjective; utilizing the abstract ‘working class’ and its needs, Soviet ideologists intended to cover the problems of poor planned socialist economy, problems inside the socialist camp, absence of real freedom and other important problems.

Drawing on his conclusions, Arbatov puts forth another thought, maintaining the idea that in socialist countries the ruling class is proletariat and it decides the policy of the country. Likewise, working people are free in their decisions, and privileged to make policy - including international polity - of their country. This is a highly problematic theory as again it narrows the angle of viewing the issue. Moreover, this statement conveniently ignores the existence of KGB, CPSU as an oppressor of

⁶⁴ Arbatov, G., *The War of Ideas in Contemporary International Relations* (1973), p. 16.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 40.

freedoms and the other Soviet echelons of power that really were in charge of formulating domestic and international policies. The pre-eminence of the working class is an illusion, albeit a very well exploited one.

The idea of portraying proletariat as the ruling power of the Soviet society involves the creation of a myth about abstract ‘proletariat’ and its mythological power in the socialist camp. During the Soviet times, a lot of pictures, slogans, special red-fabric banners that were hanging at every plant, factory, government building or public place, were carrying the depiction of this abstract ‘good-will person’, ‘true proletarian’ (nowadays one can discover that well-known figure for instance at the pages of the Soviet official daily *Pravda*). On those pictures one could find a strong man in a working robe, who was carrying a tool such as a hammer; that figure was usually accompanied by a feminine figure of a Soviet collective-farm worker, a peasant, and another figure – the bespectacled slender representative of the “people’s intelligencia”⁶⁶. However, the abstract ‘proletarian’ was the protagonist. It was supposedly on his behalf that the CPSU was making its domestic and international policy.

One can point out that this abstract proletarian was a dream figure in a dream society. As the main slogan for the communist ideology was that “we work and live for the better tomorrow”, it was supposed that Soviet ordinary people should not ask from the government a lot for today, for everyday normal life – the fruit of their labors would be delivered to them in some intangible, indiscernible future. For instance, the lack of food and daily necessities, poor living conditions, absence of freedom – all of these were sacrifices on the altar for the hypothetical ‘better tomorrow’. It was a myth that was seeded and promoted consciously by Soviet ideologists. This mythology was badly needed, as the supplies of provisions, the housing situation and the welfare system were all failing and Soviet echelons of power had to create legends to convince the public to be more patient for the hope of the better tomorrow – and the hope of overcoming the bitter enemy, world imperialism. Thus this abstract ‘proletarian’ figure and his bright future had a political meaning; it was a shield and a sword in the political game of Soviet ideologists.

Moreover, for the purposes of sustaining the myths and the order in the system there had been created a whole structure of organizing people’s lives in accordance with state ideology. From the very childhood, people were watched and managed. Free education for all went hand in hand with inducting children into ‘October links’ and every child was supposed to proudly wear a badge with a portrait of

⁶⁶ Altunyan, A. G., *From Bulgarin to Zhirinovsky: An Analysis of Ideas and Styles in Political Texts* (1999), p. 173.

Lenin in his childhood age. Every child had to behave according to the special ‘communist child norms’ and it was forbidden to break the rules for the fear of punishment. The same situation continued once the child became a teenager: schoolchildren were to be members of the ‘Soviet Pioneers’ – a boy and girl scout organization, where children had to wear red neck scarves that showed their belonging to this special political organization. The children were watched and ought to behave under the rules of that child political organization as well. There were obviously advantages to the system, such as the fact that children felt the sense of belonging and engagement and were less likely to become adolescent delinquents, but the propaganda effect remains. ‘Soviet pioneers’ were supposed to participate in slightly militarized sport games and sports competitions, especially in pioneer’s summer camps. When the children became young adults, they had to become “Komsomol” organization members. And while in younger ages children indiscriminately had to join the ‘October Links’ or the ‘Pioneers’, being a Komsomol member meant that a person was consciously dedicated to the society, as enrolling was voluntary. All in all, this structure was a form of early social organization of the children and their gradual induction into the Soviet system as a whole.

Certain values were common and obligatory for all. For example, the Soviet Constitution maintained that everybody had the duty to work – it was a mark of honor and privilege. An unemployed person was cast out of society; if one remained jobless for more than one month they could be sent to prison, a corrective facility or even to a mental institution. At work, trade unions, CPSU members, the police, or the KGB – all these organizations were watching people. Everybody had to be registered at the place they lived at, and this rule was very strictly enforced. Thus the myth of a society ruled by the proletariat was only a myth. Proletariat, just as the other classes in Soviet society, was suppressed and ruthlessly managed from above. The myth of the power of the proletariat was needed in such strictly watched and regulated political system to keep people’s minds occupied with the feeling of the superiority of their own system over the evil imperialism in which the proletariat was suffering in destitution and ignominy.

As regards the Socialist camp and its relations with ‘brother’ nations, the Soviets depicted themselves as friendly and peace-loving and portrayed events such as the 1956 suppression of the uprising in Hungary in as their assistance against “counter-revolutionary.”⁶⁷ The same attitude had been expressed over Czechoslovakia in August 1968, when a Soviet military invasion suppressed the anti-Soviet

⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 262.

revolt; in Arbatov's work it was called "fraternal internationalist assistance."⁶⁸ Thus the Soviet propaganda machine distorted the portrayal of the events, casting shedding of their socialist camp brothers' blood as fraternal assistance and desire of the people to be free from the oppressive system – a reprehensible act that needed to be stopped.

Another tenet of the Soviet ideology was the evil posed by the capitalist system. It was seen as wrong, aggressive and unnatural. "Imperialism is inseparably linked with wars, with the struggle for the division of and re-division of the world, for the enslavement of peoples."⁶⁹ Thus whatever capitalists may do, or intend to do, everything is wrong and suspicious. "Imperialism" was a swearword in USSR and alluded to slavery, inhumanity, Nazism, aggression and the threat of war. Pro-Soviet ideologists further argued that "The general crisis of the capitalist system is also expressed by the deepening crisis of bourgeois ideology, the crisis that is seriously undermining imperialism's position in this area of struggle as well."⁷⁰ One can note that such kind of a statement from Soviet ideologist is very tendentious. One can hardly argue for the superiority of the Soviet economic system over the results of the capitalist order. While trying to dominate on the political scene and carry on arms races in a competition with the NATO bloc, the USSR plunged itself into a deep crisis. Realistically, it would have been more advantageous for the Soviets to tone down the competition and vilifying of the capitalist system and seek to improve their own living conditions instead. However, such was the nature of the ideological struggle between the two hostile camps that peaceful coexistence on a live-and-let-live basis was impossible for the two systems.

The Soviet propaganda left no question of who was to blame for the international hostility and who was going to emerge the winner in the end. For instance, concerning NATO-Soviets relations it was said that: "Two or three years after the end of the Second World War the imperialists started the cold war in which foreign political propaganda was one of the principal weapons."⁷¹ The blame is squarely laid onto the shoulders of the evil imperialists, leaving the Soviet public to believe that they were beleaguered by an aggressive enemy. Since alternative sources of information for Soviets were scarce at the time, they only had the word of their official media to rely upon. Naturally, this left the Soviet ideologues free to declare the imminent "...victory of the most advanced system, socialism..."⁷² The same idea permeates the entirety of Mr. Arbatov's book: communism will overcome imperialism and it

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 24.

⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 105.

⁷¹ Ibid, p. 26.

⁷² Ibid, p. 35.

is only a matter of time. All in all, it is obvious that under the Soviet ideology and propaganda the West – and all that was possible to label as Western – was condemned and painted in the darkest colors. Western scholars were not ignorant of this, but could do little; for instance, as Critchley pointed out, “One of the most evil things the Communist leaders have done is to build and maintain by their propaganda a barrier of spurious political hatred between the Russian people and the rest of us, whom they constantly describe as bloodthirsty warmongers, imperialists, capitalists, oppressors, etc.”⁷³ The Soviet ideologists presented the West as evil and aggressive; therefore, according to Soviet theories, it was impossible to build anything constructive out of relations with the West, and Soviet propaganda reinforced that image on a daily basis.

3.5. Western Approach to Soviet Propaganda

Though the Cold War started after 1945, some academics argue that the same time period can be referred to as the “Long Peace”. During this time nations enjoyed the stability that resulted from the bipolar nature of the international system⁷⁴. Although, as Gaddis argues, “The relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States has not been free from ideological rivalries: it could be argued, in fact, that these are among the most ideological nations on the face of the earth. ... And yet, since their emergence as superpowers, both nations have demonstrated an impressive capacity to subordinate antagonistic ideological interests to a common goal of preserving international order.”⁷⁵ Thus, one can maintain that, during this Long Peace, an invisible war had been waged. It had continued on for decades and had had its weapons, battlefields, victories and defeats. It was a war of ideas and propaganda. In this Thesis’s second chapter, ‘Historical overview’, it has already been argued that ideology and propaganda mattered very much during the Cold War and that two hostile camps put in great effort to win this battle. Both sides pointed fingers, accusing and blaming each other, over-emphasizing the weaknesses of ideologies and ways of life of the opposite political system. Obviously, the daily lives of the Soviet people were made difficult thanks to the communist system; however, all problems were meant to be explained by the tenets of Marxism-Leninism, thus this theory was under scrutiny from Western scholars, ideologists and politicians. All the fundamental principles and precepts of the theory were strongly criticized. From the Western point of view, Marxism-Leninism was a

⁷³ Op. cit. Critchley (1982), p. 56.

⁷⁴ Gaddis, J. L. , “The Long Peace”, in The Cold War and After, Prospects for Peace, edited by Lynn-Jones, S. M. and Miller, S. E. (1994), p. 6.

⁷⁵ Ibid, pp. 28-29.

deleterious utopia, which misrepresented and distorted reality. According to the Western scholars, the Soviet ideologists were holding up the teachings of Marxism-Leninism as that of a religion. “Soviet communism, being atheistic, had to create an anti-religion of its own. To fill the void of faith, it substituted legend for historic reality, embellishing some events and suppressing others. The new doctrine created demons and heretics, while elevating Lenin toward divinity.”⁷⁶ Thus, Western scholars denied the existence of any positive meanings of Marxism-Leninism as a humanistic theory with a proletarian protagonist in the middle, but perceived it as an inimical doctrine.

One can assert that Western scholars were right, while they pointed out that in the USSR, from the very beginning of its existence, the common practice had been to substitute reality by a well-created legend. Thus, all history was subject to change – and historical events were reinvented in the light that better suited the Marxist-Leninist theory. One could point out that, unfortunately, the abovementioned “demons and heretics” did indeed exist in the mind of the society. As demons and heretics were creatures to be afraid of or to blame all that went wrong, it was possible to attach that label to anyone who fell out of favor with the government. In the USSR, it was dangerous to be different; to stand out from the crowd or go against the masses meant putting oneself at risk. The phrase ‘enemy of the nation’ became significant. The well-known slogan of Stalin’s time – “he who is not with us, is against us” – had transformed society as it put forth a great question – who is the enemy? What is right? What is wrong? What does it mean to be with “us”, on “our” side? All the moral rules of society were gravely damaged. The hunt for ‘enemies of the nation’ had put upside down basic ethic standards, for that was a society ruled by fear; and sometimes, innocent people were unjustly convicted and made out to be traitors and saboteurs. Such a label could be pinned on anybody, slandering those who were somehow different, or did not obey the communist principles, or had thoughts that ran counter to the Soviet ideology. There was no surer way to ruin a person than to label them the ‘enemy of the nation.’ They would be cast out of society – if they were not sent to prison camps or executed, they still could not continue living normal lives with such a label, for they would be shunned and forbidden from working and looked upon with great disgust. Their families suffered accordingly; if they were not persecuted themselves, they had to live with the shame of having an “enemy of the nation” in their family. Since people did not trust the state with their welfare, people tended to rely on their families – which made the climate of mistrust all the more disastrous. People would keep their outcast relatives secret; if the ‘truth’ came out, brothers publically repudiated their brothers through mass media; children forswore their parents. In order to survive, people bargained with their morals. The fear to be

⁷⁶ Ebon, M., The Soviet propaganda machine (1986), p. 17.

cast out, to become the enemy, made ordinary people live in fear, prevented them from struggling against the system and to ‘know their place’. Thus fearful, the Soviet society was more manageable for the CPSU. Moreover, the enemy was guilty of all the problems the society had. To find the enemy and blame those for all possible ills befalling the Soviet state became basic practice in the communist society.

Church was declared to be separate from the state and it was forbidden to practice any religion. Unfortunately, numerous beautiful, historically valuable Russian churches were demolished at that time; people were afraid to protest against it as to do so mean to become an enemy of the society. The Western scholars correctly pointed out that Marxism-Leninism was the only one religion to believe. Marxism-Leninism was declared to be the true faith and, moreover, the only hope for poor – and not just the Soviet poor, but those from all over the globe. Many of people truly believed in it, despite the fact that Marxism-Leninism was propagated from above, from the echelons of Soviet power and ideology. Lenin, on the other hand, was a ‘Divine Creator’ and thus above any criticism.⁷⁷ He was a hero, and he and his life were an exemplary standard. His works were cited and his thoughts were taken as the guiding light for the society. There was clearly a great and out-of-proportion idolization of Lenin in the USSR. Western critics derided this exaggeration with sarcasm: “In the beginning Lenin created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was a formless void, there were bourgeois darkness everywhere, and Lenin’s spirit hovered in faraway Zurich. Lenin said, ‘Let there be Revolution’, and there was Revolution. Lenin saw the Light of Revolution, and found it good, and he divided it from the darkness of feudalism, and he cried out, ‘Let there be Peace, Land, and Bread, and All Power to the Bolsheviks.’ And, lo, there was the October Revolution, and if Mankind did not live happily ever after, it was largely the fault of the American imperialists.”⁷⁸ Even though it sounds amusing, in many ways it does reflect reality. The Marxist-Leninist doctrine came to be based on faith, just like any religion, more than on rationality. What one cannot explain needs to be just taken as is. People do not ask Gods to be better or different; the only thing one can do is hope for a brighter future.

Western critics pointed out that the Soviets perceived - and presented to the entire world the October Revolution as “an act of cataclysmic purification and rebirth.”⁷⁹ The Soviets emphasized that, since it was a new system that did not have a precedent before in human’s history, thus in this newly born society everything, including miracles, was possible and ‘some others’ were simply unable to

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

understand the advantages of this new-type society. Unfortunately, those ideas are still very strong in the Russian society even nowadays. As Ebon pointed out, “Myth making and amnesia induction wash over modern Soviet history in successive waves.”⁸⁰ Thus even though Marxism-Leninism as a theory is not an official doctrine in Russia any longer, many in the Russian society still perceive it as exceptional, special, and beyond understanding for the unenlightened outsiders. This point of view is one of the basic myths of Russia, myths that Kremlin still uses to rule the nation.

Another mythical idea has been inherited from the Soviet time - which Soviets do not only liberate suppressed nations from the chains of capitalism, but that they have a special mission in the world. In the new-type society proudly established by the Soviets, “Messianic, missionary and other neo-religious themes permeated post-revolutionary propaganda, and have done so ever since.”⁸¹ This is a very important point, as it is possible to explain many events, that happening nowadays in contemporary Russian society, according to it. If one is a missionary – many issues are special for them; they are allowed to do something that would be unacceptable in any other society. Russians cherish their mystic and hypothetic missionary spirit as a valuable treasure that they are supposed to have inherited from their ancestors. The persistence of this myth also explains Russian isolation in the world. In Stalin’s time, the national idea was based on communist values, and nowadays Russians are still searching for their national idea - and the cornerstone of it is the exceptionality of Russians and their perception of “us” and “them”, and permanent search for the enemy to blame for Russian problems. Other scholars, as Barghoorn in his work *Soviet Foreign Propaganda*, emphasized, that in Soviet propaganda “the phraseology of political messianic” was present from the beginning and “the vision of the glorious society of the future, free of coercion and exploitation, which is allegedly being built in the Soviet Union, has normally played a conspicuous role in Soviet propaganda.”⁸²

The Soviet practice of searching out an enemy to blame for all Soviet ills found its greatest target in the United States of America. As Shiraev and Zubok pointed out, “Russians have a traditionally ambivalent view about the West; throughout history they have been inclined to choose a particular Western country against which to measure themselves. In the twentieth century, it was America’s turn to be such a country.”⁸³ Competition with and anger at America with its capitalistic values turned deeper and bitterer in the 1990s, when democracy was declared from above – and, due to internal disorder, the

⁸⁰ Ibid, p. 19.

⁸¹ Ibid, p. 22.

⁸² Ibid, p. 8.

⁸³ Shiraev, E., Zubok, V., *Anti-Americanism in Russia from Stalin to Putin* (2000), p. 143.

word “democrat” became almost derogatory in the Russian society for the time. According to the Russian masses, if the Western capitalist democracy was planted in Russia from above – if not imported from the West against Russian will – it meant that such a foreign order would be damaging and unacceptable to Russia, with its own history of governance and way of life. The rapid transition from command economy to a more liberal system came as a huge shock to the society. Gorbachev declared the collapse of the USSR – and though Russia became the successor of the USSR, it was a different state and many Russians deemed themselves to be immigrants in their own country. They had to learn how to survive in new unknown circumstances. Winds of change did not bring positive developments for the Russians; it was a difficult time and Russians bore a lot of painful events. Chaos, instability, economic problems, and insecurity made the lives of ordinary people very difficult. Moreover, ‘democratic changes’ that were declared to the Russians from above were scary and wild. Thus the Russians turned to the Soviet habit to blame the outside enemy for all the problems they faced. “America... became a scapegoat, the cause of Russian troubles, the country that willingly let Russia fall to her knees.”⁸⁴

Thus, the Western point of view on Soviet propaganda was rather critical. Both social systems, capitalist and communist, had so little in common that they inevitably clashed. The Soviets were different; as such, they had to be examined. They were also the ideological enemies; as such, their faults were emphasized over any good sides the system might have had. Moreover, Western scholars asserted that the Soviet society was formed with a habit of searching for the enemy to blame in its problems and, because of the Soviet propaganda against the West with its imperialistic values; an anti-Western mood became strong in the society. Moreover, thanks for Russian propaganda, the USA were portrayed as the number one enemy for the USSR/Russia and anti-Americanism in Russia became severe. As Shiraev and Zubok noted, anti-Americanism during the Soviet time was “...‘old’ Soviet anti-Americanism, the product of the official ideology of class struggle and reinforced by the concept of imperialist encirclement, nourished by the decades of Cold War confrontation...”⁸⁵ However, anti-Americanism did not end with the collapse of the USSR, but was transformed into a “new anti-Americanism” and got a form of a “chronic disease.”⁸⁶ This “disease”, though it was inherited from the Soviet time, did not disappear, but kept developing presently in the Russian society as a part of a common state ideology.

⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 145.

⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 2.

⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 145.

Chapter 4. From Soviet to Russian Media

As the subject matter of this thesis concerns the Soviet/Russian media, it is necessary to highlight an important difference between the Soviet and the Western media. Unlike their independent Western counterparts, all Soviet media were a mouthpiece for the Kremlin, a propaganda tool for spreading the official Kremlin ideology and position regarding different issues. Since the KGB strictly censored all news released in the USSR, the Soviet media were not a tribune for open discussion or even a source of objective news. Suppressed within such tight frames, the media sources were not able to tell the truth about real life, but were a distorting mirror that reflected a skewed picture of the entire world.

Of course, it is debatable whether the mass media elsewhere are free by nature and reflect objectively the picture of the world, explaining all issues from an abstract objective angle. As Oates points out, "The media are not necessarily free and fair, even in societies that claim to support free speech."⁸⁷ However, with the Soviet media, one can reasonably claim that tendentiousness in depicting issues was their main distinguishing feature. Considering the position of monopoly for the government sources of information inside the Soviet system, one cannot overestimate the influence of the Soviet media over the Soviet public. As Zassoursky notes, the media in the Soviet Union served those in positions of power, playing the role of "propagandists-illusionists, well-versed in the all techniques of creating the desired impressions."⁸⁸ The Soviet public watched the spectacle, hardly able to tell illusion from reality.

4.1. Transition Period

By the time when the wind of change blew the USSR off of the political map and the Russian Federation succeeded it, perestroika and glasnost had already shaken the Russian society. Initiated by Gorbachev, the collapse of the USSR in one wink ruined all the previous practices, institutions and approaches to life. Previous values were declared wrong and all issues related to communism became a subject of severe criticism. A barrage of news stories, one more shocking than another, all of a sudden overwhelmed the Russian audience, who had been taught for decades to take printed word for law. Previously forbidden topics of discussion suddenly sprung to the fore in the media. On the one hand, one could not deny that these changes were for the best: diversion in the Russian media sphere made it possible for the audience to acquire access to different sources of information. For the first

⁸⁷ Oates, S., Television, Democracy and Elections in Russia (2006), p. 9.

⁸⁸ Zassoursky, Y., The Temptation of Freedom. Russian Journalism in 1990-2007 (2007), p. 56.

time, the Russians saw the world not through a murky glass, but with startling clarity. That might not have been an entirely pleasant awakening, but it was rather necessary.

On the other hand, the Russian audience had practice neither at sorting, nor responding critically to the information suddenly flooding in from all sides. As the Russian media stepped onto the capitalist market, the news business had become seen as a profitable endeavor; much money was made on juicy gossip, scandalous or horrifying stories, and breaking the Soviet taboo for writing about sex. As Altunyan argues, the media in the 1990s acquired a hysterical, emotional tone, which bespoke catastrophe and calamity. When catastrophe strikes moral taboos fall away.⁸⁹

The Wild '90s became the golden age for the Russian media. Shockingly for the Russian society, the media became the bearers of stories both interesting and exciting, speaking for the first time of issues long forbidden – Stalin and issues related to his time, labor camps, private life of former leaders, dissidents and the truth about many things only ever whispered about previously. Denied this information for years, the Russians eagerly consumed it now. It is perhaps difficult for an outsider to comprehend the Russians' fervent desire to learn the truth about their own history. People would sell their possessions in order to have the money to subscribe to some journals. As I. Zassoursky pointed out, "The print press was largely responsible for raising the temperature of popular debate in the beginning of the 1990s."⁹⁰ The media highlighted the birth of diversity among political parties that appeared on the Russian political scene – which, after the long reign of the CPSU, was new and unusual for the Russians. Concerning the Russian TV at the time, it presented the news that became more exciting than any thriller, and the debates in the Russian parliament resembled fierce battles.

Thus, the Russians entered the changed world as a new nation. However, one cannot deny that, when a political system changes so rapidly in any country, especially from a totalitarian regime to a democracy, that country faces huge problems as the consequence of such changes. The media, capable of playing the role of the mediator between the government and the citizens, at this crucial time was needed by its audience more than ever. Things were changing so fast that half the time they seemed to be falling apart and the people needed an explanation to what was happening around them. Some media fulfilled this mission by presenting academic opinions of respected Russian persons of influence:⁹¹

⁸⁹ Op. cit. Altunyan (1999), p. 85.

⁹⁰ Zassoursky, I., "Free to get rich and fool around", in *The Post-Soviet Russian media. Conflicting Signals*, edited by Beumers, B., et al. (2009), p. 36.

⁹¹ Op. cit. Zassoursky (2007), p. 63.

academics, scientists, famous artists, dissidents and the like.⁹² Their opinions were fresh and, in the debates with the audience, the broadcasts for Russia's future were generally bright; so bright that they were, in fact, Utopian in nature.⁹³ While scientists, artists and academics were debating on journal pages and TV screens, the real fight for power was happening "behind the curtains". Overwhelmed and confused with these novelties and debates, living without any concern about their future, Russians did not understand that it was a pivotal time for their country, the time of re-division of the state property, when Russian natural resources, such as gas and oil, became privatized by some people; oligarchs came to power. Thus, despite the fierce rhetoric battles between the different political parties highlighted by the media, the real influence over the events was not in the hands of those parties and the outcome for the future was not determined by the success of their rhetoric. The new power was already decided: the new Russian oligarchs had established themselves, quietly, off-stage.⁹⁴

In the meanwhile, the political and economic situation in Russia deteriorated. During the turmoil and the strife of the early 1990s, the Russians came to pin high hopes on the first Russian President, Boris Yeltsin. The nation had great expectations for him - ones that never came true. He embodied all hopes for freedom and democratic changes; he declared a new era of democracy for Russia, including the freedom of press. He, now, donned the image of a benevolent protector and a "good tsar" for the nation. Still, the country was suffering the consequences of perestroika; the USSR's problems did not go away with establishing the new Russian regime. The ensuing economic chaos, especially the meltdown of 1998, affected ordinary people badly and brought a lot of disappointment to the masses. The politicians accompanying Yeltsin on the Russian political scene naturally promised to solve the problems. However, their economic plans never came to fruition and their bright speeches did not make up for the absence of food and other life necessities. These politicians called themselves democrats – and thus the notion of democracy was distorted. The word "democrat" became almost swear word in the Russian society, equal to an unreliable, irresponsible person. Different groups of interest appeared on the Russian political scene; Yeltsin was losing his influence and oligarchs became increasingly powerful, taking advantage of the situation. They came to own the Russian media. It brought more confusion for the audience as there had been no transparency on this issue and it was difficult to understand the permutations of the Russian media market. The Russian media did not help to clear the

⁹² Ibid, p. 68.

⁹³ Ibid, p. 63.

⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 68.

issue; they mostly reflected the Kremlin clans' wars for property and information wars.⁹⁵ It was in this setting that Vladimir Putin came to power.

4.2. The Media under Putin

In 2000, when Putin started his presidency, a window to the entire world, opened in consequence of perestroika, became even wider. The availability of different sources of information changed the Russian society forever. The rapidly developing possibilities of IT technologies, happening all over the globe, made huge differences too. The Internet made it possible to get the news online, overcoming the limitations of time and space. This coin had two sides, however. On the one hand, one could not deny that there was great availability of different sources of information in the 2000s' Russia. Internet users were able to access the news quickly. The situation with printed media changed too. For example, the appearance of such publications as "Russian Newsweek" in Russian became possible and gave the Russian audience an option to read the Western opinion about many issues. Of course, such possibilities made horizons wider for the Russian audience and it is not possible to compare this situation to the Soviet time, when such kinds of information were absolutely forbidden and all information that Soviets could get was supposed to help those in power manage the nation according to communist ideological dogmas.⁹⁶

On the other hand, even though it is impossible to deny these huge changes for the better, there are still many "buts" concerning this issue. Firstly, information itself spreads unequally in the Russian society. At the communist time, despite the lack of freedom of the press, it was possible for most citizens to get the news; most people got the same information filtered down from the same governmental sources, of which there was a limited number. Nowadays, there is a striking difference between different parts of the Russian audience; someone who belongs to the "office plankton" (white collars) in big cities, such as Moscow or St. Petersburg, has significantly more options as far as access to sources of information goes - they have the Internet, different journals, the TV, etc. In juxtaposition, an inhabitant of a small village in the middle of Siberia does not have the same opportunities. The Internet is still a luxury in many parts of Russia. There is also a digital divide between different age groups – the teenagers are more likely to be computer-savvy than pensioners. This inequality in the spread of information accounts for massively different worldviews forming between different parts of the Russian population.

⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 67.

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 55.

What is more, even though there is no outright censorship the way there used to be in the Soviet times and some media are indeed private, there remains some governmental control over the broadcasted and printed word. There are issues not to be mentioned, Chechnya being one of the foremost among them. It is impossible to create a real picture of the situation in Chechnya for lack of information about this issue. Some journalists were trying to shed light on it – Politkovskaya being perhaps the most unfortunately famous of them, and her murder case is still unsolved. The Russian media talk with caution on certain issues, or portray them in a certain light – or keep silence about them, which is also a way of communication. For instance, the Litvinenko case that caused a big wave of attention and comments in the Western media was presented very differently in the Russian media sources. There was no information given about the case, and only several days later it was mentioned in the Russian news that some person, a former Russian citizen, had been poisoned in the UK. There was no explanation, no examples of the Western point of view concerning the issue. Thus, the information the Russians get from their media is still distorted to a degree, although perhaps no outright substitution of reality happens the way it used to. This is why Zassoursky said that it is possible to use terms such as “simulacrum” when talking about Russian media nowadays.⁹⁷

4.3. Television in Russia as Main Source of Information

Seeing as many printed editions are not affordable or simply not available in many parts of Russia, the TV remains the main source of information for the Russian audience. On the one hand, it is more affordable and easily accessible, and, on the other, it is more of an entertaining spectacle since it delivers information through visual means. Television played the big role in Soviet people’s lives, and even though the content of information was censored - as television, as other media, were under total state ownership, the Soviet public was interested to watch news programs as for instance main daily night news program “Vremya” (“The Time”) as well as sport, nature and culture programs: ballets, concerts, education programs for youth, entertaining talent competitions and the like. Oates provides impressive data concerning this issue, arguing that “the Soviets produced large number of television sets even when other consumer goods were in very short supply. [...] at least three-quarters of all households across the vast Soviet territory had television sets by the end of Soviet rule and the typical audience for the main nightly news programme reached 80 percent of the adult population.”⁹⁸ Thus it is

⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 55.

⁹⁸ Op. cit. Oates (2006), p. 11.

obvious that television played a big role for Soviet people. Concerning the perestroika time, “at least one channel was available to about 99 percent of the country by the 1990s.”⁹⁹

As mentioned above, all media were booming in Russia in the ‘90s, voicing tough questions that had never been brought up on air before, so one can point out that the Russian television was the main mediator at this time of changes. “While the debate in the print media about the future of the country – as well as the judgment of the Soviet past – became very lively, it was television that could serve as an even stronger catalyst for change.”¹⁰⁰ It gave the Russian audience the visual proof of how the political communication in the country had changed. When Gorbachev appeared on TV screens, answering questions and giving interviews to Western journalists, it was a huge change, as the previous CPSU leaders did not communicate straight with their nation, let alone Western politics and journalists. Yeltsin also approached the public in meetings and through media, including TV, which did much to further his popularity.

Regarding the Russian TV, some channels are private nowadays, while some still belong to the state, and the question of which channel belongs to whom, baffles many Russians. There were scandals on the Russian TV about channels NTV and Channel Six. The Russian audience was lost, trying to follow the lines of mutual accusation, although they could understand that the ownership of a channel would determine the sort of information it would give. The question of bias came to the fore, but was so muddled that no awareness really resulted from it. Of course, the Russian TV nowadays is very different from the Soviet time; there are a lot of channels available, including the Russian version of EURONEWS with its obviously Western perspective. What is also more transparent today is the way the various power groups that try to influence the media; in place of one single censoring body, there are now competing parties whose battles can be observed on TV.

Putin, being a new type of leader, also created a new type of political communication: press conferences and briefings with Russian and Western journalists as well as with the Russian audience, answering the questions on TV. Unfortunately, all these shows are well scripted. There are also attempts at making the president more accessible for the masses to identify with; an example of that would be a program showing Putin bathing in a cold pond, cleansing himself of his sins in accordance with the Russian Orthodox tradition. This program sent out a clear message that the President was a good Christian who obeyed Christian traditions and was therefore a person of good moral standing;

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 12.

more than that, it showed his health and readiness to behave just as any other citizen. The message worked; Putin became quite popular.

In his TV appearances, Putin always projected an image of a strong leader. The audience was subtly, or not so subtly, informed that Russia, facing numerous huge problems, needed a strong leader to overcome them, and Putin was it. The one who could solve them. Father of the nation. These tendencies to promote Putin had a dangerous angle, as suddenly, after years of rejecting Stalin and revealing the more horrifying pages of Soviet history he had written, the government started to portray him not as a ruthless dictator, but first and foremost the creator of the national idea. When, in 2008, there was a discussion in the Russian media on the most important national hero, Stalin emerged quite close to the top of that list. His deeds were, on Putin's urging, added back into the history textbooks as something ultimately justifiable, despite their horrible price. The parallels are clear, if not explicitly stated: just as Stalin inherited a country in turmoil and had, through his personal influence, made it stronger, Putin would be able to do the same, presumably with less bloodshed. One has to admit, however, that it was the idea of the strong man on top, rather than the parallels with Stalin, that made Putin so popular – the Russians knew few good things about democracy, but they spent the absolute majority of their history with strong leaders guiding them. There might not be a lot of freedom in such an arrangement, but there was security. The Russians watched the TV, saw Putin strong and confident and promising to lead them to better life, and felt reassured that the darker days of the wild '90s were finally over.

4.4. Glamorization of the Russian Media

One phenomenon closely associated with the prosperous times of Putin's presidency, when oil money poured into Russia, is the boom of glamour in the Russian public sphere. Quite apart from the influx of glossy magazines in the 1990s – *Vogue*, *Glamour*, *Playboy*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle*, *Burda*, *Men's health*, etc. – there also occurred a reconsideration of ideas and ways of life. For decades, Russians had been deprived of the possibility to spend so much and so frivolously; then, suddenly, as the borders opened and the oil money created new possibilities, the Russians found themselves able to lead lives they had only ever dreamt of – to buy beautiful things, to wear pretty clothes, to visit exotic locations. Naturally, not everyone could afford such luxuries, but that only heightened the appeal of the glamorous life: it set those who could afford to live it from those who could not. Everything became a status symbol, from a car one owned to the kind of school one's children attended. In a society long deprived of open stratification and forced to conform to the same wage limits, this new freedom was as exhilarating as it

was deceptive – for, of course, glamour created conventions people had to conform to, replacing communism as the dominant ideology.

Russian journalists, political scientists, writers and other famous figures are aware of this trend; they debate why glamour plays such a huge role in the society. For instance, a Russian political scientist Igor Bunin in one of his interviews addresses the question why preoccupation with superficial splendor is more apparent in Russia than it is in Western Europe and why glamour has become a mass ideology. According to him, glamour fills an existing ideological and structural vacuum; in addition, glamour “fulfils the role of Peter the Great” – who had bridged the gap between the Russia and the West and created a semblance of civilization.¹⁰¹ In other words, following advice from glossy magazines and living the glamorous lives makes the affluent Russians feel a connection to the practices and ways of life of the West. While it does not change who Russians *are*, it changes how they behave, and thus brings them closer to the West. Another well-respected Russian person, writer Tatyana Tolstaya, says that glamour creates an image that people have to aspire to; it shames them if they don’t conform and offers them ideal models of life that will give them happiness. She claims that glamour sells people happiness in return for fulfilling certain financial obligations.¹⁰² As such, glamour is much less demanding than the communist ideology, but offers salvation all the same. To a society grossly disillusioned after the fall of the Soviet Union, this simplicity is predictably alluring.

With this glamorization of society comes the glamorization of the way it perceives the world. The mass media naturally reacts to public concerns and adjusts its messages accordingly. Zvereva points out that, “In recent years, TV does not allow for expertise and analysis, encouraging only formats of entertainment. In the sphere of news and public broadcasting, there begins to predominate the style of informational entertainment, which is used to produce and uphold the image of stability and well-being in the off screen reality.”¹⁰³ Thus the Russian audience does not have an opportunity to see the real picture of the world; it is again presented with a virtual reality. Sharp questions that society faces are avoided, and it leads to the notion of non-objectivity. Moreover, as Zvereva argues, “The language of a glamorous informational program is essentially imprecise. Using it, one can avoid calling a spade a spade. Seeing as the explanation for events has to be entertaining, the official rhetoric meshes with

¹⁰¹ Bunin, I., “The art to live by one day”, *Ogoniok*, 12/2008, URL: <http://www.ogoniok.com/4988/5/>, accessed 23.06.2009

¹⁰² Tolstaya, T., “Ya u mnogih vyzyvau zlobu”, *POLIT.RU*, 03/2006, URL: <http://www.polit.ru/culture/2006/03/26/tolstayaint.html>, accessed 15.11.09

¹⁰³ Zvereva, V., “Pozyvnye glamura: Glamur: kulturnaya ekspansia ili novaya ideologia?” *Iskusstvo kino*, 11/2006, URL: <http://www.kinoart.ru/magazine/11-2006/now/vera1106>, accessed 01.12.09

humorous catchphrases, sayings, quotes from songs and movies, connected on the associative level.”¹⁰⁴ Political bias, subtle messages, masked issues – all of this sneaks into Russian informational programs and colors the Russians’ view of the world – which naturally impacts their reactions to the outside world. Russia’s situation is not unique; it can be argued that the Western mass media, too, “fosters false needs, generates conformism, and sedates and diverts ordinary people from important issues towards concerns that are trivial.”¹⁰⁵ The people are more concerned with the kind of car to buy or what kind of a scandalous affair a celebrity is involved in than with affairs on the international scale, or at the very least their concerns for those issues have about equal weight. What it results in, once again, is a new bias for the Russian public as it confronts NATO and the West – as the next chapter will discuss in greater detail.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ el-Ojeili, C., and Hayden, P., Critical Theories of Globalization (2006), p. 139.

PART II. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Chapter 5. Political Cartoons as a Weapon in the Ideological War: NATO and Cold War Images in Pravda (1960s, 1970s, and 1980s)

5.1. Political Cartoons and Caricatures

It is well known that every verbal or graphic work contains a message from its creator to the audience. Comparing verbal and graphic works, one can argue that, in this respect, a visual message is easier for a viewer to understand. Moreover, a graphic image usually does not need special explanation or translation, though some visual messages are accompanied by verbal comments. And if a picture contains any humoristic or satiric meaning and is entertaining in form, it definitely attracts the viewer. Consequently, cartoons and caricatures have been popular for centuries. Compared to printed text, they are often more interesting for the audience: they are simple to understand, they entertain. Thus cartoons and caricatures have through history been winning hearts of different classes of audience; people's desire to be entertained was fulfilled by both of these types of graphic works. There is a difference between a cartoon and a caricature that for viewers might be not obvious, although it exists. As McKenna pointed out, "As such the cartoon can be viewed as an outgrowth of 'caricature', a graphic arts term for a pictorial representation in which the physical features of a person or object have been comically distorted in order to satirize or ridicule its subject."¹⁰⁶ Thus caricature by definition concerns one object (individual) which (whose) personal features might be ridiculed and funny for the viewers. On the other hand, a cartoon can depict different groups of objects or individuals that (who) also can be ridiculed because of exaggeration of their common features.

Both words *cartoon* and *caricature* come from Italian; "cartone" means "a large sheet of paper" and the latter – "to load" or "to surcharge" (from Italian *caricare*).¹⁰⁷ A sixteenth century Italian painter Annibale Carracci pioneered in sketching main features of people's faces and figures as vegetables or as animals; this mocking meaning of a cartoon was taken later and developed into different forms and ways of expression.¹⁰⁸ And as it is very much in human nature to be entertained by laughing about others, caricatures and cartoons started to serve different issues and aims since, developing with the times. With such inventions as lithography, improvements in printed technologies, and the

¹⁰⁶ McKenna, K.J., All the Views Fit to Print. Changing Images of the U.S. in Pravda Political Cartoons, 1917-1991 (2001), p. XX.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, pp. XIX-XX.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p. XX.

development of mass media, the meaning and purpose of cartoons evolved too, expressing people's creativity and serving different aims. There have been created cartoons of various genres, to please different types of audience: from simple funny pictures, to a series of adventure histories for children, from fiction, detectives, love stories to political cartoons. Political cartoons, however, have a different purpose: not only to entertain the audience, but, while transforming an image of some person or event and depicting it from satirical point of view, to deliver a persuasive hidden message and, what is more important, to form public opinion. As Press pointed out, "[The] political cartoon seeks to do more than to amuse or to make one sigh; it tries to influence one to a particular viewpoint... The political cartoon has always been an aesthetic achievement only by accident. Its purpose is propaganda, not art."¹⁰⁹ In this respect, being a tool of persuasion, political cartoons are real weapons in an ideological war. There are a great number of newspapers and printed editions from all over the globe that have been using such cartoons in political games for decades, if not for centuries.

Unfortunately, political cartooning was not in a big focus of academic research, as McKenna pointed out: "The persuasive art of political cartooning unfortunately has failed to attract the attention it is due as a topic of scholarly inquiry. A blend of social science content and fine arts technique, the multidisciplinary study of political and editorial cartooning has long been avoided by academic purists."¹¹⁰ Moreover, there has been conducted no real analysis of meanings, codes and concepts that political cartoons deliver.¹¹¹ Thus interpretation of political cartoons might vary, depending on scholars, schools, political orientation, etc. It is possible to make one statement, nonetheless: it is in human nature to be afraid to look ridiculous in other people's eyes and perceive that ridicule takes away the seriousness and respectability, and therefore it is possible to weaken an opponent through such an attack. Nowadays, many politicians, being targets as public representative figures, have grown impervious to such "attacks."

5.2. Russian Political Cartoons and Caricatures, their Roots and History

As the research at hand concerns the Russian media, one can point out that Russian political cartoon practices developed differently from their Western counterparts. The norms of political caricatures in Russia were defined by certain rules inherent in the very fabric of the Russian society as it had

¹⁰⁹ As quoted *ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. XIX.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. XIX.

developed over the centuries - fear of God, respect for the Tsar, and wariness of the government.¹¹² At the beginning of the 19th century, at the time of the war with Napoleon, political cartoons were in use, but the situation shifted to strict censorship again till the beginning of 20th century. At that time, the best examples of political cartoons and caricatures were shown; from that time this type of art gained a high level cultural tradition. Political atmosphere at the end of 19th and the beginning of 20th century was very charged in Russia, especially before and after the first Russian revolution of 1905. There were great expectations about it in the Russian society. On different levels of society, people from the proletariat to the intelligentsia and the representatives of the bourgeoisie, there were many who were in opposition to the ruling classes and harshly criticized the regime. When the revolution of 1905 failed and Russia was defeated in the unsuccessful Russo-Japanese war (1905), it brought a lot of disappointment to the nation. All these issues made politics a matter of wide discussion on all levels of society and the political ground was favorable to the boom of magazines, newspapers and other publications that formed a public sphere for sharp discussion about current issues. This coincided with a burst of creativity in the Russian art, the so-called “Silver Age” in Russian art history. For instance, a number of talented artists in 1898 united in the “World of Art” organization that profoundly influenced not only Russian, but all of the world art traditions. The talented artists were able to express themselves and their political views by publishing political cartoons and caricatures that were targeting members of the State Duma, political parties and organizations and even the Tsar himself. As McKenna pointed out, “...Russian caricaturists and political cartoonists found ample opportunity to demonstrate their talent for artistic innovation in the service of political radicalism.”¹¹³ Such magazines as for instance *Zritel* (Spectator), *Zhupel* (Bugaboo), *Satiricon*, *Novyi* (New) *Satiricon*, *Signal* and the number of others satirical and humoristic magazines started their existence at the time. Many printed publications were allowed to exist because the political atmosphere in the society convinced the Russian Tsar to sign the October Manifesto, where among other political decisions he promised the freedom of the press.¹¹⁴ Thus, in the atmosphere of freedom and creativity, artistic talents were booming. The government would find some criticism intolerable and close down some magazines, but other ones would come onto the scene, still heating the atmosphere of political activity and criticism toward the regime.

This situation lasted until the First World War – the reactionary publications would attack the revolutionary ones and vice versa. However, World War I had greatly changed the political atmosphere. Since Russia entered the war, censorship became stricter because of requirements of

¹¹² Ibid, p. XXII.

¹¹³ Ibid, p. 18.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 18.

wartime and moreover, the tone of media has changed accordingly. The public sphere required a patriotic mood from media, in place of sharp criticism towards the government and the regime. Nevertheless, the voices of criticism towards the government remained strong – for instance, harsh condemnation was published by the Bolshevik newspaper *Pravda*, which started its existence due to Lenin’s directive not long previously, in 1912. Still, *Pravda* was printed abroad and distributed in Russia with difficulties. The situation lasted until the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, which had drastically changed the political scenery in Russia.

The Soviet era of political cartoons started after the Bolshevik revolution. As mentioned above, Bolsheviks paid a lot of attention to propaganda and agitation from the very beginning. When in 1918 the first Russian information media - ROSTA (Russian Telegraph Agency) - was established, it consisted of ten departments and one of them was “literature-agitation”.¹¹⁵ ROSTA printed newspapers, including everyday small-circulation newspapers for big plants workers. It also printed everyday informative updating, bulletins, propaganda posters – “LITAGITROSTA”, or “AGITROSTA”, where there were printed caricatures or short texts about current political events. The problem was that, on one hand, amongst most of Russian population to whom Bolsheviks addressed their messages (peasants and workers) at the time the level of literacy was low, and on the other, as a consequence of the revolution and the Civil War, there was a lack of paper and capacities for printing – and thus the Bolsheviks had to invent a convincing and convenient way to spread propaganda. As McKenna pointed out, “...Bolsheviks continued to rely on popular forms of visual propaganda, for both cultural as well as pragmatic reasons.”¹¹⁶ For instance, Bolsheviks started to use, for propaganda purposes, so-called agitation trains and steamships that were carrying visual propaganda on their sides and also carried brigades of agitators and propagandists. These agitation trains were decorated with simple sketches, which persuaded the public of the advantages of the Soviet Power. For instance, the capitalists were depicted as always big bellied, ugly, wearing black top hats with mean countenances – this opposed to working class people who were usually drawn as peaceful figures with pleasant faces. Thus these messages from the Bolsheviks to the nation were addressing an ideological issue; they were made to be clearly understandable and accessible to all, without any doubt as to their meaning.

The first Soviet caricatures appeared in the so-called OKNA ROSTA (Windows of ROSTA).¹¹⁷ These caricatures were sometimes accompanied by short text or a poem and depicted the situation on war

¹¹⁵ Ovsepyan, R.P., *Istoria Noveishei Otecestvennoi Zurnalistiki* (2005), p. 54.

¹¹⁶ Op. cit. McKenna (2001), p. 30.

¹¹⁷ Op. cit. Ovsepyan (2005), p. 54.

fronts. Windows ROSTA were produced and placed in different locations of big Russian cities and these cartoons were very popular. The arrow of the Bolsheviks' satire was targeting various enemies; they ridiculed domestic and foreign bourgeoisie, merchants and anyone rich as class enemies. There were also Civil War enemies: White counterrevolutionaries and the Entente interventionist powers, etc. As McKenna points out: "Because of its ability graphically to interpret, inflate as well as deflate the prestige of nations, public figures and events, political caricature can serve as a powerful propaganda weapon to be wielded in waging ideological warfare between international powers. Much of this success derives from its innate ability to provide almost daily commentary on given events. As a result the political caricaturist can elect either to mobilize patriotic feelings against the enemy or to reduce that enemy to an object of scorn and ridicule, making him seem foolish and therefore less formidable."¹¹⁸

The main Soviet daily *Pravda* had been a powerful mouthpiece of the Soviets echelons of power for decades.¹¹⁹ Being the official printed organ of CPSU, *Pravda* became almost a law-establishing newspaper as all that was printed in *Pravda* was considered to be immutable. *Pravda* shaped the public opinion, set the correct way of life for the Soviets, as well as the tone of relations within the society. It accused the political opponents of the Bolsheviks and highlighted developments in international relations. Using a broad formula of the purpose of media, 'to inform, to teach and entertain', *Pravda* played a role of didactic controller and informer the nation within a rigid framework. All the information that was printed in *Pravda* was censored, selected and specially oriented. It was a mouthpiece of CPSU and thus ideology and propaganda were of paramount importance to this publication. It was telling the nation "what to think and what to think about".

One could view the USSR as the country of good news as the content of information about domestic issues was always full of glowing endorsement – a hymn to the glory of the socialist way of life. Every newspaper, every publication, any news report trumpeted the advantages of socialism and communism over imperialism. The mass media were full of cheerful reports about enormously rich harvests on Soviet collective farms, about outstanding achievements in building and construction, about the peaceful and happy lives of the country's inhabitants. In brief, the media helped to create a picture of a dream life in a dream society. Regarding international news, *Pravda* would divide them into two categories: those concerning from fellow communist countries and those concerning the deeds of their imperialist enemies. When delivering news on their communist brethren, the Soviet press was

¹¹⁸ Op. cit. McKenna (2001), p. 29.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, p. 6.

brimming with friendship and support, as well as the solidarity with proletariat from all over the globe. The attitude towards the capitalist evildoers was, of course, diametrically opposite. There had formed a division between “us” and “them” – “us”, the communist bloc, and “them”, the imperialists. This division on “us” and “them” has long roots. As Dobrosklonskaya pointed out, this division is constructed on a principle of “ideological polarization”.¹²⁰ This principle of polarization was the usual Soviet practice for decades. Thus the Soviet media were a promoter of good news about “us” and a claimer of bad news about “them”.

These abstract “them”, the bitter enemy of “us”, were by definition all Westerners and imperialists with their rotten values and wrong goals in life. As abovementioned, amidst the anonymous “them” the USA played a role of the number one enemy. And as NATO and the USA were tightly linked, for the Soviets they were almost one and the same – gathered under the label “imperialists.” Moreover, NATO as a military bloc embodied all the negative features of the enemy. The Soviet people were informed through the media that though they tried to build a perfect beautiful society, there had been an outside threat against their future success. There was an organization that wanted to destroy all the peaceful plans of the Soviets and all people of good will, and the name of it was - NATO. NATO was an imperialist military bloc; it was aggressive by definition, and therefore a threat. Thus it was an easy target to point fingers on. NATO and aggression became synonyms in the Soviet media. Consequently, the Soviet people were aware that any NATO action was supposed to result in a new war due to its insidious plans. One could take into account that, in the wake of World War II, the memory of recent bloodshed was very fresh in the minds of the Soviets. Every Soviet family lost their loved ones on the fields of this war, and the fear to face a new war was extremely strong in the society. A contemporary slogan that “We [the Soviets] can bear everything but not a war again” was at the bottom of the heart of every citizen. Moreover, the Soviets were scared of Stalin’s oppression, were not secure, afraid to think about their future. All in all, the Soviets were afraid of war – and NATO was a real war threat. Thus, as Black pointed out, “NATO had long been regarded as a dangerously aggressive enemy.”¹²¹ Therefore NATO was a perfect enemy figure to vilify and to fight against; moreover the threat posed by NATO became a tool for Soviet ideologists to manipulate their nation’s mind with.

As abovementioned, for decades, the Soviets had been taught that all there was to know about the entire world they could find on the pages of *Pravda*. They had not been taught to be critical; on the

¹²⁰ As quoted in Savkina, I., “What does it seek in foreign harbors?” (“Chto icheť on v strane dalekoi?”), in Litovskaya, M. et. al. (eds.), The Image of Decent Life in Contemporary Russian Media (2008), p. 202.

¹²¹ Op. cit. Black (2000), pp. 8-9.

contrary, every printed word was seen true and immutable, and the Soviet audience was manageable and rather naïve, with people believing the available media. This tendency has carried over to modern-day Russia; one could say that the trust in the government sources of information is another inheritance the Russians have received from the Soviet times. Naturally, the government saw no reason to educate their people in the ways of criticism and detection of biases and falsehoods; a gullible nation was an easily governed nation, whom one could feed horror stories about wily enemies and the virtues of the CPSU.

5.3. Image of NATO in the 1960s

Concerning political cartoons in *Pravda*, one can point out that, in the USSR, there existed no tradition to caricature Soviet leaders; they were usually beyond any criticism or even public discussion. For instance, Nikita Khrushchev was the only one who had been portrayed on the pages of *Pravda*, and that in the '60s – but still, it was done without the comical exaggeration of his physical or personality traits, so usual in caricatures; quite the opposite, he had been depicted as a hero that overcoming Cold War figure as it seen on picture 1 (“Miner at work”, January 1, 1960).

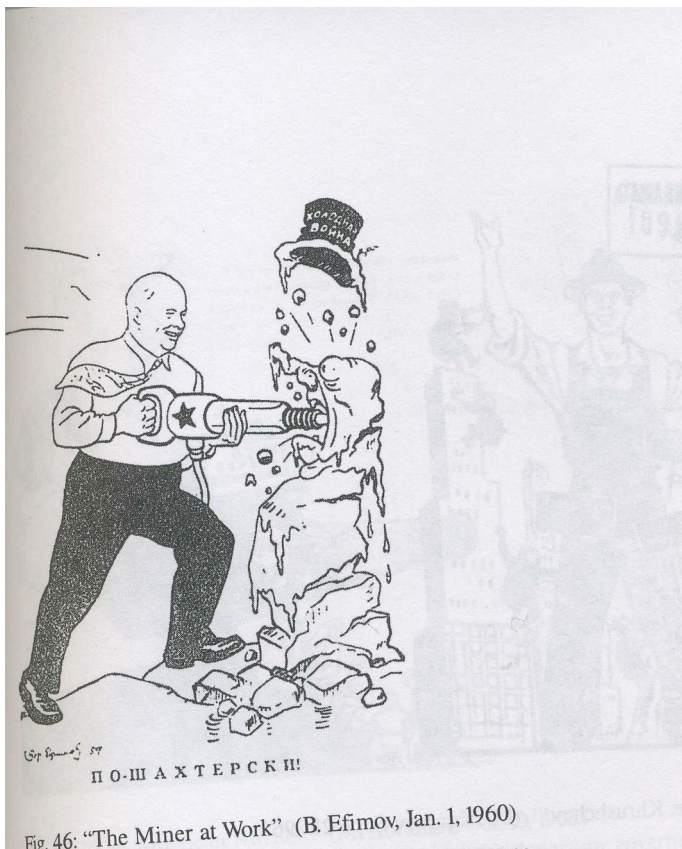
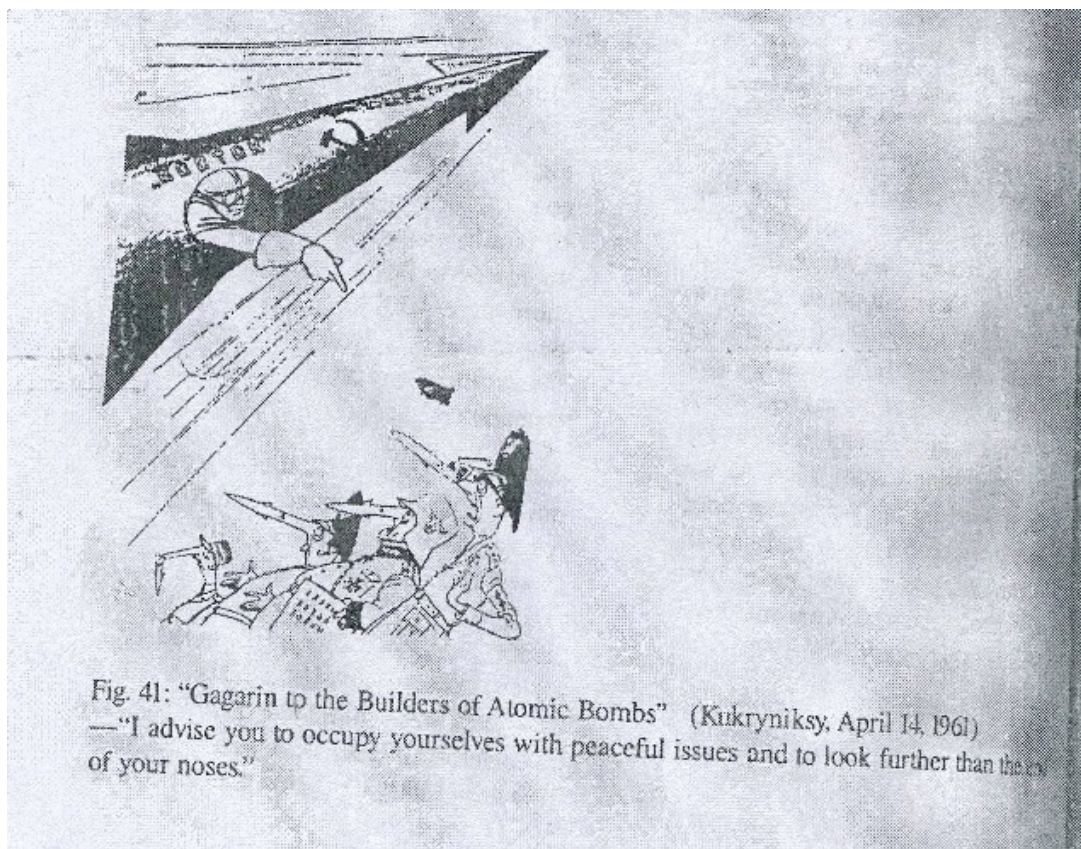


Fig. 46: “The Miner at Work” (B. Efimov, Jan. 1, 1960)

On this picture¹²² Khrushchev looks strong, optimistic and confident in contrast to the figure that he is destroying. That figure looks like a snowman; it wears the usual attribute of imperialists as depicted in Soviet cartoons – wearing a black top hat. On the top hat, the sign reads “Cold War” – so as to avoid any confusion in the minds of the viewers as to what it is that is being demolished by great Khrushchev. The Cold War figure looks ugly; has a big nose with a melting icicle on it. Khrushchev is destroying it with a jackhammer and smiling confidently. The Cold War figure looks scared, ridiculous and defeated. The hidden message of this caricature is: we are stronger our enemies, we will prevail. We are good; they are bad. It also means that Cold War supporters are not serious enemies; they will be easily defeated, for they are made of fragile snow, not solid ice. Peace is good and it will overcome the war. Good (communists) will triumph over evil (imperialists). There was, for a time, the tone of condescending superiority that permeated the Soviet press when it discussed the imperialist foes.

The same superior tone is shown in a cartoon named “Gagarin to the Builders of the Atomic Bomb” Picture 2 (April 14, 1961).



¹²² Op. cit. McKenna (2001), p. 139.

The text to this caricature is: “I advise you to occupy yourself with peaceful issues and to look further than the end of your noses.”¹²³ On this cartoon Yury Gagarin, the world’s first spaceman, a Soviet national hero, is depicted flying to the skies in the spacecraft *Vostok*, above the heads of figures of NATO generals and pointing his finger at them as he addresses them. These American, UK, French and German generals (recognizable by the uniforms they wear) all look at him, visibly astonished and envious. They all look ugly and unpleasant, with ridiculous atom bomb-shaped noses. Beyond the accusation of narrow-mindedness, the second point of this message is in the noses pictured as bombs: it implies the West’s war-mongering ways. This cartoon, akin to the previous one, shows the Soviets’ perception of them as a superpower; also, it has an underlying message of one-upmanship – whatever the West’s progress, the Soviets had managed to send the first manned flight into space. This scientific achievement was used for propaganda purpose as well: Khrushchev construed this event “as ‘a new triumph of the ideas of Lenin’ and as ‘a confirmation of the correctness of Marxist-Leninist teachings.’”¹²⁴ Thus one can conclude that, in the 1960s, the political cartoons in *Pravda* were depicting the USSR as a superpower, a strong player on the world’s political scene, and a role model for all to follow.

5.4. Image of NATO in the 1970s

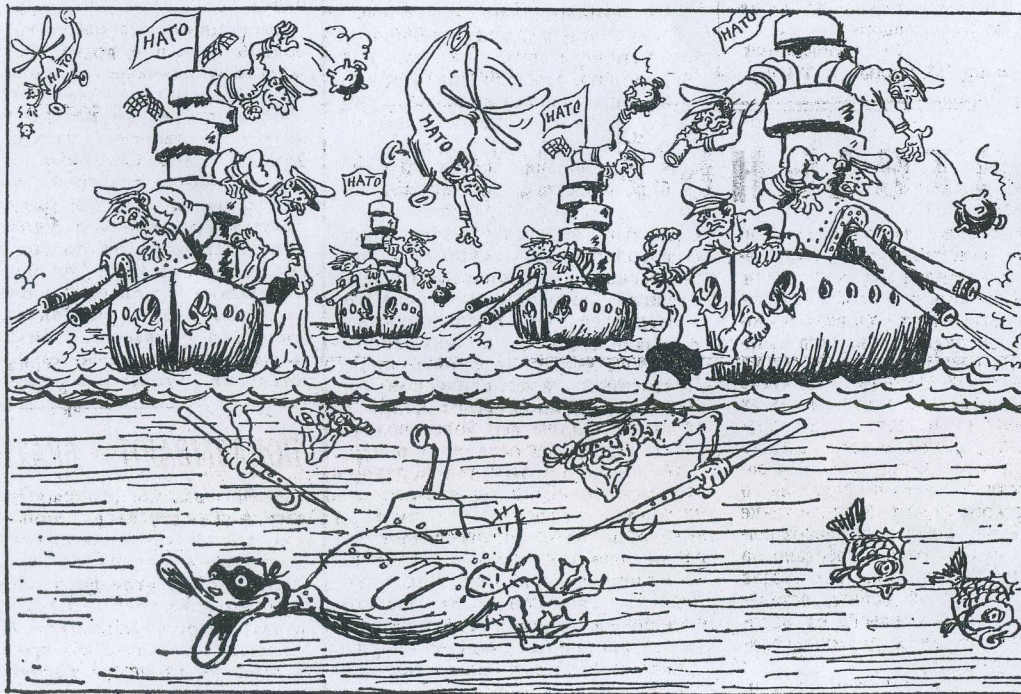
As the political situation changed in ‘70s, the tone of *Pravda’s* political cartoons was altered accordingly too. The détente politics set the tone now. As mentioned above, the 1970s had seen a “thawing” of the Cold War relations, and because of this the tone of the cartoons was less about direct military competition than about depicting the USSR as the innocent party in all conflicts. This change in tone is evident on the cartoon from November 29, 1972 (picture 3).

Picture 3

¹²³ The translation and the picture are from *ibid*, p. 106.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*.

Истерия вокруг таинственной, якобы «русской подводной лодки», вторгшейся в территориальные воды Норвегии, была, по мнению скандинавской печати, раздута руководством НАТО для того, чтобы помешать многосторонним консультациям в Хельсинки по подготовке общеевропейского совещания.
(Из газет).



Подводная утка.

Рис. А. Баженова.

It is named “Deep Water Canard” and targets the NATO with the accusation of spreading rumors about a Soviet submarine within the Norwegian seas. Seeing as this was occurring during the Helsinki Accords of 1972, it was pivotal for the Soviets to keep their face as peacekeepers and deny any accusations in non-peaceful initiatives. The picture depicts NATO ships and helicopters that are hunting and chasing a ‘duck’ (newspaper hoax), which has the features of a submarine (turret with a telescope, binoculars on the top). The duck (canard) wear an eye-mask – that is supposed to mean that it is anonymous, of unknown origin, which is important for the hidden message of this cartoon. The Soviets denied their involvement with the issue, although they did not deny the existence of the submarine. In this picture, the NATO representatives overloaded the water targeting this figure of duck (canard) with all possible types of arms: machine guns from their ships, bombs and individual hunters. All the ships and helicopters have identification signs saying “NATO”. The message of this cartoon is – NATO uses all possible arms to attack a fabricated, made-up target in their struggle against the USSR. It also shows that NATO makes much ado about nothing. This message is also carries the differentiation between the falsely accused “us” and the unfair “them”.

Another example of *Pravda's* cartoons of the 1970s comes from May 1, 1974 (picture 4). It is named “Heat Treatment for the Cold War”¹²⁵ and devoted to same issue as the abovementioned cartoon of the 1960s – destroying the Cold War. The difference is that, on this picture, it is not a Soviet leader putting an end to the Cold War, but an abstract representative of the working class (identified by the working robe he wears). He kills the Cold War monster, using a press machine styled to represent the First of May. The Cold War figure is ugly and scared; it is a bomb-shape hat on it; it is melting as it is squashed to death.

Picture 4

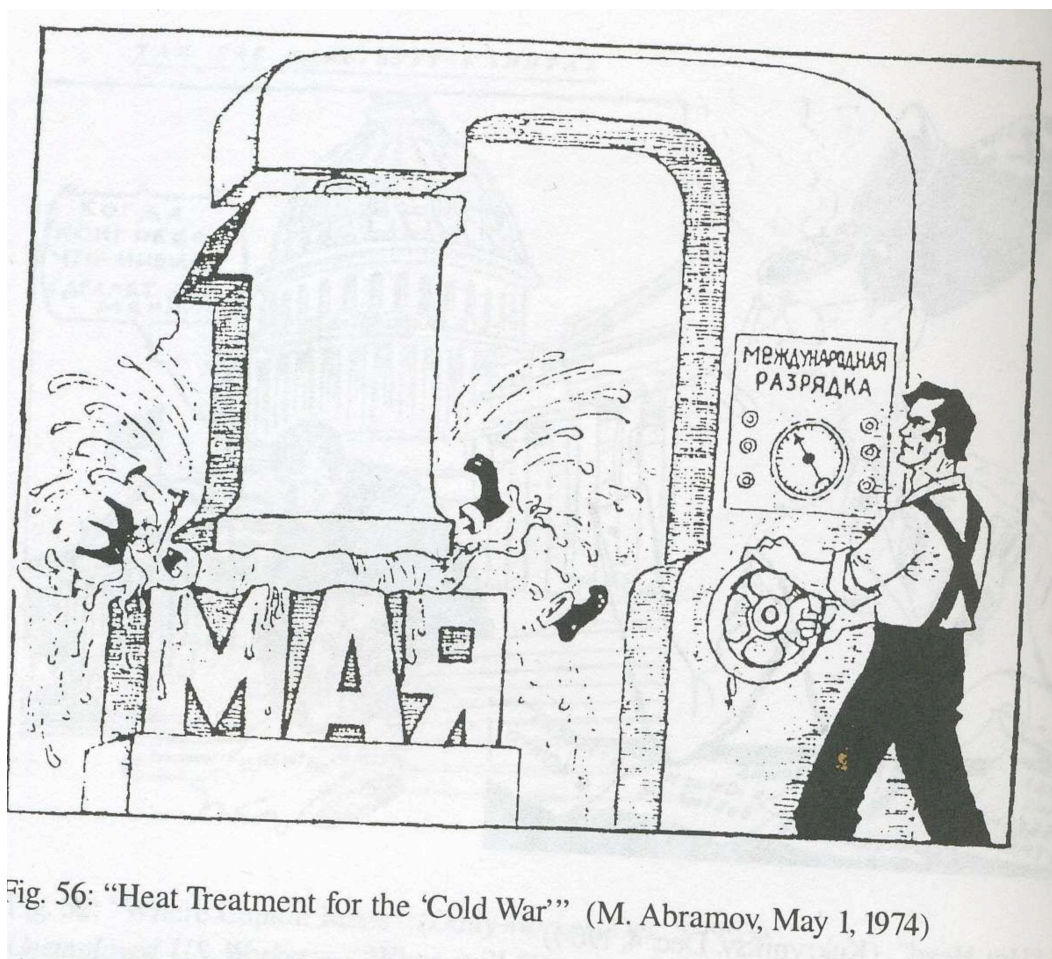


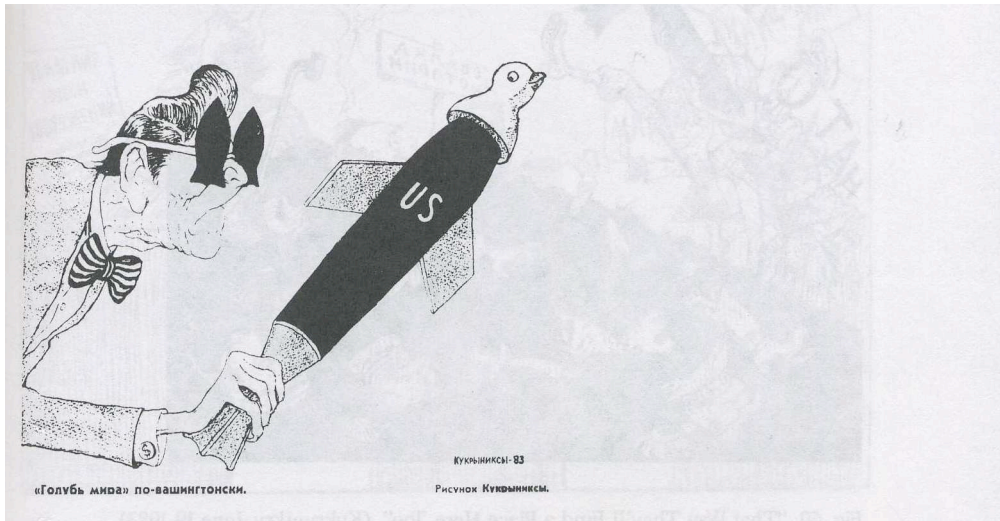
Fig. 56: “Heat Treatment for the ‘Cold War’” (M. Abramov, May 1, 1974)

One can point out that, in this cartoon, there is no sign of competition between two hostile systems. The inner message of it, the shape of the press as letters forming the words “May Day”, means that working class from all over the globe has to show solidarity to demolish the Cold War. In a way, the tone of the cartoons of the 1970s is softer than those of the 1960s. There are less accusations and finger-pointing, but more calls to making the world a better place.

¹²⁵ The translation is from *ibid*, p. 144.

5.5. Image of NATO in the 1980s

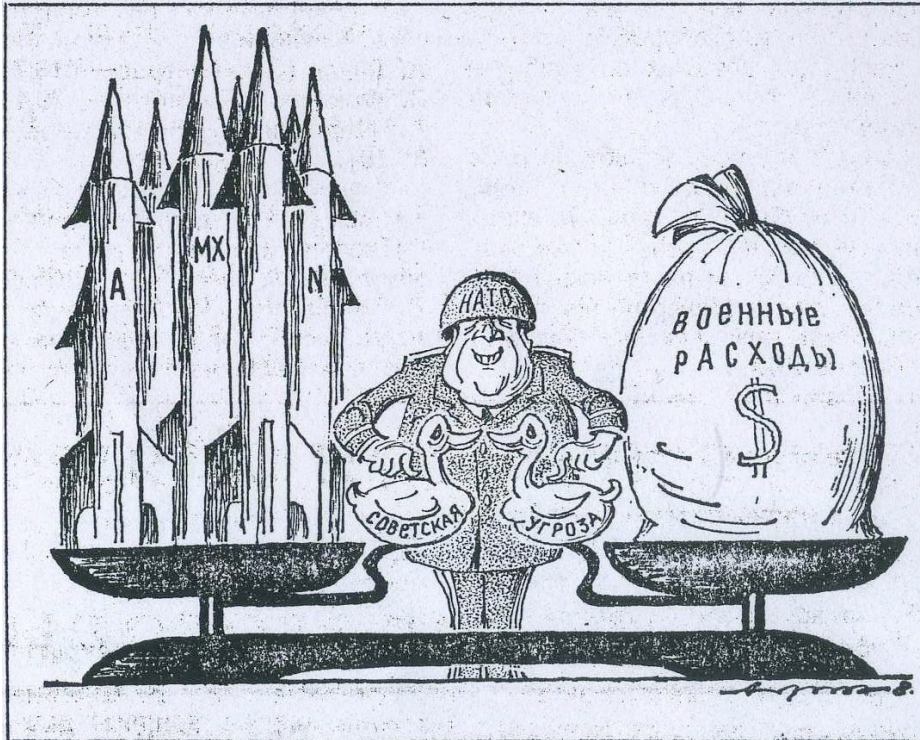
In the 1980s, the political situation changed dramatically from détente to the “Second Cold War”; thus, the tone of *Pravda* cartoons had changed also. In this respect, it is significant to consider the cartoon that was printed in *Pravda* on December 2, 1982 (picture 5)¹²⁶.



This picture is a caricature on the USA President Ronald Reagan. His features are greatly exaggerated: his hairstyle is ridiculed, his figure and face features are recognizable, but also mocked. For instance, Mr. Reagan’s hand is drawn as very thin and reminds greatly of a claw with talons; in such a hand he keeps a bomb that has a dove head at the top of it, camouflaging the weapon. This explains the name on the caricature: “Washington’s ‘Peace Dove’”. There are letters “US” on the bomb. The President wears a bow tie with stripes that are supposed to symbolize the US flag. Out of his checkered jacket sleeve is peeking his short cuff buttoned with a cuff link. There is the USA dollar image on it that symbolizes imperialists and capitalists who always think about profits and money making. This materialistic outlook was considered very inhuman and worthy of derision by the Soviets – it was juxtaposed with their own thinking about working class needs, communist values but and a future society not ruled by money. Apart from that, Reagan was sketched wearing bomb-shaped black sunglasses that, on the one hand, symbolized his American arms races and on the other blinded him to reality. On this picture the President looks like an ugly clown, not a respectable politician. The message of this caricature is clear – the USA mask their real intentions, deceiving the world with peaceful words, while harboring belligerent plans.

¹²⁶ Picture from *ibid*, p. 195.

Ссылаясь на мифическую «советскую угрозу», страны НАТО наращивают военные расходы. (Из газет).



— Мы взвешиваем каждое свое решение...

Рис. М. Абрамова.

Another cartoon of the 1980s concerns NATO. It was published on December 7, 1982 (picture 6). It is based on the double meaning on the word “weight.” The text under the picture is: “We weigh our every decision” and these words are supposed to be said of a NATO officer, recognizable by a military cap with a note ‘NATO’ on it. This ugly big-bellied figure is smiling as he presses down on two parts of large scales. Various missiles on the right side are balanced against a large sack of money on the left. It is possible to understand that there is money in the sack as there is a sign saying “Military expenses” and a dollar symbol there. Moreover, when the military man balances the scales while pressing them, he presses duck-shaped part of the scale – with a duck depicted there, once again, to symbolize a false rumor. The ducks on both sides are labeled as “Soviet threat”. This cartoon has an explanation in Russian: “Referring to the mythological 'Soviet threat', the NATO countries increase their military expenses.” Thus, the message of this cartoon is straightforward: it accuses the NATO of cheating, of falsely accusing the Soviets for the purposes of provoking a military confrontation with them.

Having analyzed these cartoons, one can conclude that editorial cartoons in Soviet times were serving propagandist tasks. Although the tone of the cartoons in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s would slightly differ because of the shifting political situation, all these works provided graphic stereotypes of “them”

– the capitalists were depicted as bloody warmongers, money-makers, associated with aggression, war and deceit, with all negative connotations dramatically emphasized. *Pravda*, which provided the framework along the lines of which the Soviet society was meant to evaluate political issues, made the West out to be a scarecrow and NATO to be a reviled enemy figure. Consistently, the cartoons glorified the Soviet way of life and the righteousness of Soviet actions. Those editorial cartoons in *Pravda*, by virtue of that publication's unmatched status in the USSR, influenced the minds and perceptions millions of the Soviet people – and the impressions left by that scathing visual commentary would outlive the newspaper itself.

Chapter 6. NATO Image in the Russian Media in the 2000s

In the previous chapter, there has been conducted a literature overview of the situation in the Russian media field. This chapter will be devoted to the comparison of the two newspapers, *Izvestia* and *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, concerning their depiction of Russia-NATO relations. These two editions, though in this research they represent two different types of Russian media, have some similarities. They both belong to the so-called "Moscow-based media outlets"¹²⁷ and both are big and respected players on the Russian media scene. As a result of merging and dissolutions of Russian media giants, there had happened huge changes in the Russian media field in the 2000s and both newspapers had been involved in the process.

The newspaper *Izvestia* has had a long history, starting in the Soviet time, and it is one of the few Soviet newspapers to survive the tough time of perestroika, huge changes in the Russian society and Russian media ownership. Just as other official Russian media outlets, it lost a large part of its audience in the 1990s, but, as Zassoursky pointed out, *Izvestia* "the once-leading nationwide daily now down to a low circulation but still of some influence and potential."¹²⁸ *Izvestia* was established in 1917 as an organ of Soviet People's Deputies and at the Soviet time was one of the leading Soviets dailies along with *Pravda*. As was mentioned above, as a consequence of political changes in the Soviet-Russian society, *Izvestia* faced great changes. The newspaper was supported by the state in the 1990s, and in 1992 there had been established a joint-stock company "Izvestia", by which the newspaper was privatized. Later its history deals with the name of Vladimir Potanin, the oligarch who was close to Kremlin. It is not a surprise though, because, as Vartanova pointed out, concerning almost all Moscow-based media at the time of late 1990s, it is difficult to find one, "that have no direct or indirect links with banks or financial sector."¹²⁹ From 2005 till 2008 *Izvestia* has belonged to joint company GAZPROM-Media, government-oriented giant. It is worth to mention, "In February 2005, *Izvestia* joined effort with *The New York Times* in production of *The New York Times* articles selected for *Izvestia* weekly supplement."¹³⁰ Nowadays it is still considered as a government-oriented press organ even though it belongs to a private owner, media magnate Jurii Kovaltcuk.

¹²⁷ Belin, L., "The Russian media in the 1990s", in Russia After Communism, edited by Fawn, R., and White, S. (2002), p. 141.

¹²⁸ Op cit. Zassoursky (2009), p. 37.

¹²⁹ Op cit. Belin (2002), p. 14.

¹³⁰ *Izvestia*, ru., "Izvestia: About Us", Accessed 10.01.2010 from URL: http://www.izvestia.ru/about_us_eng/#aboutus

In juxtaposition, *Nezavisimaya gazeta* is an example of newborn independent Russian press. It was established in the 1990, and as Belin pointed out, “Some newspapers, such as *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, refused on principle to accept handouts from the state.”¹³¹ It was established on money of Russian politicians-democrats and its first editor-in chief V. Tretyakoff. This newspaper became the first free-of-censorship edition. The slogan of it was “Without anger and bias” (“Bez gneva i pristrastia”). In 1995 Boris Berezovskii, a powerful oligarch, who used to have close links to Yeltsin family, owned 80% of *Nezavisimaya gazeta* shares and the newspaper became a part of his powerful media empire. As the consequence of the political clashes between the Kremlin clans, Berezovskii (even though at the time he supported Putin in his election time) lost his influence and moreover became persona not grata in the Russian society. His media empire collapsed and in 2005 the ownership of *Nezavisimaya gazeta* turned over to Konstantin Remchukov, who nowadays is an owner and an editor-in-chief of *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. Though this newspaper has comparatively short life history, it is respected and well known both in Russia and in the West as it shows a good example of professional Russian contemporary journalism.

6.1. Case study 1. Putin and NATO (2000)

In this study there will be done a comparison of two articles that were printed in the abovementioned newspapers, *Izvestia* and *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, on the same day, 07.03.2000 and concern the same issue, Putin’s interview to the BBC television program “Breakfast with David Frost”. At that time Putin was acting president; it was about three weeks before the election. In this BBC interview Putin has made serious statements concerning NATO-Russia relations, answering the question about the opportunity for Russian Federation to join NATO. Both articles interpret and comment his words.

6.1.1. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*

Nezavisimaya gazeta has printed the article titled “Putin does not call Russia to NATO”, that initially sounds as if the article’s title itself is the answer to the question what Putin thinks about Russia joining NATO. There is also a long sub-title: “Though the words in which he explained his attitude to this problem might be taken as a signal for the ex-USSR republics to join NATO”. Thus the title and sub

¹³¹ Op. cit. Belin (2002), p. 141.

title of the article initially give the gist of the article to the reader (“Putin does not call Russia to NATO”), together with a warning that his words could be interpreted differently.

The first sentence in the first paragraph starts with a quotation of Putin’s words: “I cannot see, why not” – with further explanation, that it was an exact answer to the interview question, is it possible for Russia to join NATO. The author emphasized, that it was not a main question in the interview: “This question was additional and it is clear, that Putin had not intended to claim Russian desire to join NATO”. This remark indicates the author’s political correctness in depicting the issue and his intention to be objective and fair. On the other hand, this remark is important to stress, because, as it will be presented further in this study, the same Putin’s words were perceived and even cited differently in *Izvestia* article.

Further in the *Nezavisimaya gazeta* article, the author states that the Russian “leftists” started to make noise at Putin’s words is his claim to give to the “aggressive block a complete control over Russia” (literally, ”otdatjsya na otkup”). As to the position of the Russian liberals, they, according to the author, started to compliment Putin’s wisdom and also to speculate how useful it would be for Russia to join NATO. The author moderates all these speculations, giving the explanation that Putin has not said anything new concerning the issue in that respect, as nobody would exclude a theoretical idea about possibility for Russia to join NATO. Thus in this paragraph is done logical objective explanation of Putin’s position concerning the issue.

The next paragraph contains some mild criticism about the form of Putin words - that because “what he said might be different from what he meant”, thus the West might interpret this statement to its own advantage. The tone of the article is respectful towards Putin; the choice of the words is decent, without sneering or applying any journalistic tricks to attract the public attention. For instance, Putin twice respectfully named “the head of the state”. The message of this article from the author to the audience is: let’s moderate our opinion about Putin and let’s analyze his words, their meaning and their hypothetic consequences. This article is done as an analysis and explanation, with logical argumentation. There are not many “scientific”, special words though. The author is using “every day type” language to deliver his thoughts. This text is a good example of newspaper journalism.

In this text it is possible to follow a logical chain of explanation. For instance, in the next paragraph goes on to expound on the author’s claims - why there is a degree of peril in Putin’s statement. The

author moderately explains that from now it will be more difficult for the Russian Federation to actively object NATO expansion to the East, to the Baltic republics and to the other ex-republics of the Soviet Union. He emphasizes difficulties, which Russia will face as a consequence of Putin's words, but does not pass a judgment. He just states that it will be more difficult for Russia to defend its previous position against NATO enlargement to the East as a consequence of Putin's words.

Moreover, moderating the meaning of Putin's message, the author even emphasizes, what he calls, a "rational grain" in Putin's words. The article quotes Putin's speech, where he talks about an opportunity for Russia to form deeper integration with NATO with a condition: "if Russia will be taken by NATO as an equal partner". The author emphasizes the importance of the issue that Putin has sent this "signal" (to the West and NATO). The author positively underscores the hope that the West will take Putin's words exactly in this way. All this explanation is done in a calm and respectful way. Argumentation in the article is based on logic, explanation, and facts (for instance, quotations of Mr. Putin's speech). The author's position might be taken as impersonal as there is no personal qualifiers such as "I think", "from my point of view", etc., and it does not give the "sense of we", or "sense of us" against Putin's position. The author defends his position about the issue, but does not try to claim anything. This article gives a lot of food for thought to the reader. Because the author exercises logic in argumentation and explanation of Putin's words, the figure of the President-to-be for the readers are supposed to be perceived in a decent and respectable way.

6.1.2. *Izvestia*

The article of another newspaper, *Izvestia*, concerns the same issue and was printed on the same day (07.03.2000). The difference in approach to the issue is immediately apparent. The article's title is "European breakfast" - that initially contains sarcastic meaning. Firstly, the word "breakfast" concerning political issue makes it less serious. For the ordinary reader "breakfast" is not a job and it would lead the audience's mind to the issue of leisure, relaxation, but not work. From the title is not clear who has breakfast and it makes for confusion of perception. The word "European" means the place of breakfast, but it still not clear from this title what the article is about. The author makes these doubtful connotations to create possible confusion in the readers' mind. As there is no sub-title or any explanation about the title, it immediately prepares the reader to take the message from a less serious, not to say sarcastic (ironic) point of view. The author's position is clear from the very beginning - he is critical and sarcastic towards Putin.

The first paragraph, that is supposed to deliver an overview, starts with the sentence that makes sarcastic statement towards Putin again: “The image of the acting president has, over the last few days, acquired new shades.” Firstly, this sentence does not sound respectful towards Putin. At the time (March 2000) nobody knew Putin as a big political figure and it was difficult to predict how he will act as the new Russian president. Nevertheless, the light tone, in which the author allowed himself to write about Putin, lowers in the readers’ eyes the importance of Putin’s figure. For instance, the author gives further explanation of why, from his point of view, Putin “acquired new shades” - because previously, according to the author, Putin “did not show anything new or significant in his business or electorate behavior”. This statement is not supported with logical argumentation; it is a claim that built on another unsupported claim. For the reader it is not understandable what the author might mean, and the tone of the article prepares the reader to be sarcastic towards Putin.

For the researcher is clear that, while delivering the same thought, the author may choose different selection of words that would contain a slightly different meaning, for instance, “the interview that Putin has done to BBC television program adds something new for his image”, or “this interview shows Putin’s personality from a different angle”. Thus, from the wording chosen to express his thought, it is possible to presume that the author aims to lower the respect to Putin’s figure. In the same paragraph: “but his appearance in David Frost’s BBC television program has changed in a big way the perception of the export image of the acting head of state.” [to ego poyavlenie v programme televidenia BBC “Zavtrak s Devidom Frostom” silno izmenilo predstavlenie ob eksportnom obraze i.o. glavy gosudarstva]. The words “poyavlenie v programme” (appearance in the program) - instead of, for instance, “participation in the program”, or “interview that has been done”, etc., as well as words “appearance” have a shadow of disrespect towards Putin’s figure. The words “export image” have ironic meaning too. Moreover, in readers mind these words might cause more connotation and questions – for instance, why president has such “export image”? It might be taken as an idea of Putin wearing masks, or puts on an act that does not suit the President’s figure. The entire wording in the paragraph is selected to lower respect towards Putin’s figure and does not exercise explanation, analysis or logic in argumentation. And the paragraph ends with the definition of Putin as “i.o.” (i.e. “acting president”).

The next paragraph starts with the words “What a shocking difference...” and charges Putin with making the claims that contradict his previous statements. In other words, this sentence contains a straight accusation to Putin of being inconsistent. This is a serious accusation, and as this sentence ends

with the exclamation mark, thus this expressiveness emphasizes the importance of this thought. It shows the author's attitude to the issue, his personal position. Moreover, such strong statements from the author's side shape the audience's opinion concerning the issue. Even though, as it was mentioned above, the argumentation of the article is not built on logic and explanation, the selection of words, wording, and exclamation mark – all this create the negative attitude towards Putin's figure.

Further in the same paragraph are quotations of Putin words, as: "Even to perceive NATO as an enemy is baneful for Russia". The author gives no explanation of these words. There are quotations (like: "Isolation is not our way"). What is significant is that later in the same paragraph the author uses the same words of Putin that were used by the author of another article of *Nezavisimaya gazeta* (as it was mentioned above). The author said that answering the main question of the interview (in *Nezavisimaya gazeta* article this question was not defined as the main, but, quite on the contrary, additional) - about the opportunity for the Russian Federation to join NATO, and in *Izvestia* article the author's interpretation of Putin's answer was: "Why not?" (Instead of, as it was quoted in *Nezavisimaya gazeta* "I cannot see, why not?")

In this *Izvestia* article Putin's words are not explained - that the meaning of them might be interpreted differently, as the author of *Nezavisimaya gazeta* has explained. But the author of *Izvestia* ends the paragraph with these words, making impression to the readers, that Putin means that Russia will join NATO and there is his opinion about the issue. There is no explanation of how these Putin's words might be taken and what meaning this statement might contain. The author sends this message to the readers and makes them judge what these words might mean. This does not show journalistic professionalism – this shows a desire to create a spectacle out of the situation.

The next paragraph too, as two previous ones, contains critique towards Putin. The author says: "It is clear that Putin carefully [tchatelno] prepared himself for his first interview to the Western media." And the next statement contains speculation that maybe Putin agreed to "have breakfast" with David Frost as his aim was "to excite [vdbudorazit] the East and West with his pro-West statement that nobody expected from him till 26th of March [the elections day]." These repeated words "to have breakfast" instead of literary "to give an interview" or "being interviewed by" make the importance of the issue less serious. Definitely, the author does it in purpose, selecting less serious and respectful wording while talking about Putin. The next speculation that Putin's aim was "to excite the East and the West" does not cast Putin in a responsible light. The wording "to excite", i.e. "to make special

impression on the East and the West” might be taken as Putin wants to pretend, to show off and once again does not picture his figure from respectable point of view.

Further in the same paragraph the author admits that it was a heroic gesture of Putin to make statements of which it is difficult to estimate what kind of reaction it would provoke from his electorate. But in the last sentence of this paragraph the same thought is taken by the author from the different angle. He says “He [Putin] might busy himself with solemn lifting of the iron curtain after his election...” (“zanyatsya torzestvennym podnyatem zeleznogo zanavesa”). Instead of using words that deliver the same meaning in this respect, for instance: “to make bridges between Russia and the West”, the author uses ironic expression “solemnly lifting the iron curtain”. These words are not there to show Putin’s intentions; they are there to ridicule them.

The forth paragraph of this article contains speculation concerning Putin’s motivation of the same statement (about an opportunity for Russia to join NATO). The speculation is: “It might be that with his statement Putin intended to lure away some part of electorate from the other candidates of the elections to improve the structure of his electorate”. This statement, which is not supported with explanation or logical argumentation, is pure speculation about Putin’s motivations. Moreover, the author then goes on to suppose that Putin’s words could be interpreted as an attempt “to signal to the West to start counting money for loans and destructuralization of existing [Russian] debts”. This statement contains an accusation to Putin who, according to the author’s conclusion, makes conciliatory statements towards the West with the hope of securing payment. At that time, the Russian economic situation was very difficult after Yeltsin’s years in office. The author phrased it in such a way that makes out Putin as letting the West “count money” to his own advantage, but not for aim to help Russia recover from its economic troubles.

This paragraph ends with the author’s words: “It is clear, that it [Putin’s statements] is all only words, not business. And as it is a long way to business [dela], so these words are supposed to hit, to stun, and to puzzle [bitj naotmash, stavitj v tupik]. And Putin risks [doing it].” This is an effective ending of the article to gain readers’ attention, but for the researcher it contains many questions. These words though they are effective to the audience, do not give any explanation of Putin’s motivation - why must his statement stun anyone? Why is it important for the leader (or future leader) of the state to “hit” [bitj naotmash]? For whose advantage does he do it? The author does not show any logic in such statements. These claims are effective at catching the audience’s attention, however. Such sharp definition of

Putin's words might link to the idea that as Putin is able to "stun" (bitj naotmash), i.e. literary "give a beating", "hit", thus he can show brutality. These words can cause a lot of interpretation from the audience, as there is no supporting argumentation of them or logical explanation. All argumentation of the article is based on the author's speculation about Putin's motivation, expressed in a tough lexis.

The next several paragraphs of the article contain the author's speculation about hypothetical new figures of the future president's cabinet. The author's vocabulary here is not respectful either - for instance, making future changes to the cabinet was defined as "shuffling the cards" [perebirat kolodu]. The article ends with a provoking remark, which requires explanation. It is significant, that this remark might be not understandable for the foreign reader (in translation) or even for the Russian-speaking foreigner as it has inner connotations - understandable only for a native Russian, who was brought up in a Russian culture environment. With sarcasm, the author says: "The incumbent president of all Russians is so multifaceted that he has enough masks to turn himself to the East just as to the West. So far he can make it because he has enough electorate durability." The words "president of all Russians" do not mean literally what they are supposed to mean. For native Russians, it links to the set expression: "The Tsar of all Russians" and there is an allusion that links Putin to be a Tsar, i.e. the author is ironic. These author's words contains a lot of sarcasm towards Putin from Russian reader's point of view. There is an allusion with which the author shares his knowledge of this set expression with the readers. The next statement, that Putin has: "enough masks" contains a hidden message to the audience that Putin is a pretender, actor who plays roles or even a dishonest person. Using such vocabulary, the author does not exercise political correctness but as opposite, makes accusations and negative speculations towards Putin.

All these statements contain hidden accusations; they make Putin's figure less respectable. The author stands on the position of "us" whom Putin tries to cheat. This article does not have inner logic and does not contain proper explanation; the argumentation of it is built on emotional speculation but not on facts and logic. This article might be interesting for a reader and definitely shapes public opinion concerning the issue. This article might be taken as an example of tendentious journalism, as it does not explain the issue for readers, but makes empty claims, takes reader's attention to wrong details, and its argumentation is based not on logic and fact, but on total speculation. On the other hand, the author is a professional journalist and he knows the subject - when he talks about the figures of the future government cabinet, he is knowledgeable and informative. Thus one can point out that the author is not writing without knowledge about the subject; on the contrary, the author is a skilled journalist who

consciously takes reader's attention to wrong directions and emphasizes wrong details for the goal of criticizing Putin's figure and making it less respectable. This article is an example of tendentious journalism.

Comparing the two articles, one can point out that even though these two articles concern the same issue and were printed on the same day in two different Russian newspapers, and moreover make the same quotation of Putin's words, they deliver very different messages to the audience.

The first article's author, of *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, makes an effort to be objective and to explain Putin's words to the audience, using logic and argumentation based on logic, making thoughtful and well-argued consequences out of possible effects of Putin's statement. There is no accusation or blame against Putin. The vocabulary is moderate, without sharp words or double meaning. The article might shape public opinion, and it gives to the readers a lot of foods for thought. The reader can get the message that Putin wants to see his country not be isolated, but be an equal partner to other countries as well as to NATO. Putin shows good will to cooperate with NATO as he stands on a position of cooperation and consolidation with the West. This first interview for the Western media was a touchstone for Putin's image and it was extremely important for him to make right impression. This article definitely helps it.

On the other hand, the article of *Izvestia* is full of sarcasm and accusations towards Putin. These accusations are built on fanciful speculation. There is no explanation to the reader of the consequences of Putin's words. His motivation is in a highly subjective way. The article does not exercise inner logic in presentation of the facts. The author goes for cheap effects, trying to catch the reader's attention by playing with words and using exclamation marks. The lexicon is sharp, not moderate. Out of it, the reader can get an impression of Putin making dangerous shortsighted statements. This article criticizes Putin, making his figure less respectable. Without using any inner logic, but with aggressive argumentation, the author tries to present Putin's figure as a person who risks and gambles, almost betraying his country. This type of article shapes a very different public opinion.

6.2. Case study 2. NATO-Russia Rome Summit (2002)

One can argue that, with time, the tone of the government oriented and independent Russian media became similar – the first became more moderate and objective. The year 2002 was the second year of Putin’s presidency and it is interesting to compare not only how the two types of the Russian media depict the same issue (in this case, the Rome Summit of 2002), but also how and to what degree the tone of the articles changed in two years of Putin’s presidency.

6.2.1. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*

On 29.05.2002, *Nezavisimaya gazeta* printed an article concerning the Rome Summit with the title: “Putin even did not even mention NATO enlargement”. This title already contains a thesis and a statement concerning Putin’s position toward the Summit and NATO. This title delivers the message that Putin is tolerant concerning NATO and is ready to cooperate with it. This article has the sub title: “Russia and Alliance formed the long-awaited ‘Twenties’”. Firstly, putting Russia and NATO on the same row makes reader consider NATO and Russia together as allies. The Russian version of words “long-awaited” firstly has its own literary meaning –“something that had been waited for a long time” and even may be interpreted as: “desired for long time”. The thesis of this article is - Russia got what it wanted for long in becoming NATO’s equal partner.

Moreover, under the title and subtitle of the article there is a photo of Putin, walking against of background that is decorated with the flags of different foreign (NATO) countries. He walks alone, confidently, and the photo contains the message that Putin confidently walking in a right direction. It means that he wants to cooperate with other foreign states (and particularly with NATO) and wants to be accepted as a partner. The picture is taken in such way that Putin’s figure is placed on the left side on it and he walks forward (to the direction of the right side of the picture) thus there is a lot of space in front of him. The photo is taken from such angle that it possible to speculate that it delivers a message to the readers the idea that Putin has a long road ahead of him. Thus even with placing this picture of Putin, walking along NATO countries flags, under the title of the article, the authors make a statement that Putin wants to cooperate with the West.

The first sentence in the first paragraph, “Yesterday a declaration was issued by NATO and Russian leaders”, on the one hand delivers information to the reader about the issue, but also at once makes a

statement that this declaration “means new phase [of relations] between NATO and Moscow.” What is significant concerning this article is that it is first time the order of mentioning the political figures has changed. Before, Russia was in the first place in the enumeration order (e.g. Russia-NATO), but in this article NATO goes on the first place. It is more politically correct - to mention “the other side” firstly and it shows that journalist wants to exercise political correctness.

Moreover, later in the same sentence it was written tolerantly: “This [Summit new Declaration] means a factual deviation from Kremlin’s previous doctrinal directives towards the issue of ex-USSR republic to join military-political structure of the North Alliance.” This is a very serious statement. Moreover, the words “Kremlin’s doctrinal directives” deliver several messages. Naming Kremlin’s directives” doctrinal” contains inherent criticism of the Kremlin’s position. It is a strong message that delivered in a strong cold official language. The paragraph ends with a sentence which contains more information concerning the issue - that in addition to the accepted declaration, there are two more documents - Working Program to the year of 2002, and Procedure document, with the detailed explanation of all the questions of cooperation between two sides in a form of the “Twenties” (NB. This name might cause confusion for the Western reader as the Russian transcription of “Twenties” i.e. “Dvadcatka” does not mean G20, but refers to the NATO-Russia Council that has been launched as a consequence of the Summit). This article and particularly this first paragraph of it is a skilled, very professional informative piece of journalistic work. In several sentences all the main important information concerning Summit is presented.

Next three paragraphs contain explanation concerning the recent relations between Russia and NATO with the statement that “bad things are in the past” (teper vse nepriyatnoe ostaetsya v proshlom). This statement might be taken to mean that the Russians are positive concerning NATO –Russia relations and now is possible to develop these relations.

In forth paragraph the authors states that Putin avoided the unpleasant issue of NATO enlargement in the East, but said that the “creation of a new mechanism of cooperation [between Russia and NATO, “Twenties”] will be taken in the right way by millions of Russians.” This moderate quotation suggests that Putin speaks on behalf of the Russian nation. And the authors of the article do not criticize him or make any special statement or emphasis anything in his words. They prefer that Putin’s words speak for themselves. This paragraph ends with the statement “De facto, yesterday Putin switched on the

green light for the Baltic [ex-Soviet] republics on their way to join NATO”. This statement is concluding the paragraph and not commenting Putin’s position and words in any way.

Several next paragraphs are describing the atmosphere of the Summit and the precautions that were taken by the Italian officials for preparing the Summit. The description is informative and may satisfy the readers’ curiosity concerning the issue. The concluding paragraph of this article contains a more proper explanation of the future plans of new born “Twenties” - the procedure of meetings, the items of discussion, the matters of cooperation (for instance, anti-terrorism cooperation), etc. The very last sentence of this last paragraph speaks in simple words about further ways of NATO-Russia cooperation.

Thus one can point out that this article is a good piece of journalistic work. Proper information about the Summit is presented and the authors shed light on all issues that concern the Summit. As an informative objective piece of work, the article is convincing. Argumentation is not presented as much here but there are a lot of facts and all the information is based on them. The main message of this article is - our president Putin decently represents the country; he goes in the right direction, forging good relations with other countries and with NATO.

6.2.2. *Izvestia*

The second article concerning the same issue, in *Izvestia*, was somehow printed the day before the Rome Summit, 27.05.2002. The article is called “Troika, Vosmerka, Dvadcatka” that has inner meaning: it may be translated as “Three, Eight, and Twenties” but also may be interpreted as “Three, G8, and Twenties”. For foreign reader it may be taken as a name of alliances - for instance G8. But for Russian native speakers is clear that there are inner connotations. The title of this article has connections with the most famous classic Russian writer, Pushkin. His story “The Queen of Spades” is constructed around the legend that there is a magic combination to the card game, and the one who knows it might win a fortune. One senior lady, whose nickname was “The Queen of Spades” according to the legend, knew this combination and it was “Troika, Semerka, Tuz” – “Three, Seven, Ace”. This combination is well known in the Russian society, as there is an opera with the name “The Queen of Spades”, and thus the article’s title bears allusions to this well-known piece. As a card game is at the center of the plot, there is also a subtle reference to probability and chance in the title of the article – Putin joins the NATO game, and one would hope that he has the right combination of cards to play it.

This article is not accompanied with a picture but it has a subtitle: “On Tuesday the Rome Declaration will be signed.” Thus, information about the Rome Declaration can be expected in this article. In the first paragraph, the key information about the time of the Summit is presented; when it will start, where, who will participate in it, what is the consequence of it -- creation of the “Twenties”, a new organization in which Russia will be the partner of NATO.

In this respect, the article is a good example of journalistic work: it is informative, more or less objective. This article defines the spheres of Russia-NATO cooperation (as it is written in the article, “equal cooperation”). In the article the plan of cooperation is described. There are references to the G8 – that some diplomats compare the Twenties to the G8. The author emphasizes in a moderate tone that this cooperation is profitable to all sides and it creates “a belt of stability” across the world.

Moreover, as the article is quite long, it is divided into subchapters (the first, mentioned above, concerns spheres of Russia-NATO cooperation). The second subchapter is titled “Militarists and diplomats are seeking a common language”. This subtitle also has double meaning. On the one hand “to search for a common language” maybe taken as “to wish to cooperate”. On the other hand, this subchapter contains information about another event that also happened at the time of Rome Summit – the publishing of a new “Russia-NATO Dictionary of military-political and military terms”. All of five paragraphs of this subchapter are devoted to the detailed explanation of the new edition - what is the purpose of its publication; how the dictionary is structured, what is the number of its issues, etc. All of this is informative. The inner message of this subchapter is – Russia can cooperate with NATO and they started the process of cooperation, intending to deepen it. The vocabulary is moderate. The argumentation is based on facts. This is a good deal of journalistic work. This article is very different from the offensive tone article in the same newspaper two years ago. Putin’s figure is not very much emphasized, but it was mentioned that he was representing the Russian delegation on the Summit, and making bridges with the West and, that is most important, with NATO.

All in all, one can argue that, during the first two years of Mr. Putin presidency, the tone of the Russian media concerning NATO became more moderate. Both articles depict the issue of the Rome Summit in positive tone and manner as an issue of NATO-Russia cooperation. Even though it is clear that this cooperation will consequently make it easier for the Baltic countries to join NATO, neither article contains negative forecasts about it. Putin represents Russia in this NATO Rome Summit, and both articles depict the issue in moderate, neutral, or even positive lexis.

6.3. Case study 3. NATO Riga Summit (2006)

It is interesting to investigate how with the time the perception of NATO and Russia-NATO relations has changed in the Russian media. Even though, as it has been mentioned before, the tone of both independent and government-oriented press came to exude more tolerance and moderation, it is possible to argue that perception of NATO-Russia relations has changed from the beginning to the end of Putin presidency.

There are two articles to study concerning the issue that are both devoted to the same event, the NATO Riga Summit (November 2006). This Summit caused a big wave of negative attitude in the Russian society as it was the first NATO Summit on the territory of the ex-USSR republic (Latvia). As the consequence of this Summit, the three Baltic States, ex-USSR republics (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), were to become new NATO members. It was a painful issue for Russia as the Russians (Soviets) for decades considered themselves as liberators of the Baltic republics from fascism, and the USSR as a brotherhood. But in the context of later problems of the Russia-Baltic states relations, Russia was accused as an invader, and that was very painful for the Russians to accept. Thus, the NATO enlargement to the Baltic republics meant for Russia that, after the disintegration of the USSR, these states had not only repudiated the former brotherhood – but they have also defected to the enemy.

6.3.1. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*

The article in *Nezavisimaya gazeta* (27.11.2006) is literary titled “It is too overcrowded for NATO in the North Atlantic space” and after the years of tolerance and objectivity even with title it shows the negative perception of Riga Summit and the idea of NATO enlargement. The subtitle of the article is: “During the NATO Riga Summit the Alliance will discuss its turning into something global.” The article is accompanied with the photo of Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, NATO Secretary General at the time. His picture has a comment, that he now sees the Alliance in global measurement.

The first paragraph of the article starts with the explanation that Russia was not invited to the Riga Summit and it is explainable as Russia is not an Alliance member. And the next sentence is very significant: “Moreover, the process of its [NATO] enlargement infringe upon Russia’ security interests.” Though this sentence might be accepted as an objective explanation of the issue, there is an inner annoyance in it, or disapproval. After the years of showing that NATO and Russia are partners

and are ready for cooperation (e.g. on the mentioned above Rome Summit), it is visible that even independent press shows Russian disapproval of NATO enlarging to the East, on the account of ex-USSR republics. Even though the thought is delivered in an official way without any emotional coloring, the strong tone of the message makes this statement tougher.

Next paragraph also contains a light criticism towards NATO: “New members will not join NATO now however, but not because of Moscow protesting against it, but because of problems arising with its candidates.” It goes into further explanations of what kind of problems NATO faces and why some countries are not ready to join NATO. And the next sentence says, “NATO will try to show half opened door to itself [to some countries, hypothetic new members], but not using formal (official) procedures.” The next sentence is significant as it is said: “It will be done despite loud complains inside NATO itself on its decreased ability to absorb new members.” This message of the article contains light criticism towards NATO and also depicts the problems that the Alliance has inside itself. The language of the article is moderate and does not contain tough vocabulary but the disapproval is evident in the way the NATO problems are presented.

This article is large and divided into subchapters. After the introduction, the first subchapter’s title is “Closer to China”. Still discussing the items for debate of the Riga Summit, the author says that: “In the center of it [the Summit] will be wider discussion concerning NATO ‘transformation’.” The inverted commas around ‘transformation’ communicate slight sarcasm. In the next sentence, it is explained that this ‘transformation’ is needed as the Alliance has “exhausted itself” – and once again, NATO is lightly criticized. In the same sentence, there is a further explanation of this statement, that the Alliance has fulfilled its primary purpose, having ensured the security of Europe and the USA during the Cold War time. This paragraph ends with the sentence: “Soon will be exhausted the circle of countries that might become Alliance members under their conditions [the countries of mentioned area]”. It is not exactly an objective presentation of facts and it does not contain any new topics or statements, but the wording of “transformation” in inverted commas, “exhausted itself”, the Cold War mentions – it all demonstrates attitude and shapes the opinion of the reader. There is a subtle reminder not to forget that NATO had been the enemy during the Cold War time. Also there is a lowering of parallels with the twice-repeated word “exhausted” (“iscerpal”) – firstly with NATO “exhausting itself”, secondly “exhausted the circle of countries that might be NATO members.” Even though there is no severe criticism, it shows definitely negative presentation of the NATO image.

The next paragraph starts with irony towards NATO. Continuing and explaining the same thought - that NATO has “exhausted itself” - the author says: “Now, a new role for NATO is to be invented that very often is defined as global.” The translation of the word “invent” into English does not mean the same as in Russian. The word “socinyaut” may be taken as “pridumyvaut”, i.e. “create” or even “exaggerate”. In Russian, this word might be taken as “to create” – “socinit poemu” - i.e. “create a poem”, but it can be taken in a different sense. For instance, it is possible to say to a child telling tall tales – “Ne socinyai!” (i.e. - “do not lie”). This word in this respect does not belong to it an official vocabulary, and thus some disrespect is already conveyed through the words chosen to express the sentiment.

Though the next paragraph contains enumeration of positive missions that NATO has exercised already (e.g. its mission in Pakistan), the words “partnership” and “global partnership” are once again put by the author into inverted commas. In this particular case, those words refer to partnerships between NATO and other countries, and call into question the sincerity of those alleged partnerships. What is put into inverted commas might have double meaning that would influence the readers’ perception. The word “globalization” [of NATO] was also put into inverted commas. That adds doubts to the meaning; it is real globalization or just something that looks like it? This double meaning or doubts concerning NATO and its missions were caused by the author because he put many words in inverted commas.

It is obvious that the author has put all these words in inverted commas to stress negative processes in NATO. Moreover, while there is new emphasis on problems that NATO has, there is no word, unlike in the previous articles, about NATO-Russia cooperation. It shows that the political media message concerning NATO has changed greatly.

The next (and the last) subchapter is titled “New edition of the Cold War” and thus supports the finding of this Thesis concerning the changed perception of NATO at the time of Putin’s presidency. The title is however not explained in this subchapter. It makes a statement, shapes the audience’s attitude towards NATO, but it is not properly explained in this subchapter what this new edition of the Cold War is and what the author means by mentioning it. It is a journalist trick to point fingers, to remind that NATO could be associated with the Cold War. In the subchapter paragraphs is explained that “only a global alliance can answer global challenges”. Quoting the “Foreign Affairs” magazine, where was an article about the new role of NATO, the author claims that NATO should cooperate with countries that have common values and interests and giving the list of these countries, the author ends this subchapter

with a tough question: "Will this global expansion give birth to a new cold war, but maybe in a different format?"

The article ends with this dangerous speculation. There is not done any further explanation or argumentation concerning the issue. Previously talking about plans NATO to cooperate with different countries, the author goes to the conclusion about a possibility for NATO to cause the new Cold War. This argumentation is built not on logic and facts, but on emotional attitude and claims. Author does not sound convincing, but he does an attempt to forge an opinion. Moreover, previously talking about plans NATO to cooperate with countries with common values and interests, the author in the last sentence of the subchapter labels this cooperation as "expansion". This is a strong word of political communication language and obviously it belongs to the terminology of the Cold War time. Even though the article is informative and built on objective facts, it shows negative perception of the event (NATO Riga Summit) by Russian media. This article creates negative opinion for the readers and, being published in an independent type of media it shapes negative perception of NATO. Thus one can deem that there has been a significant evolution in attitudes towards NATO in the independent Russian media by 2006 as compared with the first year of Putin's presidency.

6.3.2. *Izvestia*

One can point out that another article concerning the same issue, the NATO Riga Summit, in *Izvestia* (28.11.2006), shows a more negative and emotional attitude towards NATO and Riga Summit. The article is titled "NATO tanks - in Riga. The city is dead..." speaks for itself. The word selection ("NATO tanks", "dead") has bad connotations for the audience. The vocabulary is strong and emotional, in make in readers' mind a picture of war, violence and death.

The first paragraph of the article starts with an informative thesis, that Riga Summit is finishing, and the next sentence is – "It became the most secured in the Alliance history." Though this sentence is informative as well, it poses questions: why it became so secured, from whom it was necessary to defend the participants of the Summit. Does that mean that some dislike it or protest against it? Some disagree with it? The next sentence of the paragraph makes this statement stronger, supported with the argument that "the Latvian capital - as well as the entire republic – has turned into a besieged fortress." This wording aims for one purpose – to create a negative perception of the NATO Riga Summit.

Further tension is created in the next paragraph that starts with the statement: “It looked as if a war started and the capital was prepared for a massive attack - on air, on earth and on the sea.” Such words as “war”, “massive attack” create negative connotations. These words concerning the atmosphere in a city at the time of the Summit shape public opinion concerning the issue. In next sentences, it is described how many NATO soldiers and Latvian policemen were involved in the “defense of the capital”. It also was mentioned that military radio stations and fire post were placed in parks. With these words the authors try to depict a tough atmosphere in Riga to create negative connotation (towards NATO) in the reader’s mind.

Moreover, to make the story more “genuine”, or more evident, the authors apply a method of interview with a passer-by, who said: “There are military airplanes on air and it is nice that they are not bombarding the city. There is rumble day and night.” This interview is very emotionally structured, aiming to shape the opinion of the newspaper’s reader that the NATO Summit - to ordinary people in Riga - brings troubles and problems. Talking about special precautions and warning to citizens for the time of the Summit, the authors of the article make it as “we-point”, that for ordinary people this event was nothing more than trouble. For instance, in one paragraph there is a “quotation” of some Latvian schoolchildren – “Let the NATO Summit come sooner!” (skoree by)” - as this Summit caused a break in schools. All these images, emotional remarks, “sincere opinions” of unknown undefined respondents are to show that the Summit is an intrusion in ordinary people’s lives, it causes problems, troubles, breaks in work and school. Using in the text such “people’s opinions” the author of the article wants to support his argument that this Summit (for ordinary people in Latvia) is useless trouble.

In the article it is also mentioned that this Summit was very costly for Latvia, and named the sum. Talking about participants (and maybe presenting an explanation why Russia was not invited to the Summit), the author is quoting an unknown source from Belgian NATO headquarters: “some have said that this Summit was defined as ‘a family meeting without cousins’.” And almost only at the end of the article there were given some facts, for instance the number of participants and the Summit agenda.

The authors of this article consciously firstly gave the picture of the Summit from emotional perspectives, shaping readers’ opinions concerning the issue and then was mentioned the number of its participants and the agenda. In the last several paragraphs of the article in a moderate tone are mentioned other issues that were on the NATO Riga Summit’s agenda: for instance, the relations with Russia. This information is more or less objective.

There were also some statements that could not fail to attract the attention of the Russian readers - for example, the words of the Latvian president, Vike-Freiberga, who thanked her American colleagues for supporting independence of the republic and accepting the republic to NATO. There is the Latvian President's quotation: "Latvian inhabitants nowadays sleep calmly at nights because they know that they are secured now." Russian reader can perceive it to mean that before there was a threat of Russia towards Latvia, but being with NATO, Latvia is secured. These words sound offensive to Russian readers.

This article does not give explanations of its statements. There are a lot of statements that follow each other, but they are not built on any logic. Or, if the inner logic exists, it leads the reader to form a very tough opinion about Latvia and NATO. This article describes enemies. It presents questions - and do not explain or answer them. For instance, at the end of the article the authors talks about Georgia and Russian high gas prices that it is "a price for the Georgian independence". And the article ends with the Georgia issue, which was a controversial topic in Russia at the time.

Both articles, though they are very different, while presenting the same issues unfortunately lead the audience to the same negative perception of NATO, the Summit and Latvia as the host country of the Summit. It was an event that happened one year before Putin's term in office ended, and from the example of the studied cases it is visible how the perception of NATO in the Russian media has changed. If, at the beginning, the Russian media (e.g. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*) in its articles showed tolerance, neutral tone and even appreciation concerning the issue of Russia-NATO cooperation, later the perception of the issue has changed. The tone of the articles became more tough and emotional towards NATO. The critique that the authors of the articles exercised added negativism in depicting NATO. One can conclude that the message of Russian political media communication as regards the issue of NATO has evolved considerably all the time of Putin's term in office.

Chapter 7. Conclusion: Findings and Results

It is common knowledge that international relations are a living structure, and they are developing and changing with time and in dependence on different circumstances. Relations between states obey their laws, their course and their logic of development. Diplomats, researchers and skilled think tanks work on this field, trying to predict and to manage this special, delicate and complicated issue. One can say that NATO-USSR (Russia) relations are an example of such difficult, different, and changeable issue in the field of IR. These relations have changed and developed in a big way from their bitter start as a direct confrontation of two hostile camps, to the current time when the USSR has collapsed and the world political system has changed profoundly. On the march of events, there has been a great many nuances, big and small issues and affairs that have had a significant effect to the rest of the world and have changed the field of the IR all over the globe. The Historical Overview, Chapter 2 in this Thesis, depicts these changes while relating the unfolding history between Russia and NATO.

The USSR, from the very beginning of its existence, proudly claimed itself the first country in the world where care about ordinary citizens was put on the top of the priority list, according to the communist values, as opposite to the rest of the world - the capitalists, those values and practices were taken as wrong, inhuman and unacceptable thus were denied and confronted. The idea that the USSR was surrounded by enemies became the national idea, heated with the national security issue. Such political positioning consequently led to confrontation between two political systems, with both sides severely criticizing each other. The USSR lived behind the Iron curtain, and the World War Two, after which the USSR improved its position on the world scene, made the relations between the USSR and the West more complicated. Protecting the East European countries from Fascism, the USSR improved its positions with launching socialistic governments in those countries. The world socialist camp started its existence – the USSR with its East European allies and with socialist Mongolia, and after the defeat of Japan in the World War Two, China and North Korea joined socialist camp on the East. The confrontation between two political systems, capitalistic and socialistic, became deeper after it. Thus the world political system has changed dramatically after the World War Two.

No one could deny the growing popularity of the USSR and socialist ideas all over the globe after the World War Two, and to prevent further enlarging the influence of the USSR and its allies, to stop spreading socialistic ideas, the West ought to cooperate. That consequently led to the birth of NATO that was supposed to be a confronting military block against the USSR and its allies. Straight after it East European communist oriented countries united in the Warsaw Pact. Thus confrontation,

opposition, severe critique on both sides and an armament drive were the main issues in relations of NATO-USSR and Warsaw Pact countries, and this concept had affected their relations for decades. Antagonism was the core issue in these relations. Moreover, they obey the law of special matrix, or the frames, within which they existed. The perception that two political systems were noxious to each other created new conceptions and notions of ideology and propaganda. Chapter 3 of this Thesis depicts the issue of severe propaganda and war of ideology between two camps. In the ongoing war of two oppositional types of ideology, the media played a pivotal role as the tool of manipulation of nations' consciousness and the shaper of the public opinion.

Concerning the Soviet media, their environment, as it was mentioned above, was a strict CPSU censorship. Chapter 4 has demonstrated that *Pravda* was a mouthpiece for those in power in the USSR and thus, through analyzing the attitudes depicted in *Pravda*, it is possible to see how the perception of NATO-USSR relations changed through the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. While studying these cartoons one can determine how the official perception of NATO and NATO-USSR relations has changed from decade to decade.

For instance, analyzing the cartoons of the 1960s, one can see that at the time the image of NATO was presented as a Cold War monster that the brave peace-loving Soviet leader (Khrushchev) overcome alone without any problem. That image contains the inner message that "we will defeat them as we are right and they are wrong". And also it is significant that at the time it was politically correct to include a Soviet leader in the political cartooning. This situation changed later and the Soviet leaders were never again presented in the Soviet political cartooning, at least in *Pravda*. A cartoon examined in this Thesis, "Gagarin", delivers the message to the audience that the Soviets are well ahead NATO in scientific achievements and thus they are prevailing over those who are stuck to arms racing and militarization. These cartoons glorified the Soviet way of life and the idea of the Soviets prevailing over the West was common in the Soviet media in 1960s.

The image of NATO in the Soviet political cartooning at the time of the 1970s changed as détente set the tone of the NATO-USSR relations. Soviet ideologists and those in power exercised different approach to the West and NATO, as the idea of peaceful co-existence between two different political systems has been launched in the USSR as a political doctrine. Consequently, political cartoons in *Pravda* did not show a severe critique of NATO and did not emphasize the advantages of the socialist way of life, but mostly stressed the issue of Soviet peaceful intentions despite of unfair accusations

towards the USSR from the West. For instance, a cartoon “Deep Water Canard”, which was printed in *Pravda* at the time of Helsinki Talks, ridicules empty unfair accusations about the Soviet submarine within the Norwegian seas. Another studied cartoon of the 1970s depicts the destruction of the Cold War monster – the same idea that has been depicted in the 1960s - but the depiction is slightly different. For instance, none of the Soviet leaders were included in that cartoon, and the Cold war monster is demolished by the figure of an abstract working person. The main slogan in the USSR at the time was “The Soviets are people of good will”, and thus the idea of the righteousness of Soviet actions and its peace keeping mood, despite bad rumors and accusations from the West, dominated in *Pravda* political cartoons of the 1970s. Thus the cartoons of the 1970s consider the USSR’s peaceful intentions; there is mild finger-pointing on rumors and accusations toward the USSR from NATO, but severe critique towards the West and NATO is conspicuously absent.

During the 1980s, however, when the détente era was over, the tone of the Soviet political cartoons changed once again. The criticisms against the USA and NATO returned in full force. In a ‘80s cartoon, the USA President was depicted without any respect, but instead pictured as a pretender and a threat. The figure that symbolizes the President was pictured wearing bomb-shape sunglasses and holding a bomb in his hand. Moreover, the bomb has a dove head on its top and that is supposed to mask his warmongering intentions. This is a mocking picture that contains severe critique towards the USA (which, according to the USSR, was always the leader in NATO). Another cartoon considers arms races; there, a NATO officer is also depicted with bombs and other armaments, and the sign “Soviet threat” is displayed. This is a typical idea of the ‘80s, when NATO-USSR relations turned for the worse and the perception of NATO in the USSR became extremely negative.

Thus, concluding the analyses of the *Pravda* cartoons of the ‘60s, ‘70s, and ‘80s, it is possible to claim, as it was mentioned above, that these editorial cartoons were the tools of propaganda. Though the tone of these cartoons changed from decade to decade, the inner message stayed the same: the USSR and NATO are enemies; they have nothing in common and their two different political systems are polar opposites.

This research of the Soviet cartoons is useful when applied to the studies of contemporary Russian media and particularly their depiction of current NATO-Russia relations. As the media in Russia oftentimes reflect official state approach concerning the issues, thus it is interesting to analyze how the Russian media depicted the issue of NATO-Russia relations. As was mentioned in the Chapter 5 of this

Thesis, “Soviet and Russian media”, the Soviet and Russian media are different in many respects – as after the collapse of the USSR, the process of transformation of the Soviet media into the Russian media was tough and painful. For the Soviet inhabitants as well as to the Soviet social institutions, the collapse of the USSR was like an explosion and, as every explosion it affected, changed and even wounded the nation, their lives and life practices. Consequently, the collapse of the USSR affected the media profoundly as the media are an important social institution of every modern state. One can point out that, in Russia, the Soviet media practices have changed greatly and it is important that the Russian media no longer exercised what Ryazanova-Clark defines as “the ritual Communist Party rhetoric and the ideological prevalence over public speech.”¹³² However, even despite the lack of a strict Soviet censorship and the change in rhetoric, the Russian media has inherited from the Soviet times tendentiousness in depicting some issues and avoidance to shed light on certain others.

Concerning the new Russian media rhetoric, it is possible to say that, after the collapse of the USSR in 1990s, the declaration of freedom of speech in Russia ushered in an era of severe criticism against the Soviet Union and all those associated with it. Staggering facts about the old regime came to the surface and shocked the Russian audience. There had been invented a word for such news, “chernuha”, a noun from the Russian adjective “black” (“chernyi”), i.e. “colored in dark shades”. At the time, Russian media exhibited the characteristics of the media of a state in the stage of transition – the media opinions fluctuated wildly and the media approach to news changed with rapidly changing times. There occurred also a phenomenon typical for such times – painting the events in gloomier colors than normally (“sguschenie krasok”). Thus, whereas criticizing the government was unthinkable behavior in Soviet times, in the 1990s and in the early 2000s it had become the rule of the day.

To illustrate this statement, it is possible to use an example from the article in *Izvestia* from the year 2000 (Chapter 6.1.2.) This article exercises critique of the contemporary person in power (Putin) and questions his statement about the possibility of Russia joining NATO. This example is typical for government-oriented media attitude in early 2000s; at that time, it was possible to exercise critique and sarcasm towards those in power. For instance, the expression “President of all Russians”, mentioned earlier in this Thesis contains an allusion to the historical expression “Tsar of all Russians”. Every Russian is familiar with this expression and would understand the sarcastic allusion immediately. The rhetoric and vocabulary of the article are not respectful – if not to say offensive towards Putin. The argumentation in the article is not supported by facts, but instead based on pure speculation. The author

¹³² Ryazanova-Clark, L., “Developments in the Russian Language in the Post-Soviet Period”, in Russia After Communism, edited by Fawn, R. and White S. (2002), p. 117.

of the article tendentiously interprets some words of the future President and overstresses doubtful meanings. On the contrary, independent media during the early 2000s exercised more tolerance and objectivity concerning the same issue (Chapter 6.1.1). The vocabulary of the article in *Nezavisimaya gazeta* is mild and the structure of the article is built on logic and argumentation. It would be fair to say that, in the year 2000, two types of the Russian media exercised very different approaches concerning NATO and depicted the issue (Putin's interview about the possibility of Russia joining NATO) from very different angles. As the message of *Nezavisimaya gazeta* might be perceived as diplomatic "we shall see" concerning the issue, but the *Izvestia* message might be perceived as an emotional: "Look what he said!"

This Thesis cases analysis may be a base for suggestion that the situation seems to be different after two years of Putin's presidency. The case of NATO Rome Summit (2002) supports this conclusion. As was shown in Chapter 6.2, both independent and government-oriented media exercised tolerance and depicted the issue in a neutral tone. The message of both articles was the same – appreciation of the issue of Russia joining the NATO-Russia Council. Moreover, one article is accompanied by the picture of Putin is walking along the NATO countries flags and even the placement him on this picture so that he is walking, and there is a lot of space in front of him, that should symbolize the idea of spare place for him walking in the right direction and have space to work and move. That picture delivers the message that the Russian President is ready to cooperate with the West and particularly with NATO. Such depiction of the issue illustrates the striking difference in perceptions and approaches towards NATO in the Russian political environment. It was a time of great expectations concerning NATO-Russia cooperation, and studies conducted in this Thesis confirm this idea. Thus it is possible to conclude that both types of the Russian media by the second year of Putin's presidency came to the same approach concerning the issue - appreciation and support of Putin's intention to cooperate with NATO.

The appreciation in the Russian media of NATO-Russia cooperation seemed to come to the end - by the last years of Putin's presidency. In 2006, both governmental and independent media were showing the same approach concerning the issue – critique and accusation of NATO in the both articles devoted to the NATO Riga Summit (Chapter 6.3). Though two types of the Russian media show a big difference in approaches of depicting the issue – *Nezavisimaya gazeta* still shows more tolerance and *Izvestia* sets a very emotional tone, but both types of the Russian media deliver the same message: disapproval and irritation regarding the NATO Riga Summit.

It is significant that, even in such independent and tolerant media as *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, there appeared irony and sarcasm towards NATO. The vocabulary of the article is full of the Cold War allusions. There is the Cold War time terminology concerning NATO (e.g. “expansion” that was taken into inverted commas). For instance, this question was put in *Nezavisimaya gazeta*: “Will this global [NATO] expansion give birth to a new Cold War, but maybe in a different format?” The assumptions inherent in this question are self-evident. Moreover, in the article of 2006, *Izvestia* shifted from the moderate tone of 2002, and used tougher vocabulary (utilizing the words “tanks”, “war”, “soldiers”, “attack”) and depicting the issue in emotional and accusing tone. Thus, by the middle of Putin’s second term in office, the opinion towards NATO had already undergone a visible change, which was reflected in the media. The Riga Summit consequently led to NATO enlargement to the East, and both newspapers showed the negative attitude concerning the issue.

This Thesis strived to demonstrate the changes in perception of the Russia-NATO relations through the lens of the Russian media. The analysis of the Soviet-NATO relations had played a large part in the Thesis, for it is important to compare and contrast the Russian and the Soviet media in order to facilitate understanding of the alteration in perception that has occurred. The Russia-NATO relations naturally inherited some of its characteristics from the Soviet-NATO relations, for there would have been no NATO without the NATO-Soviet antagonism, and both NATO and Russia had to struggle to redefine themselves against the backdrop of the rapidly changing political situation. The Russian media reflected not only governmental decrees, but also the popular will, and the vagaries of public opinion clearly influenced the way the NATO-Russia relations were presented in the press. As separate Russian national consciousness and pride grew out of the ruins of the Soviet Union’s collapse, the attitudes towards NATO became correspondingly uncompromising once again; however, there was still an awareness of the need for mutual understanding in the NATO-Russian relations today that had been absent for most of the Soviet-NATO relations.

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