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IDEAS, INSTITUTIONS, AND THE GORBACHEV FOREIGN POLICY REVOLUTION

By JEFF CHECKEL*

INTRODUCTION

IT has become almost a commonplace in both academic and popular analyses that the Gorbachev revolution in foreign and security affairs represented a triumph of knowledge and reason over dogmatic Leninist ideology.[1] Underlying this simple statement of fact (for it is indeed true) is the even more basic realization that "ideas" and new knowledge played a key role in bringing about the monumental changes in Soviet international behavior during the Gorbachev era.

To trace the intellectual antecedents of Gorbachev's new thinking on foreign policy, one need only peruse back issues (in some cases dating to the 1960s) of any one of several Soviet academic journals dealing with international affairs.[2] Indeed, Soviet academic writing on international relations during the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras gives one a sense of being "present at the creation" of the ideological underpinnings of the new thinking.[3]

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[1] See, e.g., Elizabeth Valkenier, "New Soviet Thinking about the Third World," *World Policy Journal* 4 (Fall 1987), 653–54; and Thane Gustafson, "Conclusions: Toward a Crisis in Civil-Military Relations?" in Timothy Colton and Gustafson, eds., *Soldiers and the Soviet State: Civil-Military Relations from Brezhnev to Gorbachev* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 343. In the popular press, see "Think-Tanks: The Carousels of Power," *Economist*, May 25, 1991, p. 26; and "This Year's Economist," *New York Times*, June 23, 1991, p. 14.

[2] Allen Lynch provides a good overview of the intellectual origins of the new thinking; Lynch, *Gorbachev's International Outlook: Intellectual Origins and Political Consequences*, Occasional Paper no. 9 (New York: Institute for East-West Security Studies, 1989).

[3] See, especially, William Zimmerman, *Soviet Perspectives on International Relations, 1956–67* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969); Elizabeth Valkenier, *The Soviet Union and the Third World: An Economic Bind* (New York: Praegar, 1983); Jerry Hough, *The Struggle for the Third World: Soviet Debates and American Options* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1986); Allen Lynch, *The Soviet Study of International Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); and Stephen Shenfield, *The Nuclear Predicament: Explorations in Soviet Ideology* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987).

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So ideas—the concepts and intellectual frameworks of Soviet academic specialists—mattered tremendously in the development of the Gorbachev revolution. Put another way, the relationship of expert knowledge to political power and state behavior appears to have changed fundamentally under Gorbachev. How can we explain this new relationship? Was it an inevitable consequence of the modernization and socioeconomic change that any mature postindustrial polity experiences?[4] Was it the result of factors unique to the former USSR—in particular, the coming to power of a new and more enlightened generation of leaders?[5] Was it a consequence of the actions of transnational, knowledge-based communities of experts—so-called epistemic communities?[6] Was the new relationship (and, more generally, the Gorbachev revolution) the result of a process of adaptation to a fundamentally changed international system?[7]

Most of the above explanations force an either-or approach to understanding state behavior—either domestic-level variables *or* the international system.[8] I argue, however, that a full understanding of the new relationship between knowledge and Soviet state behavior requires an explanatory framework that integrates *both* domestic and international levels of analysis.[9] Although this argument may seem rather obvious, it is one that only very recently has come to receive serious attention in the

[4] Jack Snyder, "The Gorbachev Revolution: A Waning of Soviet Expansionism?" *International Security* 12 (Winter 1987–88), 93–131. Snyder essentially makes this argument. See also Philip Tetlock, "Learning in U.S. and Soviet Foreign Policy: In Search of an Elusive Concept," in George Breslauer and Philip Tetlock, eds., *Learning in U.S. and Soviet Foreign Policy* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1991), 36.

[5] Stephen Meyer stresses the importance of leadership variables; Meyer, "The Sources and Prospects of Gorbachev's New Political Thinking on Security," *International Security* 13 (Fall 1988).

[6] For a comprehensive overview of the epistemic-communities approach, see Peter M. Haas, ed., "Knowledge, Power, and International Policy Coordination," *International Organization* 46 (Winter 1992). This is a special issue of *IO* dedicated to the epistemic approach.

[7] Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, "The International Sources of Soviet Change," *International Security* 16 (Winter 1991–92). The authors list no fewer than eight international sources for the changes in Soviet foreign behavior under Gorbachev.

[8] The epistemic-communities literature is an exception to this generalization; see Haas (fn. 6).

[9] This essay thus contributes to a growing body of international relations literature that combines levels of analysis to arrive at more comprehensive explanations of state behavior. This literature has developed partly in response to Kenneth Waltz's theory of structural realism, with its heavy emphasis on one level—international system structure—for understanding state behavior. See Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Menlo Park, Calif.: Addison-Wesley, 1979). For important critiques of Waltzian and other structural arguments, see Robert Keohane, "Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond," in Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986); Timothy McKeown, "The Limitations of 'Structural' Theories of Commercial Policy," *International Organization* 40 (Winter 1986); Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, Jr., *Power and Interdependence*, 2d ed. (Boston: Scott, Foresman, 1989), afterword; and John S. Odell, "Understanding International Trade Policies: An Emerging Synthesis," *World Politics* 43 (October 1990).

literature on change in Soviet (and now post-Soviet) international behavior.[10]

The argument in brief is as follows. The appearance of a new ideology of international affairs in Soviet policy under Gorbachev was in no way preordained by a changing international system or domestic modernization processes. Rather, a changing external environment and the advent of a reformist general secretary created a series of policy windows through which aspiring policy entrepreneurs jumped. These purveyors of new concepts and ideologies—individual academic specialists and heads of research institutes—did not, however, operate in a vacuum. They acted within institutional and political settings that at different times either constrained or enhanced their ability to influence policy.

After more fully explicating the explanatory framework, I assess its utility by conducting a case study of one particularly important set of specialists in the former USSR: those at the Academy of Sciences Institute of the World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO). As IMEMO has long been considered one of the most important foreign policy think tanks in the Soviet Union/Russia, a study of its role in shaping the Gorbachev foreign policy revolution should help to improve our understanding of the relationship among ideas, institutions, and state behavior. I conclude with an assessment of the implications of the analysis for several ongoing debates in the international relations literature.

Windows, Entrepreneurs, and Institutions

Scholars in the field of international relations have spent much of the past thirty years engaged in an often not very fruitful debate over the level-of-analysis issue in the study of state behavior.[11] One problem in this debate is confusion over what precisely the subject is. Is it broad patterns of state interaction over time (for example, the seemingly recurrent formation of balances of power), or is it the foreign policy behavior of particular states? Even the most adamant systems-level theorist would admit that while international levels of analysis may be sufficient for the former, they need to be supplemented by domestic levels if the latter

[10] See, e.g., Robert Legvold, "Soviet Learning in the 1980s," in Breslauer and Tetlock (fn. 4), 684–87, 720–26. Also addressing this issue is Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Did 'Peace through Strength' End the Cold War? Lessons from INF," *International Security* 16 (Summer 1991).

[11] The seminal work on the level-of-analysis problem remains J. David Singer, "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations," *World Politics* 14 (October 1961). This debate continues to the present. See, e.g., the divergent predictions of a number of international relations specialists on the future of European security in the new, post–cold war world, in Sean Lynn-Jones, ed., *The Cold War and After: Prospects for Peace* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991).

topic is being examined.[12] Lack of precision in specifying the topic of explanation has led more than one analyst astray.[13]

A second, more troubling aspect of the debate is that until recently the accepted wisdom has held that it was appropriate to maintain different levels of analysis, especially in terms of theory development.[14] In recent years, however, a growing number of scholars—first, in the subfield of international political economy (IPE) and, more recently, in the foreign policy/security area—have argued the need for integrating domestic and international levels of analysis to explain topics as diverse as regime formation, international trade policy, foreign policy decision making, alliance behavior, and security policy.[15]

This is not to deny the importance of international/structural sources of state behavior. Rather, it is to argue that systems-level explanations are inherently limited: they define the universe of possible outcomes but do not explain why particular ones occur.[16] The challenge for theorists is to develop analytic frameworks that explore the dynamic between international and domestic variables, a dynamic that ultimately determines the character and content of particular policy outcomes.[17] Put another way, theories that analyze domestic "decision processes as well as [sys-

[12] A point clearly recognized by Kenneth Waltz (fn. 9), 122–23. See also Thomas Christensen and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity," *International Organization* 44 (Spring 1990), 137–38.

[13] See, e.g., Michael Mandelbaum, *The Fate of Nations: The Search for National Security in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988). Mandelbaum utilizes—unsuccessfully—international-level structural theories to explain the security policies of particular states.

[14] McKeown (fn. 9), 56.

[15] In the IPE literature, see, among others, McKeown (fn. 9); Paul Rohrlich, "Economic Culture and Foreign Policy: The Cognitive Analysis of Economic Policymaking," *International Organization* 41 (Winter 1987); Stephan Haggard and Beth Simmons, "Theories of International Regimes," *International Organization* 41 (Summer 1987), 513–17; Keohane and Nye (fn. 9), 257–67; Odell (fn. 9); and Emanuel Adler and Peter Haas, "Conclusion: Epistemic Communities, World Order, and the Creation of a Reflective Research Program," in Haas (fn. 6), 367–69. In the foreign policy/security studies subfield, see Timothy McKeown, "The Foreign Policy of a Declining Power," *International Organization* 45 (Spring 1991), 278–79; Michael Barnett and Jack Levy, "Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignment: The Case of Egypt, 1962–73," *International Organization* 45 (Summer 1991), 370–74, 393–95; Risse-Kappen (fn. 10); and Helga Haftendorn, "The Security Puzzle: Theory Building and Discipline Building in International Security," *International Studies Quarterly* 35 (March 1991), 13. Robert Putnam provides an important theoretical treatment and argument for integrating domestic and international levels. See Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," *International Organization* 42 (Summer 1988).

[16] For a recent and perceptive review of the debate over structural/systemic theories, see Stephan Haggard, "Structuralism and Its Critics: Recent Progress in International Relations Theory," in Emanuel Adler and Beverly Crawford, eds., *Progress in Postwar International Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).

[17] In the IPE subfield, this dynamic has recently been theoretically argued and empirically demonstrated by G. John Ikenberry. See Ikenberry, "A World Economy Restored: Expert Consensus and the Anglo-American Postwar Settlement," in Haas (fn. 6).

tematically/structurally influenced] decision outcomes are stronger theories than those which purport merely to explain outcomes."[18]

Another problem left unexplained by an approach that focuses on international sources is the timing of the changes. Why did the moderation in Soviet international behavior begin under Gorbachev and not before? As has recently been persuasively argued, a number of international factors contributed to this moderation,[19] yet many of them were in no sense new. Some—such as nuclear weapons and the liberal capitalist system of states—had already been present in the international system for decades.[20] To answer the question of why they only became influential determinants of Soviet policy under Gorbachev, then, one needs to explore the *interaction* between international and domestic-level variables.[21] This mandates a certain tolerance for theoretical pluralism, as well as the development of explanatory frameworks with multiple levels of analysis.[22]

Acceptance of the need to link domestic and international levels of analysis to understand more fully changes in Soviet/post-Soviet external behavior then raises additional questions. What factors should be examined at the domestic level? What is the nature of the interaction between domestic and international levels? On the first question, both the IPE and comparative politics literatures have made an important contribution by reminding us that ideas—in particular, specific sets of ideas or ideologies, intellectual frameworks, and concepts—can be important determinants of state behavior.[23]

[18] McKeown (fn. 9), 56. Advancing a similar argument are Yale Ferguson and Richard Mansbach, "Between Celebration and Despair: Constructive Suggestions for Future International Theory," *International Studies Quarterly* 35 (December 1991), 374–75. In an interesting parallel to the move away from structural/systemic theories within the international relations field, several scholars in the comparative politics literature have recently argued that domestic-level structural arguments must likewise be supplemented, in this case, to make better sense of the political phenomena of concern to comparativists. See especially Peter Hall, "Conclusion: The Politics of Keynesian Ideas," in Hall, ed., *The Political Power of Economic Ideas: Keynesianism across Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), chap. 14; Kathryn Sikkink, *Ideas and Institutions: Developmentalism in Brazil and Argentina* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991), 19; Timur Kuran, "Now out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989," *World Politics* 44 (October 1991), 13–25; and Russell Bova, "Political Dynamics of the Post-Communist Transition: A Comparative Perspective," *World Politics* 44 (October 1991), 122, 126–36.

[19] Deudney and Ikenberry (fn. 7). The authors are to be commended for their systematic treatment of this neglected issue.

[20] Deudney and Ikenberry themselves admit that their explanation is overdetermined: "Given the number of variables that suggest shifts to accommodation [in Soviet policy], the question may not be why it happened, but why did it not happen earlier?" Deudney and Ikenberry (fn. 7), 116.

[21] A point clearly recognized even by Deudney and Ikenberry (fn. 7), 116.

[22] On this, see, especially, Matthew Evangelista, "Sources of Moderation in Soviet Security Policy," in Philip Tetlock et al., eds., *Behavior, Society, and Nuclear War*, vol. 2 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

[23] These literatures, which sit at the intersection of comparative politics and international

The notion that ideas matter, however, begs a more important question: how and under what conditions are they influential determinants of policy? As John Kingdon has argued in the public policy field, the issue is not so much the origins of ideas (although this is certainly of interest) as it is the factors that help particular ideas take hold and grow.[24]

Earlier writing on the role of ideas in politics examined their influence primarily from an individual level of analysis, emphasizing the importance of ideas held by particular individuals.[25] More recently, however, several analysts have argued that to understand what makes certain ideas take hold and grow, one must look beyond the individual to the role of institutions as well.[26]

This latter writing provides the theoretical basis for my research on change in Soviet international behavior. I explore the influence of ideas on Soviet/Russian state behavior by examining the institutional and political contexts that have shaped and filtered these ideas. I assign a key role to the ideas of particular individuals and examine how institutional and political variables constrain or enhance their ability to influence policy. Furthermore, I argue that changing systems-level variables can and often does provide these "peddlers" of new ideas with opportunities to advance them.

More specifically, my dependent variable is the dramatic change that began in late 1985 in the Soviet political leadership's understanding of the issues, actors, and fundamental dynamics of the international environment within which the USSR operated. The independent variables are the set of beliefs and attitudes on international politics developed and held by Soviet academic specialists, the role of institutions, political factors, and changes in the international system. Some theorists might prefer a shorter list of causal variables, but, as has been argued in other

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relations, include John Odell, *U.S. International Monetary Policy: Markets, Power and Ideas as Sources of Change* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982); Emanuel Adler, "Ideological 'Guerrillas' and the Quest for Technological Autonomy: Brazil's Domestic Computer Industry," *International Organization* 40 (Summer 1986), 673–705; idem, *The Power of Ideology: The Quest for Technological Autonomy in Argentina and Brazil* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); Peter Hall, *Governing the Economy: The Politics of State Intervention in Britain and France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 276–280; Hall (fn. 18); and Sikkink (fn. 18). For especially useful definitional and theoretical overviews of the role of ideas in politics, see Odell, chap. 6; and Sikkink (fn. 18), chap. 1.

[24] Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1984), 75–77.

[25] See, e.g., Odell (fn. 23), chap. 2.

[26] See, especially, Judith Goldstein, "Ideas, Institutions and American Trade Policy," *International Organization* 42 (Winter 1988); idem, "The Impact of Ideas on Trade Policy: The Origins of U.S. Agricultural and Manufacturing Policies," *International Organization* 43 (Winter 1989); and Sikkink (fn. 18), chap. 7.

contexts, such parsimony would be gained at the expense of capturing the full array of factors affecting a complex process.[27]

My approach departs in two ways from the explanatory frameworks advanced in recent writings on ideas and politics. First, I explore more systematically the interaction between the individual and institutional levels of analysis. Second, I suggest a route by which systemic, external-level stimuli enter the domestic policy process and create "windows" for the promotion of particular ideas or views.[28]

In the case of the former USSR, academic specialists and research institutions under the aegis of the Academy of Sciences have been an important source of new ideas in Soviet politics over the past twenty-five years. In contrast to previous writing on these specialists, however, I do not see them as completely "free agents" who independently form their ideas and conceptual frameworks.[29] Rather, I see them as operating within an institutional context that often influences their behavior in important ways.[30] Thus, I am sympathetic to what has come to be called the "new institutionalism."[31] If nothing else, this perspective reminds us that institutions—their standard operating procedures and structures—matter. There is indeed abundant empirical evidence in the West that "processes internal to political institutions, although possibly triggered by external events, affect the flow of history."[32]

Applied to the Soviet/post-Soviet case, the argument holds that the ideas and intellectual outlooks of specialists are filtered through the in-

[27] Hall (fn. 23), 259–60. See also Robert Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 25. Using slightly different language to make the same point, Gilpin argues that "eclecticism may not be the route to theoretical precision, but sometimes it is the only route available." As I will suggest in the last section of the article, the revolutions in Eastern Europe and the dissolution of the USSR—by providing a large set of real-world cases where states are undertaking major reorientations in their foreign policies—offer an important opportunity to control more carefully for the influence of each of the four causal variables in the framework.

[28] Recently, a number of scholars have suggested another mechanism—transnational epistemic communities—by which external-level variables can enter the domestic policy process. See, e.g., the contributions in Haas (fn. 6). I will address this literature in the article's concluding section.

[29] Previous analyses of these specialists do see constraints on their behavior, but they are of a general nature and apply equally to most other participants in the process as well. See, e.g., Hough (fn. 3), 16–18.

[30] For the theoretical and empirical justification of this viewpoint, see Jeff Checkel, "Organizational Behavior, Social Scientists and Soviet Foreign Policymaking" (Ph.D. diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1991).

[31] See, especially, James March and Johan Olsen, "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life," *American Political Science Review* 78 (September 1984), 734–49; and idem, *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1989). Odell (fn. 9), 152–55, provides a useful review of the most recent international political economy literature utilizing this institutionalist perspective.

[32] March and Olsen (fn. 31, 1984), 739.

stitutional settings in which they operate. Depending upon the details of a particular organization's history and sense of mission, these settings can either hinder or promote particular ideas or outlooks.[33] In others words, these specialists would be expected to respond to the "constraints and opportunities presented by [their] institutions."[34]

A challenge for the institutionalist perspective is to explain *nonincremental* change.[35] After all, despite the institutional organization of most of our social, economic, and political lives, there *are* cases of dramatic and rapid change in policy. Soviet foreign policy since 1985 is an obvious case in point. To understand such nonincremental change, one needs to turn to the individual level of analysis and explore how particular combinations of circumstances (policy windows) can be exploited to overturn existing organizational norms and constraints.

Clearly, the ability of any one individual to modify basic organizational missions is highly constrained. First, a process of selective recruitment usually ensures that individuals with a mind-set different from the dominant institutional ideology rarely join the organization.[36] Moreover, once an individual has joined, an array of bureaucratic obstacles and power relationships minimize his ability to affect the organization's behavior.[37]

Nonetheless, it must be recognized that most institutions do contain one or more individuals who rock the boat or run against the grain of the dominant mind-set. John Kingdon has called such individuals "policy entrepreneurs."[38] They seek to promote particular ideas that may or may not fit comfortably within the institution's self-defined sense of mission. Whether such a person succeeds in gaining acceptance for new

[33] On this, see also Goldstein (fn. 26, 1988, 1989). A useful review and critique of cognitive approaches such as Goldstein's is Haggard and Simmons (fn. 15), 509–13.

[34] Odell (fn. 9), 153. On the importance of institutional structures in shaping outcomes, also see Sven Steinmo, "Political Institutions and Tax Policy in the United States, Sweden, and Britain," *World Politics* 41 (July 1989).

[35] This was a central theme of the panel "Reflections on the New Institutionalism," held at the annual convention of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., 1991.

[36] See Anthony Downs, *Inside Bureaucracy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), 228–33. For evidence that selective recruitment occurs in an academic think tank such as IMEMO, see Checkel (fn. 30), chap. 7.

[37] Downs (fn. 36), chaps. 6, 12; James Thompson, *Organizations in Action: Social Science Bases of Administrative Theory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 105–8; and Pasquale Gagliardi, "The Creation and Change of Organizational Cultures: A Conceptual Framework," *Organization Studies* 7 (1986), 119–21, 130–33.

[38] Kingdon (fn. 24). See also Jack Walker, "The Diffusion of Knowledge, Policy Communities and Agenda Setting," in John Tropman, Robert Lind, and Milan Dluhy, eds., *New Strategic Perspectives on Social Policy* (New York: Pergamon, 1981). The arguments about the role of policy entrepreneurs in explicitly institutional settings are taken from Checkel (fn. 30), chap. 1.

ideas depends to some extent on his or her expertise, position within the organization, negotiating skills, personality (traits such as persistence), and connections to higher-ups in the organization or outside it.

Whether or not his entrepreneurial skills have the desired effect also depends on the external environment in which his institution operates. Two particular environmental factors are important: (1) whether there are problems in that external setting that could be solved in whole or in part by the implementation of the entrepreneur's ideas; and (2) whether there are leaders in power who recognize that such problems do indeed exist.[39]

These last two variables, taken together, create an opportunity, or policy window, through which an aspiring entrepreneur can "jump" in an attempt to sell a particular idea, intellectual outlook, or policy.[40] In the foreign policy issue-area, the concept of policy window is a way of linking domestic levels of analysis to the international setting. In particular, for Soviet/Russian foreign policy specialists and their institutions, external threats or other changes in their international environment help form such a window. How wide this window opens, however, is a function of the other variable mentioned above: a political leadership willing to consider the new knowledge being purveyed by these specialists.[41]

Hence, my framework emphasizes the role of chance in the policy process. (Are entrepreneurs available? Are policy windows open?) Along with a growing number of scholars, I therefore argue for moving beyond the "stages" model of the process first developed during the 1970s and 1980s.[42]

To sum up, to understand the role and influence of ideas on Soviet/Russian foreign policy, one has to integrate factors operating at several levels of analysis. My clear bias is toward the importance of domestic variables: individual policy entrepreneurs and their ideas, institutional settings, and enlightened political leadership.

As I have suggested, however, by creating policy windows, a changing

[39] On the former point, a number of analysts agree that the influence of new ideas is partly a function of their ability to solve key problems faced by political decision makers. See, e.g., Hall (fn. 18), 386–89; Sikkink (fn. 18), 247; Ikenberry (fn. 17), 318–21; and Adler and Haas (fn. 15), 380.

[40] On this, see Michael Cohen, James March, and Johan Olsen, "A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 17 (March 1972), 1–25; and Kingdon (fn. 24), 89–94.

[41] Taking a slightly different approach, Evangelista (fn. 22), 275–77, 335–36, has also suggested the importance of policy entrepreneurs and windows for understanding changes in Soviet international behavior under Gorbachev.

[42] I will return to this point in the article's concluding section. The stages heuristic typically divides the process into a logical sequence, for example, agenda setting, option formulation, decision selection, and implementation.

external environment also matters. It is simply impossible to understand the shift to moderation in Soviet international behavior under Gorbachev (and the influence of new ideas and concepts) without an appreciation of the changing international environment and the deteriorating external situation facing the USSR in the early 1980s.

The Reagan military buildup, the recovery in many Western capitalist countries from the economic stagflation of the 1970s, the technological challenge of SDI, the crisis in Poland, and the failure of the Afghan intervention did indeed matter. These events created windows and opportunities and thus helped begin a process that eventually led to a revolutionary redefinition of Soviet state interests in the international arena.[43] This occurred through an interaction among individual/cognitive, institutional, and leadership variables.

This framework, with its multivariate emphasis, obviously sacrifices parsimony and generalizability for a deeper understanding of a particular instance of change in state behavior (albeit one without precedent in seventy years of Soviet history). The potential payoff, however, is at least twofold. First, within the field of Soviet/post-Soviet studies this kind of analysis can contribute to the ongoing and painfully slow process of bringing the study of the former USSR back into the mainstream of contemporary social science.[44] The events of August 1991 and the subsequent demise of the Soviet Union have, if anything, reinforced the need for such a reintegration.

Second, within the broader international relations field, this study can contribute to several of the more promising research programs, because of its explicit focus on the relationship of knowledge to power and the links between domestic and international variables.

Academic Expertise and the Gorbachev Revolution

As far back as late 1986 several Western analysts had recognized that Gorbachev's foreign policy reforms were quite different from those of Brezhnev and Khrushchev. In particular, Gorbachev did more than sim-

[43] As an anonymous reviewer has correctly noted, I am essentially arguing that ideas as influence are partially "demand-driven," that is, turned to when structural or other changes in the international system trigger a search. Although such sources may prompt this search, the degree of influence new ideas ultimately have on policy depends on the array of *domestic* variables discussed above.

[44] On this, see, especially, Frederic Fleron, ed., *Communist Studies and the Social Sciences: Essays on Methodology and Empirical Theory* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1969); Jack Snyder, "Richness, Rigor and Relevance in the Study of Soviet Foreign Policy," *International Security* 9 (Winter 1984–85); idem, "Science and Sovietology: Bridging in the Methods Gap in Soviet Foreign Policy Studies," *World Politics* 40 (January 1988); and Evangelista (fn. 22), 259–60.

ply bring in new people (for example, Shevardnadze as foreign minister in July 1985) and articulate new policies (such as the unilateral nuclear test moratorium announced in August 1985); he also brought in new ideas and concepts.[45] By early 1986 Gorbachev was articulating a dramatically different worldview (*mirovozzreniye*)—to borrow some Sovietspeak. The ideas and conceptual frameworks underlying it would eventually be used both to legitimize radical changes in Soviet international behavior and undercut the arguments of domestic opponents of these changes.

As many analysts have noted, this new worldview—captured in phrases such as "values common to all mankind," "global problems," "interdependence," "mutual security," and "reasonable sufficiency in defense"—was in fact not new at all. Such concepts had been articulated by various academic specialists and institutions in the USSR since at least the mid-1960s.[46] Yet it was only beginning in 1985–86 that such notions came to influence both the basic assumptions informing Soviet foreign policy and the strategic prescriptions for the USSR's national security.[47]

Gorbachev's revised basic assumptions include the following:

—an official view of the international system that stressed its interdependent nature and the advent of global problems
—a goal structure for Soviet policy that emphasized the dominance of nonclass over class values and interests
—an image of capitalism that openly questioned the Leninist orthodoxy concerning its inherent aggressiveness and militarism

And the revised strategic prescriptions are as follows:

—a new conceptualization of national security that gave first priority to mutual efforts at ensuring it
—a new criterion guiding the development of the Soviet military force posture (the principle of reasonable sufficiency of military potentials)

The specialists at IMEMO were instrumental in putting several of these issues on the Soviet public agenda. To understand why these researchers and their ideas were sometimes influential (and sometimes not), one must appreciate the institute's own history and sense of mission, how personal and institutional factors interacted and sometimes clashed within it, the role played by policy entrepreneurs and windows, and—

[45] See, e.g., Charles Glickham, "New Directions for Soviet Foreign Policy," Radio Liberty *Research Bulletin* Supplement 2/86 (September 6, 1986); and Matthew Evangelista, "The New Soviet Approach to Security," *World Policy Journal* 3 (Fall 1986).

[46] Lynch (fn. 3); and Zimmerman (fn. 3).

[47] The distinction between basic assumptions and strategic prescriptions draws on George W. Breslauer, "Ideology and Learning in Soviet Third World Policy," *World Politics* 39 (April 1987), 430–31.

most importantly—the ties it was able to establish to a reformist political leadership.

By the early 1980s IMEMO was a well-established institution that had a clearly defined sense of mission, a rather stable structure, and a well-articulated and distinctive set of beliefs about the international system.[48] The institute's sense of mission focused on the study of the political economy of contemporary capitalism, international economics, and conceptual-theoretical studies of the international system. This type of "fundamental" research was given priority over such applied topics as the study of U.S. foreign behavior or questions of international security.[49]

In the early 1980s, the institute quite aggressively promoted a distinctive ideology of international relations, including a complex empirical and essentially nonclass vision of world politics. In particular, it advocated the study of global problems such as environmental degradation and resource depletion that cut across national and—as institute scholars often pointed out—ideological boundaries.

All this ideological advocacy mattered not at all in terms of official Soviet views. Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko, and other elites were content to repeat the tried-and-true verities of the Marxist-Leninist dogma. Hence, leadership statements and other official documents stressed the class-based nature of the international system, downplayed or simply ignored the topic of global problems, and emphasized the importance of the international class struggle.

This result is understandable given the paucity of "access channels" through which IMEMO (and other academic institutes) could enter the policy process. In fact IMEMO's prime route for influencing policy—personal ties between institute leaders and the top political leadership—was completely disrupted in 1982 with the death of *both* longtime IMEMO head Nikolay Inozemtsev and CPSU general secretary Leonid Brezhnev.

The importance of this political context for understanding the relationship of the specialists' knowledge to Soviet policies and state behavior is highlighted even more dramatically by another event that occurred in

[48] For a recent and authoritative overview of the ideology of international relations developed at IMEMO during the 1970s and early 1980s, see Yevgeniy Primakov, "Uchenyy, rukovoditel', chelovek (k 70-letiyu akademika N.N. Inozemtseva)," *Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya* (hereafter *Memo*) 4 (April 1991), 104–10. Primakov had served as a deputy director of IMEMO for seven years in the 1970s and returned as its director for several years in the mid-1980s.

[49] This assessment of IMEMO's sense of mission is derived from (1) a review of institute literature and programmatic statements by IMEMO's top leadership concerning its research agenda, both over a sixteen-year period (1964–71, 1980–87); (2) an examination of the training and background of key institute leaders; (3) a quantitative analysis of the subject matter of articles published in IMEMO's journal, *Memo*; (4) interviews with institute researchers and leaders; and (5) a review of the various graduate degree programs offered at IMEMO.

1982, when IMEMO was the target of a pressure campaign that had backing at high levels within the CPSU. This campaign, which included the arrest of a deputy director and the formation of a CPSU/KGB investigatory commission, had a tremendous influence on the institute's behavior.

IMEMO's remaining access channel to the political process—aside from personal connections to top political leaders and their staffs and occasional reports sent to the Central Committee (many of which were never read)—was its publications, especially its monthly journal *Memo*. Yet because of this political interference, *Memo*, for the first and only time in a sixteen-year period from the 1960s into the 1980s, virtually lost its "voice" during 1982. For example, the institute's strident advocacy of the need to study global problems, which had been so evident in the early 1980s, nearly disappeared from the pages of *Memo* during 1982 and early 1983.

IMEMO's fortunes, and ultimately its ability to use its expert knowledge to influence Soviet policy, took a dramatic turn for the better in the last half of 1983, with the appointment of Aleksandr Yakovlev as institute head. This change, it turns out, was largely a product of chance. Gorbachev had met Yakovlev during the summer of 1983 while touring Canada, where Yakovlev was ambassador.[50] The two men hit it off, and Gorbachev decided he wanted Yakovlev back in Moscow. Needing a "safe" place for Yakovlev (that is, not a high party or government post), Gorbachev "parachuted" him into a convenient and relatively safe position that happened to be open: the directorship of IMEMO.[51]

After his appointment in September 1983, Yakovlev quickly began to exploit his new position and mobilized the institute in a dramatic way to advance several radical positions—positions that within eighteen months began to find their way into Gorbachev's own speeches. Put another way, Yakovlev, the policy entrepreneur, was exploiting an emerging policy window to influence the views of a political leader, Gorbachev, to whom he had direct access.

How did Yakovlev mobilize the institute? As institute researchers re-

[50] Yakovlev was essentially in "exile" at this time. He had been posted to Canada in 1973, after losing a battle with conservative Russian nationalist elements within the Communist Party. Prior to 1973 he had spent most of his adult life working in the central apparatus of the CPSU, mainly in its propaganda, science, and culture sections. In notable contrast to most apparatchiks, Yakovlev was well educated. He held a doctorate (in historical sciences) along with the academic rank of professor and had spent a year as an exchange student at Columbia University in the late 1950s.

[51] On this, see also Arkadiy Vaksberg, "Priglasheniye k sporu: Zametki na polyakh knigi A.N. Yakovleva 'Kakim my khotim videt' Sovetskiy Soyuz'," *Literaturnaya gazeta*, May 15, 1991, p. 3. The directorship of IMEMO was open because Vladlen Martynov, who had taken over as the institute's leader in the wake of Inozemtsev's death, was officially only its acting director.

count it, he brought a more open atmosphere to IMEMO and encouraged serious, scholarly research, while downplaying Marxist-Leninist dogma.[52] Moreover, under his leadership, several new rubrics specifically intended as a forum for unorthodox, controversial views were introduced in the institute's journal, *Memo*. In other words, Yakovlev, the acknowledged mastermind behind Gorbachev's later policy of glasnost, was already implementing within IMEMO reforms much in the spirit of this policy.

The policy window Yakovlev exploited was a function of two factors, both of which were apparent by the first half of 1984: (1) Soviet foreign policy had reached a low point not seen in decades (perhaps in the whole postwar era); and (2) Gorbachev was now the clear heir apparent to Chernenko and had made known his openness to new ideas on foreign and security policy.[53] While these two factors created the policy window for Yakovlev, what made it work—that is, what made the ideas of Yakovlev/IMEMO so influential—was Yakovlev's personal tie to Gorbachev from early in the fall of 1983.

In one sense, however, Yakovlev does not fit the description of a policy entrepreneur. He did not have a ready-made solution looking for a problem but instead was open to a range of new ideas and approaches on foreign policy, as long as such approaches proceeded from the realities of the contemporary world. This latter point is one he made over and over again in the past half dozen years.[54]

Yakovlev's own lack of a clear vision for resolving the foreign policy problems facing the USSR reinforced the importance of the institutional context within which he was operating. As will be seen below, he did

[52] Those familiar with Yakovlev's publications during the years 1983–85 may well question this observation. Many of these writings were vitriolic, propagandistic, and extremely anti-American. Institute researchers assert, however, that Yakovlev's tone and approach within the institute were completely different. Moreover, a careful review of his writing during this period reveals several instances where he adopted a very unorthodox approach on matters of foreign (and domestic) policy. See, e.g., Yakovlev, "Dinamizm i konservatizm—ikh adepty" (Dynamism and conservatism—their adherents), in Yakovlev, *Realizm—zemlya perestroyki: Izbrannye vystupleniya i stat'i* (Realism—land of perestroika: Selected appearances and articles) (Moscow: Politizdat, 1990). This essay, first published in 1990, was in fact written by Yakovlev at the time he assumed the leadership of IMEMO in 1983. For further evidence of his unorthodox views during these years, see Yakovlev, "Demokratiya, toropyas', ne proizvodit nravstvennoy selektsiy," *Literaturnaya gazeta*, December 25, 1991, p. 3. Yakovlev reveals in that article that as far back as late 1985 he had proposed splitting the CPSU into two parties, thus fostering the development of multiparty politics in the Soviet Union.

[53] On this last point, also see "Vystupleniye M.S. Gorbacheva v Britanskom parlamente," *Pravda*, December 19, 1984, pp. 4–5; and Georgiy Arbatov, "Memuary. Arkhivy. Svidetel'stva: Iz nedavnego proshlogo," *Znamya*, no. 10 (October 1990), 221.

[54] See, e.g., Aleksandr Yakovlev, "Obshchestvennye nauki na novom etape," *Pravda*, November 28, 1987, p. 3. The one exception to this pragmatic approach is Yakovlev's image of American capitalism. See fn. 69.

indeed mobilize the institute and make it an influential player in the advent of the new thinking, but IMEMO was most "mobilizable" and influential only on those issues that best fit with its own long-standing ideology and beliefs about international relations.

STRUCTURE OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

Beginning in late 1983 IMEMO dramatically increased its earlier advocacy in favor of revising the official Soviet dogma concerning the structure of the international system. Two issues in particular received significant attention: the correlation between class and nonclass values in the world arena and the specific nature of the international system. On both issues, IMEMO engaged in extraordinary advocacy throughout the years 1983–85. In many instances, this advocacy came in the work of senior institute scholars writing in the lead article of a given issue of *Memo*.

The very clear message that emerged from institute advocacy on the relationship of class to nonclass (*obshchechelovecheskiy*) values was that the former should be subordinated to the latter.[55] Although this distinction might seem to have little practical significance for Soviet foreign policy, in fact, this was not the case. As of 1986 Soviet scholars and, eventually, Gorbachev and other leaders would use the notion of the primacy of nonclass values to delegitimize one key class-based element of the foreign policy strategy inherited from the Brezhnev leadership—support for national-liberation movements—while simultaneously legitimizing the importance of such nonclass notions as "global problems" and "interdependence."

The boldness of the institute's advocacy here can only be appreciated when one recalls the extremely poor state of Soviet-American relations in late 1983 and early 1984. These ties were virtually frozen by the time of Andropov's death in February 1984.

On the second issue, of the specific nature of the international system, the institute was almost equally outspoken throughout the years 1983–85.[56] The two buzzwords for institute researchers were "interdependence" and the notion of a single "world [*vsemirnyy*] economy" that operated according to economic laws common to *both* socialism and capi-

[55] See, e.g., V. Lukov and Dmitriy Tomashevskiy, "Radi zhizni na zemle (Uroki velikoy pobedy i mirovaya politika nashikh dney)," *Memo* 2 (February 1983), 3–13; idem, "Interesy chelovechestva i mirovaya politika," *Memo* 4 (April 1985), 17–32; and Oleg Bykov, "Leninskaya politika mira i ee voploshcheniye v deyatel'nosti KPSS," *Memo* 3 (March 1984), 23–29.

[56] See, e.g., "Vsesoyuznaya nauchnaya konferentsiya: Delo Marksa zhivet i pobezhdayet," *Memo* 7 (July 1983), 72–95; and Yuriy Shishkov, "Tribuna ekonomista i mezhdunarodnika: K voprosu o edinstve sovremennogo vsemirnogo khozyaystva," *Memo* 8 (August 1984), 72–83.

talism.[57] The point here is not that such words (and the nonclass framework of analysis they implied) were new to the Soviet scene. Scholars at IMEMO (and elsewhere) had been promoting them for years. The difference now was that the language was much more forceful ("objective realities" and the like). In addition, much of this analysis came at a time when East-West relations were so bad that the political climate within the USSR did not provide an objective basis (to borrow some Sovietspeak) for thinking in such nonclass terms.

During these years (1983–85) there is a clear contrast in the institute's advocacy of a complex, nonclass, and empirical vision of the international system, on the one hand, and of a revised view of the nature of security, on the other. In the former case the advocacy, often by leading IMEMO scholars, was very pronounced and many times appeared in the lead article of a given issue of *Memo*. On the nature of security, the advocacy was *much* less pronounced and there was less of it. Yakovlev, it would seem, had only been fully able to mobilize the institute behind a certain subset of foreign policy issues.

Thus, to arrive at a full understanding of the institute's behavior one must look not only at Yakovlev's important "entrepreneurial" role and the "window" available to him but also at the institutional context within which he was operating. Simply put, theoretical and empirical analyses on the nature of the international system were bread-and-butter issues for IMEMO. Those were its areas of expertise, and as far back as the late 1960s the promotion of a complex vision of the world arena had been a central element of its own ideology of international relations. It was natural that the institute would most vigorously promote those issues that protected and extended this core sense of mission.

For all this advocacy and bold analysis by academic researchers, one must still ask whether it mattered. It turns out that, in this case, it really did. From October 1985 Gorbachev began to describe the international system in language virtually identical to that employed by any number of these institute scholars, often indeed repeating parts of their analyses verbatim. By October 1986 concepts such as interdependence, global problems, and nonclass values were an integral part of the new general secretary's vocabulary. Yakovlev, the entrepreneur with an open policy window, had mobilized the institutional resource at his disposal (IMEMO), along with its ideology of international affairs, to influence the evolving worldview of a Gorbachev to whom he had direct access.

These concepts, and the worldview they implied, were utilized by

[57] Valkenier (fn. 3), chap. 2, provides a good overview of Soviet specialist writing during the 1970s on these concepts.

Gorbachev and his political allies to promote several major policy changes in 1985–86. These changes included a new, more favorable attitude toward arms control (premised on the need for "mutual" security) and a dramatically revised international-economic/foreign-economic policy (premised on the need for greater Soviet integration into an interdependent world economy).

Thus, by late 1986 the largely deductive, Marxist-Leninist view of the international system that for so long had been a staple of Soviet leadership statements had been replaced by an empirical, nonclass vision—one based on an ideology of world politics championed by IMEMO for nearly twenty years.[58] New ideas and specialist expertise—with a mighty assist from a very able entrepreneur and an open window—had triumphed over the kind of Leninist dogma upheld by *the* most powerful political institution: the Soviet Communist Party.

Image of the Adversary

As of late 1986, however, Leninist dogma still prevailed in one key area: leadership views of capitalism. Gorbachev and other leaders continued to speak of capitalism in much the same way as the leadership had in the bad old days of *zastoy* (stagnation) under Brezhnev. Gorbachev, in particular, seemed curiously dogmatic on this subject. Through October 1987 he continued to talk of imperialism's inherently aggressive nature and the growth of militarism in capitalist societies.

Beginning in the fall of 1987, however, Gorbachev completely changed his tune. At a major party gathering, he turned the Leninist theory of imperialism on its head by suggesting that, yes, contemporary capitalism *could* free itself of militarism and its neocolonial tendency to exploit the developing world.[59]

These were truly revolutionary words in the Soviet context. But why the dramatic shift in the general secretary's oratory? Several likely explanations come quickly to mind. One is that the new, dramatically more moderate image of capitalism (and, by implication, of America) was needed to legitimate the more cooperative approach to ensuring Soviet national security that had been announced at the Twenty-seventh CPSU Congress in February 1986. It would be difficult to justify a more cooperative approach if the chief adversary (the United States) were *inherently* prone to aggression and reliance on military force. Related to this line of

[58] The Institute of the U.S.A. and Canada (ISKAN), the other main international affairs think tank, had virtually nothing to say on the issues IMEMO was most aggressively promoting during these years.

[59] Mikhail Gorbachev, "Oktyabr' i perestroyka: Revolyutsiya prodolzhayetsya," *Kommunist* 17 (November 1987), 31–36.

reasoning is the argument that Gorbachev needed the new image of capitalism to undercut the domestic opposition to the new thinking that was already beginning to appear by mid-1987.

A third quite logical reason for the new image was that Gorbachev, who by 1987 had finally begun to lose his former naïveté concerning the state of the Soviet economy, was looking for additional ways to pare the Soviet defense burden. A benign image of the capitalist adversary would certainly make it easier to implement such reductions.

Any or all of these explanations may have played a part in the introduction of the new image of the capitalist adversary, but all suffer from the same drawback. They are a bit too logical and rational, particularly in light of the increasingly tumultuous sociopolitical atmosphere in the USSR. By late 1987 this kind of atmosphere—with ideas, policies, and attacks coming from all over the political spectrum—surrounded the evolution of Soviet foreign policy as well.[60]

It was a setting ripe for policy entrepreneurs. It turns out that one of these entrepreneurs was the new head of IMEMO, Yevgeniy Primakov.[61] Primakov, exploiting an open policy window and his close personal ties to Gorbachev's circle of advisers, revitalized and mobilized IMEMO (in ways even more far-reaching than those of Yakovlev) and swayed the general secretary's thinking on a fundamentally important issue: the image of the USSR's capitalist adversaries. In contrast to Yakovlev, Primakov was no outsider to the institute. He had spent seven years in the mid-1970s as one of its deputy directors.[62] Like Yakovlev, however, Primakov had solid intellectual and academic credentials, having been elected a full member of the Academy of Sciences in 1979. His scholarly work—mainly on the Middle East and the developing world—was well respected and had often stretched the limits of official Soviet dogma.

Perhaps because of his prior association with IMEMO, Primakov's effect within the institute was even greater than Yakovlev's. Senior institute scholars praise him for the "democratic" atmosphere he established and for bringing some fresh air into IMEMO. Moreover, in a powerful symbolic move, Primakov appointed German Diligenskiy editor in chief of

[60] See Robert Legvold, "The Revolution in Soviet Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 68 (America and the World 1988–89), 82–98.

[61] Primakov had been appointed head of the institute in December 1985, succeeding Yakovlev, who moved on to a much more important position in the Central Committee apparatus. This "promotion" may seem odd given Yakovlev's apparent success at IMEMO. Gorbachev, however, clearly wanted his close ally in a stronger bureaucratic position so that Yakovlev could help him overcome opposition to his policies in the Central Committee (which at that point was still a key actor in the political process).

[62] From 1977 to 1985 Primakov served as director of the Academy's Institute of Oriental Studies.

the institute's journal, *Memo*. Within IMEMO, Diligenskiy had a reputation as a radical, respected for his research creativity and fierce independent streak. Of even greater symbolic importance was that Diligenskiy had lost his position at IMEMO during the 1982 CPSU/KGB "investigation." Thus, an outcast, one labeled a "dissident" in the early 1980s, was now overseeing IMEMO's most important publication.

As for Primakov the policy entrepreneur, one particular idea he was peddling in 1985–87 was the need for a dramatic revision of the Soviet image of capitalism—both its internal (economic) and external (foreign policy) components. In mid-1986 Primakov began to suggest publicly, at first cautiously but then with increasing boldness, that capitalism could endure and sustain significant economic growth, indeed, could even outgrow its militarism and aggressive foreign policy.[63] The eventual success of Primakov's entrepreneurship in using IMEMO's knowledge and expertise to modify the official Soviet image of capitalism hinged, however, on his personal ties with Gorbachev's circle of advisers.[64]

Several factors account for the policy window open to Primakov. Most important was the presence of political leaders willing to listen to new ideas (as had been the case for Yakovlev several years earlier). In addition, the CPSU's two most recent authoritative statements on the nature of capitalism—Gorbachev's Political Report (which was so innovative on a host of other foreign policy issues) to the Twenty-seventh Party Congress in February 1986 and the new edition of the Third Party Program adopted at that same congress—were *completely* at odds with a variety of signals coming from the USSR's external environment. These included, inter alia, the capitalist West's continuing success at adapting to and participating in the scientific-technical revolution and the apparent success of the "Reagan revolution" in America (in particular, its emphasis on deregulation) at stimulating sustained economic growth—contrary to Soviet expectations. These facts, however, were clearly appreciated by Primakov.[65]

As it turned out, IMEMO needed little prodding by Primakov to reconsider the image of capitalism. Revisionist views on the subject had been an important part of its ideology of international affairs since at least the

[63] See, e.g., Yevgeniy Primakov, "Leninskiy analiz imperializma i sovremennost'," *Kommunist* 9 (June 1986), 102–13; and idem, "Kapitalizm vo vzaimosvyazannom mire," *Kommunist* 13 (September 1987), 101–10.

[64] These ties first became evident in November 1985, when Primakov accompanied Gorbachev to the Geneva summit meeting. Two deputy directors of IMEMO confirm in separate interviews that by late 1986 Primakov had become a key Gorbachev adviser.

[65] See Yevgeniy Primakov, "XXVII s'ezd KPSS i issledovaniye problem mirovoy ekonomiki i mezhdunarodnykh otnosheniy," *Memo* 5 (May 1986), 6–8.

mid-1960s.[66] In mid-1986, however, institute advocacy on this question took a qualitative jump when it began publication of a series of essays on the Soviet "theory" of state-monopoly capitalism and organized a conference to examine the Soviet framework for explaining capitalist foreign policy behavior.[67] The bottom line of this advocacy was as simple as it was revolutionary in the Soviet context: capitalism had an internal vitality that would allow it to maintain more than adequate levels of economic growth for the foreseeable future, and its external behavior posed no threat to the USSR; that is, it was *not* inherently militaristic.[68]

There is a striking correlation between this IMEMO-Primakov analysis and the commentary about the nature of capitalism Gorbachev would first use in November 1987. Primakov had mobilized the institute to consider a topic (the political economy of contemporary capitalism) quite consistent with its own sense of mission and ideology and then presented these arguments—via his personal access channel—to a skeptical Gorbachev.[69] This combination of institutional expertise and personal access prevented conservative organizations such as the Soviet military from dominating the debate.

Thus, not only on official views about the structure of the international system but also on an even more fundamental question—the image of the adversary—the new ideas and expertise of specialists had triumphed over Leninist dogma and politically powerful conservative institutional actors. In neither case, however, was this "victory" in any sense inevitable. It was the result of the efforts of skillful policy entrepreneurs who had a "mobilizable" institutional resource at their disposal, as well as access to reformist political leaders.

Did this revised image of capitalism matter? Aside from consigning another piece of Leninist dogma to the "dustbin of history," did it have any more practical effect? In one very important way, it did. In early 1988 reformist commentators began arguing on the basis of the new, less aggressive image of capitalism that the USSR did not face a serious ex-

[66] On this, see also Primakov (fn. 48), 106–7.

[67] For an excellent overview of the essays on state-monopoly capitalism (and their radical content), see Brian Taylor, "Perestroika and Soviet Foreign Policy Research: Rethinking the Theory of State-Monopoly Capitalism," *Millennium* 19 (Spring 1990). On the conference, see "Mezhdunarodnaya konferentsiya: Sovremennye osobennosti obshchego krizisa kapitalizma," *Memo* 6–8 (June–July–August 1987).

[68] ISKAN contributed virtually nothing to the capitalism/militarism debate in 1986–87.

[69] Aleksandr Yakovlev was an obvious source for Gorbachev's skepticism about capitalism. Yakovlev, who at this point was already one of Gorbachev's most trusted advisers, had consistently promoted an image of capitalism that was virtually identical to the one articulated by Gorbachev through early 1987. Even *after* Gorbachev's commentary on capitalism changed, Yakovlev continued to speak on the topic in a distinctly more pessimistic manner.

ternal threat and thus could countenance a radical restructuring of its armed forces.[70]

Security Issues

On questions of international security (the balance of conventional forces, evaluations of strategic stability, nuclear doctrine and strategy, and so forth), a new relationship between specialist knowledge and the political process would, at least for IMEMO, be much more difficult to establish than in other issue-areas. This difficulty certainly did not arise from a lack of political leaders interested in civilian analyses of security. In mid-1986 Gorbachev and his allies in the leadership had explicitly and publicly stated for the first time that they indeed wanted studies of this type. Moreover, there were several security issues that could be defined as major problems for the USSR at this point (most prominently, the NATO Euro-missile deployments). In other words, a policy window was open in this issue-area as well.

Instead, IMEMO's difficulty in establishing a new relationship to the process arose from several other variables at the political and, especially, institutional levels. On the former, it is clear that through 1986 the social scientists at IMEMO (under the leadership first of Yakovlev and then of Primakov) had been unable to establish access channels to important political leaders on security issues; this contrasted notably with their success in doing so in other issue-areas. The political leadership at this point was turning to another set of Soviet specialists for advice and information on security topics.[71]

Even if the necessary access had been in place, however, the researchers at IMEMO were poorly equipped to exploit it. As noted above, "applied" issues such as international security did not fall within the institute's sense of mission, and as a result occupied only a minor place in its ideology of international affairs. This being so, the recent literature on political institutions[72] would hold that any attempt to expand IMEMO's conceptual/research repertoire to include security matters could well be a difficult exercise.

An analysis of IMEMO's behavior in the 1980s indicates this was indeed the case. The evidence is twofold. First, one needs to recall the institute's

[70] See, especially, Sergey Karaganov et al., "Vyzovy bezopasnosti—starye i novye," *Kommunist* 1 (January 1988).

[71] These were the *natural* scientists who worked for the Academy of Sciences technical divisions and, in particular, the Committee of Soviet Scientists in Defense of Peace, against the Nuclear Threat.

[72] March and Olsen (fn. 31, 1989), 16–19 and chap. 2; and Goldstein (fn. 26, 1988), 181–86 and passim.

actions during the years 1983–85, when Yakovlev was its head. This was a period of mobilization that saw IMEMO aggressively promote several topics. Equally important, however, is what it did not promote. Specific questions of international security (for example, military strategy or arms-control verification) received *very* little attention.

This behavior is especially puzzling in light of two additional facts. For one, the announcement of the U.S. SDI program and the commencement of the Euro-missile deployments, both in 1983, should have created one or more exploitable policy windows. In addition, Yakovlev, the entrepreneur with no fixed personal agenda, had by late 1983 taken the specific step of creating a new disarmament unit within the institute to mobilize IMEMO on security issues as well. The head of this new section, Aleksey Arbatov, was a very capable (in the Soviet context) analyst of strategic issues, but he was hindered by a lack of institutional interest, resources, and expertise devoted to security issues.[73]

Second and more important is the record of the institute's behavior in the years 1985–88. Under Primakov's leadership at the time, IMEMO was influential in both promoting *and* revising Gorbachev's initial agenda for foreign policy reform. Political leaders were now openly calling for academic analyses on security topics, and by 1987 there were public debates on at least two such issues: the overall size of the Soviet force posture (the debate over "reasonable sufficiency") and whether the Soviet armed forces should be restructured along more defensive principles ("defensive defense"). To aid IMEMO's participation in this debate, Primakov, in 1986, created a full-fledged Department of Disarmament and International Security within the institute. The creation of this new unit, which was headed by Aleksey Arbatov, placed security studies on a par with other department-size research interests within IMEMO.

Despite these various changes and despite Arbatov's skills, IMEMO was a relatively uninfluential player in these security debates. Arbatov was in fact a "policy entrepreneur"—a person who like Yakovlev and Primakov had the necessary skills and connections to exploit open policy windows. Nevertheless, he failed to convert this entrepreneurship into influence, even though he had the clear backing of his boss, Primakov. A key element in this failure was that Arbatov, in bringing his expertise in strategic affairs to IMEMO, was attempting to modify fundamentally the institute's basic mission.

[73] This observation is based on an analysis of numerous IMEMO publications, as well as on interviews with three deputy directors of the institute. The institutional constraints facing Arbatov included a weakly developed scientific/technical culture within IMEMO and the institute's long-standing unwillingness to seek contacts with groups within and outside the USSR that studied issues of international security.

This explains why Arbatov was unable to find a ready cadre of strategic analysts within IMEMO. Moreover, his entrepreneurship was openly and actively resisted by various institute scholars.[74] The basic charge these researchers leveled against Arbatov was that he was leading IMEMO away from what it did best. That this dispute received wide publicity in the institute's journal suggests the strong feelings it generated within IMEMO. In sum, Arbatov was in no sense a free agent but rather was operating within an institutional context and history, one that hindered his ability to bring new *strategic-affairs* ideas to IMEMO and the broader political process.[75]

Is this focus on institutional dynamics within IMEMO really necessary for explaining its inability to be a major actor in the area of security policy? Perhaps what really accounts for this behavior is that IMEMO, like *all* other civilian institutions, had suffered from the Soviet military's monopoly of national security expertise and information during the Brezhnev era.

While this factor has certainly played a role, by itself it is insufficient to account for IMEMO's behavior. If the military's monopoly on security expertise was the main factor at work here, one would expect other academy units—especially the other main international affairs think tank, the U.S.A. and Canada Institute (ISKAN)—to be similarly affected. This, however, was not the case. Throughout the latter half of the 1980s, ISKAN was consistently a more knowledgeable and influential participant in the Soviet security debates than IMEMO. Like IMEMO, the U.S.A. and Canada Institute had a very skillful policy entrepreneur on security matters. This individual, Andrey Kokoshin, however, was given a powerful assist by a much more facilitating institutional environment than Arbatov had at IMEMO.[76]

The comparison between Arbatov/IMEMO and Kokoshin/ISKAN and also the earlier review of Yakovlev-Primakov-IMEMO's starkly different behavior and influence in other issue-areas suggest that while individuals (entrepreneurs) and their ideas do indeed play critical roles in making

[74] See, especially, the debate between Arbatov and Elgiz Pozdnyakov, a senior scholar in IMEMO's Department of International Relations, over the proper way to study issues of international security. Arbatov, "Deystvitel'no, yest' li povod dlya spora?" *Memo* 10 (October 1988), 130–34; and Elgiz Pozdnyakov, "S kem, kak i po kakomu povodu sporit A. Arbatov?" *Memo* 10 (October 1988), 125–30.

[75] Arbatov had made quite clear on more than one occasion his desire to bring such expertise to IMEMO. See, e.g., Arbatov, "Glubokoye sokrashcheniye strategicheskikh vooruzheniy," *Memo* 4 (April 1988), 10–22.

[76] For details on the role of ISKAN and Kokoshin in these security debates, see Checkel (fn. 30), chaps. 8–10. In the spring of 1992 Kokoshin was named a deputy minister of defense of the Russian Federation.

revolutions, they often do so in institutional settings that can constrain or magnify their ability "to effect the flow of history."[77]

Alternative Explanations

The plausibility of the above account is strengthened by comparing it with several alternative theoretical frameworks for explaining the emergence of new ideas in Soviet foreign policy under Gorbachev. One alternative explanation—at the individual level of analysis—is the "Gorby the Great" interpretation. This argues that Gorbachev, a representative of a new and more politically sophisticated leadership generation, was himself the carrier of the new ideas that later became the central conceptual elements of the new thinking in foreign policy. Given the clear correlation between Gorbachev's accession to power and the promulgation of the new thinking, there is an obvious intuitive appeal to such an explanation.

There is very little evidence to support it, however. Prior to late 1985, while Gorbachev had clearly hinted in both public and private that he was open to new ideas on foreign policy, there is no indication that he had developed a comprehensive conceptual or policy framework for foreign policy reform.[78] In fact, the evidence is quite clear that in these early years (1984–85) of Gorbachev's ascent to power his thoughts were concentrated on a different domain of public policy: *domestic* socioeconomic reform.[79]

A second set of explanations for the advent of new ideas and knowledge in Soviet foreign policy focuses on psychological learning processes within individuals. By itself, however, a learning explanation is inadequate. First, there are the definitional problems inherent in the notion of learning and the question of who or what must learn for Soviet policy to change.[80] Second, even if one accepts that a process of learning—most importantly, at the level of Gorbachev himself—was the mechanism by which new ideas came to alter Soviet policies, learning explanation nonetheless overlook an important question. In particular, since proponents of this approach are most interested in ascertaining whether learning has

[77] March and Olsen (fn. 31, 1984), 739.

[78] See, e.g., Eduard Shevardnadze, *Moy vybor: v zashchitu demokratii i svobody* (My choice: In defense of democracy and freedom) (Moscow: Novosti, 1991), 62–63. The former foreign minister argues that during the early 1980s Gorbachev knew the kind of foreign policy he did not want—the one followed by the Brezhnev leadership—but seemed much less clear on what should replace it.

[79] Compare, for example, the discussion of domestic and foreign policy in Gorbachev, *Zhivoye tvorchestvo naroda* (Vital creativity of the people) (Moscow: Politizdat, 1984), a speech of December 1984 before a conference on ideology.

[80] Tetlock (fn. 4) is an excellent overview of the definitional problems.

occurred, they often fail to ask what accounts for particular instances of learning.[81] If Gorbachev did indeed modify his foreign policy beliefs as a result of new knowledge,[82] one must still ask who or what was the source of such knowledge. As I have argued throughout this essay, policy entrepreneurs with the requisite institutional resources and personal access were a key source of this new knowledge.

It is indeed possible that a learning model is applicable at the level of these entrepreneurs.[83] Nonetheless, to explain how cognitive processes within particular individuals (the entrepreneurs) came to influence the views of leaders like Gorbachev, the learning approach must be supplemented with an exploration of the *political context* (influence relationships, institutional access) within which the beliefs and images of Soviet leaders evolved.[84]

A third plausible explanation for the advent of new ideas in Soviet policies under Gorbachev is that their appearance was part of a logical and largely inevitable process of adaptation to various international stimuli.[85] Taken by itself, however, this explanation is also inadequate. Most importantly, by dismissing the importance of domestic-level variables, such explanations ignore the *process* by which Soviet state interests are shaped. While the international environment may have helped induce a change in Soviet interests in the mid-1980s, a focus on external stimuli alone is completely inadequate for explaining the *content* of these new/redefined interests and the role of new ideas and knowledge in this process.[86]

Obviously, international factors play a role in shaping state interests. The challenge, however, is to understand *how* they matter—under what conditions. This is an issue that must be empirically explored and not simply assumed away.[87]

[81] Legvold's (fn. 10) important account of Soviet learning in the 1980s exhibits this analytic bias.

[82] That is, through "cognitive content" learning. For a discussion of this concept, see Tetlock (fn. 4), 27–31.

[83] Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for alerting me to this issue.

[84] On the importance of integrating political factors into psychological theories of decision making, see also Sarah Mendelson, "Explaining Change in Soviet Foreign Policy: Learning, Motivated Bias and Epistemic Communities" (Paper delivered at the annual convention of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., 1991), 1–10. For an excellent overview and critique of learning theories as applied to the Soviet case, see Evangelista (fn. 22), 266–79, 323–28.

[85] Deudney and Ikenberry (fn. 7).

[86] For a recent treatment of this issue, see McKeown (fn. 15, 1991), 259–61, 276–78.

[87] Realist theories (which focus on a particular subset of international stimuli to explain state behavior) insist—wrongly I think—that a state's interests can be taken as a given. Even recent and quite sophisticated realist theories exhibit this analytic bias. See G. John Ikenberry, David Lake, and Michael Mastanduno, "Toward a Realist Theory of State Action," *Inter-*

Conclusions

I will address several questions related to the analysis and explanatory framework and then discuss the relevance of this research for several ongoing debates in the public policy and international relations literatures.

Analysis and Framework

To start with, there is an important methodological question to be addressed: the measurement of influence. This is an important issue in *any* study of foreign policy decision making and all the more so in the Soviet case.[88] Ultimately, my measurements of influence are indirect. I am not privy, for example, to the personal conversation a Yakovlev or Primakov had with Gorbachev or members of his personal staff. As a result, I have measured a correlation between concepts, intellectual frameworks, and policies advocated by IMEMO-Yakovlev-Primakov and changes in official Soviet views or behavior (as announced in leadership statements or important CPSU documents). However, by controlling for several likely alternative explanations and wherever possible supplementing my analysis with direct participant insights (through interviewing), I feel confident in moving from a correlational relationship to a causal one and therefore arguing that the influence patterns were real.

A second point about the framework is its relationship to that well-known concept in the study of foreign policy: the black box. The perceptive reader will recognize that while the black box has definitely been "shrunk," it is still present.[89] In particular, one must ask of the policy entrepreneurs I have identified: where did *their* unorthodox views come from? For Primakov, it is clear that his ideas on the nature of capitalism emerged from the Soviet milieu, if for no other reason than because the institution he took over in 1985 had been advancing such views for the better part of twenty years.[90]

While I have not discussed Aleksey Arbatov in detail here, it is worth noting that the source of his ideas is a more interesting case. Given that many of his security views were qualitatively new in the Soviet context when first elaborated in the mid-1980s and given that he has spent considerable time abroad (in both the U.S. and Western Europe), it is quite

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national Studies Quarterly 33 (December 1989). The authors attempt to develop a realist theory that incorporates both domestic and international variables.

[88] Timothy Colton, "Perspectives on Civil-Military Relations in the Soviet Union," in Colton and Gustafson (fn. 1), 34–37.

[89] Thanks to Dave Cameron of Yale University for alerting me to this issue.

[90] See, especially, Primakov (fn. 48). Recall that Primakov had a prior association with IMEMO, as a deputy head of the institute for seven years beginning in 1970.

likely that individuals and institutions *external* to the USSR were the source of his innovative ideas.[91] This suggests the importance of transnational linkages, an issue addressed by the literature on epistemic communities.

A third point concerns the causal logic of the framework. By arguing that foreign policy change is the result of a complex interplay of stimuli from the external environment and domestic-level cognitive, institutional and political variables, I have highlighted what I believe to be the diverse sources of major change in state behavior. This argument, however, leaves important issues unresolved. What, for example, was the *independent* causal impact of new ideas? How important was the cognitive-institutional synergy in bringing about the revolutionary redefinition of Soviet state interests? Answers to these (as well as other questions) are needed to advance an ideas-based argument more confidently.

The preceding comments point to the need for more research. The revolutions in Eastern Europe and the dissolution of the USSR, however, present a golden opportunity—a theorist's dream—to control better for the independent effect of the different variables.[92] These events provide a large set of real-world cases where existing and recently created nation-states are undertaking major reorientations in their foreign policies—and doing so at a time when both the international and domestic-level variables identified here are in great flux.

Within the former USSR, for example, the breakup of Union structures has created a dramatically different external setting for many of the former republics. At the same time these new states are establishing their own foreign policy and national security institutions, and new leaderships are assuming power in several of them. Moreover, there is early evidence that in some cases the ideas of specialists are playing a key role in shaping the worldviews and foreign policy orientations of states formerly a part of the USSR.[93] In other words, new policy windows have opened and new entrepreneurs may be coming to the fore. Comparative

[91] Two books written by Arbatov in the early 1980s clearly demonstrate his knowledge of Western strategic concepts and thinking. See Arbatov, *Bezopasnost' v yadernyy vek* (Security in the nuclear age) (Moscow: Politizdat, 1980); and idem, *Voyenno-strategicheskiy paritet i politika SShA* (Military-strategic parity and the policy of the U.S.A.) (Moscow: Politizdat, 1984). On Arbatov, also see Tyrus Cobb, "National Security Perspectives of Soviet 'Think Tanks,' " *Problems of Communism* 30 (November–December 1981), 54–55, 57.

[92] In the comparative politics literature, David Laitin has made a similar point with respect to the revolutions in Eastern Europe. See Laitin, "The National Uprisings in the Soviet Union," *World Politics* 44 (October 1991), 141–42.

[93] There is interesting if preliminary evidence that this is the case in Ukraine. See Kathleen Mihalisko, "Defense and Security Planning in Ukraine," *Report on the USSR* 3 (December 6, 1991), 15–19.

research on these cases will help to rectify the problem of overdetermination in my analysis and further sharpen the ideas-based argument.

Debates in the Literature

The analysis presented here can make a contribution to three current debates in the public policy and international relations literatures. First, in the policy studies field there is a growing recognition of a need to move beyond the "stages" heuristic of the policy process developed and refined in the 1970s and 1980s.[94] As Paul Sabatier has correctly noted, this heuristic divides the process into stages but contains no clear assumptions about what forces move it from one stage to another.[95]

The present study, with its emphasis on the role of chance in the policy process, has much in common with Kingdon's alternative to the stages heuristic: the "policy streams" approach.[96] It also provides fairly strong empirical support for Kingdon's work. My main amendment to it, at least in the case of the former USSR, would be greater attention to the *institutional* context in which policy entrepreneurs—the purveyors of new ideas—operated.

Second, there is an ongoing debate in the international relations literature over the influence of domestic context on state behavior, with many arguing that this is still a neglected area of research in the field of international politics.[97] This study, I hope, has shown the tremendous importance (and complexity) of the changing domestic context for understanding the revolutionary changes in Soviet international behavior under Gorbachev. We need more research in the spirit of the integrative explanatory framework advanced here (and elsewhere).[98]

Third and again within the international relations field, there is an emerging debate on how epistemic communities can influence state behavior.[99] This is an important research program that shares many insights with the analysis presented here, for example, a commitment to exploring the dynamic interaction between domestic and international

[94] See the recent symposium "Toward Better Theories of the Policy Process," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 24 (June 1991), 144–56.

[95] Sabatier, "Political Science and Public Policy," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 24 (June 1991), 145.

[96] Kingdon (fn. 24).

[97] Risse-Kappen (fn. 10), 187–88; and idem, "Public Opinion, Domestic Structure, and Foreign Policy in Liberal Democracies," *World Politics* 43 (July 1991). See also Haggard (fn. 16), 432–33.

[98] As noted earlier, Evangelista (fn. 22) argues in favor of a similar approach.

[99] See, especially, Haas (fn. 6). See also idem, "Do Regimes Matter? Epistemic Communities and Mediterranean Pollution Control," *International Organization* 43 (Summer 1989); Ernst Haas, *When Knowledge Is Power: Three Models of Change in International Organizations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), chaps. 1–2; and Mendelson (fn. 84).

sources of state behavior and a recognition that under the proper conditions new knowledge can play a decisive role in shaping state behavior.[100]

My framework differs from the epistemic framework in an important way, however: the level of analysis. The epistemic approach emphasizes the role of transnational networks of knowledge-based experts in bringing new ideas to the political process.[101] I have stressed the importance of ideas imbedded in particular domestic institutions and the role of policy entrepreneurs as essential to the dynamic whereby new knowledge enters the process. Hence, my primary levels are individual and institutional, not transnational.

This difference, however, is more apparent than real and can best be reconciled by a synthesis of the two approaches. Take, for example, the case of Aleksey Arbatov. As I suggested above, transnational contacts almost certainly played a role in the evolution of his views on security.[102] That is, Arbatov may very well have been a member of a transnational epistemic arms control community during the 1970s and early 1980s.

Yet, as this study showed, the faced significant obstacles in diffusing this knowledge within the former Soviet Union. Indeed, it was not until 1986 that he even gained an institutional platform (his own department at IMEMO) from which to promote such knowledge. Even after gaining this platform, however, his ability to diffuse new arms control concepts was hindered by institutional impediments, namely, the presence of a dominant ideology within IMEMO.

The epistemic approach does in fact recognize the importance of institutional dynamics.[103] Indeed, the third element in the causal logic of epistemic policy coordination is "institutionalization," that is, the extent to which an epistemic community consolidates bureaucratic power within domestic or international institutions. The community's influence over domestic and/or international policy-making will correlate with the degree of this bureaucratic consolidation.[104]

Despite this appreciation of institutional factors, some proponents of the epistemic approach nevertheless seem to underrate them. Emanuel

[100] These are central themes of virtually all the essays in the recent special issue of *International Organization* dedicated to epistemic policy coordination. See Haas (fn. 6).

[101] For an excellent overview of the causal logic behind the epistemic-communities approach, see Peter Haas, "Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination," in Haas (fn. 6).

[102] Matthew Evangelista and Stephan Kux have suggested, in a more general sense, the importance of such contacts for the evolution of Soviet views on security. See Risse-Kappen (fn. 10), 183.

[103] Haas (fn. 101), 3–4, 33–34.

[104] Ibid., 4. The first two elements in the causal logic are *uncertainties* faced by political decision makers and *interpretation* of these uncertainties by experts. That is, uncertainties give rise to demands for information and advice that is provided by the epistemic community.

Adler, for example, has recently argued that during the 1960s an epistemic community that began in the United States and then spread to the USSR played an important role in shaping Soviet policy on offensive and defensive strategic nuclear arms control (the SALT I and ABM treaties).[105] There are, however, several problems with this argument. For one, the Soviet leadership's overall record on arms control in the decade after these initial accords leads one to wonder whether there was a process whereby the epistemic community's influence in Soviet politics had in fact been "institutionalized." Moreover, IMEMO—one of the key institutions that could have served as a resource for members of the Soviet arms control epistemic community—was quite resistant to developing arms control expertise during this period, in part because such research fell outside its dominant institutional mind-set and ideology.[106]

In sum, while the epistemic approach and the one outlined in this article are largely complementary, the former will benefit by a more systematic consideration of institutional factors. They can play a key role in either promoting or hindering the diffusion of new ideas and knowledge, regardless of whether the deep roots of such knowledge lie in transnational networks or in domestic institutions.

[105] Adler, "The Emergence of Cooperation: National Epistemic Communities and the International Evolution of the Idea of Nuclear Arms Control," in Haas (fn. 6), 101–45.

[106] See Checkel (fn. 30), chaps. 5–6.