

Checkmate: Angela Merkel, Vladimir Putin, and the Dilemmas of Regional Hegemony

In February 2005, nine months before she became Germany's first female chancellor, Angela Merkel delivered the *laudatio* for then-Senator Hillary Clinton, who had traveled to Baden-Baden to receive the prestigious German Media Prize. At the end of her speech, the CDU opposition leader cited one of my favorite lines from Eleanor Roosevelt, which she erroneously attributed to Hillary: "A woman is like a tea-bag; you only know how strong she is when she's in hot water."¹ Rarely inclined to discuss the gender challenges she has encountered while climbing the political ladder, Merkel does pay homage to two women she claims as personal role models. The first is a two-time Nobel Prize recipient, physicist Marie Curie; the second is Russia's longest reigning empress, Catherine the Great. Indeed, journalists familiar with Merkel's seventh floor sanctum in the Federal Chancellor's Office report that she keeps a small portrait of Catherine on her desk. The only other painting on prominent display there is that of Germany's first postwar chancellor, Konrad Adenauer.

The two women Merkel admires most were both born in Poland but later adopted new homelands, where each managed to shatter the glass ceiling of her day. Each was unusually well educated for her time, preferring reason and evidence over passion and rhetoric; both women, in turn, successfully established themselves in domains historically reserved for men. Despite her Nobel Prizes in physics and chemistry, respectively, Marie Curie was denied admission to the French Academy of Sciences in 1911 but later served on the Committee for Intellectual Cooperation at the League of Nations.² In 1995, her remains were transferred to the Pantheon Mausoleum in Paris, the first woman to be nationally honored "in perpetuity" based on her own accomplishments.

Characterized as an “enlightened despot,” Catherine began her life as Princess Sophie of Anhalt Zerbst; she was baptized as a Lutheran in Stettin (Pomerania), less than 50 miles away from Templin, where Merkel was later raised. At 15 Sophie acquired a new name when she embraced the Russian Orthodox faith, a precondition for her marriage to the grandson of Peter the Great. Fluent in German, French, and Russian, Catherine read vociferously and promoted the arts; she also expanded the Russian empire to include much of modern Poland, Ukraine, and the Crimea. She published two manifestos inviting farmers, miners, and traders (excluding Jews) to relocate from her homeland to help develop Russia. Later known as the Volga Germans, they were granted the unusual privilege of maintaining their own culture, language, and religions, as Lutherans, Catholics and Mennonites, contributing to her reputation as a supporter of religious tolerance.

Merkel’s paternal grandparents, as well as her mother, were likewise born in Poland; her family moved from the Western city of Hamburg to the Eastern state of Brandenburg in 1954, requiring Angela to adapt to a “foreign” culture in unified Germany thirty-five years later. As a Lutheran pastor’s daughter fluent in German, Russian, and English, Merkel frequented museums and collected art postcards in her youth; she still attends concerts, theater, and opera performances. She has moreover positioned unified Germany as a key actor on the global stage. Deeply committed to democratic freedoms, Merkel claims to admire Catherine as a woman “who had accomplished many things under difficult circumstances” and “as a reformer, nothing more.”³ As someone who has almost single-handedly impelled CDU/CSU hardliners to cross that bridge to the twenty-first century with modernized family policies, the chancellor’s idea of “nothing more” says a lot about an unusual political virtue she shares with the former empress: humility (*Demut*). Both leaders have had to master political environments falling under the proverbial curse, “May you live in interesting times.” As Catherine noted during her reign, 1762–1796, “A great wind is blowing and that either gives you imagination . . . or a headache.” She observed further, “I shall be an autocrat: that’s my trade. And the good Lord will forgive me: that’s his.” Perhaps Merkel drew some comfort from those words as she worked behind the scenes to impose a very unpopular austerity package on Greece.

However circumscribed Merkel’s admiration for Catherine the Great may be, the latter’s accomplishments offer crucial historical insights to those trying to comprehend the chancellor’s turbulent relationship with the current Russian leader, Vladimir Putin. Like no other

couple on the contemporary political stage, Merkel and Putin have experienced parallel lives. Fate required them to share a geo-political space until 1990, one as a GDR citizen, the other as a KGB operative in Dresden; like parallel lines, however, their values and world-views are unlikely to intersect any time soon. After the Wall's collapse, these two political outsiders pursued national leadership tracks at equivalent speeds; while both have evinced impressive political staying-power, Putin's notion of "sovereign democracy" differs significantly from Merkel's rights-based, rule-of-law version.

Ever since her first speech at the Munich Security Conference in 2003, Angela Merkel has sought to balance her unwavering commitment to the North Atlantic Alliance with Germany's *Realpolitik*-need to keep Russia engaged in international negotiations and dialogue. Her personal affection for the United States rarely translated into an easy time for George W. Bush or Barack Obama, whose policies she candidly challenged. Presenting herself as a critical friend, Merkel has taken issue with their respective violations of fundamental American values concerning torture, rendition, the Guantanamo Bay prison camp, and the intrusive nature of National Security Administration spying; the latter included the tapping of her personal cell-phone. Despite her steadfast support for NATO, Merkel is painfully aware that US entanglements over the last twenty years have taken their toll on that country's reputation as the defender of the free world.

The end of bipolarism, a European shift from *hard* to *soft power* responses to global conflict, public demands for nuclear disarmament, and new forms of violent insurgency have undermined traditional NATO doctrines and strategies, long fixated on nuclear deterrence. Generational change has also reconfigured views about Germany's contemporary partners and adversaries, particularly since unification. The first Western chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, experienced the atrocities of two world wars, as did his short-term successor Kurt Georg Kiesinger. The next FRG leader, Willy Brandt, spent several years as a member of the anti-Nazi resistance in Norway; his successor, ex-*Wehrmacht* officer Helmut Schmidt, served on the Eastern front, and later in the Ardennes offensive. Although too young to fight, Helmut Kohl also witnessed the war firsthand in Ludwigshafen, later incorporated into the French occupation zone. All of these chancellors focused on "West integration," collective security via NATO, a special Franco-German friendship, and outright rejection of military engagement in any place where German boots had once marched between 1939 and 1945.

Only a toddler when the war ended, Gerhard Schröder quickly turned his back on a contentious French president, Jacques Chirac, in favor of a personal friendship with Vladimir Putin; following his 2005 electoral defeat, he accepted a highly paid job advising the Russian energy conglomerate, Gazprom. Born after the Korean War and forced to turn eastward as a GDR citizen, Angela Merkel never developed the emotional tie to France evinced by her predecessors, nor did she inherit an intuitive understanding of the European Community. Having hitch-hiked extensively across Eastern Europe and parts of the Soviet Union prior to 1989, she naturally gravitated toward the new democracies after unification, emphasizing reconciliation with Poland and Israel. By the time she became chancellor, Merkel understood better than any other Western leader why it was essential to bring the Russians back into any dialogue involving Europe. She has been no less candid in her dealings with Putin than she was with Bush and Obama, especially concerning Russian incursions into Georgia, the Crimea, and eastern Ukraine.

My original aim was to offer a number of short case studies, illustrating Merkel's efforts to keep the United States and Russia engaged in regional discourses by way of "triangulation." Like my chapter on her approach to migration and integration policies, however, this one has been overtaken by current events. As of this writing, the Merkel–Putin relationship offers more than enough fertile ground for exploring Germany's increasingly assertive behavior on behalf of national interests, as well as for ascertaining what makes "the world's most powerful woman" tick in the foreign and security policy domain.

The chapter begins with a brief historical review of Germany's transition from an international pariah, to a steadfast NATO partner, to an increasingly independent civilian power. It then considers the rules of "power physics" that have shaped Merkel's personal relationship with Putin, rendering them subject to *the irresistible force paradox*. Next, I consider Germany's efforts to walk a fine line between its energy security concerns and divisions between "old" and "new" European Union members. I then describe Merkel's efforts to mediate with regard to Putin's aggressive approach to the Georgian, Crimean, and Ukrainian conflicts. The concluding section reflects on the kind of "hard" versus "soft" power dilemmas that recent out-of-area crises raise for a German chancellor, seeking a modicum of Russian cooperation, for example, in the global war on terrorism.

I argue that despite her extensive exposure to forced solidarity with the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact minions, Merkel had no problem

internalizing a traditional FRG commitment to multilateralism and collective security under NATO. While she prefers détente to deterrence, she recognizes that German responsibility for securing the peace now extends beyond regional boundaries.⁴ This chancellor displays little tolerance for despotic nationalism, but her “double-track” approach to Putin has complicated her relations with Central East European states also displaying national-populist tendencies in these “interesting times.”

BECOMING A RELUCTANT HEGEMON: WEST INTEGRATION, OSTPOLITIK, AND CIVILIAN POWER

The restoration of national sovereignty under the 1990 Two plus Four Treaty had little immediate impact on the extraordinary bipartisan consensus that has characterized German foreign and security policy dating back to 1949. For nearly four decades, FRG citizens and elites shared a commitment to NATO membership as the lesser of two evils in the face of possible Warsaw Pact encroachments. They nonetheless played a vanguard role in searching for alternative approaches to European security. By the early 1970s, the Federal Republic’s commitment to regional integration and East–West cooperation would endow postwar Germans with a source of positive identification with their own state, matched only by pride in their “miraculous” economic recovery.⁵

Mutually exclusive reconstruction plans advanced by the victorious powers following Germany’s unconditional surrender in May 1945 soon gave rise to four decades of “cold war and hot peace.” The first postwar chancellor, Konrad Adenauer (CDU), defined the contours of national policy from 1949 to 1963. In the spirit of “rather half of Germany completely than the whole with half-control,” Adenauer pursued a masterful consolidation strategy focusing on economic reconstruction and the cultivation of unshakable ties to the West in communion against the Soviet Union. Following short-lived de-Nazification efforts, US policy toward the new Western state centered on “keeping the Germans down, the Americans in, and the Russians out.”⁶ Despite vehement protests, FRG citizens eventually accepted rearmament and nuclear weapons on their territory under an integrated NATO command, to prevent a military confrontation along the inter-German border. The Basic Law placed strict limits on Bundeswehr deployments, however, linked to collective security mandates.⁷ Adenauer visited Moscow for the first time in 1955, resulting in diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and the return of the last surviving prisoners of war.

Prior to 1998, FRG security policy was driven by two key postulates, “never again war, never again Auschwitz,” pursued by way of a threefold strategy known as *Westbindung*. Germany’s full integration into the transatlantic camp rested, first, on its responsible participation in the NATO alliance; second, on the cultivation of a special Franco-German relationship, initiated by Adenauer and de Gaulle; and, third, on its willingness to strengthen (and pay for) a fledgling European Community. West integration was viewed as “a lifeline for gaining equal status among the family of nations, for pursuing economic recovery, and for establishing internal and external stability.”⁸ Erected in 1961, the Berlin Wall symbolized the nation’s “permanently provisional” division, lending a paradoxical stability to Cold War relations.

By the late 1960s, the combined influences of generational change, NATO’s shift from Mutually Assured Destruction to the Flexible Response doctrine, and electoral realignment in favor of Social Democrats added a further ingredient to Germany’s foreign policy toolkit: the politics of *détente*. Initiated by Willy Brandt under a new SPD–FDP government, *Ostpolitik*, rested on Egon Bahr’s 1963 formula of “change through growing closer.” Treaty negotiations offered a powerful mechanism for addressing complex security needs, linking *national interests* with a positive construction of *what it meant to be German*. As Brandt declared in his October 1969 state of the union address, “the German people need peace, in the full sense of the word, with people of the Soviet Union and with the peoples of Eastern Europe. We are prepared to make an honest effort to achieve understanding, in order to overcome the consequences of the catastrophe precipitated by a criminal clique throughout Europe.”⁹ His vision for a new European peace order rested on a singular insight: “The key lies in Moscow.”

The optimism implicit in the 1969 partisan realignment gained momentum with a proliferation of Eastern accords, commencing with the Moscow Treaty of August 12, 1970, promising a general renunciation of force. Despite painstaking wrangling on both sides, and significant US skepticism, Egon Bahr’s shuttle diplomacy produced several agreements in quick succession, most importantly, the Warsaw Treaty of December 1970 and the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin, signed in September 1971. The crowning achievement was the 1972 Basis of Relations Treaty between the two German states, allowing for permanent diplomatic missions in Bonn and East Berlin. Supplementary accords addressed commercial transit, postal and telephone services, and health service provisions, as well as tax and automobile fee waivers for visitors. Separate Berlin

agreements regulated travel, visitation traffic, and “passage rights” for territorial enclaves. Bonn established full diplomatic relations with Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania; both states were accorded full UN membership in 1973. To avoid suspicion concerning a possible “special German path,” the Federal Republic co-sponsored the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), leading to the 1975 Helsinki Accords. Efforts to establish “good neighborly relations” with the Soviet Union and its eastern minions led to Brandt’s receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1971.

Still committed to “the politics of negotiation,” Chancellor Helmut Schmidt encountered an increasingly hostile environment as of 1979. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the imposition of martial law in Poland, crackdowns on new human rights groups in Eastern Europe, and hotly contested NATO plans for theater-nuclear modernization (TNF) to counter Soviet SS-20 deployments impelled Schmidt to concentrate more on “damage limitation” than on new modes of reconciliation. *Ostpolitik* nonetheless provided a dynamic framework for superpower relations amid the ebbs and flows, despite US demands for “linkage.” It also became deeply rooted in the security consciousness of German Baby Boomers, irrespective of partisan affiliation. By 1983, a proliferation of citizen initiatives opposing nuclear energy joined forces with those demanding nuclear disarmament, giving rise to the Green Party. Although the term was not used at the time, Germany increasingly came to see itself as a “civilian power” (as opposed to “checkbook diplomacy”), more intent on conflict prevention than on crisis resolution involving military means.

Schmidt’s successor, Helmut Kohl, faced massive anti-nuclear protests at home, complemented by peace movements in neighboring European states. He continued détente politics, hosting the first state visit by an East German premier in 1987; he then sought the release of GDR political prisoners during his 1988 visit to Moscow. One of the amazing achievements of this era was the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, signed in Washington, DC by Kremlin chief, Mikhail Gorbachev and US President Ronald Reagan on December 8, 1987. Perceived as a major victory by the peace movement, the INF obliged the United States and the Soviet Union to eliminate all nuclear and dual-capable missiles covering a range of 500 to 5,500 km. By June 1, 1991, the superpowers had destroyed a total of 2,692 missiles, coupled with intrusive on-site verification.¹⁰

The second mind-boggling event marking the Kohl years was the fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989, resulting in unification, with

Gorbachev's blessing, less than ten months later. Though not directly related, these two developments solidified the perception among most Germans born after the Second World War that peace could best be achieved through non-military means. The Kohl government offered substantial payments to ensure Soviet forces deployed on GDR territory a "dignified withdrawal," while channeling reconstruction contributions to USSR successor republics through bilateral and multilateral institutions. United Germany committed DM 73.6 billion in aid, DM 14 billion of which were linked to Russian troop withdrawal; it quickly signed treaties of Good Neighborliness and Cooperation with Poland, Hungary, the Czech and Slovak republics. German trade accounted for 30–35 percent of all commercial exchanges with the newly independent Central European states by 1995, a figure matching the Soviet share during the best years of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.¹¹ The FRG supported Association Agreements between the EU and democratizing CEE states; it favored both EU and NATO enlargement.

The collapse of the Iron Curtain replaced a curiously stable "balance of terror" rooted in a bipolar world order with an ever messier set of global actors less committed to traditional alliances. By the time Germans elected their first Red–Green government, most had internalized a two-pronged strategy, "security = détente + deterrence," based on the perceived effectiveness of the Eastern treaties, the Helsinki Accords, and the "velvet revolutions" that ended Soviet domination. Before the ink had dried on the 1998 coalition agreement, however, the SPD–Green cabinet faced a major foreign policy crisis in its own backyard. "Ethnic cleansing" campaigns witnessed in Bosnia and Kosovo turned the pillars of German foreign policy into mutually exclusive propositions: "never again war" versus "never again Auschwitz." A Green minister with no foreign policy experience, Joschka Fischer, became the first national leader to deploy German troops out-of-area in a NATO attack against Serbian forces. Within a decade, Bundeswehr forces would be participating in a variety of slippery slope, combat-relevant missions in the Balkans, Afghanistan, and even off the coast of Israel. Under new Defense Policy Guidelines adopted in 2003, Germany re-assigned 35,000 soldiers to serve as rapid-response forces in high-intensity operations; allocated 70,000 as stabilization forces for longer-term, low- to medium-intensity conflicts; and committed 137,500 to support units for joint operations and home duties.¹²

Although the number of troops deployed abroad has reached a new high under Merkel's leadership (3,420 as of April 2016), united Germany

has tried very hard to uphold its standing as a “civilian power.” As defined by Hanns W. Maull, and later Sebastian Harnisch and Franz-Josef Meiers, the main parameters of FRG foreign and security policy, known as *civilian power*, begin with the recognition of its special historical obligation to promote European integration. This is coupled with a normative approach to policy-making, stressing peace, freedom, democracy, the rule of law, justice, and human rights, balanced with national interests; it further espouses a solid commitment to multilateralism, extensive cooperation, the rule of law, and reliance on international institutions. Germany routinely seeks to “civilize” or transform international relations, favoring a “culture of restraint” over the utility of military force, but it also accepts the centrality of NATO and complementary ties to EU Common Foreign, Security and Defense Policy. Since the 1990s, it has recognized a growing responsibility to deploy Bundeswehr troops abroad, not only to meliorate humanitarian crises and prevent human rights violations but also to combat heinous forms of terrorism.

In addition to citing historical grounds, Germany couches its reluctance to apply military means in terms of its “limited financial resources.”¹³ As Merkel confirmed in her February 2006 speech at the Munich Security Conference:

while we can and intend to assume responsibility, in some fields we may not be able to meet everyone’s expectations regarding our financial scope for defence spending ... we may not be able to do everything, but what we do, we do very efficiently. We play our role in Afghanistan with 2,500 soldiers in the ISAF mission. We play our part in Kosovo as well as in Bosnia and Herzegovina with around 3,500 soldiers. We are present on the Horn of Africa, in Sudan and in the southern Caucasus, to name only a few major regions. Now Germany participates in the mission in Rafah, which is a totally new experience, as this is a commitment to a wholly new region. We provide the largest contingent to the NATO Response Force. We are implementing the decisions taken at the Prague NATO Summit in a highly committed way in the field of strategic airlift. In other words we are making our contributions in many respects, helping many people.

We have a parliamentary army. Extending its operations to cover almost the entire world is a clear political challenge, one which requires a great deal of discussion, but we – government and opposition – have again and again jointly brought the majority of these discussions to a positive conclusion. Of course, we also want to use the synergies within the European Union, and in this connection there is greater European cooperation, for example, allowing us to increase the share of deployable troops, to name just one aspect among many.¹⁴

Appointed by Merkel in 2013, Ursula von der Leyen (first female defense minister) requested €130 billion in investment funds to modernize

Bundeswehr weapons systems over the next fifteen years. Now depending on a volunteer army, this suggests Germany's growing willingness to participate actively in international military campaigns, especially those directed against ISIS-style terrorism.¹⁵

Personal interactions between leaders had played a key role in earlier FRG efforts to reconcile with once adversarial states, beginning with the 1963 Franco-German Friendship Treaty signed by Adenauer and de Gaulle. In 1971, Chancellor Willy Brandt went swimming with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev near Yalta, opening the door to closer relations under *Ostpolitik*. In July 1990, Helmut Kohl and Mikhail Gorbachev were photographed wearing cardigans, symbolizing their close ties, while walking in the Caucasus during the unification negotiations. In 2001, "Vladimir" and "Gerhard" rode with their wives through snow-covered Moscow in a horse-drawn sleigh. Merkel and Putin also use first names and the informal "you" when speaking German or Russian, but their interactions are described as "cold and businesslike." Putin describes his counterpart as a "high caliber" leader and a political "heavyweight"; he reports that she "scolded" him like a school mistress during a 2009 energy dispute involving Ukraine.¹⁶

As Chapter 3 demonstrated, "special relationships" are characterized by a high degree of *historical intertwining*, *intense interactions*, and mutual *psychological resonance* between two peoples. Given the ferocity of their interactions across two world wars, followed by the GDR's forty years of Soviet subordination, German–Russian ties certainly meet the "special relationship" criteria advanced by Gardner Feldman.¹⁷ Merkel, however, has faced "a delicate choice the Bonn Republic never had to make: a choice, or at least a trade-off," between Germany's long-standing commitment to multilateral peace-keeping and growing international pressures for military burden-sharing. She has been forced to find a new balance between "the Scylla of collective memory" and "the Charybdis of contemporary exigencies" not only in Israel but also in her efforts to shore up democratic practices beyond the Oder–Neisse border.¹⁸ We now take a closer look at Merkel's approach to foreign policy-making, and the conditions defining her "special relationship" with Vladimir Putin.

IMMOVABLE OBJECT, UNSTOPPABLE FORCE: MERKEL, PUTIN, AND "POWER PHYSICS"

Encountering his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, for the first time at the Slovenian Summit of June 2001, President George W. Bush declared:

“I looked the man in the eye. I found him to be very straightforward and trustworthy and we had a very good dialogue. I was able to get a sense of his soul. He’s a man deeply committed to his country and the best interests of his country . . . I appreciate very much the frank dialogue and that’s the beginning of a very constructive relationship.”¹⁹ Angela Merkel not only knows a thing or two about the Russian soul; having looked into Putin’s eyes many times since 2005, she understands him better than anyone else on the international stage. Although they shared a common Cold War space prior to the fall of the Wall, they now stand on opposite sides of a re-emerging ideological divide.

Born in 1954 and raised under the shadow of Soviet hegemony, Merkel traveled as a teenager to the USSR on a language scholarship. She bought her first Beatles album in Moscow, and later returned for professional exchanges with Russian physicists. As a young adult, she hitch-hiked her way across the “fraternal socialist states” long before US Fulbright scholars were allowed to enter those countries. Her Protestant ethics and GDR experiences leave little room for double standards regarding human rights and democratic legitimacy. Born in 1952, Putin likewise understands Merkel better than the rest, given his activities as a KGB agent in Dresden, 1985–1990; only a lieutenant colonel by the time he left, his “operative skills” did position him to assume temporary control of the KGB successor, the Russian Federal Security Service, in 1998. A year later, he became acting prime minister, then acting president following Yeltsin’s resignation in December 1999.²⁰

In addition to sharing a love of Russian literature and a commitment to upholding historical responsibilities, both leaders grew up under the material resource constraints of a socialist command economy. Although both were political outsiders prior to 1990, each was unexpectedly catapulted into national prominence by a powerful mentor – Helmut Kohl and Boris Yeltsin, respectively – whose abuses of power they later publicly renounced. They are evenly matched in terms of personal determination; although Putin holds better cards regarding oil and gas dependency, Merkel can influence the flow of critical trade, technology, and investment. The last three factors have given civilian-power Germany the leverage needed to abandon its junior partner role, freeing it to pursue broader national and global interests.

Merkel faces fewer complaints that “she just doesn’t lead” during her international appearances. One variable initially contributing to her effective triangulation of foreign policy relations amid many crises was “beginner’s luck.” Over time, she has developed a special decision-making skill

set, albeit one that seems to derive from her socialization as a natural scientist. Having interviewed her in 2006 (only one year into her first term), Hajo Schumacher characterizes the chancellor's general approach to decision-making as "power physics" (*Machtphysik*). Extending over a ten-year period, my observations allow me to refine the "Merkel Method" of decision-making posited by Schumacher in a way that lends itself to both the domestic and foreign policy levels. Before she reacts, even in crisis situations, the chancellor looks for a clear definition of the problem and its core parameters. Although she is unlikely to have read Herbert Simon's classic work on the topic, she recognizes that all decision problems consist of "factual premises" and "value premises."²¹ She attempts to discern the main actors, their motives, and interests before assessing the broader costs, benefits, and risks associated with particular solutions. Next, she considers the best level for addressing the problem, the most trustworthy actors, and a promising decision-making structure (face-to-face relations, institutional majority, or closed circle). She will not commit to a decision until she has a sense of both the short- and long-term effects associated with potential solutions, which she then uses to frame the indicators, benchmarks, and timetables that can be used for implementation.²² Her tendency to "learn" from positive and negative experiences sometimes leads to a change in course, which brings praise and criticism from unexpected quarters; she rarely reveals how she is affected by one or the other.

Many elements of this approach were reflected in Merkel's first global performance, when she hosted the 1995 UN Climate Summit in Berlin. She learns as much as she can about the other actors, until she has registered their respective "tipping points"; she knows how to work the room but has also been known to withdraw in order to let others do the persuading. She pursued a similar course in relation to the 2007 G8 summit in Heiligendamm, and again in Brussels during her efforts to secure adoption of the 2009 Lisbon Treaty. When it comes to Russia, she is more likely to rely on France than on the United States (see below).

The Merkel Method has little in common with Putin's secretive, self-assertive approach to policy-making, driven by his strong-state inclinations, his (re)interpretation of key historical events, and his often dubious vision of national superiority. As Jennifer Yoder notes, he uses Catherine's term, *Novorossiia*, implying that the defunct Soviet Union was imperial Russia, "only under a different name"; he wants to make Russia "great again." Like Kohl's Girl, Putin initially benefited from his status as a "misunderestimated" outsider, lacking ties to new Moscow elites who secured their oligarchical power during the corrupt Yeltsin years. While

the chancellor credits Putin with acting rationally with respect to his own nation, she warned President Obama in a March 2014 phone call that his Russian counterpart holds a completely different view of the world.²³ Ignoring their systemic constraints, for example, the need to secure parliamentary approval, Putin believes that Western leaders are free to operate much the way he does: bending rules or ignoring institutions (despite his law degree) to serve the interests of friends with whom he has shared earlier stages of his life.

Putin's inner circle draws heavily on acquaintances from his days in St. Petersburg; they include former KGB/FSB members, wealthy oligarchs, and bureaucratic forces (known as *siloviki* or "strong people") based in key ministries. He brought "unprecedented numbers" of men with military–security backgrounds into the political and economic sectors after his 2000 election to the presidency, accounting for 35 percent of all deputy ministers by 2003. These are men trained to respond to commands from above.²⁴ As the chief editor of Moscow's top radio station, Alexei Venediktov once reported: "They are really convinced that Washington decision-making works in ways very similar to Moscow decision-making. That your president can pick up the phone and call the judge [or the speaker of parliament] and give him orders."²⁵

Kimberly Marten offers several vignettes attesting to Putin's questionable understanding of democracy, noting that he views all policy interactions, including foreign relations, in patron–client terms. Those who meet his expectations "will be rewarded with ongoing attention and reciprocal gifts, while those who 'offend' will be treated with disdain and shunning that far outweighs the original offense."²⁶ He once asked George W. Bush why he "didn't change the [US] Constitution so [he] could run again"; to his credit, Bush was "flabbergasted" by the suggestion, as well as by Putin's assumption that he had personally arranged for CBS (a TV station) to fire a critical moderator, Dan Rather. He deemed Bush weak when he supplied humanitarian aid rather than a military response to the 2008 Georgian crisis.

The Russian president later expected Obama to get a grip on the US Congress for blocking presidential initiatives at the same time he overruled his military advisors on some deployments. Citing "similarities" between their respective military lobbies and foreign ministries, "Putin seemed to lack an understanding that the secretaries of both State and Defense are political appointees serving at the president's pleasure, and that the president is Commander in Chief of a military that must follow his lead even when commanders disagree with its direction."²⁷

Merkel and Putin clearly differ in their historical assessments of 1989–1990. Although she kept her regular sauna date with a friend before crossing over to “test the West” on November 9, Merkel observed twenty-five years later: “The Berlin Wall, this symbol of state abuse cast in concrete, took millions of people to the limits of what is tolerable, and all too many beyond it . . . It broke them.” Conscious of her debt to the protesters who helped to make it happen, she has emerged as an outspoken defender of human rights, insisting that “the fall of the Wall has shown us that dreams can come true.”²⁸ Putin spent that night in 1989 at the KGB offices in Dresden, located in a part of Germany known as “the valley of the clueless” because of poor Western TV reception. His primary responsibility that evening was to destroy as many secret police records as possible: “We burned so much that the oven almost exploded,” he noted in a later interview.²⁹ When East Germans stormed the building, he called for reinforcements, but “Moscow kept silent.”

Putin’s five years in East Germany help to explain his ongoing attacks on the socioeconomic chaos he witnessed in Russia during “the troubles” of the 1990s. The “shock therapy” introduced in 1992 ended central planning, privatized state enterprises, liberalized prices, and eliminated many universal social services; the outcome was mass unemployment, a 20 percent inflation rate, and soaring national debt. During his first presidential term, Putin declared the collapse of the Soviet Union the “greatest geopolitical catastrophe” of the twentieth century, although he admitted that the GDR’s higher living standards had attested to the deeper nature of economic failure back home: “It was clear the Union was ailing. And it had a terminal, incurable illness under the title of paralysis. A paralysis of power.”³⁰

The time Putin spent in the “valley of the clueless,” cut off from Western and Soviet media sources radically liberalized under *glasnost* (which the GDR had banned as too democratic, e.g., *Sputnik*) meant that he experienced neither the free airing of formerly taboo topics, nor the “the enthusiasm and the lifting of spirits” later highlighted by his wife.³¹ His return to Russia was marred by Yeltsin’s militarized attack against the 1993 parliamentary coup plotters, then dirty, divisive election campaigns, fist-fights on the floor of the Duma, the humiliation of International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditionality in exchange for loans, and territorial losses in the Caucasus – lands that had secured imperial power under Catherine the Great. Qualifying his “catastrophe” assessment in 2010, Putin observed: “Whoever does not regret the collapse of the Soviet Union has no heart. But whoever would like to have it back in its old form has no brain.”³²

Merkel and Putin also differ significantly in their views of the state's role relative to individual rights and freedom of choice. Despite her rejection of a command economy and centralized political control, Merkel sees a legitimate role for the state in many domains, subjecting her to misunderstanding even within her own party; one example involved her insistence on tougher bank and financial market regulation after the 2008 Wall Street melt-down. Her ongoing battles with "state princes" (like Seehofer in Bavaria) might lead her now and then to envy the strong presidencies seen in France and Russia but she has clearly mastered the rough and tumble of party politics, and knows how to win. Putin, by contrast, places the state high above the needs of a pluralist society, as revealed in his 1999 Millennium Message: "For Russians, a strong state is not an anomaly to fight against. Quite the contrary, it is the source and guarantor of order, the initiator and the main driving force of any change . . . Society desires the restoration of the guiding and regulating role of the state."³³ In this regard, he stands closer to Louis XIV (*l'état, c'est moi*) than to Catherine II who claimed, "I may be kindly, I am ordinarily gentle, but in my line of business I am obliged to will terribly what I will at all."

Both national leaders have managed to keep their private lives rather private, but while the chancellor has put her physical "makeover" behind her, Putin is addicted to staged photo opportunities that present him as a rugged, nature-loving macho ready for adventure, that is, as a scuba diver, a fire-fighting pilot, a motorcyclist, a big-game hunter, or a nightclub "crooner." Raised as a pastor's daughter, Merkel does not personally support gay marriage but welcomes civil partnerships and a broader understanding of *family*: "Family is there, wherever parents take responsibility for their children and children for their parents." She has allowed her multitasking minister, Ursula von der Leyen, to pursue policies that sooner reflect the GDR gender regime than conservatives' traditional "children, kitchen, church" paradigm."³⁴

Since his return to the presidency in 2012, Vladimir Putin has clearly broken with the Soviet paradigm concerning gender roles, state-church relations, and other biopolitical issues. He rails against homosexuality, feminism, sexual freedom, the erosion of marriage, and declining birth rates, all of which are subsumed under the rubric of moral relativism and Western decadence; he targets the European Union (*Gayropa*), in particular.³⁵ The 2012 Dima Yakovlev Law outlawed "homosexual propaganda," allegedly to protect minors against gay books, movies, and activism, despite a personal appeal by Germany's gay foreign minister, Guido Westerwelle, when he visited his Moscow counterpart.

Putin used the Duma to ban further US adoptions, insisting that “the bodies of Russian children belong to the nation,” even if abandoned in orphanages: many Americans had adopted “special needs” children requiring expensive medical care not available in the Motherland. Some efforts to regulate private behavior border on the absurd: one of the first laws introduced in St. Petersburg commensurate with his calls for “public hygiene” barred excessive night noise (“cat stomping”). Other statutes have targeted smoking, obscene language, and drugs, imposed age limits on mass media use, and encouraged higher birth rates. One defined “appropriate sexual relations,” in an effort to stop adolescent sex. Besides efforts to bar “foreign” religions and revitalize the Orthodox Church, Putin has elevated ultra-nationalist Dmitry Rogozin to the post of deputy premier, who described his desire to expel non-Russian ethnic migrants as “ridding Moscow of the dirt.”³⁶

Presidential calls for public modesty are paradoxically coupled with blatantly sexist comments, not to mention photographs of Putin baring his chest on horseback or riding bear-back (literally), suggesting his athletic qua sexual prowess. When the former Italian prime minister went on trial for sexual relations with a minor, Putin opined, “Berlusconi is standing in court because he lives with women. If he were a homosexual, no one would have touched him.” When Israeli leader Moshe Katzav was accused of rape and sexual assault in 2006, Putin told Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, “Extend my greetings to your president. He fooled all of us. We envy him.” Released by a girl-band called “Singing Together,” a 2002 pop-song chanted, “I want a man like Putin, full of strength / I want a man like Putin, a non-drinker / I want a man like Putin that will not abuse me / I want a man like Putin that will not run away.” Female admirers extolling Putin’s “good husband” qualities were unfazed by his 2013 divorce from Lyudmila, much less by rumors of his affair with Alina Kabayeva, an ex-Olympic gymnast half his age; now a Duma deputy, she has two children allegedly fathered by the nation’s moralist-in-chief.³⁷

A former wrestler and judo expert, Putin also “bullies” those he wishes to intimidate, including a strong-willed female chancellor. Knowing her fear of dogs (she was seriously bitten twice), he presented Merkel with a black and white stuffed dog during her first Moscow visit in January 2006. A year later he unleashed his black Labrador “Kori” when she traveled to Sochi and had her reaction captured on camera; he remarked snidely, “I don’t think the dog will scare you. She won’t do anything bad, she likes journalists.”³⁸ During their heated exchanges over oil and gas shut-offs in Ukraine, Putin reportedly shouted and used obscenities; he even

“squeezed her arm” at the 2007 Munich Security Conference, after denouncing the pernicious effects of a “greater and greater disdain for the basic principles of international law” exhibited by “first and foremost, the United States [which] has overstepped its national borders in every way.”³⁹ Although she remembers having her bike stolen by a Russian soldier, Merkel is the one more likely to follow Catherine’s advice: “I like to praise and reward loudly, to blame quietly.”

The chancellor conceives of politics as a more or less constant electrical/magnetic field, in which Russia amounts to an unstable energy field beset by “problematic tendencies.” This brings us back to *power physics*: the political world, as she sees it, consists of elementary building blocks, standing in reciprocal relation to each other (*Wechselwirkungen*), that are governed by established “laws of nature” determining structures of time and place. She monitors and interprets ongoing events in terms of constantly shifting positive and negative charges in search of equilibrium, which allows her to calculate probabilities and risks. Here, too, she prefers to wait things out, to assess long-term consequences before taking action; postwar German leaders have always prided themselves on their consistency, stability, and predictability. Relying on informal networks driven by personal interests, Putin evinces little respect for laws of any sort, explaining why his foreign and economic policies (like Russia’s support for Iran) often pull the state in contradictory directions. Rather than assess the bigger picture, Putin tends to talk tough, act strong, and intimidate weaker powers “while choosing battles promising a quick and easy win.” Western failure to respond in kind, by flexing military muscle, is construed as a “green light to act.”

Rooted in a third-century BC text by Chinese philosopher Han Feizi, the “unstoppable force paradox” used the image of a perfect spear (capable of piercing all shields) and an equally perfect shield (able to block any spear) to pose the question: *What occurs when an unstoppable force meets an immovable object?* While most scientists deny the likelihood of its real-world occurrence, Charles Moffat argues that, ultimately, the immovable object will be moved (despite an assumption of “infinite mass”) because *it lacks any force holding it in place*. The only thing that can displace the immovable object is “infinite torque,” which would continue to push the object regardless of its infinite mass. Without an energy anchor, the “immovable object” can be budged. I find this analogy useful for exploring German–Russian conflicts regarding the geopolitics of energy security, on the one hand, and European responses to military incursion in the Caucasus, on the other. While Putin

sees himself as an unstoppable force, Merkel has assumed the role of immovable object.

CHANGE THROUGH RAPPROCHEMENT V. CHANGE THROUGH INTERDEPENDENCE: ENERGY POLICY

While European leaders across the board now recognize the stability of energy supplies as a security concern, German politicians try to separate this issue from other foreign policy disputes with Russia. Merkel's early focus on climate change (Chapter 6) led her first Grand Coalition to adopt a major Energy Turn-Around Package in 2008. Basking in high oil prices that allowed him to redirect the economy and even pay off Russia's IMF debt three years ahead of schedule, a duly re-elected Putin was exasperated by Germany's all-out campaign to develop renewable energy (RE) sources even before its post-Fukushima shift.⁴⁰ Addressing a 2010 gathering in Berlin, he declared: "I just don't understand it: you don't want gas, you don't want to develop nuclear energy any more. Do you want to heat everything with firewood?"⁴¹

The Soviet Union faced a unique energy dilemma for decades: controlling the world's largest known oil reserves and other costly mineral resources, it lacked the advanced technologies needed to extract them from formidable geophysical locations in Siberia. Coupled with other Cold War strengths, such as its powerful nuclear arsenal and its permanent seat on the UN Security Council, Russia enjoyed a degree of national autonomy not seen elsewhere regarding its post-1990 policy choices; it was free to follow its own development compass following the collapse of "communism."

Russian leaders' belief in the infinite nature of their energy reserves has nonetheless rendered them vulnerable to a "resource curse," as described by Terry Lynn Karl.⁴² She posited in 1997 that a sudden infusion of major capital deriving from energy wealth can dramatically transform the decisions, functions, and activities of resource-rich states. Access to easy money, particularly after a sustained period of economic decline, can induce formerly cautious leaders to pursue overly ambitious, risky, or wasteful policies, characterized as *petromania*. James D. Brown argued, for instance, that Soviet authorities grew "giddy" with massive oil wealth, as world market prices jumped from US\$17.50 to US\$40 per barrel, between January and November, 1979. Covering 18 percent of total global production at the time and facing no real threat from resource-starved Afghanistan, Kremlin leaders nonetheless

adopted a bold and incredibly costly change in strategy, risking all of their slowly accumulated gains for an ally of seemingly little value ... having carefully consumed a sizeable piece of the Afghan cake, the Soviets attempted to gulp down the rest in a single, overzealous bite. The result, rather than the hoped for quick incorporation, was prolonged, painful choking, followed by the regurgitation of all that had been previously ingested.⁴³

Nine years of war resulted in an official death count of 13,833 (Western estimates put the figure at up to 75,000), costing over 5 billion rubles annually. Longer-term consequences included the strengthening of independence movements in other Soviet republics, along with the rise of warlords and a Taliban takeover of Afghanistan a few years later. Political stagnation at home, due to the octogenarian incompetence of Brezhnev and company, contributed to Gorbachev's ascension and, arguably, to the end of the USSR *per se*.

Vladimir Putin has fallen into the resource-curse trap on more than one occasion, beginning in 2006, when he first tried to exploit European dependence on Russian energy to discipline Ukrainian leaders trying to distance themselves from Kremlin influence. Despite recent losses in market share, Russia remains the No. 1 energy exporter, responsible for 12.7 percent of the oil, 16.7 percent of the gas, and 4.3 percent of the coal (2015 figures) produced for global consumption. Correspondingly, it supplies 35 percent of Europe's oil, 30 percent of its gas, and 26 percent of its coal imports; 80 percent of Russia's diesel products also go to Europe. Russia moreover accounts for 18 percent of the EU uranium supplies, needed to run eighteen Soviet nuclear reactors located in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, and Slovakia, respectively. Because reactor designs require specific kinds of fuel rods, they cannot easily be replaced, despite efforts to diversify.⁴⁴

The post-Soviet energy sector has seen big swings in the policy pendulum over the last twenty-five years. Shock therapy, and a sudden shift from state ownership to an ill-conceived voucher system under Yeltsin rendered public assets the private property of a new class of corrupt oligarchs. Putin refers to the 1990s as a time of "troubles," which he associates with national humiliation, chaos, and insecurity. Abjuring the mass unemployment, rising debt, and IMF-imposed conditionality of that period, he has sought to restore state sovereignty without returning to a Soviet-style command economy, whose failures he observed from a distance during his five years in Dresden. As reported in 2010, his KGB activities there persuaded him that Western technologies "obtained by special means" would be "impossible to utilize" back in the USSR, which lacked the

material and business infrastructures needed to incorporate them into socialist production.⁴⁵ Putin's dissertation plagiarized parts of a popular US textbook, *Strategic Planning and Public Policy*, authored by David I. Cleland and William R. King.⁴⁶ He has used his three terms as president to reassert strategic control over the energy sector by way of "network state capitalism."

Putin used heavy-handed tax evasion charges to expel Yeltsin's cronies, including raids on corporate offices by masked operatives with loaded Kalashnikovs; he manipulated trials to eliminate others posing a political challenge, such as Mikhail Khodorkovsky, now in London after ten years in prison.⁴⁷ The energy network consists of Putin loyalists dating back to his KGB and St. Petersburg days, for example, Gazprom CEO Alexei Miller and top Lukoil managers, Vagit Alekperov and Leonid Fedun (Lukoil is Russia's largest private oil player). Despite evidence that he, too, has amassed illegal wealth based on his networks, Putin declared: "It is true that I am the richest man in the whole world. I am rich. Because I collect feelings and emotions, Russia has twice granted me the greatest joy, of being able to serve it."⁴⁸

In 2008, Merkel still had high hopes for his presidential successor, Dmitri Medvedev, who promised to modernize privatization; he did legislate greater energy efficiency, then signed decrees on renewables and recharging stations for electric vehicles. She reportedly felt duped when Putin reassumed the presidency in 2012 (extending his third term to six years) after a "managed election" devoid of real opposition. "Network capitalism" has turned Gazprom into a state-within-a-state, which the Kremlin feels free to raid regularly to finance other projects. Gazprom revenues from taxation and export duties feed the National Reserve Fund (equivalent to 5.9 percent of GDP) and the National Wealth Fund (19 percent of GDP in 2015). The problem is that significant energy revenues are creamed off the top to advance the personal interests of those who control them.

Dependent on Russia for 60–80 percent of its own fuel needs, Ukraine serves as the major "pipeline" for up to four-fifths of Gazprom's European deliveries.⁴⁹ In recent years the Ukrainian Gas Transmission System has lost its monopolistic position due to the Yamal Pipeline moving through Belarus and Poland, the Nord Stream pipeline transferring natural gas from the Baltic Sea to Greifswald, and the Blue Stream pipeline crossing through Turkey. After losing the 2005 election, Schröder became chairman of the Nord Stream operations. Former Hamburg Mayor Henning Voscherau took on the same responsibilities for South Stream

in 2012. Ex-Green minister Joschka Fischer advised an energy consortium backing the Nabucco pipeline that would have bypassed Russia by delivering gas from the Caspian Sea to Austria, until its €15 billion price tag put the project on hold in 2012.⁵⁰ Merkel knows she needs to walk a fine line regarding alternative pipeline routes, co-financed by her Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. One country's diversification could be another's energy death knell: "Arithmetically, just one additional line of Nord Stream 2 and one of Turkish Stream might be enough to bypass Ukraine."⁵¹

In 2006, Ukraine's outstanding oil debt led Moscow to block all pipeline flows, affecting seventeen EU states for four days in mid-winter; Bulgaria and Slovakia experienced complete cut-offs. Russia's threat to European energy security damaged its reputation as a dependable, market-based supplier, precipitating a search for alternatives. A second shut-down in 2009 cost Russia a billion dollars in lost export revenues, at a time when a financially strapped Ukraine was paying a higher price for gas than affluent Germany. Forced to play the bad cop by way of repeated "take or pay" and "pre-pay" demands, Gazprom's obligation to fill state coffers for other projects also extracted a high price. A third cut-off was averted during the political unrest of 2014, based on "mutual restraint." Berlin coordinated trilateral negotiations, pushing Kiev to pay US\$2 billion of its US\$5.2 billion debt. Gazprom accepted discounted terms and agreed to "pre-pay" its transit fees for 2015.⁵²

The imposition of Western sanctions in response to Putin's quick annexation of Crimea and support for separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine (see below) put several European equity swaps and commercial ventures on hold, offering a "topography of Russian oligarchs."⁵³ Poland and Baltic state leaders joined Merkel's call for tough sanctions, while Italy, Hungary, and Bulgaria championed Russia's "historical reliability" as an energy supplier.⁵⁴ Extended through January 2016, the sanctions targeted individuals, oil companies, and major Russian banks, affecting capitalization across the entire energy sector.⁵⁵ They came on the heels of a major European Court of Justice (ECJ) antitrust case filed by the Directorate-General for Competition, based on evidence seized in dawn raids on Gazprom operations by EU inspectors. Western sanctions have compounded Putin's other problems, including serious ruble devaluations, plunging oil prices, and declining oil demand both at home and abroad. The rise of the liquefied natural gas (LNG) trade, an unforeseen gas boom in North America, new cross-border pipelines with multidirectional interconnectors, new LNG storage facilities, suppliers and transfer

hubs, as well as post-Fukushima nuclear recalibrations have shifted global demand and supply. Moscow tried to limit the damage by centralizing control over the domestic sector, utilizing state-supported subsidies and export tax exemptions, along with discretionary price cuts (or hikes) and “take-or-pay” obligations. It has, moreover, threatened to build a new gas cartel, dumped cheap gas in foreign markets, and arbitrarily switched deliveries “between established import-dependent European customers and emerging markets in Asia.”⁵⁶

Germany and Russia have become co-dependent all along the value chain. In 2014, 39 percent of Gazprom’s total investments went to Germany, while 63 percent of Rosneft’s European investments also landed there; the latter owns stakes in four refining companies: Gelsenkirchen, Bayern Oil, MiRO, and Schwedt.⁵⁷ One of its biggest natural gas customers, E.ON, has poured €10 billion into Russia’s energy market, also supplying half of BASF Wintershall’s hydrocarbon production and two-thirds of the company’s reserve base. EU Energy Commissioner Günther Oettinger was a mover and shaker behind the Road Map for EU–Russia Energy Cooperation until 2050 and the Third Internal Energy Market package, among other things. Russian dominance of the global energy market is decreasing due to Germany’s 2008 energy turn-around and its uploading of climate-change policies at the EU level; but Moscow’s resource curse has intensified the “values versus interests” debate driving relations between a former pastor’s daughter and an ex-KGB man. Brandt’s *Ostpolitik* vision of integrating Russia into a Western trade-and-reconciliation orbit has given way to a new German *Frostpolitik*, drawing new territorial frontlines.⁵⁸

SPEAKING TRUTH TO REVISIONIST POWER: MERKEL AND THE CAUCASUS CRISES

Just as the earlier financial chaos and humiliation moved Putin to reassert top-down control over major sectors of the economy, Yeltsin’s disastrous management of the first Chechnya crisis motivated his hand-picked successor to reassert Russian power in the “Near Abroad.” Sidelined in St. Petersburg during the fist-fighting days of the Duma, Putin rejected the *tactics* of ultra-nationalist parties under figures like Vladimir Zhirinovskiy but not necessarily their foreign policy views: feeding on memories of the Great Patriotic War, opposing the “color revolutions,” challenging a US-dominated world order, and reinstating the privileges of the Orthodox Church. Taking a dim view of separatist movements within his own borders, Putin declared in 1999: “We will track down the

terrorists everywhere. If we find them sitting on the toilet, we will wipe them out in that location.”⁵⁹ Seeking a return to Great Power status on the global stage, he used the second Chechen war as test case for renewed use of Russia’s military hard power. Formerly heading the ultra-nationalist KRO-Rodina party, Deputy Prime Minister Dmitri Rogozin is now responsible for the defense industries.⁶⁰

Like Merkel, Putin began reflecting on his nation’s looming demographic deficit during his first term; in 2001, he issued a “Concept on the Demographic Development of Russia 2001–2015” and attended his first World Congress of Compatriots Living Abroad, comparable to Germany’s annual Schlesien Reunion (former Second World War expellees and offspring). Unable to bully the Baltic states into granting full citizenship rights to Russians abroad, he began urging their repatriation both to shore up his declining work force and to tap into potential investment capital; only a few hundred actually returned.⁶¹ Realizing that he could not protect Russian *citizens* outside his own boundaries, Putin’s subsequent approach to Ukraine echoed another adage attributed to Catherine the Great: “I have no way to defend my borders but to extend them.”

Russia’s 2008 military invasion of Georgia, its 2014 annexation of Crimea, and its ongoing support for separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine are all part of a strategy to reassert control over its “historically legitimate” sphere of influence, dating back to Catherine’s eighteenth-century conquests. Putin also invokes modern parallels, equating Russian efforts to “liberate” South Ossetia with US support for Kosovo’s independence in 2008. His real agenda probably has more to do with his fears that mass protests against autocratic rule witnessed during the Arab Spring and various “color revolutions” could spill across the border, given his shock over the protests he encountered in relation to his 2012 “re-election.”

Classified in Soviet times as an *autonomous oblast*, South Ossetia has seen several cycles of violence since 1991, in contrast to North Ossetia, which was directly integrated into the Russian Federation as an *autonomous republic*. Of its 70,000 inhabitants, 40,000 are ethnic Ossetians, the rest are Georgians.⁶² Military clashes in 1991 killed 1,000 and displaced over 60,000; the 1992 Sochi Agreement created a joint peacekeeping force, comprised of 500 Russians, 500 North Ossetians and 500 Georgians. Abkhazia then declared its independence, leading to a further war that ended in 1994, after displacing another 250,000.⁶³

A former architect of reform under Gorbachev, Georgian president Eduard Shevardnadze (1992–2003) initially supported civil society and

media freedom. Increasing corruption, budget shortfalls and, finally, blatant electoral fraud produced mass protests labeled the Rose Revolution (November 3–23, 2003), forcing him out of office. Promising to end corruption, Shevardnadze's pro-American successor, Mikhail Saakashvili, initiated an anti-smuggling campaign in 2004, hitting the South Ossetian "backwater" especially hard. This triggered another wave of conflict, during which Georgian troops seized Russian "peace-keeping" trucks bearing missiles and other offensive weapons. Renewed corruption and reform failures re-incited protests against Saakashvili in late 2007, who responded with a violent crackdown. He then pushed for reintegration of the secessionist areas, where Russia had been supplying residents with passports and welfare benefits. Clearly overestimating his own power, Saakashvili ordered a military attack on Tskhinvali, destroying most of the break-away capital on August 7, 2008. The Kremlin responded with a massive counterattack against Gori and a military base 60 km away from Tbilisi, securing its hold on Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and a further chunk of Georgia.⁶⁴

The new Russian president, Dmitri Medvedev declared in a *Financial Times* interview on August 27: "Only a madman could have taken such a gamble. Did [Saakashvili] believe Russia would stand idly by as he launched an all-out assault on the sleeping city of Tskhinvali, murdering hundreds of peaceful citizens, most of them Russian citizens?" Serving as prime minister, Putin told a CNN reporter, "there are grounds to suspect that some people in the United States created this conflict deliberately, in order to aggravate the situation and create a competitive advantage for one of the candidates for the US presidency," that is, John McCain, who favored a new missile defense system for Poland.⁶⁵ As EU Council president, Nicolas Sarkozy helped to broker a (non-binding) six-point peace plan, but Merkel also traveled to Sochi to deliver some "straight talk" to both Medvedev and Saakashvili. Calling for an immediate, unconditional ceasefire and a return of all military forces to their earlier positions, Merkel held both sides accountable.

Georgia had already joined the European Neighborhood Partnership (ENP) in 2004, receiving €505 million to shore up democratic reforms. Germany committed €1 million in humanitarian aid after the war, but the chancellor drew a red line regarding renewed calls for Georgian admission to NATO. Merkel had already spoken out against extending NATO membership to Georgia and Ukraine at the 2008 Bucharest summit, for which Putin was reportedly "grateful."⁶⁶ While frozen conflicts in these two states toughened US rhetoric in favor of NATO enlargement, they

strengthened Merkel's resolve not to be pulled into unstable regions calling for "Article 5" alliance protection (an attack on one member counts as an attack on all). Subsequent developments in Ukraine reinforced her concerns along these lines.

With two "orange revolutions" behind it, Ukraine has also seen its share of bad governance, major political infighting, and corruption. Despite her strong human rights orientation, the chancellor kept her distance from "oil-igarch" turned prime minister, Yulia Tymoshenko, even before she was imprisoned by her ally turned rival, Viktor Yanukovich in 2011.⁶⁷ The 2004 and 2014 "revolutions" were both directed against leaders who sought to keep Ukraine in the Russian orbit. The first resulted in short-term rulers who frequently switched political alliances to secure personal power without effecting real reforms ("the worst governed country in Europe").⁶⁸ The second, known as Euromaidan, commenced on November 21, 2013, when President Yanukovich suspended preparations for a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with the European Union. Special police forces used batons and tear gas against the demonstrators on November 30. The protests continued until Yanukovich struck a deal with Moscow, involving Russia's purchase of US\$15 billion in Ukrainian bonds and reducing its natural gas costs by a third. Ukraine's willingness to sign the EU Association Agreement, ahead of Moldova, Belarus, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, would have destroyed Putin's plan to create a Eurasian Union by 2015. In October, Merkel met with Putin until 2 am, but reached no agreement on de-escalation. Protests intensified during December and January, as did government efforts to crackdown on them; February 20 saw the worst violence, resulting in eighty-eight deaths, when uniformed snipers fired at protestors.

The "Weimar Triangle" (Germany, France, Poland), met on February 20 in Kiev, at which point Merkel and Steinmeier emerged as the central Western actors. Long, dramatic negotiations led to a plan for new elections at the end of the year, but Yanukovich disappeared on February 21. Armed, pro-Russian groups seized public buildings in the Crimean capital on February 27: "The annexation of Crimea occurred lightning fast and out of the blue, as did the appearance of ethnic Russian and North Caucasus militia leaders and fighters in eastern Ukraine."⁶⁹ Merkel made multiple calls to Putin, who claimed that no regular Russian soldiers were engaged on the peninsula despite the presence of "little green men," wearing uniforms without identifying insignia. A first break between the two leaders occurred in early March after a very "frosty" telephone exchange in which the latter admitted that the militias active in Crimea

did have direct ties to his forces; 40,000 Russian troops undertook exercises along the eastern Ukraine border. Merkel told Obama that Putin had “lost touch with reality” and was “living in another world.”⁷⁰

The chancellor convened an international contact group to discuss possible sanctions on March 6, then took a principled stance against Putin’s decision to move up the referendum: “We are now experiencing in Europe, in Ukraine, a conflict about spheres of influence and territorial claims, which we got to know in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a conflict we thought we had overcome . . . a breach of international law in Central Europe, after which we cannot . . . go back to business as usual.”⁷¹ Having lobbied long and hard to sustain good relations with Moscow, Merkel led the sanctions charge to prevent Russian expansion to the southeast. On March 14, she met with the heads of major German corporations who accepted the need for sanctions, offering a united front. Organizers of the March 16 referendum claimed that 97 percent of voters had approved Crimean secession. Wasting no time, Putin signed an annexation treaty on March 18.

French elites were not so unified: Sarkozy deemed the referendum legitimate. Hollande had to be persuaded not to deliver a Mistral helicopter carrier, after leading a delegation to Moscow that had declared EU sanctions “counter-productive and harmful,” though German companies were taking a bigger economic hit.⁷² Merkel, in turn, canceled bilateral government consultations as well as the G8 summit scheduled for Sochi. The Council of Europe stripped Russia of parliamentary voting rights. Poland and the Baltic states moved closer to panic.

On April 7, separatists occupied state buildings in Donetsk, Luhansk, and Kharkiv, likewise calling for independence. Merkel charged Putin with violating the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances which had obliged Kiev to give up 2,000 strategic and 2,500 tactical nuclear weapons, in exchange for security promises; a 1997 Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Partnership had allowed the Kremlin to keep its Black Sea Fleet at Sevastopol. As Putin saw it, Ukraine had secured its autonomy in exchange for agreeing to remain outside the EU and NATO camps; Western values and money had fostered poor governance, recurrent “Maidans” and political instability. Fearing regime-change contagion at home, Putin played the strongman vis-à-vis the vulnerable eastern front; he used nationalist terms suggesting that the “loss” of Ukraine had induced “phantom pains in the soul of the Russian people.”⁷³ The goal, Marlene Laruelle argues, was not to reconstitute a divided nation but rather to punish the turncoat state “for not respecting the rules of the game.”⁷⁴

Insisting that only local and volunteer forces were militarily engaged, Putin declared: "Take a look around post-Soviet places. There are many uniforms that look just like that. Go into any of our stores, and you'll be able to buy such a uniform there." He later admitted supporting "self-defense forces." By April, the EU had extended the list of actors targeted by the sanctions, including members of the National Security Council, Secret Services, the Chechen president, the governor of Krasnodar, two deputy defense ministers, and the deputy of the General Chief of Staff. The second breaking-point for Merkel occurred with the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 over separatist territory on July 17, 2015, claiming 298 (mostly Dutch) lives. Having called Putin over thirty times a month, she stopped communicating for a time. As of this writing, few of the 2015 Minsk Agreement terms seem to be holding.⁷⁵

While some analysts have declared the *Ostpolitik* tradition of seeking Russian "change through rapprochement" dead, others still hope for "change through interconnection."⁷⁶ Visiting Berlin in 2010, Putin called for the formation of a "harmonious economic community stretching from Lisbon to Vladivostok."⁷⁷ He now views European Neighborhood policies, association agreements, conditionality, and "the logic of routine" as tools for transferring a "normatively unacceptable civilization against which Russia needs to undertake measures of political hygiene."⁷⁸ His post-2012 stress on *Gayropa* and Western decadence entails a counter-offensive against efforts to lead the Near Abroad countries to reject his Eurasian Union as well as his promotion of "sovereign democracy." As Dimitar Bechev observed, "while Russia cannot replace the EU as a purveyor of functional integration, the EU is in no position to effectively balance and contain Russian might with coercive means . . ." Two rival narratives are at play: "Europe's story of political, economic, and institutional transformation in line with its liberal democratic credo . . . and a counter narrative blending traditionalism, religious values, nostalgia for the Soviet past, and the historical myths of victimhood and resistance linking Russia to its neighbors."⁷⁹

The Kremlin's mercantilist policies regarding energy exports are at odds with its political control of those resources, but that is not the only contradiction driving events in the Caucasus. Putin sees no parallels between Russia's campaign against "separatist terrorists" in Chechnya and European perceptions of secessionist forces in eastern Ukraine. Both are nonetheless symptomatic of his insistence that Russia be treated as "a rule-maker of equal standing . . . rather than a rule-taker like the other post-communist countries on the EU's periphery."⁸⁰ Merkel reportedly

shakes her head over Putin's antics but sees no point in tirades. She uses democratic reasoning but does not "moralize"; he, in turn, respects the economically powerful country she represents. Although he appears as a tough dog to the outside world, Merkel sees him as essentially fearful, his greatest angst being that "he could end like Ceaușescu." The Arab Spring, the Gezi Park rebellion, and the Maidan revolts have turned Putin's fears into a phobia, according to people in the Chancellor's Office.⁸¹

Germany often stood up to its own allies during *Ostpolitik* years, working hard to accept Russia as an equal partner with legitimate security needs, based on two world wars. Her GDR experiences notwithstanding, Angela Merkel was the only Western leader to grasp the real nature of the power game at stake. In December 2014, sixty foreign policy elites, including ex-chancellors Schmidt, Kohl, and Schröder, criticized Merkel for her tough sanction stance. She was nonetheless the only Western ruler (along with Steinmeier), who traveled to Moscow to mark the seventieth anniversary of Nazi capitulation – although she skipped the military parade. She accepts her nation's special historical responsibility for promoting dialogue, but a reconfigured world order requires a revised strategy for positioning Europe between Russia and the United States. That task has become much more difficult since 2012, leading us back to the "unstoppable force" paradox.

A DIFFERENT CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS: SOFT V. HARD POWER

At first glance, the Merkel–Putin relationship reminds one of Churchill's description of Russia as "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." The chancellor herself has been characterized as an enigma, even though my research has persuaded me that "what you see is what you get."⁸² Her values are clear, her decision-making method is consistent, and she makes a regular effort to explain her policies carefully once she has made up her mind. She supports Germany's traditional multilateralism and its culture of restraint but she also enjoys a reputation across Europe as an honest broker, to a degree not seen among her predecessors. Through it all, she has remained a fairly popular leader, facing no major rivals. The World's Most Powerful Woman thus resembles her role model, Catherine the Great, who declared: "Power without a nation's confidence is nothing."

When it comes to human rights, NGOs, and abjuring use of the military, the Chancellor often takes a harder line towards Russia than her SPD partners. In November 2012, the Bundestag reacted to Putin's raids on

German foundation offices (e.g., Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung) in Moscow with several draft proposals from opposing party caucuses. While the CDU/FDP version prevailed, its seventeen-point resolution read more like an exhortation to “change” than an outright condemnation of Russian practices. Germany still needs to walk a fine line between past and present, between interests and values, even if it pursues national interests more openly nowadays. As Jennifer Yoder notes, Merkel sees human rights and economic interests as two sides of a single coin that (citing the Chancellor) “should never stand in opposition to each other.”⁸³ A growing number of “states of concern” makes it tougher to draw lines between norm-based foreign policies and active security responsibilities, however. Despite the “bad cop, good cop” differences between Merkel and Steinmeier on some issues, the CDU chancellor and her SPD foreign minister displayed a united front following Putin’s annexation of Crimea.⁸⁴

Germany has not abandoned *Ostpolitik*, but the policy contours have obviously shifted following the restoration of its national sovereignty after unification. There is still a consensus among citizens and elites that *security* requires a balance between defense and *détente*. *Ostpolitik* is one thread that has consistently bound East and West Germans as well. Although the GDR persistently denied its citizens freedom of expression, unlimited travel rights, and genuinely competitive elections, the living standards and social rights Merkel and her peers experienced under the Eastern Treaties of the 1970s were significantly better than the repressive Soviet practices dominating the bloc states during the 1950s and 1960s. Given their respective memories of two world wars, Putin still expects Germany to serve as a special partner, pushing its EU partners to “appreciate the Russian perspective” while helping it to meliorate “the perennial lopsidedness of its economy.”⁸⁵

The problem is that Putin views foreign policy as a relentless zero-sum game, while Merkel searches for flexible win-win options. The chancellor would rather lead the EU charge on climate change than rally troops to secure European gas supplies moving through Ukrainian pipelines from Russia. Still holding firm to its preferred model of civilian power, Germany has no choice but to accept new responsibilities for military burden-sharing. One thing is clear, however: short of an all-out invasion, which Putin himself cannot afford, no German leader is likely to place “boots on the ground” in a military engagement with Russia during my lifetime. This is a core reason for Merkel’s rejection of full NATO membership for Russian neighbors that have yet to consolidate their democracies. It might have also

have motivated her to appoint Ursula von der Leyen as Germany's first female defense minister, hoping that a mother of seven would be less likely to send youth into battle without an exit strategy.

Vladimir Putin has numerous reasons for presenting himself as the “unstoppable force,” not the least of which is his need to keep his citizens unified despite a growing economic crisis. Russians watched as world oil prices plunged to a mere US\$28 per barrel through 2015, compounded by a weaker ruble (79 to the US dollar). Although oil prices have recovered somewhat, wages had already fallen by 9 percent, adding 2 million people to the poverty rolls. Cutting off EU agricultural imports in retaliation against the sanctions has raised food prices, and bankruptcies are on the rise.⁸⁶ As the man behind Medvedev, Putin's goal with respect to the 2008 Georgia crisis, the Crimean annexation, and support for east Ukrainian rebels was to re-establish Russia as a global force as a function of “*mass x acceleration*.” The downing of a Russian plane over Egypt in November 2015, along with greater involvement in Syria, has created yet another double-bind regarding ISIS terrorism, and may impel Putin to re-think his hard-power strategy: he cannot leave the “global war on terrorism” up to the United States while demanding equal status as a superpower.⁸⁷ ISIS has proven that fundamentalist insurgencies defy conventional military strategies.

Still, a growing number of confrontations between the two super-powers over the last decade makes it harder for Germany to be a partner to both. Merkel is just as concerned about US willingness to apply unilateral force without the legitimization of a UN Security Council resolution as was her former nemesis, Green Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer. But even as the World's Most Powerful Woman, the modern equivalent of Catherine the Great, Merkel would not be able to hold her ground as the proverbial “immovable object” without the necessary force and friction to anchor her in place: that is the role of NATO, combined with the collective economic power of the European Union. Merkel does not accept ex-Belgian Prime Minister Eysken's characterization of Europe as “an economic giant, a political dwarf and a military worm.”⁸⁸ Germany is a loyal, committed, and financially supportive member of the transatlantic alliance. Having served as the home base for thousands of short- and intermediate-range nuclear missiles under superpower control, a virtual Ground Zero for forty years, it knows all too well that military strength is what NATO is for – but only as a last resort.

The chancellor's aversion to an historical male tendency to talk tough, rattle sabers, and draw symbolic lines in the sand brings us back to the

gender dimensions of the Merkel-Putin relationship. Although the president undoubtedly admires Catherine's imperial contributions to Russian greatness and devotion to the Orthodox faith, the empress would probably be offended by his self-aggrandizing cultivation of a "macho personality cult."⁸⁹ As Stephen White and Ian McAllister observed:

Within a year of his accession, foundry workers in the Urals were casting him in bronze; not far away, weavers were making rugs with the president's face inside a golden oval. In Magnitogorsk, the overalls Putin had worn during a visit were on display in the city museum. A factory in Chelyabinsk had begun to produce a watch with a presidential image on its dial, and a local confectioner was selling a cake with the same design; a "Putin bar" had opened elsewhere in the town, selling "Vertical power" kebabs and "When Vova was little" milk-shakes. An all-female band had meanwhile "taken the airwaves by storm" with its single "Someone like Putin" (someone who, among other things, "doesn't drink" and "won't run away"). Putin's fiftieth birthday in September 2002 brought further tributes: *Argumenty i fakty* readers wanted to present their president with a samurai sword, a portable toilet "so that he can wipe out whoever he wants whenever he wants ..."⁹⁰

Sexualized appeals are a regular part of the package: women have offered to have Putin's "love children." One group publicized a video of themselves clad in white shirts and underpants, baking him a chocolate birthday cake ("decorated with a heart") and "squirting whipped cream into their mouths." In July 2011, another set ("Putin's Army") advertised a contest called "I'll Rip [It] for Putin": the video ended with a cleavage-heavy young woman "ripping her tank top down the middle, while asking, 'What are you prepared to do for your president?'"⁹¹ Putin's "mobilization of machismo," centering on his own personality, is part of a larger, nationalistic legitimation strategy, intended to shore up support at home despite deteriorating economic conditions.

Putin utilizes gendered images to undermine his political competitors and critics at home and abroad, as Valerie Sperling shows. In 2007, a state-sponsored youth camp, for example, featured "a large poster exhibit of three male opposition leaders, Mikhail Kasyanov, Garry Kasparov, and Eduard Limonov, portrayed their faces photoshopped onto female bodies clad in bustiers and thigh-high stockings, transforming them into a trio of most unmanly transvestite-prostitutes who had sold out Russia."⁹² The "patriotic enlistment" of masculinity intensified in the wake of the Ukrainian uprisings, with the president portraying himself as a tough guy willing and able to rescue distressed Mother Russia from her Western "liberal-fascist enemies." He invoked homophobic terms to dismiss

rebellions in the Caucasus, for example, starting with Georgia: “A rose revolution, next they’ll come up with a light blue one” (slang for a gay male). In April 2014, a Russian TV program claimed that females who had supported Ukrainians’ “fascistic” anti-Yanukovich protests were behaving badly due to sexual deprivation. The list included Dalia Grybauskaitė (president of Lithuania), Victoria Nuland, (US Assistant Secretary of State), Iryna Farion (an ultra-right Ukrainian politician), Tatiana Chernovol (an activist-journalist), and Olga Bogomolets (who coordinated on-site emergency medical aid). The anti-Kremlin agitation seen among the so-called “Furies of the Maidan” was ascribed to gender pathologies ranging from lesbianism to sexual inhibition.⁹³

But Putin’s gender-baiting does not stop there, nor does it respect super-power boundaries. Shortly after the downing of MF17 in eastern Ukraine unleashed a new wave of sanctions, Deputy Prime Minister Rogozin tweeted a pair of photos: one side featured Putin petting a leopard on his lap, the other Barack Obama cuddling a white poodle, suggesting that Obama could only handle a small dog, compared with Putin’s ability to calm a wild animal. The caption indicated, “We have different values and different allies.”⁹⁴ When Hillary Clinton compared his claim of “protecting” Ukraine’s Russian minority to Hitler’s justification for seizing Polish and Czech lands in the 1930s, Putin responded during a French radio interview that it was “better not to argue with women . . . When people push boundaries too far, it’s not because they are strong but because they are weak. But maybe weakness is not the worst quality for a woman.”⁹⁵

These examples render Putin’s respect for Merkel, a former GDR citizen, all the more incongruous; she is one tough woman, his effort to exploit her fear of dogs notwithstanding. According to Bernd Ulrich, the Ukrainian crisis constituted a “gender turning-point in world history.” Having (reportedly) reached the limits of his own power, President Obama put a crisis precipitated by a “classic Kremlin macho” into the hands of a woman who “chose her own, female-European method of stopping Vladimir Putin: talking, talking, talking, remaining unflustered and above all [using] economic sanctions instead of tanks, missiles and bombs.”⁹⁶ While I welcome the fact that men now recognize women’s leadership skills in the national security domain, I doubt that gender made a difference in this case. Merkel took lethal defensive weapons for Ukraine (demanded by US hardliners) off the table not because she was a woman or a pacifist, but because she realized they would merely cause Putin to up the ante with new military aid to the separatists. Although Germany had a greater stake in Russian trade and investment than all of its EU

counterparts, she led by example with strong sanctions because she knows that Putin is very vulnerable regarding the national economy. If he cannot deliver the goods to his people in the longer run, or finds himself trapped in a never-ending insurgency, his support will erode. The Afghan War cleared a path for Gorbachev, the Chechen disaster helped to topple Yeltsin. As the latter said in a 1993 speech, "You can build a throne with bayonets, but you can't sit on it for long."⁹⁷

For Angela Merkel, negotiation is not a matter of hard or soft power; it is merely a rational approach to meliorating complex problems. It is striking that many European women have served as defense ministers since 1990, in Sweden, France, Germany, Croatia, Norway, Denmark, Slovakia, Latvia, the Czech Republic, Spain, Slovenia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Italy, Albania, Montenegro, and even Bosnia-Herzegovina. Now eligible for combat, others are moving into power positions within the military.⁹⁸ They remain grossly underrepresented in the board rooms of global energy conglomerates and the military-industrial complex setting the parameters of "the national interest," however.

Regarding Merkel's performance in this arena, policy success can only be indirectly measured in terms of "containment." It would be unfair to expect Germany's first female chancellor to single-handedly pull a macho-authoritarian Russian ruler back into line. Some pundits characterize them as an old married couple, each able to anticipate the tricks and grudges of the other, but this type of gratuitous "gendering" ignores the historical complexity of their relationship.⁹⁹ The "special relationship" between their countries contributed to three major reconfigurations of the world order during the twentieth century alone. Having refined its *civilian power* practices since its founding in 1949, Germany united has no incentive at this point to abandon a formula that has contributed to extraordinary peace and prosperity in Europe for nearly seventy years: as much negotiation as possible, as little military involvement as necessary. Putin remains a wild-card, and will continue to seek quick victories in places where he fears no direct NATO response. He exploits memories of Russian suffering at the hands of the Germans but he also recognizes Merkel as the leader most capable of preserving her country's historical responsibility along these lines.

No matter how hot the political water becomes, Merkel has proven to be very strong. It would not hurt, however, to add another role model to her list of women who defied the odds and changed the world: Eleanor Roosevelt, the heart and mind behind the 1948 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights that motivates the chancellor on so many fronts.

NOTES

1. Mishra, *Angela Merkel – Machtsworte*, p. 222.
2. Created in 1666 by Louis XIV, the French Academy did not admit its first woman, Marguerite Perey, until 1962; its first “full” member, as of 1979, was Yvonne Choquet-Bruhat. Curie’s daughter Irene secured a Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1935.
3. Kornelius, *Angela Merkel: Die Kanzlerin und ihre Welt*, p. 16.
4. NATO’s double-track approach of the 1980s combined these elements, allowing for Pershing II and cruise missile deployments to counter a Soviet SS-20s build-up.
5. Mushaben, *From Post-War to Post-Wall Generations*.
6. Citing General Lord Ismay, first Secretary-General of the NATO.
7. Ekkehard Brose, “When Germany Sends Troops Abroad: The Case for a Limited Reform of the Parliamentary Participation Act,” *Stiftung für Wissenschaft und Politik*, Berlin, September 2013.
8. Emil J. Kirchner, cited in Mushaben, *From Post-War to Post-Wall Generations*, p. 173.
9. Regierungserklärung von Bundeskanzler Willy Brandt vor dem Deutschen Bundestag in Bonn am 28. Oktober 1969.
10. Mushaben, *From Post-War to Post-Wall Generations*, pp. 234–235.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 191.
12. Franz Josef Meier, “The Security and Defense Policy of the Grand Coalition,” in Marco Overhaus, Hanns W. Maull, and Sebastian Harnisch (eds.), *Foreign Policy of the Grand Coalition: Base Line and First Assessment, Foreign Policy in Dialogue*, 7/18 (2006), p. 53.
13. Sebastian Harnisch and Hanns W. Maull (eds.), *Germany as a Civilian Power? The Foreign Policy of the Berlin Republic* (Manchester University Press, 2001).
14. Munich Security conference website, downloaded June 4, 2015.
15. “Von der Leyen will 130 Milliarden Euro investieren,” *Die Zeit*, January 16, 2016.
16. Ralf Neukirch and Matthias Schepp, “Chilly Peace: German–Russian Relations Enter a New Ice-Age,” *Der Spiegel*, May 30, 2012.
17. Gardner Feldman, *The Special Relationship between West Germany and Israel*.
18. Meier, “Security and Defense Policy of the Grand Coalition,” p. 59.
19. “Bush and Putin: Best of Friends,” BBC, June 16, 2001, available at: www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/1392791.stm.
20. Fiona Hill and Clifford Gaddy, *Mr. Putin: Operative in the Kremlin* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2013).
21. Herbert A. Simon, *Administrative Behavior: A Study of Decision-Making Processes in Administrative Organization* (New York: Macmillan, 1947).
22. Hajo Schumacher’s 2006 dissertation, “Machtphysik: Führungsstrategien der CDU-Vorsitzenden Angela Merkel im innerparteilichen Machtgeflecht, 2000–2004,” University of Duisburg, supplied the foundation for *Die zwölf Gesetze der Macht. Angela Merkels Erfolgsgeheimnisse*.

23. Patrick Donahue and Tino Andresen, "Merkel Eye for Russian Empress Shows Putin Ties are Complex," *Bloomberg*, March 4, 2014.
24. Olga Kryshtanovskaya and Stephen White, "Putin's Militocracy," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 19(4) (2003), pp. 292, 296.
25. Kimberly Marten, "Informal Political Networks and Putin's Foreign Policy: The Examples of Iran and Syria," *Problems of Post-Communism*, 62(2) (2015), p. 74.
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
28. Source for both quotes is "Merkel zum Mauerfall-Jahrestag: "Träume können wahr werden," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, November 9, 2014.
29. Wladimir Putin, with Natalija Geworkjan and Andrei Kolesnikow, *Aus erster Hand. Gespräche mit Wladimir Putin* (Munich: Heyne, 2000).
30. Hill and Gaddy, *Mr. Putin*, p. 122.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 124.
32. Quotes like this were summarized in a "Putin quiz" in which *Der Spiegel* asked readers to identify the real quote among three options. See Benjamin Bidder, "Quiz zum Kreml-Boss: Das hat Putin nicht wirklich gesagt, oder?" available at: www.spiegel.de/quiztool/quiztool-64350.html, last accessed June 10, 2014.
33. Cited in Hill and Gaddy, *Mr. Putin*, p. 36; further, Nikolai Petrov, Masha Lipman, and Henry E. Hale, "Overmanaged Democracy in Russia: Governance Implications of Hybrid Regimes," *Carnegie Papers No. 106*, February 2010.
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35. Andrey Makarychev and Sergei Medvedev, "Biopolitics and Power in Putin's Russia," *Problems of Post-Communism*, 62(1) (2015): 45–54.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
38. Bruce Hounsell, "Putin Uses Dog to Intimidate Merkel," *Foreign Policy*, June 14, 2007.
39. Kornelius, *Angela Merkel: Die Kanzlerin und ihre Welt*, p. 184.
40. Hill and Gaddy, *Mr. Putin*, p. 145.
41. Bidder, "Quiz zum Kreml-Boss."
42. Terry Lynn Karl, *The Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
43. James D. Brown, "Oil Fueled? The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 29(1) (2013), p. 64.
44. Alexander Gusev and Kirsten Westphal, "Russian Energy Policies Revisited: Assessing the Impact of the Crisis in Ukraine on Russian Energy Policies and Specifying the Implications for German and EU Energy Policies," *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik*, Berlin, December 2015, pp. 8–9, 32, 44.
45. Hill and Gaddy, *Mr. Putin*, p. 156.
46. Igor Danchenko and Clifford Gaddy reached this conclusion ("The Mystery of Vladimir Putin's Dissertation," presented at the Brookings Institution, March 30, 2006), after reviewing his thesis on "Strategic Planning of the Reproduction of the Mineral Resource Base of a Region under Conditions of the Formation of Market Relations."

47. Hill and Gaddy, *Mr. Putin*, p. 149.
48. Bidder, "Quiz zum Kreml-Boss"; also, Karen Dawisha, *Putin's Kleptocracy. Who Owns Russia?* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014).
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50. Frank Dohmen and Alexander Jung, "Europe's Failed Natural Gas Strategy: Gazprom Hopes to Build Second Baltic Sea Pipeline," *Der Spiegel*, May 18, 2012.
51. Gusev and Westphal, "Russian Energy Policies Revisited," p. 30.
52. Stulberg, "Out of Gas?" p. 116.
53. Gusev and Westphal, "Russian Energy Policies Revisited," p. 34.
54. Stuhlberg, "Out of Gas?," p. 120.
55. Sabine Fischer, "EU Sanktionen gegen Russland: Ziele, Wirkung und weiterer Umgang," *SWP Aktuelle*, 26 (March 2015).
56. Stuhlberg, "Out of Gas?" p. 115.
57. Gusev and Westphal, "Russian Energy Policies Revisited," pp. 16, 33.
58. Tuomas Forsberg, "From *Ostpolitik* to '*Frostpolitik*'? Merkel, Putin and German Foreign Policy towards Russia," *International Affairs*, 92(1) (2016): 21–42.
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63. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
64. "A Chronology of the Crisis: Georgia Crisis," *IISS Strategic Comments* 14, No. 7, September 2008.
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 92. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
 93. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
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 95. Carl Schreck, "Putin Dismisses Clinton's Hitler Comparison With Sexist Jab," Radio Free Europe, June 4, 2014, available at: www.rferl.org/content/putin-dismisses-clintons-hitler-comparison-with-sexist-jab/25410658.html.

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