



**Germany and Russia – Friends or Foes?**  
**A Study on the Current and Historical Relationship between**  
**Germany and Russia**

**Bjarki Þórðarson**

**Lokaverkefni til MA-gráðu í alþjóðasamskiptum**

**Félagsvísindasvið**

**Júní 2016**



**HÁSKÓLI ÍSLANDS**

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Stjórnmálafræðideild  
Félagsvísindasvið Háskóla Íslands  
Júní 2016

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## Útdráttur

Þessi lokaritgerð til meistaraþrófs í alþjóðasamskiptum fjallar um samskipti Rússlands og Þýskalands frá sameiningu þess síðarnefnda í eitt ríki árið 1871 fram til dagsins í dag. Ríkin tvö hafa á tíðum átt í ágætum samskiptum sín á milli, en á öðrum tímum eldað saman grátt silfur og verið hinir verstu óvinir. Ákveðin kenning í alþjóðasamskiptum eftir fræðimanninn Stephen Walt er vel til þess fallin að útskýra hvernig og hvers vegna þjóðir mynda bandalög sín á milli eða verða óvinveitt. Kom hann fram með kenninguna sína í bókinni *The Origins of Alliances* sem kom fyrst út árið 1987 og fjallar um tengsl þjóða út frá nokkrum sjónarhornum, svo sem landræðilegri legu, hernaðarstyrk og fleiru. Með kenningu hans til hliðsjónar vonast höfundur þessarar ritgerðar til þess að geta útskýrt samband ríkjanna tveggja, hvernig það var áður fyrr og hvernig það er í dag, meðal annars með því að bera saman eiginleika hvors ríkis fyrir sig á ákveðnum tímabilum og tengsl þeirra við umheiminn. Niðurstaðan er sú að kenningunni tekst það sæmilega og á hún vel við í raunveruleikanum í dag.

## **Abstract**

This dissertation for a Master's degree in International Relations takes on the bilateral relationship between Russia and Germany from the unification of the latter into one state in the year 1871 up until today. Those two states have had some good relations in certain periods of history, but were the fiercest of foes others. Stephen Walt's theory on alliance behavior in the field of International Relations is well suited to explain why states choose to form alliances, or become opposed to others. He presents the theory in his work *The Origins of Alliances* which first came out in the year 1987. The theory is divided into different components which take a look at states' capabilities including geographical location, military power and more. Applying this theory the author hopes to explain how this very important relationship was in certain periods in history and if it applies today as well by comparing the states' capabilities with each other and their relations with the world among others. The conclusion will be that it does a fairly good job and it is still relevant up to this day.

## Preface

This thesis is a 30-credit final dissertation for a Masters of Arts degree in International Relations and is written under the supervision of Ph.D. Bradley Alfred Thayer at the Faculty of Political Science at the University of Iceland. I have always been quite fascinated by the two countries of Europe that have had some of the most profound effects on human history, namely Germany and Russia, in whatever form they have existed. Before I started my studies of International Relations I finished a Bachelor of Arts degree in German Philology at the University of Iceland as well, and so in a sense it was natural to do a dissertation on something regarding at least Germany and possibly include Russia. Thayer thus came up with the idea of comparing their relationship throughout history by applying Stephen Walt's *The Origins of Alliances*.

I am a language and history enthusiast and I speak fluent Icelandic, English and German and I have quite a lot of knowledge in many other languages, including Russian, which I have been learning on and off for roughly ten years now. This gives me the urge to understand what it is that makes Russia and its people tick and knowing both their and Germany's history and language gives one an insight into their mindsets. That also enables me to look for sources in other languages than just English.

I'm very thankful to Thayer for having supported me throughout the work that went into this, advising me, helping me to get it right and simply encouraging me to keep going and "win this battle," paraphrasing his own words a little. I'm also very thankful to my family and specifically my mother, Helga, who encouraged me, advised me too and made sure that I was on schedule. I'm also thankful to Ágústína, an English teacher at my old Junior College, for proofreading.

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## **List of Abbreviations:**

EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MAD	Mutual Assured Destruction
MLRS	Multiple Launch Rocket System
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSDAP	National Socialist German Workers Party
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
SPG	Self-Propelled Gun
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

## I. Introduction

As Russia takes a more active role in world events as a result of rebuilding their society after the fall of the Soviet Union, it is necessary to understand what it takes to put two states against each other and what could possibly escalate into a conflict. After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 a new democratic Russia has been trying to find its place in a new world order without much of its former territory and power. Russia was undeniably in a terrible mess after the break-up and moving from a communist state-planned economy to a free market one has proven very difficult and even catastrophic in the 90's under the poor leadership of the first Russian president Boris Yeltsin.<sup>1</sup> With the current president's, Vladimir Putin, ascent to power things certainly started to look better for the average Russian and for the state as a whole, although his methods of governing would most likely not be considered democratic by Western standards.<sup>2</sup> However, one cannot refute that the rise of the country is largely thanks to Putin's strong leadership.

Russia obviously had its great set of problems to solve after the fall of Communism, not only was rampant corruption and oligarchy a huge problem, but the military also faced huge challenges, having to fight two bloody wars against Chechen separatists, with a demoralized and completely underfunded military, bordering on plain dysfunction in the first war.<sup>3</sup> Both of them proved very costly, both in terms of casualties<sup>4</sup> and finances.<sup>5</sup> Under the leadership of Vladimir Putin, Russia has been rebuilding its military might and actually displaying it in effect in recent years in military operation outside of Russia's own borders. Firstly, in Georgia in August 2008<sup>6</sup> (however during the presidency of Dmitri Medvedev<sup>7</sup>). Then in Ukraine in 2014, more precisely with the seizure of the Crimean peninsula and subsequent annexation, which in turn has almost led to the collapse of relations between Russia and the West with

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<sup>1</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Boris Yeltsin - President of Russia," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2013).

<sup>2</sup> "Vladimir Putin," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2016).

<sup>3</sup> Michael Coffey, "Military Learning between the Chechen Wars," *SRAS* (2006), [http://www.sras.org/military\\_learning\\_between\\_the\\_chechen\\_wars](http://www.sras.org/military_learning_between_the_chechen_wars).

<sup>4</sup> GlobalSecurity.org, "Russia - Introduction - a New Cold War," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/russia/intro.htm>.

<sup>5</sup> "Second Chechnya War - 1999-2006," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/chechnya2.htm>.

<sup>6</sup> George Friedman, "The Russo-Georgian War and the Balance of Power," *Geopolitical Weekly* (2008), [https://www.stratfor.com/weekly/russo\\_georgian\\_war\\_and\\_balance\\_power](https://www.stratfor.com/weekly/russo_georgian_war_and_balance_power).

<sup>7</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Dmitry Medvedev," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2012).

sanctions being implemented back and forth.<sup>8</sup> Lastly, in conducting airstrikes in Syria to prop up Bashar al-Assad's regime in fighting anyone who opposes him, an action that is severely frowned upon by Western powers.<sup>9</sup> This makes Russia, without a doubt, one of the world's most important nations and it is possibly on a collision course with its neighbors and other world powers, if indeed it is not placed there already. Not to mention that it still possesses the world's greatest arsenal of nuclear weapons, much of which is currently being upgraded with new technology.<sup>10</sup> Russia is generally regarded as the second greatest military power in the world today, miles behind the United States in conventional military capabilities, but still ahead of China.<sup>11</sup> The vast alliance network that the Soviet Union possessed from the 1950's until roughly 1990 was understandably disassembled with the fall of communism,<sup>12</sup> so Russia today only has a handful of real and potential allies, e.g. Belarus, Armenia and Kazakhstan to name a few.<sup>13</sup>

Russia also faces some internal problems regarding public health, as can be noted, for example, in the declining population but Russian politicians do not seem to pay much attention to such matters.<sup>14</sup> Democratic reforms have come about slowly and the state of Russian governance today could be described as a conservative authoritarian regime<sup>15</sup> and the government has repeatedly cracked down on social movements and NGOs, specifically those of non-Russian origin.<sup>16</sup> It has also fought against anti-government protest and sentiment with a well-oiled propaganda machine, almost rivaling that of the former Soviet Union in intensity.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, it is hard to determine the future of Russia and especially its leadership with a somewhat unpredictable Vladimir Putin as the head of state.

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<sup>8</sup> The Economist, "Bad Memory," *The Economist* (2015), <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21654059-land-grab-started-russias-conflict-west-has-fallen-bottom>.

<sup>9</sup> GlobalSecurity.org, "Syria - Russian Intervention," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/syria-russia.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> Daryl Kimball, "Nuclear Weapons: Who Has What at a Glance," Arms Control Association, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Nuclearweaponswhohaswhat>.

<sup>11</sup> GlobalFirepower.com, "Global Firepower Military Ranks - 2016," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.asp>.

<sup>12</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Warsaw Pact," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2014).

<sup>13</sup> Lisa Mahapatra, "Who Are Russia's Allies and Enemies? Here's How Russians View Other Countries [Infographic]," *International Business Times* (2013), <http://www.ibtimes.com/who-are-russias-allies-enemies-heres-how-russians-view-other-countries-infographic-1409150>.

<sup>14</sup> GlobalSecurity.org, "Russia - People," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/russia/people.htm>.

<sup>15</sup> Kathy Lally and Will Englund, "Russia, Once Almost a Democracy," *The Washington Post* (2011), [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/russia-once-almost-a-democracy/2011/08/12/gIQAQMrINOJ\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/russia-once-almost-a-democracy/2011/08/12/gIQAQMrINOJ_story.html).

<sup>16</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Vladimir Putin."

<sup>17</sup> Bridget Kendall, "Russian Propaganda Machine 'Worse Than Soviet Union'," *BBC News* (2014), <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-27713847>.

Germany in the 1990's was a completely different story. It was still a member of NATO and enjoyed relatively great wealth, although differences between the 'old' western part and the 'new' eastern part were vast. The re-unification of Germany did put some strain on the German economy and it also brought with it its own set of problems,<sup>18</sup> even if those did not rival the hardship that afflicted Russia. Germany was filled with national pride and joy from being re-united after four decades of being split apart,<sup>19</sup> which is quite the opposite of the depressing status of Russia of that time. Germany was also still a member of NATO and possessed a relatively strong military<sup>20</sup> and with the most likely frontline running straight through Germany had the Cold War turned hot, it had good reason for this.<sup>21</sup> In terms of military might, Germany today possesses a relatively strong military while not the world's strongest, it is at least regarded as the 9<sup>th</sup> strongest in the world overall, as of April 2016.<sup>22</sup> It has no nuclear weapons of its own, it does not have an aircraft carrier but it does possess some of the world's top class main battle tanks, artillery pieces, aircraft and more to bolster its forces along with well-trained troops.<sup>23</sup> However, this does not mean that Germany has no internal problems of its own. It has an aging population and the overall population numbers have generally been in a very slow decline over the last decade.<sup>24</sup> The average amount of children conceived by the average German woman is way below the needed minimum to replace the older generations, and thus Germany needs a lot of immigrants to keep this number up.<sup>25</sup> That in return has led to some severe conflicts within Germany regarding its immigration policies, especially during the ongoing Syrian refugee , which has only fueled the fire further and led to the rise of political movements on the far right of the political spectrum and general xenophobia.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> GlobalSecurity.org, "Germany - Introduction," GlobalSecurity.org,  
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/de-intro.htm>.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> "Heer - German Army - 1989," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/de-army-1989.htm>.

<sup>21</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Germany - Security," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2016).

<sup>22</sup> GlobalFirepower.com, "Germany Military Strength," GlobalSecurity.org,  
[http://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.asp?country\\_id=germany](http://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.asp?country_id=germany).

<sup>23</sup> Bundeswehr, "Großgerät der Bundeswehr," Bundesministerium der Verteidigung,  
[http://www.bundeswehr.de/portal/a/bwde/!ut/p/c4/04\\_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP3I5EyrpHK9pPKUVL3ikqLUzJLsosTUTJJUvflEtLTUvPjSvJT49FSgWllelF-cTGErV-Q7agIAAI2y4M!/](http://www.bundeswehr.de/portal/a/bwde/!ut/p/c4/04_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP3I5EyrpHK9pPKUVL3ikqLUzJLsosTUTJJUvflEtLTUvPjSvJT49FSgWllelF-cTGErV-Q7agIAAI2y4M!/).

<sup>24</sup> World Bank, "Population, Total," (Washington, DC: The World Bank Group, 2016).

<sup>25</sup> GlobalSecurity.org, "Germany - People," GlobalSecurity.org,  
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/de-people.htm>.

<sup>26</sup> Lizzie Dearden, "Refugee Crisis: From Border Controls to Cash Seizures, How Germany Turned Its Back on Refugees," *Independent* 2016, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/refugee-crisis-germany-turning-its-back-on-asylum-seekers-with-border-controls-cash-seizures-and-a6829801.html>.

Germany today is without a doubt the most powerful country within the European Union or even Europe as a whole. Its economy is one of the strongest and largest in the world<sup>27</sup> and it has the second largest population of any country in Europe with just over 80 million,<sup>28</sup> behind Russia, which has a total of 144 million.<sup>29</sup> Apart from the somewhat declining population numbers of both countries, those numbers still make them important simply because of sheer size. Russia had a dramatic cut in its manpower with the fall of the Soviet Union, where Moscow lost about half of its population to the other newly independent states, which together had a population of about 290 million, a little more than half of them of Russian ethnicity.<sup>30</sup> Germany (or more precisely West-Germany) gained about 16 million inhabitants<sup>31</sup> with the re-unification of East- and West Germany which further enabled Germany to become even more powerful than before. Since then, Germany has been using its strength as the most powerful nation within the EU and its economy to spread its influence and affect world events.

Those two states, Germany and Russia, have a great deal of interwoven history. They have been friends and they have been foes. Those states have also undergone some major changes throughout history that dramatically affected world events and it is hard to imagine what the world would look like, had it not been for those countries. The Second World War happened mostly because a bitter Germany was seeking to regain its former glory after being humiliated by the Treaty of Versailles,<sup>32</sup> and the Soviet Union was one of two superpowers during the Cold War that had the capabilities to wipe out all life on earth as we know it.<sup>33</sup> Russia has existed in one form or another since the 10<sup>th</sup> century with the advent of the Kingdom of Kievan Rus'.<sup>34</sup> After a series of different rulers and Russian states, the Russian Empire was declared at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century with the Tsar as the head of state and absolute ruler.<sup>35</sup> That empire eventually fell with the revolutions of 1917 after terrible conduct during the First World War against the German empire and its allies, and as a result of a major civil

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<sup>27</sup> GlobalFirepower.com, "Purchasing Power Parity by Country," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalfirepower.com/purchasing-power-parity.asp>.

<sup>28</sup> World Bank, "Population, Total."

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, "USA/USSR: Facts and Figures," ed. U.S. Department of Commerce (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991).

<sup>31</sup> Zentralverwaltung für Statistik, "Statistisches Jahrbuch der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik," ed. Zentralverwaltung für Statistik (Berlin: Zentralverwaltung für Statistik, 1991).

<sup>32</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Germany - the Third Reich, 1933–45," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2016).

<sup>33</sup> "Nuclear Strategy," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>34</sup> "Kievan Rus," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2016).

<sup>35</sup> "Peter I," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2014).

unrest at home, which too was due to the war.<sup>36</sup> After a few years of all-out civil war the Soviet Union was declared.<sup>37</sup> That then ended up fighting in the most brutal war the world has ever seen against Nazi Germany two decades later and came out victorious in the end, although at a huge cost.<sup>38</sup> The Soviet Union eventually dissolved in 1991, which leaves us with Russia in its current state.<sup>39</sup>

Major changes have similarly occurred in Germany throughout history, although the country was not actually formed as a single (and mostly) coherent state until 1871, after a successful war against France.<sup>40</sup> Before that it was mostly a collection of small duchies and kingdoms, all varying in size and strength. The "first" German state was probably the Holy Roman Empire, established during the Middle Ages. It has undergone many changes throughout its many centuries of existence, but usually with Austria as its main driving component. This 'quasi-state' then finally ceased to exist in 1806,<sup>41</sup> to be replaced by the German Federation after the Napoleonic Wars during the Congress of Vienna.<sup>42</sup> The Kingdom of Prussia and the Austrian Empire were its most powerful states and were constantly at each other's throats in their quest for power and influence within the German territories. Prussia eventually gained the upper hand after defeating Austria and its allies in a swift war in 1866 and formed the first real German state, the North German Confederation.<sup>43</sup> That state did not encompass the southern German states hence the name, but that was taken care of during the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1871 with the declaration of the German Empire under Prussian leadership.<sup>44</sup> Germany along with the rest of Europe suffered greatly in the First World War and lost a lot territory with the Treaty of Versailles, and its status as an Empire. That in turn led to the rise of fascism under the term Nazism, which eventually plunged Germany and the world into an even larger war, the Second World War.<sup>45</sup> Germany was in ruins afterwards and was split up between the victors, with the western Allies holding the western part and eventually forming the German Federal Republic (also colloquially known as West-Germany), and the Soviets forming the German Democratic Republic (also known as East-

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<sup>36</sup> "Russia - the Last Years of Tsardom," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>37</sup> "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>38</sup> "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics - The U.S.S.R. From the Death of Lenin to the Death of Stalin," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>39</sup> "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics - The U.S.S.R. From 1953 to 1991," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>40</sup> "Germany - Germany from 1871 to 1918," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2016).

<sup>41</sup> "Holy Roman Empire - Empire and Papacy," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>42</sup> "German Confederation," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2012).

<sup>43</sup> "North German Confederation," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2008).

<sup>44</sup> "Germany - Germany from 1871 to 1918."

<sup>45</sup> "Treaty of Versailles," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

Germany).<sup>46</sup> The Cold War kept those two separate until they were finally able reunite as a single German state at the end of the Cold War.<sup>47</sup> Thus leaving us with the current state of Germany, the powerhouse of Europe.

## 1.1 A Brief Introduction to Stephen Walt's Theory

Stephen Walt's *The Origins of Alliances* tries to explain the behavior of states when it comes to alliance formation and their behavior towards states that are potentially threatening. In his book Walt establishes his theory on such alliance behavior and how states either "balance" against threats or "bandwagon" with them. His theory is split into different parts that measure such behavior, but he starts out by talking about the difference between balancing and bandwagoning behavior, both of which are the main components of his work. Balancing is in his own words "at the heart of traditional balance of power theory"<sup>48</sup> while bandwagoning is essentially when states are drawn towards the power or strength of a different state.<sup>49</sup>

Walt goes on to explain the many different sources of threat, which can have an effect on the alliance choices states make and he begins with aggregate power. That is the total amount of resources, including manpower, raw materials, and infrastructure a state possesses.<sup>50</sup> Russia has historically been very vast and populous, but often lacking in infrastructure, both causing a headache for Russian officials as well as invading armies. Germany has had a relatively large population, although not as large as Russia's, but it was usually bolstered by great infrastructure. This is essentially everything that is located within a certain state's territory, which in turn can be converted to represent power in any form.

Next is geographical proximity to the threat. Although geography in itself is pretty fixed, states' borders can shift and complicate things. States are generally more concerned about potential threats that are close to them than those that are much further away, for example, on a different continent.<sup>51</sup> For instance, Germany and Russia do not currently share a common border, but did so for most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and for some part of the 20<sup>th</sup> as well.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> "Germany - the Era of Partition," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2016).

<sup>47</sup> "Germany - the Reunification of Germany," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2016).

<sup>48</sup> Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Princeton, New Jersey: Cornell University Press, 1990). p. 18.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. pp. 19-21.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. pp. 22-23.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. pp. 23-24.

<sup>52</sup> Walter Leisering, *Historischer Weltatlas* (Wiesbaden: Marix Verlag GmbH, 2009). pp. 92-93.



Then Walt takes into account military strength, or as he calls it, "offensive power." Offensive power is the ability of a country to use its military to extend its power beyond its own borders with minimal losses and to be able to hold onto and occupy said territory.<sup>53</sup> Russia and Germany have both had their share of military greatness and power, with both of them possessing some of the most powerful militaries in the world during the Second World War. After the war the Soviet Union turned out to be one of two superpowers in the world and having one of, if not, the strongest or largest military in the world. Germany's offensive capabilities were very great, as evidenced by the Wehrmacht taking over much of Europe.<sup>54</sup> The Soviet Union may have had more defensive capabilities to begin with, but as the war progressed it became more offensive oriented and capable of such operations, as evidenced by them pushing the German back to Berlin.<sup>55</sup>

Furthermore, there are aggressive intentions. Walt states how aggressive states will most likely result in balancing alliances being formed against them, for example, with Nazi Germany. States are unlikely to bandwagon when such a state is believed to be unalterably aggressive.<sup>56</sup> Nazi Germany with its ideology, one of its aspects being the promise of a "living space in the east," (Ger. 'Lebensraum im Osten')<sup>57</sup> was poised to go head to head with the Soviet Union in a straight out total war, which eventually took place and resulted in the bloodiest war in human history.

Those mentioned above form the main parts of Walt's theory on how to measure threat, but he also takes into consideration other aspects, such as the question of strong and weak states, whether allies are already available, such as through Germany's NATO membership today, and whether there is already peace or war.

Next up is ideology. Germany and Russia were both monarchies in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> and monarchies, and liberal democracies to be precise, do generally not project their power beyond their own boundaries according to Walt. Thus, they have no reason to be at odds with another state with the same or similar type of rule. Those are examples of unifying ideologies.<sup>58</sup> After the First World War, Russia became a communist dictatorship and Germany a republic, although somewhat dysfunctional and unstable. That in

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<sup>53</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*. pp. 24-25.

<sup>54</sup> Leisering, *Historischer Weltatlas*. pp. 114-115.

<sup>55</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics - The U.S.S.R. From the Death of Lenin to the Death of Stalin."

<sup>56</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*. pp. 25-26

<sup>57</sup> Arnulf Scriba and Daniel Wosnitzka, "Lebensraum," Stiftung Deutsches Historisches Museum, <https://www.dhm.de/lemo/kapitel/der-zweite-weltkrieg/voelkermord/lebensraum.html>.

<sup>58</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*. pp. 36-37.

turn led to the rise of Nazism, which promised the return of Germany's lost territories and more in the 'Lebensraum im Osten', and the colonization of Russia and Eastern Europe under German rule.<sup>59</sup> This again put Germany on a collision course with the Soviet Union, which eventually turned into the Second World War. Certain ideologies can also divide people and lead to conflict, and Walt takes communism as an example, where people and states have to agree on a single leader, at least in theory. However, in reality that has turned out quite differently.<sup>60</sup>

Finally, there is the prospect of how foreign aid can give a state leverage over another state's decision making and thus have an effect on its policies, by giving it valuable help. This is one of the reasons why Russia aligned with France in the early 1890's.<sup>61</sup>

## 1.2 Hypothesis and Argument

Therefore, the central hypothesis for this master's thesis is: Does Walt's theory on the origins of alliances explain Germany's and Russia's historical behavior towards each other when they were not at war? Furthermore, the author wants to look at the relationship between these two countries and see if Walt's theory applies to the current status of their relationship, which is probably at an all-time low since the fall of the Soviet Union. Is Germany balancing against Russia, bandwagoning, both or even neither?

The argument of this thesis is that Walt's theory does explain their historical relationship and it does apply today as well. Germany today does not possess as a strong military as it did before, but if it still shared a border with Russia the situation might be different. Additionally, Russia has in the recent decade shown itself to be willing to use its force abroad to reach its goals, showing off some offensive intentions, which Germany does not. Germany does not seem to be balancing against Russia. However, it is a part of a greater military alliance, which takes care of that problem, which in itself is both a form of buck-passing and free-riding.

Now, why should anyone be interested in deciphering the Russo-German relationship? Firstly, Russia along with the United States are the only two powers on earth that are capable of wiping out all life on earth as we know it in a nuclear holocaust, and that on its own is a good enough reason to study Russian alliance behavior. Secondly, earlier wars between Russia and Germany have been some of the deadliest and most horrific in human history, namely the Second World War and the First World War. Thirdly, Germany and Russia have

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<sup>59</sup> Scriba and Wosnitzka, "Lebensraum".

<sup>60</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*. pp. 35-36.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. pp. 41-42.

had some ups and downs in their relationship, the earlier monarchs of both the German Empire and the Russian Empire being close cousins<sup>62</sup> and Hitler and Stalin both being brutal dictators fighting a brutal war against each other.

The outline of this master's thesis will be as follows. The first chapter is the introductory one and the second will cover methodology and how the author tends to answer the research questions. The third chapter will be a long chapter taking on Walt's theory in essence and his arguments for balancing and bandwagoning behavior and most of the components that contribute to states' alliance choices. The author will also briefly compare the theory to Neo-Realism. The fourth chapter will be the first case study, where the author takes a look at the German Empire in the 1870's and 1880's under Bismarck's leadership and examines his skill in international diplomacy. The fifth chapter is going to take on Germany from the ousting of Bismarck as chancellor in 1890 until the beginning of the First World War, but this was a period of major change in German foreign policy. The sixth chapter focuses on the case of the Weimar Republic and their somewhat friendly relations with the Soviet Union until the ascent of Adolf Hitler and the National Socialists to power. In the seventh chapter, the author intends to apply Walt's theory to the current status of affairs between Russia and Germany, but still in a similar manner as with the former cases. Lastly, the author will present his conclusion in the eighth chapter and some of his own thoughts.

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<sup>62</sup> Christian Twente, "Wilhelm und die Welt," in *Die Deutschen* (Mainz: ZDF, 2008).

## II. Methodology

For this thesis the most straight forward method to work with is a case study methodology. Four different cases will be taken for evaluation in relation to different components of Walt's theory and then eventually assessed so see whether they prove or disprove Walt's theory. This will be done by comparing e.g. the states' total population and population trends, their industrial capabilities, output and transportation capabilities. Their military power will be assessed primarily using the total number of troops during peacetime and some of their military hardware. The geographical location of the states will be looked at as well along with their respective aggressive intentions. Further factors will be taken into account when considered relevant, for example, availability of allies and ideology.

The primary source for this master's thesis is Stephen Walt's book *The Origins of Alliances* which first came out in 1987 or more specifically the first chapter, where he introduces the different factors and sources of threat that have to be taken into account.

Other sources will be utilized to explain the historical evidence, which will be compiled to reliably assess each state's capabilities in each different historical case. For this purpose the author tried to find as many and as varied sources as possible. One thing has to be noted beforehand and that is that most of the sources are online sources. However, the author tried to make certain that they were both reliable and of good quality. The author will try to keep some variety as well, but for many basic historical facts, an online encyclopedia like Britannica.com will be utilized among others. Some printed sources will be used as well, when necessary and available, but these are somewhat scarce as the timeframe since the author started working on this dissertation has been quite narrow. A couple of German documentaries have been looked at as well regarding German history in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early 20<sup>th</sup>. A few historical documents have been assembled as well, in English, German and Russian, mostly for basic statistics, for example, regarding population numbers at certain times. It should be noted that the author speaks both German and English fluently and has some working knowledge of basic Russian. However, most of the sources will be in English, simply because of the availability of them in that language, but some have been gathered in the other languages as well, when deemed necessary.

The main theory that will be the focus of this thesis is Walt's theory on alliance formation and behavior, which he presents in his book *The Origins of Alliances*. Other theories may be taken into account for brief comparison with Walt's theory, for example, Neo-Realism.

The citation style used is according to the *Chicago Manual of Style* which is the recommended style to be used within the Faculty of Political Science at the University of Iceland. All citations will be in footnotes for ease of access and then a complete bibliography will be found at the end.

### III. The Origins of Alliances

The basis of this thesis is Stephen Walt's alliance theory, which he presented in his work *The Origins of Alliances*. It should make it easier to determine both the historical relationship between Russia and Germany and shed a light on their current relationship. The purpose of this chapter is not to discuss Walt's theory in detail or to try to either prove or disprove it, but rather to clarify his main points and argument for further dissection of this very important bilateral relationship. The theory is divided into many small pieces that fall into place to make one solid theory, which gives one a good vantage point to be able to assess why two countries decide to rely on each other or why those two countries are at odds with each other.

#### 3.1 Balancing vs. Bandwagoning

There are two main components in Walt's theory and they entail some interesting thoughts and some contrasting views on how international alliance formation works and how international relations in general function. The terms which Walt uses to describe them is firstly "bandwagoning" and secondly "balancing." Bandwagoning means that a country sides with a threat in order to appease it,<sup>63</sup> and balancing means that a country forms alliances or otherwise closer ties with other states in order to, as the word implies, 'balance' against the threat.<sup>64</sup> This forms the core of his theory and a part of the research question, of whether Germany is trying to balance against Russia. His theory then further examines some different aspects of what affects a state's decision in allying with other states or the other way around.

First it is necessary to define the terms balancing and bandwagoning. As previously stated, bandwagoning describes the phenomenon when a state aligns itself with a supposed threat in order to either gain something from it or simply to fulfill its security needs and thus avert possible conflict with said state. However, when a state does bandwagon with a supposed threat – for the sake of argument a great power – the state with which it does bandwagon will have to keep up the threat level, or supremacy in a certain field, so that the lesser states will continue to view it as the best choice. However, if the great power does begin to falter and it becomes clear that the state has lost its supremacy and is not "invincible" any more, then the lesser state has a tendency to defect to the other side at any opportune moment. The basic notion is that nations are attracted to strength and nations might choose to bandwagon with a

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<sup>63</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*. pp. 19-21.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid. pp. 18-19.

potential hegemon to share the spoils of his victory or success. Thus bandwagoning behavior can be described as somewhat opportunistic in nature as states seem to align with the one who has the most power. According to Walt, this approach has been tried a few times throughout history but with varying degree of success and sometimes backfiring horribly. States were threatening lesser states into rethinking their alliance choices or trying to persuade them into simply staying out of it, but this tended to have the effect of pushing them closer to the "enemy." One country may start boosting its military to persuade another state to stay away from its matters and not intervene, but it might have the opposite effect of starting an arms race.<sup>65</sup>

Balancing is the term for when a state sees a threat in another state but deliberately takes a stance against it, for example, by allying with other states to counter that threat and hopefully become stronger as a whole, and possibly overwhelm the threat. Usually states want to consider that before a certain threat becomes too strong for them to handle. Contrary to bandwagoning, states that choose to balance may join an alliance against a potential hegemon as the great power cannot easily dominate it. In other words, a group of states of similar size and power will have more individual influence on the alliance rather than just following orders from the hegemon, which would happen if they choose to bandwagon. Walt claims with this that joining the weaker side is the preferred choice that states make, and it all holds hands with traditional theory on the balance of power in international relations.<sup>66</sup> In short, balancing is the choice of joining the weaker side whereas bandwagoning is the choice of joining the (already) stronger side.

## **3.2 Four Sources of Threat**

Walt has a list of different aspects that affect a state's choice to do one of the two and firstly he talks about a few main sources of threat. Sheer power is a part of the whole decision making process, but it is not the only factor. The aspects that he lists are divided into four components, those being (1) aggregate power, (2) geographic proximity, (3) offensive power and (4) aggressive intentions.

### **3.2.1 Aggregate Power**

Aggregate power simply describes the total amount of resources that are available to a nation and that factors in the total population of the country, number of troops and military hardware available, industrial might and also its technological prowess. As the country

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid. pp. 19-21.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. pp. 18-19.

possesses more of each, the greater threat it is able to pose. Therefore, having less population or being just a minor military power does not pose such a great threat compared to someone who has all of the previously stated aspects. Yet such a great power would not necessarily have to be a threat in the end, because states with such powers have the abilities to either punish their enemies or even reward their friends.<sup>67</sup>

### **3.2.2 Geographic Proximity**

Geographic proximity is clearly one of the more crucial aspects of this list, as states that are much closer to each other are usually the ones who pose a threat and are as a result much greater threats than those that are located much further away, for example, on a different continent. It is more likely that states make alliances to respond to threats that are closer, rather than some different one much further away. Walt says that when a threat arises, which is close, and states choose to balance, a situation arises that resembles a checkerboard when it comes to alliances. The logic in there is that "neighbors of neighbors are friends",<sup>68</sup> and thus the balancing alliance might end up encircling the threat. However, when a state chooses to bandwagon with the threat, the great power might have shown its power to make others obey and the small state in question might simply be too powerless and vulnerable that it eventually decides to team with the threat instead of balancing against it. This results in the phenomenon that is known as a "sphere of influence." Walt takes Finland as an example, "whose name has undeservedly become synonymous with bandwagoning"<sup>69</sup> but adds that this was only the result of being beaten twice in a war within a very short period of time by the Soviet Union.<sup>70</sup> This is also known as 'Finlandization', but it can also apply to other countries in certain situations, like Mexico being located just to the south of the United States and the position of both Switzerland and Denmark, being located adjacent to Germany, specifically in earlier not-so-peaceful times.<sup>71</sup>

### **3.2.3 Offensive Power**

Even though offensive power is directly linked to geographic proximity, they are not the same. States are more likely to provoke others into balancing against them if their offensive capabilities are large, as opposed to those that do not possess such abilities. Offensive power is also similar to aggregate power, although here again it is still not identical. Offensive power

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid. pp. 22-23.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid. p. 23.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid. p. 24.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. pp. 23-24.

<sup>71</sup> Leisering, *Historischer Weltatlas*. p. 107.



is basically the ability to threaten the sovereignty of other states at an acceptable cost and it also takes into account that state's ability to turn its resources or aggregate power into real offensive power. Walt argues that when states are located close to a state with great offensive power, those states are usually susceptible to balancing rather than bandwagoning. However, in certain situations it may be a better option to do the latter, as potential allies for a state that is located right next to a great power might be too far away to offer any help in time, should the occasion arise. States in this situation may simply be forced to accept bandwagoning with the threat, as joining a balancing alliance does not seem a viable choice. This is also how spheres of influence come to be.<sup>72</sup>

### **3.2.4 Aggressive Intentions**

Aggressive intentions is probably one of the more important factors at play in states' decision to balance, and those that are seen as aggressive are more likely to provoke a balancing alliance against themselves, and even lesser states will do so as well. Even if states do not intend on conquering others, the perception of intent plays a major role in states' decision making. States that are also perceived as nothing but aggressive are very unlikely to make other states bandwagon with them, and even if a state would bandwagon with the threat, it would eventually just become a victim itself, as it would not have the capabilities to alter the great power's intentions. It is thus a better choice to balance against the threat. All this implies that it is not just sheer power that makes states seem threatening, but the actual threat itself and that it has greater leverage over states' decision making in alliance choices.<sup>73</sup> In the end "the greater the threat, the greater the probability that the vulnerable state will seek an alliance."<sup>74</sup>

## **3.3 Additional Factors**

After listing these four main sources of threat, Walt goes on to discuss some other factors that do not count into the threat equation, but certainly play a role. He claims that balancing behavior is generally favored over bandwagoning, which according to Walt only happens under "certain identifiable conditions."<sup>75</sup> Since the thirty years war, the great powers have shown a tendency towards balancing against a rising hegemon, and basically every time a great power has attempted to reach the status of a hegemon, it has usually been met with a balancing alliance to thwart the threat. Walt claims that balancing behavior is the preferred

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<sup>72</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*. pp. 24-25.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. pp. 25-26.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. p. 26.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid. p. 28.

choice of the two, as no one can be certain what the others have in mind. Additionally, placing one's trust in a rising hegemon and thus going with the bandwagoning principle means that a state is placing its trust in the great power's continued prevalence and increasing the resources available to it. Furthermore, it is safer to balance, because, as was just noted, bandwagoning means to put one's trust in the continued prevalence of the hegemon, something that cannot be guaranteed forever.<sup>76</sup>

### **3.3.1 Strong States vs. Weak States**

Walt goes on to explain the phenomenon of weak states versus strong states. It basically says that the weaker the state is, the more likely it is to bandwagon. As some states are so weak that they simply cannot have any effect on the outcome of a conflict, they have to choose the winning side. If they would join the opposing coalition they would not add much to their power, and in a conflict with a great power it could suffer immensely. Thus it makes no sense for a weak state to join a balancing alliance. It is only when they have the possibility to affect the outcome that they might find it rational to join it. A strong state, on the contrary, can have a great effect on a coalition and it can actually turn it into a winning one simply by joining in. It is also likely that they will be greatly rewarded for their contribution. As previously stated, states are generally more concerned about states and events occurring in close proximity, but weaker states even more so. A weak state will follow the balancing formula when threatened by other states of similar capabilities, but when the threat is much stronger, then bandwagoning occurs and the temptation for that is even greater if the great power is capable of strong and swift action, i.e. has great offensive power.<sup>77</sup>

### **3.3.2 Availability of Allies**

Next comes the availability of allies, which is going to be one of the more crucial components of this chapter. Clearly, states are forced to bandwagon if allies are simply not available. States generally put their trust in their own resources to balance against a threat instead of relying on support from allies. But they are even more likely to do that if they are assured that they will have assistance from their allies. Good communication between countries in an alliance is also crucial as it will make it easier for them to recognize their shared interests and enable easier cooperation. Walt also points out that when weak states see no possible outside help, they will be forced to side with the threat. However, there is danger associated with alliances and that is the possibility of relying too much on them. This is

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid. pp. 28-29.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid. pp. 29-30.

known as "free-riding" on the efforts of others, but this might be the only real solution for weak states that cannot really contribute anything at all to begin with. For great powers there is the danger of "buck-passing," which is relying too much on one's allies of similar capabilities to face the threat. Both of those are in no way a form of bandwagoning, but it does hint at that balancing behavior is more likely to take place when members of an alliance are not assured about their allies' unconditional loyalty. Again, this explains how a sphere of influence around a great power is created and it also shows that strong states neighboring other strong states are more likely to balance, but weaker states in close proximity to a strong state will bandwagon. They simply cannot stand up to the threat and potential allies may be too far away and too slow to react to any potential conflict situation.<sup>78</sup>

### **3.3.3 Peace or War**

Whether there is peace or war of course affects states' decision making. Walt claims that states are more likely to balance during peacetime or in the early stages of war, but later as the outcome of the war is clearing up, states might defect over from the losing side to the winning side. However, when peace has returned after the war, states will start balancing against each other once again, and so victorious alliances have a good chance of breaking up after a war. This is a recurring phenomenon in history. Balancing is thus the prevalent tendency in international politics and bandwagoning is merely an opportunistic exception.<sup>79</sup>

### **3.3.4 Ideology**

Finally, Walt talks about the effects of ideology on alliance behavior and he begins by talking about Hans Morgenthau's "ideological solidarity," meaning that states that share a common ideology or cultural or political traits are more likely to ally than not. Walt notes that this is in stark contrast to what has just been discussed here above, namely that states view alliances as a response to external threat. He continues that most realist scholars do not find ideology to be a driving force behind alliance choices. During the Cold War, Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam of Ethiopia talked about the "natural" alignment of socialist states towards each other, and in similar matters, Ronald Reagan talked about the United States and its allies having rediscovered their values. But would states with similar ideology automatically gravitate towards each other? States might choose that as a way of defending their political principles. If statesmen see their own system as "good", why would they not want to join others with similar ideals and protect them? States with similar traits have a

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid. pp. 30-31.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. pp. 31-32.

tendency to fear each other less, reinforcing the statement above. Aligning oneself with similar states might also be a way of legitimizing one's own weak regime by showing that it is a part of a much larger and a popular international movement, and at the same time appeasing the people back home. Lastly, an ideology might predict or prescribe alignment, with the most obvious example of this being Marxism-Leninism.<sup>80</sup>

However, ideology cannot always be a unifying factor. Especially when the ideology calls for all its members to obey and follow the authority of one single leader, then it will likely result in a quarrel among the members rather than cohesion. Walt states that this is somewhat paradoxical, and goes on to explain what he means. Member states must agree on who exactly takes the leading role in this movement, as the ideology gives them the basis for legitimacy. However, this leading member might be a foreign power and the state will just have to accept that, which in turn might make the state's autonomy feel as if it is under threat from other members of the same movement. As the authority of the leading state or group depends on their interpretation of the ideology then ideological infighting is likely to occur. This could get so intense that the ones who do not agree with what the leader says will be ousted and deemed traitors or heretics. Walt takes international communism as an example and that is a prime symbol of this paradoxical outcome of the ideological cohesion. Before the Second World War, communist movements around the world depended on guidance from Moscow, but as communist states sprung up around the world after the war, Moscow lost its supremacy over the others. Communist states have had conflicts and even conducted wars between each other, but the only part of the world in which communist ideology did remain somewhat cohesive was in Eastern Europe, but that was mainly due to direct Soviet presence.<sup>81</sup> That then fell apart with the end of the Cold War.

However, this set of problems is not present within monarchies or liberal democracies. As their legitimacy is not based on an ideology that transcends country borders and nationalities and does not require the leadership of a sole leader and thus liberal states are not a threat to each other. The people also have a say in matters in such states. It is a similar situation with monarchies as the power of the king, for example, is justified by his divine right to rule. Both of these types of states only have legitimate rule over their own territory and have no such right over the domain of other states and as such, those states are usually not divided by ideological infighting. Those states will actually be more willing to collaborate when the legitimacy of one of them is under threat, which might become a reason for them to

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid. pp. 33-35.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid. pp. 35-36.

eventually make an alliance. There are quite a few examples of this behavior, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century between the empires of Europe joining together to fight liberal movements and today the very stable peace between the various liberal democracies.<sup>82</sup> This part might have something in common with Immanuel Kant's Democratic Peace Theory, which in very short says that liberal democracies will not wage war on one another.<sup>83</sup>

Walt further discusses how important ideological solidarity is in alliance formation and explains that if ideology is in fact a determining factor, then seeking friends and identifying foes should be fairly easy. A strong state driven by ideology could call upon support from its similarly thinking allies to boost its own capabilities. Walt claims that states will follow their own ideological preferences when they feel pretty secure, but will jump into any alliance when they feel threatened. Therefore, the need for security trumps ideological preferences and such alliances are unlikely to survive when some better solution has presented itself. He states that if ideology is in fact a factor towards more security, then the effect of ideology in the (back then) bipolar world be even greater, since it is supposedly the most stable world. When weak governments try to use ideology to boost their legitimacy with the local population then it may also have an effect on their alliance choices. The regime might follow the path of aligning itself with a larger group in an attempt to convince its citizens that it is rightful and good. Additionally, regimes that seem uncertain about their ideology seem to have a tendency to join alliances based on ideology. However, Walt notes that the importance of ideology when it comes to the speeches of statesmen is possibly somewhat exaggerated and that they are not to be taken too seriously, as they will probably talk kindly about their allies and shun their ideological foes, for many different reasons, domestic and international. Furthermore, he says that many ideological alliances might only appear so on the surface if they were formed to counter a newly emerged hostile ideology and that weak regimes may bandwagon if it seems certain that a new ideological movement seems to be gaining momentum.<sup>84</sup>

### **3.3.5 Foreign Aid**

In the end Walt touches on what effect foreign aid has on alliance formation and he begins by saying that either military or economic aid is certainly a prerequisite for an effective alliance, and the more the aid, the closer the resulting alliance will be. The one state that supplies the aid is very likely to have leverage over its recipient, and this has unsurprisingly

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid. pp. 36-37.

<sup>83</sup> Azar Gat, "The Democratic Peace Theory Reframed: The Impact of Modernity," *World Politics* 58, no. 1 (2005). p. 73.

<sup>84</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*. pp. 37-40.

been used throughout history. However, Walt does not agree that aid is the main tool in alliance formation and says that it ignores other aspects such as that military or economic aid is only accepted and offered, when it is in the interest of both states to do so. Eventually, Walt explains that the more valuable the asset or the form the aid takes, the greater monopoly the supplier has over the recipient. The concept is very simple, as it implies that when aid is especially valuable and the one looking for it has nowhere to go, the eventual supplier will have more leverage and influence over the recipient. Walt takes as an example the relationship between Russia and Germany is it was in 1892 when Russia aligned itself with France, as a direct result of French loans to Russia.<sup>85</sup>

### **3.3.6 Asymmetrical Dependence, Transnational Penetration and Open vs Closed Societies**

Another small aspect is asymmetrical dependence, which is when dependence is mutual, then both states are obligated to adapt to their partner's interest, but when one states faces an imminent threat and needs aid from another state that is not under threat, then the influence of the supplier is very likely to increase over the recipient. In other words, when one ally does not need the other, his leverage over the other will increase.

A couple of more aspects worth noting are transnational penetration and the difference between open and closed societies. The former is mostly important as one of its parts has to do with foreign officials within one's own ranks who can affect the decision making of the state and Walt takes an example of the Turkish decision to join the central powers, as it apparently had a great deal to do with the fact that a German officer was serving as an inspector-general of the Turkish army.<sup>86</sup>

However, such penetration (and many other forms of it) will of course be much more effective in open societies rather than closed ones. "When power is diffuse, when state and society are more accessible to propaganda from abroad or to lobbyists representing foreign interests, or censorship is rare, transnational penetration is more likely to work. Thus one would expect a democratic state such as the United States to be more susceptible to penetration than an authoritarian regime such as the Soviet Union."<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid. pp. 41-43.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid. p. 47.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. pp. 46-48.

### 3.4 Summary

To sum up his theory Walt talks about the two different worlds that balancing or bandwagoning behavior represents. There is plenty of security in a world where balancing is the norm, ideology has little effect, and foreign aid or penetration are no great causes for alignment, then it is very difficult for any single states to achieve hegemony. In a world where bandwagoning is the norm and all of the above actually exerts more effect on alliance choices, then hegemony will be much easier to reach, although it might be a little more fragile, and great powers will view their own security with suspicion.<sup>88</sup>

### 3.5 A Brief Comparison with Neo-Realism

One of the most dominant theories in international relations is Kenneth Waltz' Neo-Realism and it is almost impossible to write a thesis on international politics without at least taking it into consideration. One of Neo-Realism's main concepts is the status of anarchy in the world where there is no global government, only nations that make the best of the situation as they can. Another concept, which has a lot in common with Walt's alliance theory, is the balance of power in international politics, which can be further divided into situations of multipolarity, bipolarity or unipolarity. Multipolarity is the circumstances where there are many states that possess roughly equals capabilities and thus they have similar power, for example, the run up to the First World War, whereas in a bipolar world the power is mostly distributed between two major powers. An example of that would be the Cold War with most of the power divided between the United States and the Soviet Union.<sup>89</sup> Unipolarity is the condition where most of the power is focused under one state and some have argued that the post-Cold War world is an example of that, with the United States as the world hegemon.

Neo-Realism thus mainly focuses on the distribution of power and how states react to it and the more power states possess, the greater a threat they pose others. However, Walt with his alliance theory suggests that by defining states' capabilities in terms of threat rather than simple power, one can gain a better understanding of what effects the alliance preferences of states. Power alone is not the only reason why one powerful state should be feared but rather how that state uses that power and how it presents itself to the outside world. With that logic a great part of the world should be balancing against the power of the United States in the modern world. However, only a handful of states are in reality doing exactly that and so

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid. p. 49.

<sup>89</sup> Elif Dibek, "What Are the Basic Concepts of Neorealism?," ResearchGate GmbH,  
[https://www.researchgate.net/post/What\\_are\\_the\\_basic\\_concepts\\_of\\_neorealism](https://www.researchgate.net/post/What_are_the_basic_concepts_of_neorealism).

Walt's theory might be better suited to explain why that is the case. Even though Neo-Realism does go into the distribution of states' capabilities in different aspects, Walt's alliance theory goes much further into detail on what exactly those capabilities are and how they would constitute a threat.

### **3.6 Case I – Bismarck's Germany and the Russian Empire**

After the unification of Germany in 1871, Germany as a whole was now a major power to be reckoned with. However, under the leadership of its quite modest and realistic-thinking chancellor Otto von Bismarck, Germany sought not to disturb its neighbors and rather build up good relations, especially with Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Russia. With Germany now the center balancing point in Europe it had to play its game carefully as not to instigate too much fear in its neighbors and that is exactly what Bismarck did, even though Germany was now the most powerful nation in continental Europe.<sup>90</sup>

Bismarck was clearly balancing against French power, which was by then already less than that of Germany. However, if one takes the balancing point of view, he may have been balancing against Germany's most imminent or potential future threat, which is certainly France bitter over their losses in the Franco-Prussian War and the territorial loss of Alsace-Lorraine.<sup>91</sup>

But how could one employ the bandwagoning hypothesis in this case? That is very difficult, however, not impossible, as Germany under Bismarck was in no way trying to reach hegemony and rather focused on staying friendly with its neighbors by pursuing the status quo. However, Austria-Hungary may have in a way bandwagoned with Germany as it was now the lesser partner in their respective relationship, although Germany was not really a great threat in itself to the Dual-Monarchy. One of Bismarck's greatest fears was that Germany would have to fight a two front war against both France and Russia in the future, and that most likely prompted the chancellor to align with the other great threat: Russia. However, that may in itself also simply have been an act to further balance against France and further isolate them.<sup>92</sup>

If one goes by the four sources of threat that Walt covers in his work, that of aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive power and aggressive intentions, one could try to assess the outcome of Bismarck's policies and their effect on stability in Europe. Germany's

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<sup>90</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Germany - Germany from 1871 to 1918."

<sup>91</sup> C. C. Eckhardt, "The Alsace-Lorraine Question," *The Scientific Monthly* 6, no. 5 (1918). p. 231.

<sup>92</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Otto von Bismarck - Imperial Chancellor," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).



aggregate power in the 1870's was probably somewhat more than the power of France was, e.g. more manpower, good transportation (which had, for example, been convenient a few years earlier during the Austro-Prussian war of 1866),<sup>93</sup> and a strong economy with a growing heavy industry.<sup>94</sup> Thus the combined might of Germany and not just Prussia would have been a serious threat to any neighbor of Germany, had it planned to go to war in the 1870's (not counting the Franco-Prussian War at the start of the decade, although a very good example of its capabilities).

The geographical proximity between Germany and France is obvious. That is however irrelevant, since France and Germany are simply neighboring countries and it goes without saying that those two states will be watching each other closely and be fearful of the other's intentions. It is a similar situation with Germany and Russia sharing a significantly longer border.<sup>95</sup> They will have concerns about their neighbor. However, this must not have been a source of enmity between them, as they also shared a problem across the borders, namely Polish nationalists, which was the direct result of the partitions of Poland at the end of the 18th century.<sup>96</sup> Their proximity may thus have been a source for cooperation.

The offensive power of Germany had been clearly demonstrated in the Franco-Prussian War and it was well suited to attack and occupy another country with acceptable losses. However, there is a question whether the Russian army could have done the same. Against Germany they would probably not have fared well, but Germany would probably not have fared well either against a huge country like Russia. One possibility is that they may only have taken the Polish part and not been able to march further. This factor thus seems to be nullified, but this will be further scrutinized in a later chapter.

Germany's aggressive intentions were at this point, under Bismarck's rule, practically none. Germany was united in single state (excluding Austria) and pressed no further territorial claims.<sup>97</sup> Thus Germany's intentions were not expansion and conquest, but rather appeasement and state building. So if Walt's argument is true regarding Russia, then it should have been balancing against Germany since it was clearly the most powerful nation on its borders. However, they were on good terms with each other and thus Russia may have "sort

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<sup>93</sup> Christian Twente, "Ludwig II. und die Bayern," in *Die Deutschen* (Mainz: ZDF, 2010).

<sup>94</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Germany - Germany from 1871 to 1918."

<sup>95</sup> Leisering, *Historischer Weltatlas*, p. 96.

<sup>96</sup> Adam Zamoyski, "The Problem with Poland's New Nationalism," *Foreign Policy* (2016), <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/01/27/the-problem-with-polands-new-nationalism/>.

<sup>97</sup> Christian Twente, "Bismarck und das Deutsche Reich," in *Die Deutschen* (Mainz: ZDF, 2008).

of" chosen to bandwagon with Germany, not to intimidate them, but they may have been balancing against a mutual threat at this time, which was Polish nationalism, among others.

### **3.7 Case II – Wilhelmine Germany and the Russian Empire**

When Emperor Wilhelm II came to power in 1888 he did not want to rule "under Bismarck," so he sacked him shortly thereafter in 1890<sup>98</sup> and thus sowed the seeds for Germany's geo-political isolation. Shortly thereafter Russia broke its alliance with Germany and was now on good terms with France.<sup>99</sup> The new German Emperor had plans for Germany and those did not go well with the other European powers that slowly began to regard Germany with suspicion and eventually came to see it as the greatest threat in Europe.<sup>100</sup> Wilhelmine Germany chose the path of trying to become the hegemon of Europe with imperialistic ambitions, while Russia and France simultaneously were balancing against its power and potential threat. By the outbreak of the First World War, Germany was a naval power almost rivalling the United Kingdom in power, but that was the failed policy of Admiral von Tirpitz that if Germany was to become stronger, it would thwart a possible British intervention in any future conflict. This of course had exactly the opposite effect, and started a naval arms race between Germany and the UK.<sup>101</sup> This, among other things, painted the image of Germany as a great threat in Europe and it is no wonder that France and Russia and eventually the UK decided to balance against it in what would later become known as the Entente.<sup>102</sup>

Applying Walt's theory, Germany's aggregate power was quite extensive with a fairly large population (about 56 million just in 1900)<sup>103</sup> and again a strong economy. It was also highly industrialized with a vast and effective transportation network throughout the entire country. Therefore, Germany's potential for waging total war, with all the resources it had at its disposal, was clearly tremendous. This was then evidenced during the First World War,<sup>104</sup> when Germany was able to mount offensive operations in the west and then hold on to those

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*. p. 41.

<sup>100</sup> Twente, "Wilhelm und die Welt."

<sup>101</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*. pp. 24-25.

<sup>102</sup> Twente, "Wilhelm und die Welt."

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "World War I - Forces and Resources of the Combatant Nations in 1914," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

territorial gains while simultaneously beating Russia repeatedly in the east.<sup>105</sup> Germany also had to dispose some of its resources to assist its main ally, Austria-Hungary.<sup>106</sup>

Yet again, aggregate power does certainly pose a threat, but more is needed. Germany's aggressive intentions under Wilhelm II, combined with its potential resources, was certainly something to be afraid of. Many saw that the future role of Germany was to dominate the European continent and the Kaiser seeking territorial expansion and the buildup of its Navy to rival that of the British Royal Navy. Thus the potential for threat was definitely there. When it comes to offensive power, then one could not be sure of anyone's power before the war broke out, but it turned out that Germany's offensive power was immense, as the above example of fighting simultaneously on multiple fronts clearly shows, without planning that strategy beforehand. Thus the offensive power of Germany was vast.

Russia's power was more defensive as it could call upon massive manpower reserves, but the offensive power of Russia was very limited, shown by the fact that their armies barely made it into eastern Prussia before being beaten back by the German army.<sup>107</sup> Russia's aggregate power at the same time was probably not as great as Germany's, specifically in terms of industrial might and capabilities, but it certainly had more than enough manpower (more than double that of Germany) and potentially growing industry and a huge landmass. But all that is only good for defensive purposes if it does not have the available logistics and offensive capabilities.

Therefore, Russia clearly considered Germany to be its greatest threat and thus chose to ally itself with both France and later Britain to form the Triple Entente.<sup>108</sup> The boundary between Russia and Germany/Prussia had not changed for roughly a hundred years or so,<sup>109</sup> which combined with Germany's ambitions makes Russia's concerns fairly comprehensible as evidenced by their geographic proximity to one another. However, Russia is not completely free of blame, as the pronounced Pan-Slavist movements in Eastern Europe that wanted Russia to become the leader of European spiritual and cultural affairs. Yet, that could not be done without liberating the occupied Slavic territories under Austro-Hungarian and Turkish rule (in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century). Russia did not officially support this movement, but some of its

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<sup>105</sup> "World War I - the Western and Eastern Fronts, 1915," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>106</sup> "World War I - Serbia and the Salonika Expedition, 1915-1917," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>107</sup> "World War I - the Eastern and Other Fronts, 1914," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>108</sup> "Triple Entente," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2009).

<sup>109</sup> Leisering, *Historischer Weltatlas*. pp. 92-93.

ministers were affiliated with it.<sup>110</sup> This put it at odds with both Germany, with its sizable Polish population in its eastern territories, and Austria-Hungary, with its vast and numerous Slavic minorities.<sup>111</sup> This had formerly also been its driving force in opposing the Ottoman Empire.<sup>112</sup> This should all be evidence of Russian balancing behavior against Germany and will be examined further in the coming chapters.

### 3.8 Case III – The Weimar Republic and the Soviet Union

The end of the First World War and its aftermath saw the fall of four empires. Firstly, the Russian Empire was split in a bloody civil war, which ended with the establishment of the first communist state in the world, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, simply known as either the Soviet Union or the USSR.<sup>113</sup> Secondly, the German Empire became a republic, but with all of its colonies split between the victors. It also suffered a great territorial loss in Europe, mostly in the east, which went to the newly created state of Poland.<sup>114</sup> The Austro-Hungarian Empire dissolved into many different nation states and the newly established Austrian Republic was only but a shadow of its former self and now dreamt of uniting with Germany, even going as far as naming itself "German-Austria."<sup>115</sup> Lastly, the Ottoman Empire finally fell, resulting in a war with Greece, and resulted in the loss of their Arab colonial possessions in the Middle East and signaling the birth of the modern nation state of Turkey.<sup>116</sup>

The end of the First World War was a time of major changes. It was during the so called Weimar era of Germany that it fostered a somewhat good relationship with Russia, or more precisely the Soviet Union. Many reasons could lie behind such an action. Both were relatively new states in their current form and both were rather vulnerable from interference from abroad. They regarded themselves as victims of the victors from the war and they had great economic ties to each other as well. Additionally, they were both in stark opposition to the new state of Poland.<sup>117</sup> The two states also cooperated heavily on military matters. All this

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<sup>110</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Pan-Slavism," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2013).

<sup>111</sup> Leisering, *Historischer Weltatlas*. p. 99.

<sup>112</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Pan-Slavism."

<sup>113</sup> "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics - The Civil War and the Creation of the U.S.S.R.," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>114</sup> "Treaty of Versailles."

<sup>115</sup> Jürgen Koppensteiner, *Österreich - Ein landeskundliches Lesebuch*, 4 ed. (Vienna: Praesens, 2010). pp. 46-47.

<sup>116</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Turkey - Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish War of Independence, 1919–23," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>117</sup> Museum Berlin-Karlshorst, "German-Soviet Relations 1917 - 1933," Museum Berlin-Karlshorst e.V., <http://museum-karlshorst.de/en/component/content/article/16.html>.

laid the basis for a fairly good relationship between the two states, although ideologically they were not very coherent. However, this did not strain the relationship.<sup>118</sup>

Again applying Walt's theory it should be rather clear that Germany and the Soviet Union were on good terms with each other from 1922 until 1933. Germany's aggregate power during this time was very limited due to the restrictions of the Treaty of Versailles, as its standing military was limited to 100.000 men and great restrictions were on its navy and air force and its production of other military vehicles.<sup>119</sup> At the same time, the Soviet Union was not under any specific restrictions, but only due its own weaknesses as before. Its population had suffered greatly during the First World War and during the ongoing Russian Civil War, and so the population of the Soviet Union had most likely shrunk somewhat after the wars, but it still had a much larger population than Germany. Its natural resources were tremendous but again the Soviet Union was nowhere near as industrialized as Germany, just as the Russian Empire had been.

The offensive power of both states was now severely reduced, in Germany due to the Treaty of Versailles and in the Soviet Union after years of a bloody civil war. However, the latter was able to field a much larger military as it was not bound by restrictions. Its offensive power compared to Germany was thus much greater. However, with the resurrection of Poland they no longer shared a common border and thus they were not as much concerned about each other as they had been before, and as Walt puts it "neighbors of neighbors are friends".<sup>120</sup> Therefore, Poland was effectively the thorn in the sides of both states, which eventually unified them in their opposition to it.

When it comes to ideology though, they were far from being on the same page. Germany was a Republic (nominally at least and somewhat unstable), and the Soviet Union was a proletarian dictatorship. However, they did not really fear each other per se, rather the system that the other represented. This ideological difference did not affect their relationship to a great extent as they stayed rather friendly towards each other. It was only with the advent of Adolf Hitler to power and his National Socialist Party that relations got strained, which eventually ended with the bloodiest war in human history.

So if Walt's argument is true, neither state was balancing against the other. Germany might have been using its ties with the Soviet Union to secure its place with a possible ally in

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<sup>118</sup> Arvo Vercamer and Jason Pipes, "German Military in the Soviet Union 1918-1933," Feldgrau.com, <http://www.feldgrau.com/ger-sov.html>.

<sup>119</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Treaty of Versailles."

<sup>120</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*. p. 23.

European politics after the First World War. At the same time, the Soviet Union really needed the technical expertise of Germany to rebuild itself, mainly its military. It also needed an ally that could stand by it in its fight against the capitalist West, even though Germany itself was very capitalistic in nature. Germany was thus an important asset to the Soviets, which would give Germany leverage over Soviet decisions. However, the balancing hypothesis seems to be stronger in this case, with the Soviet Union balancing against the West together with Germany.

### **3.9 Case IV – Germany and Russia Today**

If Walt's argument is true for the modern state of affairs between Germany and Russia by using the balancing hypothesis, then Germany should actively be working on balancing against Russia. However, Germany today might be suffering from free-riding on the efforts of the United States, as it is the greatest military power within NATO and the world.<sup>121</sup> In the light of recent events regarding Russia, Ukraine and Syria and as pressure from NATO's recommended minimum military expenditure of 2% of the GDP,<sup>122</sup> then Germany might be beginning to bolster themselves and starting to work more on its own security affairs by taking more responsibility, obviously in cooperation with the US and the rest of NATO. Leaving that alliance would be very counterproductive from the balancing point of view and simply unrealistic from almost any perspective.

Germany today could hardly be said to be bandwagoning with anyone, not even the US, even though they are clearly the sole military superpower in the world. The US could easily pose the greatest threat to any state in the world with their military, but Germany has been very reluctant to follow the lead of the United States in recent times, for example, by opposing the invasion of Iraq and refusing to join the military intervention in Libya in 2011. On the other hand, Germany has been rather active in military operations in Afghanistan and assisting in training the modern Iraqi army.<sup>123</sup>

Turning to the balancing hypothesis, Germany, however, as the most powerful member of the EU<sup>124</sup> might be using it as a counterweight to balance against the power of the US (in a Neo-Realist way) and against the threat that Russia poses, and if it were to gain more power

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<sup>121</sup> GlobalFirepower.com, "Global Firepower Military Ranks - 2016".

<sup>122</sup> NATO, "Wales Summit Declaration," news release, 5 September 2014, [http://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/official\\_texts\\_112964.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm).

<sup>123</sup> Johannes Stern, "Germany Plans to Expand Its Military Operations in the Middle East," International Committee of the Fourth International, <http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2014/10/25/germ-o25.html>.

<sup>124</sup> Stuart Jeffries, "Is Germany Too Powerful for Europe?," *The Guardian* (2013), <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/mar/31/is-germany-too-powerful-for-europe>.

within the EU, it might be well on its way to rivaling the US. The author finds this possibility rather far-fetched and unrealistic. But if Germany would choose to tread a more Neo-Imperialistic path towards hegemony, that would be the most obvious way.

The next four chapters will present some figures and empirical data for all of the cases above to support the central argument of this paper, beginning with a united Germany under Bismarck's rule and his relationship with Russia, then going on to Germany under Wilhelm II, after that to the Weimar Republic and the Soviet Union and lastly the current states of affairs.

## IV. Case I – Bismarck's Germany and the Russian Empire

A recently unified Germany under Bismarck's chancellorship enjoyed rather good relations with the Russian Empire, as stated previously, as a result of the chancellor's ambitions to keep the peace in Europe. A united Germany would still possess some vast capabilities, both militarily and through their heavy industry. This case is marked by the time when Bismarck was in office in Germany, which is from the unification in 1871 until Bismarck's ousting out of office by Emperor Wilhelm II in 1890.<sup>125</sup>

### 4.1 Sources of Threat

#### 4.1.1 Aggregate Power

Both Russia and Germany during this period possess some great aggregate power and potential for making it even greater. The following statistical data further clarifies this:

Germany's population at the time of unification in 1871 was about 40 million inhabitants and it was growing fast, whereas the population of France, for instance, at the same time was about 35 million. It is noteworthy that while Germany's population was steadily growing and about 20 years later (by the end of the period for this case) that population had grown to about 50 million but France's population had barely grown and was maybe about 38 million.<sup>126</sup> France is of course not the main point in this thesis, but it offers an interesting counterpoint, illuminating the fact that Germany would pose an even greater threat to France in the future with its greater manpower if France's own problems were not solved. That is also important because of the fact, as was mentioned previously, France and Russia will form an alliance two decades later.<sup>127</sup>

The total population of the Russian Empire in 1870 was at about 84.5 million inhabitants, which is a little more than double the population of Germany at the same time. This number was also rising fast, and by 1880 that number had risen to 97.7 million people.<sup>128</sup> A few years after this period ends, in 1897, the total population of the Russian empire is at about 125

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<sup>125</sup> Twente, "Bismarck und das Deutsche Reich."

<sup>126</sup> Spengler, "Why Iran Is Dying for a Fight," *Asia Times Online* (2007), [http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle\\_East/IK13Ak01.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/IK13Ak01.html).

<sup>127</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Dual Alliance," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2006).

<sup>128</sup> KMLA, "Russian Empire, 1855-1881," World History at KMLA, <http://www.zum.de/whkmla/region/russia/rusemp18551881.html>.



million,<sup>129</sup> which is about 2.5 times that of Germany. Therefore, it is no surprise that Russia has a tremendous advantage when it comes to sheer manpower.

However, the Russian infrastructure at that time was severely lacking and was far behind the powers of Western Europe. If one takes a look at the total span of its railway networks one would think that the total length of its tracks was larger, but in reality that was not the case. In 1870, the total railway network totaled 10,731 kilometers in length and in 1880 that number had gone up to 22,865 kilometers. This was still lower than the total length of the railway networks of more industrialized, but still considerably smaller nations in Europe, like Germany and Britain. This means that the Russian railway system was clearly inferior to its Western counterparts and Germany thus had the upper hand in infrastructure.<sup>130</sup>

Russian economy in the 1870's and 1880's was severely lacking behind the powers of Western Europe, as is evidenced by the fact that production of pig iron in the Russian Empire in 1870 was 359,000 metric tons. This number rose to 449,000 metric tons in 1880, but that was still far behind the numbers that Germany and Britain were churning out. Germany produced in 1880 roughly 2,468,000 metric tons, which is more than five times the amount that Russia produced, and Britain's production, which was 7,873,000 metric tons, dwarfs the Russian number. The numbers for Russia are even worse when it comes to the production of coals, which in 1880 numbers at about 3.3 million metric tons, next to Germany's 59.1 million tons and Britain's 149 million tons.<sup>131</sup> Therefore, in terms of industrial capabilities, Russian industrial production in this period lags far behind Germany and thus Germany has a tremendous head start on Russia in terms of industrial might.

#### **4.1.2 Geographic Proximity**

The Russian and German empires shared a long common border as is evident on maps of Europe from 1815 to 1914.<sup>132</sup> Therefore, Otto von Bismarck seeking good relations with Russia, his policy of peace after 1873 and his alliance with both Austria-Hungary and Russia<sup>133</sup> is the result of concerns of not wanting to fight a war with Russia and France at the same time.<sup>134</sup> With that he also secured Germany's eastern border, at least for the duration of his rule.

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<sup>129</sup> Anatoly Vishnevsky, "Приложение. Справочник статистических показателей," in *Demoscope Weekly* (Demoscope Weekly, 2016).

<sup>130</sup> KMLA, "Russian Empire, 1855-1881".

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Leisering, *Historischer Weltatlas*. pp. 92-93.

<sup>133</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Otto von Bismarck - Imperial Chancellor."

<sup>134</sup> "Germany - Germany from 1871 to 1918."

### 4.1.3 Offensive Power

As Prussia and a united Germany had proven more than capable of defeating France in the Franco-Prussian War in 1870-1871,<sup>135</sup> it was clear that Germany was Europe's leading military power. Its general staff was one of the best and most effective in the world and its chief of staff, General Helmuth von Moltke, was very innovative and forward thinking.<sup>136</sup> Germany with its fairly large population was also able to call upon large numbers of well trained and disciplined soldiers. Just the Prussian standing army in 1870 had been around 300,000 troops, but combined with the reserve units, including the *Landwehr*, it totaled to 1.2 million troops in wartime conditions, and that is just the Northern German part.<sup>137</sup> Including the southern part the numbers of the standing army would go up 500,000 and likely some more reservists could be added.<sup>138</sup> Germany also possessed some of the world's latest artillery technology, which far outclassed the French old-school bronze artillery.<sup>139</sup>

However, the Russian army was not great as an example from the Crimean War shows. Although the Russian army was able to field some 1.7 million men during the war in 1856, many of those men were inadequately trained militia grade units. Rampant corruption also plagued the army and logistical problems were severe. It proved strong enough to squash revolts back home, but unsuccessful in waging war against other nations and defending its own territory from foreign intruders.<sup>140</sup>

Russia fought a brief war against the Ottoman Empire in 1877 where it showed that their army was capable of projecting its power beyond Russia's borders and occupying foreign territory. However, the Ottoman Empire was already very weak at this point and Russia was only fighting against the Turks, and not France and Britain at the same time, which was the case during the Crimean War. Their capabilities thus seem not to have been greatly improved since then.

With the stark difference in capabilities and with the Germans being able to field almost as many soldiers as the Russians, soldiers who were also much better trained and equipped, it is abundantly clear that Germany possesses a much stronger military force and is able to use it

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<sup>135</sup> Twente, "Bismarck und das Deutsche Reich."

<sup>136</sup> Geoffrey Wawro, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870–1871* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). p. 47.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid. pp. 41-43.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid. p. 19.

<sup>139</sup> Twente, "Bismarck und das Deutsche Reich."

<sup>140</sup> John Shelton Curtiss, "The Army of Nicholas I: Its Role and Character," *The American Historical Review* 63, no. 4 (1958). pp. 887-889.

outside of its borders with great success, whereas Russia had a huge problems defending its own land.

#### **4.1.4 Aggressive Intentions**

Germany's intentions after its unification in 1871, thanks to Otto von Bismarck, were to exist peacefully with the rest of Europe and his pacifist policies in international diplomacy were a clear indicator of that. He even went as far as to hold a peace conference as the Russo-Turkish relations got very stiff in the late 1870's after a war between the two, referenced above, where Britain and Austria-Hungary threatened to declare war as a result of peace conditions imposed on Turkey by Russia.<sup>141</sup> Germany's policy towards Russia could thus be described as peaceful and trying to seek as friendly relations as possible.

Russia's intentions are maybe not as clear as it pursued relentless colonialism in Northern and Central Asia during this period. Pan-Slavism was also quite popular within the Slavic populations of Europe at that time and although Russia did not actively pursue Pan-Slavic policies, some of its ministers apparently were affiliated with it.<sup>142</sup> Russia also has a history of using the Slavic minorities in the Balkans to stir up problems against the Ottoman Empire.<sup>143</sup> Thus Russian intentions could be described as uncertain to some extent, but its policy against Germany was rather friendly. Interestingly, when the Tsar started pursuing Russification policies throughout its western regions, the German minorities in the Baltic were excluded and they were allowed to keep their culture and language intact. This was due to the fact that they were loyal subjects to the Tsar, unlike the Poles, for example, and they made good officers and officials in their service of the Empire.<sup>144</sup> This does not only apply to this period in question right here, but also into case number 2, which stretches towards the beginning of the First World War.

The Russian attitude towards Germany was good to begin with, but that did not last very long. After the Russo-Turkish War of 1877, which was referenced here above, Russia forced the Ottomans to sign a harsh peace treaty that created a large sovereign Bulgarian state. This was not regarded kindly by the French and the British who threatened to intervene. Bismarck thus held a congress in Berlin where Russia eventually had to accept a much smaller Bulgaria. The Russians felt humiliated and for that Otto von Bismarck was to blame. Thus the Russo-

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<sup>141</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Otto von Bismarck - Imperial Chancellor."

<sup>142</sup> "Pan-Slavism."

<sup>143</sup> "Russia - Russia from 1801 to 1917," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>144</sup> "Russia - From Alexander II to Nicholas II," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

German relations soured somewhat during this period. Bismarck did all what he could to fix their relationship but all that was for nothing when he was forced to resign in 1890. Russia had gravitated towards France as it began to view German intentions with suspicion and it also needed aid from the French.<sup>145</sup>

In other words, their relations were good to begin with, but they gradually went downhill and eventually plummeted with the fall of Bismarck in 1890.

## **4.2 Additional Factors**

### **4.2.1 Ideology**

Only one additional factor, to be taken into account, seems relevant in this case and that is rather small factor of ideology. Both Germany and Russia are monarchies in this case, while differing somewhat in the exact type of monarchism. Russia is an absolute monarchy, where the Tsar is the absolute ruler,<sup>146</sup> and the German empire was officially a constitutional monarchy.<sup>147</sup> However, in reality it was ruled by the Prussian Junkers elite with Otto von Bismarck being the most prominent figure of them. With both states as a type of monarchy, their power would only extend to their own boundaries and no further as both respective emperors only have the right to rule over their own subjects within their own borders and not beyond. This is a factor that unifies them as they are not pressing claims on the other's territory, especially since Germany declared its interests and territorial needs to be fulfilled after the Franco-Prussian War.<sup>148</sup> The same went for Russia, at least officially. Some Russian officials were affiliated with the ideas of Pan-Slavism, which would put Russia against Germany, but Russia did not embrace it officially and thus this is more or less nullified.<sup>149</sup>

Even though this factor does not really alter the equation much, it is worth noting for the sake of context.

## **4.3 Summary**

The two countries share some similarities in their method of governance and they share a long common border. Germany is clearly the stronger partner overall, with stronger industry, infrastructure and military capabilities, although in comparison of population numbers the Russians would come out ahead, which results in a greater mobilization pool for them.

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> The Tsarskoye Selo, "Russian Monarchy," The Tsarskoye Selo State Museum-Preserve, <http://eng.tzar.ru/museums/history/monarchy>.

<sup>147</sup> Lynn Abrams, *Bismarck and the German Empire, 1871-1918*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Routledge, 1995).

<sup>148</sup> Twente, "Bismarck und das Deutsche Reich."

<sup>149</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Pan-Slavism."

However, that did not help them in the Crimean War, as the example from 1856 shows severe lack of quality and great logistical problems accompanied by corruption. It seemed to be able project its power beyond its borders in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877, but that was only against a lesser power. Its military seemed to be good enough to squash rebellions within their own borders, but defending them against foreign invaders was a completely different scenario. Furthermore, Germany and Russia seem to have been good partners to begin with in this scenario, but slowly Russia began to grow suspicious of Germany's intentions. Therefore, it seems that Russia chose to bandwagon with Germany, as it was the greatest power and threat in its vicinity. Russia simply would not have been able to stand up against the German might. As Russia's own power began to grow, it slowly shifted away from bandwagoning to balancing right at the turn of the 1890's.

## V. Case II – Wilhelmine Germany and the Russian Empire

The second case study is marked by the abdication of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck from power in 1890 under pressure from Emperor Wilhelm II, who did not want to rule "under Bismarck,"<sup>150</sup> until the beginning of the First World War in 1914. This period saw major changes in German foreign politics as a result of the Kaiser's ambitious goals, which eventually concluded with a major war.

### 5.1 Sources of Threat

#### 5.1.1 Aggregate Power

As no great changes have taken place since the last period this is a continuation of that period. However, both states have some massive capabilities and potential, be it though in different aspects.

Beginning by looking at the population of both states, their tendency seems to be the same: A rapid rise in both countries. The population of Germany, at the turn of the 1890's, was roughly 50 million and on the rise<sup>151</sup> and at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that number had reached 56 million.<sup>152</sup> That number kept on rising and at the beginning of the First World War in 1914 it had reached approximately 67 million.<sup>153</sup> For comparison, the population of France over the last 40 years had barely grown and was only 39.6 million in 1914,<sup>154</sup> compared to 35 million in 1870.<sup>155</sup>

The population of Russia rose dramatically during this time as well. The population of the Russian Empire in 1897 was estimated at about 125 million. That was the year that the first all-encompassing census was performed in the empire.<sup>156</sup> Russia's numbers just keep on skyrocketing and by 1904, for example, this number had reached some 146 million,<sup>157</sup> a rise of about 21 million inhabitants in only a few years. By the beginning of the First World War

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<sup>150</sup> Twente, "Bismarck und das Deutsche Reich."

<sup>151</sup> Spengler, "Why Iran Is Dying for a Fight".

<sup>152</sup> Twente, "Wilhelm und die Welt."

<sup>153</sup> New Zealand History, "The German Empire," History Group of the New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage, <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/war/germany-facts>.

<sup>154</sup> "Republic of France," History Group of the New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage, <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/war/republic-france-facts>.

<sup>155</sup> Spengler, "Why Iran Is Dying for a Fight".

<sup>156</sup> Vishnevsky, "Приложение. Справочник Статистических Показателей."

<sup>157</sup> KMLA, "Russian Domestic Policy, 1894-1905," World History at KMLA, <http://www.zum.de/whkmla/region/russia/rusemp18941905.html>.

this number had reached 167 million people,<sup>158</sup> some further 21 million in only ten more years. This shows a tremendous overall growth in the population by at least 40 million in 17 years, which is equal to the whole population of France moving to Russia. A comparison of the number of Russian to Germans in 1914 clearly shows that Russia has a huge advantage in sheer manpower by a ratio of roughly 2.5, which is still more or less the same as it was during Bismarck's era.

When it comes to infrastructure Germany was in a very good position as before. In 1880 the total length of the German railway system was about 34,000 kilometers and this number would rise to a little over 51,000 kilometers by 1900. If one takes those numbers and divides to represent the total length per 100,000 square kilometers, then the density is a little over 8000 kilometers in 1880 and about 13,000 kilometers in 1900. This is a good indication of the efficiency of the system or its density and Germany was in a very good position in that regard. In comparison, the density in Great Britain in 1880 is about 12,500 kilometers and in France it is only about 3500.

Russia, on the other hand, is in quite a different position. The total length of its railway system in 1880 was 22,865 kilometers.<sup>159</sup> In 1892 the total length had risen to 31,202 kilometers and in 1905 it had become longer than Germany's railway system with a total of 61,085 kilometers.<sup>160</sup> Due to Russia's huge territory and as their network was but a little bigger than Germany's, the efficiency was always going to be less. It is actually barely noticeable compared to the numbers of the other nations already mentioned, both in 1880 and again in 1900. But again that is only because of Russia's huge landmass. Even though Russia has caught up with and actually surpassed Germany in the total length of the system, Germany still has the upper hand in terms of its density and therefore efficiency.

The industrial capacity of Germany is massive, while Russia's industrial capacity was below that of most great powers in Europe, but it was growing at a faster rate. As an example, Russia's production of pig-iron in 1892 was 1.1 million metric tons, whereas British production was about six times greater, but in 1905 this number had risen to about 2.7 million tons, or about a quarter of Britain's production. Coal production in 1892 amounted to roughly 6.9 million tons, but it rose to 18.7 million tons 1905, still only a fraction of the production of Germany and Britain, but a rapid rise nonetheless. One aspect where Russia was actually able

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<sup>158</sup> New Zealand History, "The Russian Empire," History Group of the New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage, <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/war/russian-empire-facts>.

<sup>159</sup> KMLA, "Russian Empire, 1855-1881".

<sup>160</sup> "Russian Domestic Policy, 1894-1905".

to surpass the other nations of Europe was their expansion of farmland from 13.4 million hectares in 1895 to roughly 20 million hectares in a period of ten years. Production of wheat had risen from about 8.4 million metric tons in 1895 and up to 12.8 million ten years later and a similar rise is found in potato harvests, with 21.1 million tons in 1895 and 27.6 million tons in 1905.<sup>161</sup> The number did decline somewhat as a result of the Russian loss in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 and the subsequent revolutions that took place. At the time, the common people in Russia got desperate for food, which also sparked the revolution.<sup>162</sup> Therefore, the Russian economy was growing at an actually rather rapid pace, but suffered setbacks because of the revolution and general instability within the Empire. Apart from that, if war had not broken out in 1914, it is very likely that the capabilities of Russia might have caught up with Germany or Britain in more aspects.

To sum up, Germany had more aggregate power in almost all aspects, except for pure landmass and population, although the ratio between Germany and Russia stayed roughly stable with Russia enjoying a manpower advantage roughly 2.5 times that of Germany. However, Germany had a much denser railway network and a much stronger world class industry.

### **5.1.2 Geographic Proximity**

As the geographical situation between the Russian Empire and the German Empire had not changed since 1870, or actually since 1815 through Prussia, they still shared a rather long common border through Poland.<sup>163</sup> This, in turn, still means that they will be watching each other with suspicion. As both states developed better industrial capabilities, their populations were growing fast and steadily, and their transportation networks grew (although Russia still lacked density in that regard), there was an even greater reason for them to keep an eye on each other. All this combined with their rather skeptical perception of each other since the 1890's would most likely have inflated this even more. With Bismarck and his pacifying policies now out of the picture, the nations were practically set to engage each other in some sort of disputes. However, this will be discussed further in the section on aggressive intentions.

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> "The Russian Empire, 1905-1914," World History at KMLA,  
<http://www.zum.de/whkmla/region/russia/rusemp19051914.html>.

<sup>163</sup> Leisering, *Historischer Weltatlas*. pp. 92-93.



### 5.1.3 Offensive Power

As during Bismarck's era, Germany was a great military power. However, during this whole period the German military only expanded very slowly in relation to its total population. For example, Germany was able to uphold 500,000 troops in a standing army in the 1870's, it only fielded 880,000 men in 1898, and that is including Austro-Hungarian troops in their alliance, against the Franco-Russian alliance, which had about 1.56 million men at the same time.<sup>164</sup> At the outbreak of The First World War in 1914 the standing German army numbered at about 840,000 troops as a peacetime force. Furthermore, they were able to call to arms roughly three million additional men, both from the reserves and the Landwehr (technically older reserves). The Russian army, at the outbreak of the war, had a peacetime force of about 1.4 million and was able to mobilize some 5.1 million additional soldiers of all types.<sup>165</sup> This gave the Russians a tremendous advantage in sheer numbers. However, in the first stages of the war, the Russian army was pushed back and outmaneuvered in their invasion of Eastern Prussia.<sup>166</sup>

The German navy was one of the largest in the world almost rivalling the British in power,<sup>167</sup> and much larger than the Russian navy. It had a total of 43 battleships of all classes, six battlecruisers, 14 cruisers, 35 light cruisers, 152 destroyers and 30 submarines with a total number of sailors numbering at 72,000 men.<sup>168</sup> The Russian navy was quite small in comparison with only 13 battleships of all types, eight cruisers, five light cruisers, 106 destroyers and 36 submarines with the number of sailors at about 60,000 men.<sup>169</sup> While the German army lacked in numbers compared to the Russian army, their navy was larger and stronger thus giving Germany a great advantage in naval capabilities.

### 5.1.4 Aggressive Intentions

With the fall of Bismarck in 1890 and the Kaiser taking a more extensive control of Germany's policies and turning aggressive and expansive, Germany was set to clash with its neighbors at some point. Firstly, the heavy industrial company Krupp was supposed to supply all the steel necessary for the build-up of the German navy, which in the future was supposed to rival Britain's naval supremacy. Wilhelm II dreamt that it was Germany's destiny to expand

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<sup>164</sup> Holger H. Herwig, *Strategic Uncertainties of a Nation-State: Prussia-Germany, 1871-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). p. 255.

<sup>165</sup> New Zealand History, "The Russian Empire".

<sup>166</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "World War I - the Western and Eastern Fronts, 1915."

<sup>167</sup> Twente, "Wilhelm und die Welt."

<sup>168</sup> New Zealand History, "The German Empire".

<sup>169</sup> "The Russian Empire".

and get colonies abroad just like the other powers, for example, in Africa.<sup>170</sup> This was a U-turn from Bismarck's policy of appeasement and not wanting to push forth any further territorial gains after its war with France in 1870-1871.<sup>171</sup> Germany continued their alliance, and regularly renewed it, with Austria-Hungary and Italy, also known as the Triple Alliance. However, that alliance was somewhat shaky, specifically in its regards to Germany promising support to Italy in its colonial claims against France.<sup>172</sup>

The relations that Russia had with Germany during Bismarck's era gradually went downhill and were somewhat sour, but they never sank into total enmity. That changed with the fall of Bismarck in 1890.<sup>173</sup> Even though Russia may not have been expanding in Europe, their policy elsewhere in the world were definitely expansionistic and militaristic in nature. The Russo-Japanese war in 1904 to 1905 was the result of Russia's policies in the Far East clashing with those of Japan over dominance in both Manchuria and Korea.<sup>174</sup> However, the main thing concerning Germany was in 1891 when Russia aligned itself with France as a result of French loans and investment in Russia.<sup>175</sup> France needed Russia in an alliance against Germany and French loans were also used to industrialize Russia among others.<sup>176</sup> There were also more reasons for why Russia turned to France as Russia was getting a little restless because of the Triple Alliance and closer cooperation between them and Britain. Russia also recognized some signs of pro-Polish tendencies in Germany and thus Russia was reluctantly pushed towards France.<sup>177</sup> Therefore, Russia seemed to be taking a very strong anti-German stance. Its alliance with France was aimed directly against Germany, as it was agreed that in the case of war with Germany they would come to each other's aid. This alliance was even expanded later on to include a possible war with Britain.<sup>178</sup> However, with the foundation of the Triple Entente in 1907, a defensive alliance between France, Britain and Russia was now in place.<sup>179</sup> This had started with a couple of different alliances between the three countries in the years prior to its foundation, for example, the Franco-Russian alliance, which had already started in 1891 and was formalized in 1894 in a secret treaty.<sup>180</sup> The treaty,

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<sup>170</sup> Twente, "Wilhelm und die Welt."

<sup>171</sup> "Bismarck Und Das Deutsche Reich."

<sup>172</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Triple Alliance," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>173</sup> "Otto von Bismarck - Imperial Chancellor."

<sup>174</sup> "Russo-Japanese War," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2016).

<sup>175</sup> KMLA, "Russian Domestic Policy, 1894-1905".

<sup>176</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Russia - From Alexander II to Nicholas II."

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> "Triple Entente."

<sup>180</sup> "Dual Alliance."

'Entente Cordiale', was an alliance between Britain and France as a result of them coming to an agreement on their differences and disputes in 1904 and a way for them to work together against growing German pressure.<sup>181</sup> Then there was the Anglo-Russian Entente, which was a convention between Russia and Britain on their disputes in Asia and this one culminated with the foundation of the Triple Entente.<sup>182</sup> With the Entente in place and the Triple Alliance between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy as well, the pieces were set for the coming conflict, which would be the First World War. However, Italy betrayed this alliance and eventually joined the Entente in 1915.<sup>183</sup>

Growing tension in world politics and growing capabilities of both nations (and others) led to a decline in Russo-German relations and it did not help that Germany was ruled by a monarch, who thought that it was Germany's destiny to take part in the Great Game of the other great powers and that Germany's future lay on the sea.<sup>184</sup> Growing Russian power and an alliance with France eventually pushed them even further apart and sowed the seeds for a future conflict.

## **5.2 Additional Factors**

### **5.2.1 Ideology**

The ideological situation is the same in this case as the first one: Russia is an absolute monarchy and Germany is a constitutional one. No changes are thus made on the legitimacy on their rule towards their own subjects and others beyond their own boundaries. Therefore, this is a factor that does not necessarily unify these two empires, but neither does it separate it them.

### **5.2.2 Foreign Aid**

As Walt says, it is a recognized fact that Russia aligned itself with France as a result of French investment and aid in the 1890's.<sup>185</sup> As a result, this is a significant factor in the souring of Russo-German relations in this period and one of the main reasons Russia turned away from Germany, and a factor that could not be repaired. As previously stated, the Russians really needed help to industrialize and French investments and loans were the way to accomplish that. The French also needed an ally against Germany in a future war and Russia

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<sup>181</sup> "Entente Cordiale," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2013).

<sup>182</sup> "Anglo-Russian Entente," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2009).

<sup>183</sup> "Triple Alliance."

<sup>184</sup> Twente, "Wilhelm und die Welt."

<sup>185</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*. p. 41.

and France would only be able to comes to each other's help in the case of war with Germany.<sup>186</sup>

### **5.3 Summary**

As Russia grows more anxious towards Germany and especially after Emperor Wilhelm II comes to power and sacks Bismarck, the two countries are practically set to collide. Still growing in almost every aspect, however, with Russia growing even faster and industrializing, it is able to distance itself from Germany and start balancing against its power. Yet that only began when it received loans and investments from France to boost its infrastructure and industry. Right from the start of the 1890's Russia had started to balance against German power together with France, which would desperately need any allies in a possible future war with Germany. Russia was the most obvious candidate, even though Russia only reluctantly agreed to it. Germany's growing power and military (naval) capabilities prompted Russia, France and Britain to consolidate their differences and focus together on containing German policies. This later became the Triple Entente and so the pieces were set for the First World War.

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<sup>186</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Russia - From Alexander II to Nicholas II."

## VI. Case III – The Weimar Republic and the Soviet Union

It is rather hard to mark the exact beginning of the third case, which is the relationship between the German Weimar Republic on one hand and the newly established Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the other, also simply known as the Soviet Union. The reason being that Russia was more or less in a state of war for a couple of years after the end of the First World War.<sup>187</sup> This period is of course marked by the end of the war in 1918 and the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. This made Germany officially responsible for causing the war and was among many other things that caused Germans deep humiliation.<sup>188</sup> The Russian Civil War also dragged on until 1920, with hostilities ongoing until 1922.<sup>189</sup> An armistice was signed between Poland and Russia at the end of 1920 and the war officially ended with a peace treaty in 1921.<sup>190</sup> The beginning of this case will thus be the declaration of the Weimar Republic in 1919, so named because the parliament first met in the city of Weimar as they feared unrest in Berlin.<sup>191</sup> The end of this period is marked by Adolf Hitler's rise to power in 1933 and his Nazi Party becoming the dominant force in German politics.<sup>192</sup>

For the purpose of simplification in this chapter the names 'Soviet Union', 'Soviet Russia' or just simply 'Russia' will be used more or less interchangeably, unless noted specifically, standing for firstly the successor state to the Russian Empire most commonly known as the Soviet Union. The names for the Weimar Republic will also be used somewhat interchangeably, namely either the 'Weimar Republic' or just simply as 'Germany'.

### 6.1 Sources of Threat

#### 6.1.1 Aggregate Power

The aggregate power of Germany during this era is somewhat limited, mainly due to the restrictions put on it by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919,<sup>193</sup> but as usual it possesses some great potential with its resources, as was evidenced during the run up to and during the Second World War.

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<sup>187</sup> "Russian Civil War," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2014).

<sup>188</sup> "Treaty of Versailles."

<sup>189</sup> "Russian Civil War."

<sup>190</sup> "Russo-Polish War," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2014).

<sup>191</sup> Gregor Delvaux de Fenffe, "Weimarer Republik," Westdeutscher Rundfunk, [http://www.planet-wissen.de/geschichte/deutsche\\_geschichte/weimarer\\_republik/](http://www.planet-wissen.de/geschichte/deutsche_geschichte/weimarer_republik/).

<sup>192</sup> Irina Fernandes, "Adolf Hitler," *ibid.* [http://www.planet-wissen.de/geschichte/diktatoren/adolf\\_hitlers\\_lebensweg/index.html](http://www.planet-wissen.de/geschichte/diktatoren/adolf_hitlers_lebensweg/index.html).

<sup>193</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Treaty of Versailles."

As usual, manpower is one of a state's resources. Germany had lost a lot of lives (soldiers) during the First World War. The population of the Weimar Republic was a little more than 62 million people in 1925,<sup>194</sup> some five million less than it had been eleven years earlier. This is mostly due to lost territory as a part of the Treaty of Versailles and with those losses Germany also lost some of its former population.<sup>195</sup> With the harsh conditions within Germany at that time it is very unlikely that Germany would see much rise in its population during this period.

Russia, or the Soviet Union, had lost a lot of its former territory as a result of the First World War and the ongoing Civil War, which didn't end until 1920 (although again hostilities dragged on until 1922) and many foreign powers intervened on behalf of the White armies or supported them against the Bolsheviks.<sup>196</sup> Acquiring reliable data for the Soviet Union during this period remains difficult because of all the secrecy surrounding the state, especially during Stalin's reign, and with officials and leaders also meddling with and skewing the data. However, somewhat reliable sources do exist and according to one, the population of the Soviet Union at the beginning of this period in 1920 was a staggering 137 million people,<sup>197</sup> a drop by about 30 million people from a few years earlier. This is a good indicator of the harsh realities of the First World War and the Civil War and their effects on the population of Russia. The tremendous death toll and a great loss of territory likely contributed to the massive loss of numbers as well. However, the population continued to grow at a similar rate just like before the wars and by 1926 the number had reached at least 145 million.<sup>198</sup> At the end of this period or in 1933 the population had grown to just under 162 million.<sup>199</sup>

If one compares the numbers of the Soviet Union and Germany at the beginning of this period, in 1920, then the Soviet Union clearly enjoyed an advantage over Germany, but this time only by about 2.2 times over Germany, which is somewhat lower than the 2.5 times advantage it enjoyed in the couple of decades earlier. At the end of this period in 1933 that difference was even greater as it now had a manpower advantage of 2.6, which is more than at any time before, and this is even after the Soviet Union had lost a significant amount of territory in the west after the wars. Those lost territories combined accounted for a substantial amount of the Russian Empire's former population.

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<sup>194</sup> Andreas Gonschior, "Das Deutsche Reich im Überblick,"  
<http://www.gonschior.de/weimar/Deutschland/index.htm>.

<sup>195</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Treaty of Versailles."

<sup>196</sup> "Russian Civil War."

<sup>197</sup> E.M. Andreev, L.E. Darskiy, and T.L. Khar'kova, *Население Советского Союза: 1922-1991* (Moscow: Nauka, 1993). p. 14.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid. p. 14.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid. p. 40.

As German infrastructure before the war was already dense and highly effective, there would be no need to develop the German railways or roadways much further. Additionally, they were not damaged during the war as it took place almost solely outside of Germany's borders. However, German infrastructure was clearly somewhat weakened as a result of the war and subsequent hyperinflation.

The Soviet Union in the 1920's had inherited the infrastructure of the Russian Empire, which was not great to begin with. However, it was most likely sufficient, or at least adequate for the purposes of the first five-year plan, initiated in 1928 and focused mostly on industrialization. That in and of itself is a sign that infrastructure was not severely lacking.<sup>200</sup>

While German industry was still capable of producing top quality products, this time German industrial might was severely limited as it was not allowed to produce certain goods. For example, capital ships, tanks, aircraft and more products related to the military. Germany was also obligated to pay huge amounts for wartime reparations, which really stretched the budget of the German state.<sup>201</sup> When Germany was not able to deliver its supposed wartime payments and raw materials to France on time in 1923, the French President Poincaré ordered troops to occupy the Rhineland. The Treaty of Versailles foresaw an occupation for 15 years after the war, which was a great source of humiliation for the Germans. The industry of Germany was really weakened as a result.<sup>202</sup> The hyperinflation at the same time did not make things easier for Germany as the value of their Mark really plummeted and in the end it was practically worthless. Germany finally took up a new currency called the Reichsmark in October 1924 and was after that relatively stable and able to stay on schedule with its payments. The Allies had realized by then that only an economically healthy Germany would be able to fulfill its part of the Treaty.<sup>203</sup>

That did not last long as in 1929 the Great Depression hit the world hard and Germany was no exception. It marked another low in German economic might in under a decade, which resulted in rapidly rising unemployment rates and export revenue falling from 13.5 billion Reichsmarks down to 5.7 billion as German industrial production fell by 40%. Nations of the world took protective measures, which resulted in world trade dropping by 25% from 1929 to

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<sup>200</sup> John Simkin, "Stalin's Five Year Plan," Spartacus Educational Publishers Ltd., <http://spartacus-educational.com/RUSfive.htm>.

<sup>201</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Treaty of Versailles."

<sup>202</sup> Gregor Delvaux de Fenffe, "Die langen Schatten des Krieges," Westdeutscher Rundfunk, [http://www.planet-wissen.de/geschichte/deutsche\\_geschichte/weimarer\\_republik/pwiedielangenschattendeskrieges100.html](http://www.planet-wissen.de/geschichte/deutsche_geschichte/weimarer_republik/pwiedielangenschattendeskrieges100.html).

<sup>203</sup> "Die Hyperinflation von 1923," Westdeutscher Rundfunk, [http://www.planet-wissen.de/geschichte/deutsche\\_geschichte/weimarer\\_republik/pwiediehyperinflationvon100.html](http://www.planet-wissen.de/geschichte/deutsche_geschichte/weimarer_republik/pwiediehyperinflationvon100.html).

1932.<sup>204</sup> It is abundantly clear that the economic situation of Germany at the end of this period was simply dire.

For most of this period the Soviet Union was not really in an industrialized state and the total size of its industry at the beginning of the twenties was only about a quarter of its pre-war size. The little industry that did exist and was active, was more on the lighter side, for example, in textiles. An attempt at great industrialization, with an emphasis on heavy industry, would start with Stalin's first five-year plan, which was initiated in 1928. This plan had an emphasis on the production of transportation capacities, iron, steel, electric power, machine tools and more. If the Soviet Union were to industrialize its agricultural sector it would need some additional 250,000 tractors, and to be able to use all of those new tractors it needed to improve its oil-production capacities. Farms were also supposed to be supplied electricity by new power stations. The total increase in production of coal was supposed to be some 110%, in iron it would be 200% and the total electricity output was to be some 335% of what it was previously.<sup>205</sup> Apparently in 1932, when it was declared that the plan had been a success, the truth was actually that none of the specified target figures had been achieved or even approached.<sup>206</sup> This did boost the Soviet industrial output but it was achieved with an iron fist and workers were punished severely for being late or not achieving the set output for each worker, sometimes by being put into forced labor or even simply with a bullet to the head.<sup>207</sup>

Yet, it is quite hard to determine which country was actually in "worse" shape during this period, but it is probably simplest to say that neither of them was in good shape in almost any way. The major difference, as usual, between Russia and Germany is the population difference where the Soviet Union enjoys an undeniable advantage. German economy was in shatters but had stabilized for a few years at least before being hit by the global depression. The Soviet Union was in very bad shape after the wars and its industry was only a fraction of what it was previously. However, with both time and the five-year plan, this began to change.

### **6.1.2 Geographic Proximity**

With Germany's loss of territory after the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 it was mostly its territory and borders in the east that changed the most, for example, with a whole new state

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<sup>204</sup> Arnulf Scriba, "Die Weltwirtschaftskrise," Stiftung Deutsches Historisches Museum, <https://www.dhm.de/lemo/kapitel/weimarer-republik/industrie-und-wirtschaft/weltwirtschaftskrise.html>.

<sup>205</sup> Simkin, "Stalin's Five Year Plan".

<sup>206</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "The U.S.S.R. From the Death of Lenin to the Death of Stalin - Industrialization, 1929–34," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>207</sup> Simkin, "Stalin's Five Year Plan".



being carved out of its and Russia's former Polish territories.<sup>208</sup> However, this had the effect that the Soviet Union and Germany were no longer next door neighbors, because there was a whole new state right in between them. This puts a whole new dynamic into their relationship, which was not there when they were adjacent to each other. According to Walt's theory this should make them less worried about the intentions of each other and actually make them become friendlier, as Walt says "neighbors of neighbors are friends".<sup>209</sup> The fact that the two states no longer shared a common border shall be reflected upon further in the part on aggressive intentions.

### 6.1.3 Offensive Power

The offensive power of Germany's was very limited during this period, once again due to the limits put on the German military with the Treaty of Versailles. Its military personnel were not allowed to exceed 100,000 and severe restrictions on what it could do related to military activities were also put in place. This included the abolishment of the general staff. All production of tanks, armored cars, airplanes, submarines and poison gas were forbidden and only a handful of certain factories could produce ammunition or weapons. Apparently, the harsh disarmament clauses of the treaty were implemented to encourage other nations to disarm voluntarily.<sup>210</sup> This great reduction in the capabilities and size of the German military was in stark contrast to its capabilities before the First World War when it had a standing peacetime force of about 840,000 active soldiers and a fairly large navy.<sup>211</sup> Thus for most of this time the offensive power of Germany simply remained very limited.

However, the Soviet Union and Germany did cooperate with each other on many military projects in secret training and research facilities that were located in the Soviet Union. Those secret facilities enabled Germany to at least go on with some of its programs, exchange ideas with the Soviet Union and produce some military assets that were prohibited in Germany. This includes the production of aircraft and experimentation with tactics and the training of both old and new pilots. There were also experiments with tanks, all of which quite ironically would come in handy later on. These facilities were mostly to be used for research and development and according to their agreement, the Soviet Union was supposed to benefit from this agreement as well. As this was all kept secret, German officers and pilots, for

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<sup>208</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Treaty of Versailles."

<sup>209</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*. p. 23.

<sup>210</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Treaty of Versailles."

<sup>211</sup> New Zealand History, "The German Empire".

example, were only supposed to wear civilian clothing as not to be spotted.<sup>212</sup> With the rise of Hitler and the Nazi-party to power in January 1933 the whole project was jeopardized, but it was not until September that same year that the Soviets asked the Germans to close their facilities and leave, which was then completed only a month later.<sup>213</sup>

The military power of the Soviet Union varied quite a bit from the beginning of this period to the end. 'The Red Army', as it was called, had just fought a bloody civil war and the number of soldiers was over five million at the end of it. However, as the war came to an end this number was of course reduced right away down to about 600,000 troops after demobilization to form a standing army. This number would not be expanded again until after Hitler came to power in Germany.<sup>214</sup> Furthermore, as the Red Army mostly consisted of workers and peasants it was a difficult task to find qualified and competent officers in the beginning, and so Trotsky allowed former officers of the Imperial Army to serve to solve this problem temporarily. The number of such officers up to 1921 would be a total 50,000. Later, in the 1920's, most of the officers would be graduated from Soviet military academies, and for commanders it was a requirement to be a member of the communist party.<sup>215</sup> Again, as mentioned previously, the Soviet Union and Germany cooperated secretly on numerous projects and the Soviet Union offered Germany to set up military facilities within its borders. Some exchange of ideas did take place, but it is hard to assess how much of German military expertise ended up being useful to the Soviets and if it had any lasting effect on the efficiency of the Red Army.

To summarize, the Soviet Union definitely had a major advantage when it came to the number of soldiers and at the end of the Civil War the ratio was about 50:1 in the favor of the Soviet Union. This number would drop with the demobilization after the war and in the end it had a standing army of about 600,000 troops, so a ratio of 6:1 against Germany. However, it was the German military that had the expertise and knowledge that the Red Army did not possess. For example, the Soviets asked the Germans for machinery to build aircraft.<sup>216</sup> It is quite difficult to assess the exact capabilities of both the Red Army and the German Reichswehr, but both of them were at this point almost only useful for defensive purposes.

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<sup>212</sup> Vercamer and Pipes, "German Military in the Soviet Union 1918-1933".

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> John Simkin, "The Red Army," Spartacus Educational Publishers Ltd., <http://spartacus-educational.com/RUSred.htm>.

<sup>215</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Red Army," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

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#### 6.1.4 Aggressive Intentions

This period starts with Lenin as the leader of Soviet Russia, whose ideals were to 'export' the revolution to other countries in the world in the belief that workers were anxious to bring down the exploiters and stop fighting each other.<sup>217</sup> Therefore, this newly established communist state was not welcome on the scene by most nations in the world and was essentially isolated.<sup>218</sup> Although communist parties were formed in the majority of European countries, the proposed world revolution had to be put to a halt to consolidate communism within Russia.<sup>219</sup> Many leaders within the communist party still wanted to spread the revolution abroad and most prominent of them was Trotsky. However, he was defeated by Stalin, who was now the supreme leader of the Soviet Union and now embraced the slogan "Socialism in one Country." Meaning, just like Lenin had thought in the end, that they had to build communism in one country, simply because of practical reasons of not going on expensive adventures abroad while simultaneously pursuing radical programs back home.<sup>220</sup> Thus for the remainder of this period the Soviet Union is an outsider to most of the world's nations, but it is still not particularly aggressive, even with its proposed 'world revolution'. However, it did still support communist movements abroad, even with weapons, for example, in Germany.<sup>221</sup>

With the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 Germany was set to have conflicting interests with its neighbors in the coming years. Firstly, losing much of its territory, most of it being its former eastern territories, that were now a part of the newly created state of Poland, would obviously put it at odds with it. Secondly, along with a huge amount that it had to pay to the various countries in war reparations it also had to endure the humiliating fact that its territories left of the Rhine were occupied by foreign powers and a demilitarized zone raised between it and the rest of Germany. Lastly, the treaty also limited the size of the German military.<sup>222</sup> Therefore, it is no wonder that such political parties as the National Socialist German Workers Party (Ger. Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei or the NSDAP), known as the Nazi-party in English and under the leadership of Adolf Hitler, gained

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<sup>217</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics - the Communist International," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>218</sup> Vercamer and Pipes, "German Military in the Soviet Union 1918-1933".

<sup>219</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics - the Communist International."

<sup>220</sup> "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics - the Nep and the Defeat of the Left," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2015).

<sup>221</sup> Vercamer and Pipes, "German Military in the Soviet Union 1918-1933".

<sup>222</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Treaty of Versailles."

popularity, as they preached a rhetoric about revenging the lost war, regaining its national glory, and anti-Semitic speech.<sup>223</sup>

It is also worth noting that both Soviet Russia and the Weimar Republic saw themselves as the losers of the First World War and its aftermath, and both of them were initially quite isolated on the world stage after the war. So even though they were not ideologically sound friends, they shared their bitterness towards the Western powers and that resulted in some close cooperation between the two.<sup>224</sup>

## **6.2 Additional Factors**

### **6.2.1 Strong versus Weak States**

The prospect of weak states versus strong states is perhaps not the most accurate depiction of the Russo-German relationship in this period, although both states can be described as weak in certain aspects and strong in others. An inherently weak state would be prone to align with the threat, but as both states are sort of in the middle, it is quite difficult to assess this. If one is thinking in terms of military matters then Germany is without a doubt the weak one and the Soviet Union the strong one, or at least stronger. Economically both were a mess and thus weak. However, Germany most likely had a stronger industry and the Soviet Union lacked behind making Germany the strong one in this aspect. Both were thus essentially weak and strong. However, both of them were very weak when it came to international diplomacy as will be briefly discussed in the next section.

### **6.2.2 Availability of Allies**

As both countries were essentially isolated they were understandably very vulnerable in international diplomacy and military matters.<sup>225</sup> Thus it was almost natural for them to look to each other for assistance in those matters, as allies for them were simply not available or at least very scarce. With that being said, this is a huge factor contributing to their more or less good relations during this period. It could be said that were in a way naturally drawn towards one another.

### **6.2.3 Ideology**

At last ideology does play some role in Russo-German relations during this period, but still only a minor one. Russia being the first communist state in the world and wanting to spread

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<sup>223</sup> Arnulf Scriba, "Das Ns-Regime," Stiftung Deutsches Historisches Museum, <https://www.dhm.de/lemo/kapitel/ns-regime>.

<sup>224</sup> Vercamer and Pipes, "German Military in the Soviet Union 1918-1933".

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

its revolution around the world (to begin with)<sup>226</sup> really put it at odds with the rest of the world and it was thus isolated. Therefore, it should be at odds with Germany as well, but in this case it was not so. Soviet communism and German republicanism may in theory be at odds with each other, but in this case these differences only play a minor role. It was only at the end of this period with the rise of Hitler and Nazism that ideology began to play a major role in their relations, and then obviously turning them to the worse.<sup>227</sup>

#### **6.2.4 Foreign Aid**

Foreign aid played a crucial role in this relationship and is connected to the availability of allies section. As was noted before, there were big projects going on between the Soviet Union and Germany for the greater part of this period regarding many different military matters.<sup>228</sup> The Soviet Union would allow Germany to build training and research facilities for all sorts of things that were prohibited in Germany and the results of this research would be shared with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union would also produce some machinery for the Germans that were prohibited to do so according to the Treaty of Versailles.<sup>229</sup>

#### **6.2.5 Asymmetrical Dependence**

Essentially, the Soviet Union had leverage over Germany in the sense that it could offer Germany military facilities in Russia to train and research, something that they simply could not have back home. The Soviet Union would then benefit somewhat from this cooperation but it would probably not be as valuable to them as it was for the Germans. The Soviet Union was also able to produce weaponry and vehicles that was prohibited to do in Germany, giving the Soviet Union a clear leverage over Germany.<sup>230</sup>

### **6.3 Summary**

It is clear that Germany and Russia/Soviet Union were both bitter towards the world for being the "losers" of the First World War, even though they had been at war with each other just a few years earlier. However, both states had undergone dramatic changes and in a way had been "restarted" and there was now a newly created and independent Polish state wedged in between them. Both were geopolitically isolated and desperately needed friends and allies, and as no one else would want to align with them, they gravitated towards one another. Both had great economic interests in the other, but the main component of their good relationship

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<sup>226</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics - the Nep and the Defeat of the Left."

<sup>227</sup> Vercamer and Pipes, "German Military in the Soviet Union 1918-1933".

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

during this period was their close and covert military cooperation. Germany, under severe restrictions, was allowed to put up research and training facilities in the Soviet Union and the Soviets would supply the Germans with much needed military production. Ideology does not seem to have been an issue in their relations, although one minor incident did flare up. It was only towards the end of this period at the beginning of the 1930's that their relationship began to go south and was eventually jeopardized with the coming to power of Adolf Hitler in 1933, even though actual cooperation was not cut off until a few months later.

Germany and Russia were thus not balancing against each other, but rather unified in balancing together against the world, or precisely the West.

## **VII. Case IV – Germany and Russia Today**

This case will take on the relationship between Russia and Germany in the modern world, but the general period for discussion will be marked by the fall of the Soviet Union in December 1991 and the end of it will be the most current situation when this dissertation is written (spring 2016).

### **7.1 Sources of Threat**

#### **7.1.1 Aggregate Power**

Population is once again going to play an important role, but this time the situation is somewhat different than before. At the time the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 the total population was roughly 290 million people. About half of them were ethnic Russians and combined with the other east-Slavic residents, that is the Ukrainians and Belarusians, this group made up about two thirds of the total population.<sup>231</sup> However, the Union split up and Russia was left with only its part of former Soviet Union, which had a population of about 150 million people.<sup>232</sup> This number has been gradually decreasing since the break-up and today it numbers only about 144 million.<sup>233</sup> Not only is the population decreasing but it is also aging and replacing itself very slowly. This will mean a drop in the available workforce for Russia and by 2025 the total workforce will have dropped down by 14 million people from its all-time high in 2007 when it counted about 90 million people.<sup>234</sup> Russia, even though it is still quite a populous country, has some major problems when it comes to its people.

The situation for Germany on the other hand is not so bleak, but neither is it perfect. Its total population today is a little over 80 million people<sup>235</sup> and in 1991 this number was almost exactly the same.<sup>236</sup> Its fertility rate is one of the lowest in the world,<sup>237</sup> which means that the native German population is not reproducing enough to replace the older generations. To stem against this Germany needs a lot of immigrants to keep its total population number level. If

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<sup>231</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, "USA/USSR: Facts and Figures." Table 1.4

<sup>232</sup> GlobalSecurity.org, "Russia - People".

<sup>233</sup> World Bank, "Population, Total."

<sup>234</sup> GlobalSecurity.org, "Russia - People".

<sup>235</sup> World Bank, "Population, Total."

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> "Fertility Rate, Total (Births Per Woman)," (Washington, DC: The World Bank Group, 2016).

nothing is done, then Germany's labor force would shrink from its current number of about 45 million people in 2015 down to 29 million in 2050.<sup>238</sup>

Both countries obviously have problems with their general population but when it comes to the total population of the countries, Russia, as usual, apart from losing a lot of its people with and after the fall of the Soviet Union, still has the upper hand in this respect. The ratio today however is only 1.8 in favor of Russia, whereas the ratio in 1991 against the Soviet Union was an astounding 3.6 times that of (a unified) Germany.

Once again the Russian infrastructure has to serve a vast country with rather low average population density (only 9 per square km). The total length of the Russian railway system today is about 87,000 kilometers and the total length of its roadways is 982,000 kilometers.<sup>239</sup> Germany today, on the other hand, has railway coverage of a little less than 42,000 kilometers and its roadways are about 644,000 kilometers in total.<sup>240</sup> Comparing their railways, one cannot but notice that Russia's current railways are slightly more than double the length of Germany's, which should point to some low density in its network compared to Germany, whose size is only a fraction of Russia's size. Even if those railways are mostly located in the European part of Russia and in the more habitable spaces, Russia's railway network does not come close to the German railways in density and thus efficiency. It is even noteworthy that Germany's road system is only two thirds of Russia's system in total length, although Russia's road system is fairly big, it apparently again does not have the same density as Germany's road system and railway system. So in terms of infrastructure, Germany is stronger.

The Russian economy is not the largest in the world but still pretty large judging by its Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) measuring at about 3.58 trillion US dollars in 2015 putting it in sixth place, just below Germany with its 3.75 trillion dollars, which puts Germany in the fifth place.<sup>241</sup> When it comes to Gross Domestic Production (GDP) Russia has about 1.86 trillion dollars, which only puts in the tenth place, just behind India and ahead of Canada, while Germany with its 3.87 trillion dollars is then in the fourth place, after Japan but ahead of Britain.<sup>242</sup> The GDP per capita in Russia is about 12,700 dollars in 2014, but in Germany this number was much higher, or at 47,700 dollars,<sup>243</sup> which would explain the rather similar size of their economies even though Russia has a much larger population. This clearly shows

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<sup>238</sup> GlobalSecurity.org, "Germany - People".

<sup>239</sup> GlobalFirepower.com, "Russia Military Strength," GlobalSecurity.org, [http://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.asp?country\\_id=russia](http://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.asp?country_id=russia).

<sup>240</sup> "Germany Military Strength".

<sup>241</sup> "Purchasing Power Parity by Country".

<sup>242</sup> World Bank, "GDP at Market Prices (Current US\$)," (Washington, DC: The World Bank Group, 2016).

<sup>243</sup> "GDP Per Capita (Current US\$)," (Washington, DC: The World Bank Group, 2016).



that the German economy is much stronger than the Russian one, but what about their access to oil and its production?

Having access to oil is one of the essentials of modern societies and absolutely necessary for modern militaries to function, so which one of them has better access to it? Russia is the leading oil producer in the world producing about 10,110,000 barrels of oil per day in 2015, ahead of Saudi Arabia, which is in second place with 9,735,000 barrels per day. The United States, in comparison, produces 8,653,000 barrels a day. However, Germany only produces 48,830 barrels per day which puts it in 52<sup>nd</sup> place in total oil production.<sup>244</sup> However, Germany consumes exceedingly more than it produces, which makes it reliant on importing oil. Its total consumption amounts to 2,400,000 barrels per day and it would take its own production capacities about 49 days to reach its daily consumption. Russia consumes 3,320,000 barrels per day, but produces roughly three times as much.<sup>245</sup> This gives Russia a huge advantage over Germany in terms of access to oil.

So which one has more aggregate power today? If we are only talking about those two states then they would probably balance out pretty evenly. Russia's population is much larger than Germany's, but both of them share a similar problem of an aging population and other demographic problems. Thus, in population numbers Russia comes out on top. In terms of infrastructure, Germany definitely takes the trophy as its whole transportation network is a lot more dense than Russia's network, even though Russia's total length exceeds that of Germany by far. In that case one has to keep in mind that the total size of Germany is but a fraction of the total size of Russia, thus giving Germany the upper hand in terms of transportation capabilities. When it comes to their respective economies it gets quite tricky as their total size is pretty similar. However, Germany's economy is much stronger overall as its GDP per capita is much higher than in Russia. Russia is miles ahead when it comes to oil production. Germany is dependent on the importation of oil, whereas Russia produces much more than it consumes.

### **7.1.2 Geographic Proximity**

Germany and Russia do not share a common border today, although the European Union does have a border with Russia through Finland, Estonia and Latvia.<sup>246</sup> However, that is

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<sup>244</sup> GlobalFirepower.com, "Oil Production Output by Country," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalfirepower.com/oil-production-by-country.asp>.

<sup>245</sup> "Oil Consumption by Country," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalfirepower.com/oil-consumption-by-country.asp>.

<sup>246</sup> BBC News, "European Union Maps," BBC, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-24367705>.

irrelevant. Today there are two whole independent states between Russia and Germany, namely Poland and Belarus. Russia does have an enclave located between Poland and Lithuania on the Baltic coast, which is a part of the former territory of Eastern Prussia, known today as the 'Kaliningrad Oblast'.<sup>247</sup> So technically there is still only Poland between them. But for the purpose of this thesis the focus will be on the Russian mainland. As they are not direct neighbors, just like in case 3, they are not as likely to view each other as a threat since they are not adjacent to each other.

### **7.1.3 Offensive Power**

Russia today possesses some massive military capabilities and is generally regarded to have the second most powerful military in the world,<sup>248</sup> and that does not take into account their nuclear capabilities. The United States is in the top spot and China is in third place after Russia. Germany comes in 9<sup>th</sup> place, after Turkey and before Italy.<sup>249</sup> Taking the total number of military assets Russia today has about 766,000 active duty troops, which is quite a lot compared to Germany's mere 180,000 troops. Thus in total number of troops Russia is clearly at an advantage and the difference becomes even bigger when the number of reserve troops is taken into the account as well. Russia has almost 2.5 million in reserve, which it can call upon in the case of an all-out war, whereas Germany has only about 145,000. The Russian Air Force is much bigger than Germany's. They have a little more than 3,500 aircraft of all types when Germany has only about 670. Russia possesses the largest tank force in the world with a total of more than 15,000 tanks of all types,<sup>250</sup> but Germany only has a just over 400. Furthermore, Russia has more than 30,000 armored fighting vehicles of all types while Germany has almost 5,900 of them. When it comes to all sorts of artillery pieces then Russia clearly has a major advantage as well with almost 6,000 self-propelled artillery pieces (SPGs), 4,600 old-fashioned towed artillery and just about 3,800 multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS) compared to Germany's 154 SPGs and mere 50 MLRSs.<sup>251</sup>

Russia's navy is also much bigger and it outnumbers the German Navy in every category of ships, except frigates. The total number of vessels in the Russian Navy is 352, 60 of them are submarines, 15 destroyers and 81 corvettes. Russia has only four frigates compared to Germany's 10, but that is the only advantage of the Germans. Furthermore, Russia has some

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<sup>247</sup> Leisering, *Historischer Weltatlas*. p. 156.

<sup>248</sup> GlobalFirepower.com, "Russia Military Strength".

<sup>249</sup> "Global Firepower Military Ranks - 2016".

<sup>250</sup> "Tank Strength by Country," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalfirepower.com/armor-tanks-total.asp>.

<sup>251</sup> "World Military Strength Comparison," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-comparison-detail.asp?form=form&country1=russia&country2=germany&Submit=COMPARE>.

patrol boats and mining crafts. One more great advantage of the Russian Navy is that they have an aircraft carrier while the German Navy does not. The total number of German vessels is only at 81 with five of them being submarines.<sup>252</sup>

There is one major aspect where Russia completely towers over Germany and that is nuclear capabilities. Russia has one of, if not, the biggest arsenal of nuclear weapons on earth and is one of two countries in the world that are capable of ending all life on earth as we know it. The other one is of course the United States.<sup>253</sup> Germany possesses no nuclear weapons of its own giving Russia a tremendous advantage once again, but Germany is a member of NATO<sup>254</sup> placing it under the nuclear umbrella of the United States. However, it is debatable whether possessing nuclear weapons gives one state an advantage given the concept of "MAD", or Mutually Assured Destruction, meaning that if one state launches a nuclear strike against another one, the latter will respond by launching a retaliatory strike and thus essentially both countries end up wiping each other off the map.<sup>255</sup>

Even though Russia's military has a numerical advantage in almost every aspect that does not necessarily mean that it has the upper hand in every aspect. The Russian military has had some serious issues regarding spending and efficiency and it still has not fully transitioned from a conscript force to a professional one, among other drawbacks.<sup>256</sup> Furthermore, because of the dire economic situation of the 1990's, a lot of its equipment did not receive adequate maintenance and its operational capabilities dropped tremendously. The Russian military today and since the break-up is generally outdated and weak.<sup>257</sup> However, given Russia's stockpile of nuclear weapons, the whole of Germany could easily be swatted in a single strike, but given the concept of MAD, it is questionable whether Russia's nuclear weapons are really an advantage.

#### **7.1.4 Aggressive Intentions**

Right after the fall of the Soviet Union Russia had a number of problems to solve. One of those was growing separatism in some of its regions, specifically Chechnya.<sup>258</sup> But Russia during the 1990's stayed mostly quiet on the world stage and did not flex its military muscle

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<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Kimball, "Nuclear Weapons: Who Has What at a Glance".

<sup>254</sup> NATO, "Nato Member Countries," NATO, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/nato\\_countries.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/nato_countries.htm).

<sup>255</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Nuclear Strategy."

<sup>256</sup> Jonathan Masters, "How Powerful Is Russia's Military?," *Defense One* (2014),

<http://www.defenseone.com/threats/2014/11/how-powerful-russias-military/99062/>.

<sup>257</sup> Andrew Cottey, *Security in 21st Century Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). p. 140.

<sup>258</sup> GlobalSecurity.org, "First Chechnya War - 1994-1996," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/chechnya1.htm>.

that often. Although it became increasingly nationalistic, with Andrew Cottey calling the situation a 'Weimar Russia.'<sup>259</sup> With Putin coming to power things began to change. He started to spend more on the military and finally in 2008 Russia used its military in a short and successful military campaign against Georgia.<sup>260</sup> One might say that Russia had been seeking a confrontation with the West and this was just one aspect of it. Russia has been opposed to the Western powers in many ways, for example, by objecting to the US missile defense systems in Europe, enlargement of NATO and more. The incursion into Georgia in 2008, the annexation of Crimea and the subsequent military clashes in the Donbass region in eastern Ukraine<sup>261</sup> and finally its quite successful military intervention in Syria<sup>262</sup> are all signs of Russia's aggressive stance in international politics. This flexing of their military muscle has not gone down well with the Western powers.

Vladimir Putin is famously supposed to have said that the fall of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, an event that left millions of Russians outside of Russia's borders.<sup>263</sup> Russia is obviously set against the West and conflicting interests could escalate further into more conflict if Russia and Germany, along with the United States and the rest, do not come to an understanding at some point.

## 7.2 Additional Factors

### 7.2.1 Availability of Allies

One important factor to consider with Germany is that it is practically a minor player when it comes to military matters, even though it does possess the 9<sup>th</sup> strongest military in the world.<sup>264</sup> That is because Germany is a member of NATO and thus its defenses are guaranteed in the case of an attack. However, there are a total of 28 member states in NATO and one of them is the United States,<sup>265</sup> which is generally regarded as possessing the greatest military capabilities in the world.<sup>266</sup> Germany is by no means a weak state, but when it comes to military matters it probably is, at least compared to both Russia and the US. Germany thus has a great tendency free-ride on the effort of the US to provide for its own and European

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<sup>259</sup> Cottey, *Security in 21st Century Europe*. p. 123.

<sup>260</sup> GlobalSecurity.org, "Russia - Introduction - a New Cold War".

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Natasha Bertrand, "Russia's Intervention in Syria 'Has Changed the Slope' of the War's Most Important Battlefield," *Business Insider UK* (2016), <http://uk.businessinsider.com/russia-syria-intervention-war-2016-1?r=US&IR=T>.

<sup>263</sup> BBC News, "Putin Deplores Collapse of USSR," *BBC News*, no. 13 April (2005), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/4480745.stm>.

<sup>264</sup> GlobalFirepower.com, "Global Firepower Military Ranks - 2016".

<sup>265</sup> NATO, "Nato Member Countries".

<sup>266</sup> GlobalFirepower.com, "Global Firepower Military Ranks - 2016".

security against Russia. But Germany is definitely one the great powers of the world and so it also suffers from buck-passing its security matters to its allies, most often the US. However, Germany does offer its assistance in military matters abroad, for example, in Afghanistan and most recently in Syria, a sign that it is not completely dormant.<sup>267</sup>

Russia does not possess such a vast network of allies although it does have a few.<sup>268</sup> Russia is also the strongest of its group of friends and because of that, it does not have to rely on others to provide for its security. Russia is also regarded as the second most powerful military force in the world, which means that there is also no incentive for Russia to be lax on its security and military matters.<sup>269</sup>

### 7.2.2 Ideology

Today both Germany and Russia are nominally democracies. However, under the leadership of Vladimir Putin its rule has become much more authoritarian and nationalistic in nature,<sup>270</sup> thus questioning the fact whether Russia is actually a democracy and whether the legitimacy of its rule is only bound within its internationally recognized borders. This is further evidenced by Russia's annexation of the Crimean peninsula, which has a sizeable ethnic Russian population.<sup>271</sup> Russia seems to think that the legitimacy of its rule reaches not just to its borders but to all Russian's living abroad. Russia also seems to be uncomfortable with many western style social movements and foreign organizations and has cracked down on them hard and Putin has also gone as far as to jail opposition leaders.<sup>272</sup>

Meanwhile Germany has been a western style federal republic since 1949 and was given this designation under the supervision of the western powers.<sup>273</sup>

## 7.3 Summary

It is obvious that Russia is in a tough position and has been since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. Its road to recovery has been long and hard and it has not yet fully recovered from the shock. Russia still has many problems to solve, ranging from demographics to

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<sup>267</sup> GlobalSecurity.org, "Deployments / Einsaetze," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/de-deployments.htm>.

<sup>268</sup> Mahapatra, "Who Are Russia's Allies and Enemies? Here's How Russians View Other Countries [Infographic]".

<sup>269</sup> GlobalFirepower.com, "Global Firepower Military Ranks - 2016".

<sup>270</sup> Sean Cannady and Paul Kubicek, "Nationalism and Legitimation for Authoritarianism: A Comparison of Nicholas I and Vladimir Putin," *Journal of Eurasian Studies* (2013).

<sup>271</sup> Henry E. Hale, "Nationalism and the Logic of Russian Actions in Ukraine," *Perspectives on Peace & Security* (2014), <http://perspectives.carnegie.org/us-russia/nationalism-logic-russian-actions-ukraine/>.

<sup>272</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Vladimir Putin."

<sup>273</sup> "Germany - Government and Society," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2016).

military matters. Despite all of its problems, Russia possesses the 2<sup>nd</sup> most powerful military force in the world, and that does not take into account their vast nuclear arsenal. Russia is a legitimate threat to the rest of the world, but given its long set of problems and relative geopolitical isolation, what it can actually achieve is questionable.

Germany on the other hand fares much better than Russia, although it comes with its own set of problems, mostly demographics-related. Despite that, its position in the world is much better than Russia's, being a part of a vast defensive alliance and possessing a relatively strong military, although far behind Russia in both capabilities and numbers. Germany is clearly miles ahead of Russia in economics, whereas Russia towers over Germany in conventional military power and nuclear capabilities.

The two states do not share a common border with two independent states in between them (disregarding Kaliningrad), so it is possible that their relationship might even be worse if they still shared a border.

With all things considered, Russia seems to be trying the best it can to balance against the supposed threat that NATO and the EU pose against it, however, with varying success. At the same time, Germany does not seem to be actively balancing against Russia, and neither is it bandwagoning with it. Germany is free-riding on the efforts of the United States and buck-passing its responsibilities to its allies at the same time, however, it is taking a more active role with respect to military activities, so its stance may be undergoing some changes.

## VIII. Conclusion

It is obvious that Russia and Germany in all of their different forms since the 1870's have had their share of both common ground and grievances and Stephen Walt's *The Origins of Alliances* does a good job of explaining their respective behavior towards each other. With the many different aspects of his theory one can assess the capabilities of states in different ways and thus their potential threat to others states.

The central point of Walt's theory is the difference between the terms balancing and bandwagoning, each representing different realities in international politics and subsequent behavior of states. According to him, balancing is the norm in our world and when one state rises to power and potentially becomes too powerful, other states will begin balancing against its threat. Bandwagoning is an opportunistic exception that is rarely to be expected, except in certain cases, for instance, in the case of Finland during and after the Second World War. A bandwagoning world would be more much more competitive and states would simply build up their capabilities and be more inclined to use force.<sup>274</sup>

Then there are the four main sources of threat. First one of them is aggregate power, which takes into account all of the resources available to a certain state and so it is possible to see which country has more material power in terms of e.g. manpower, industrial capabilities etc. States with more of those aspects have the potential to mobilize more men and turn more of their steel production, for example, to military use and are thus much greater threats. Geographic proximity plays a key role in all this as states will be more concerned about the states that are in much closer proximity. Britain should be more worried about Germany's intentions rather than Brazil's as Germany is located much closer. Directly related to proximity is offensive power, which is the ability of states to project their power beyond their own borders and take control of another's states territory and hold on to it with minimal losses. Finally, there is one of the most important aspect namely aggressive intentions. What are states going to do with all their power? Do they seek expansion or do they simply want to maintain the status quo? The perception that other states have of a possible aggressor plays a major role in this, as some states might be very powerful, but have actually no intention of threatening others.<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>274</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*. pp. 27-28.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid. pp. 21-26.

Clearly, the behavior of states is not just that simple and so one has to take into account a few additional factors. A weak state might be inclined to join in with the threat (a strong state) as it sees no other alternatives and this could also be one form of appeasement towards a certain threat. The availability of allies also has a lot to say when assessing alliance behavior as a lone state will very likely bandwagon when it recognizes that allies are simply not available. Lesser states may also be inclined to free-ride on a great power's security efforts, and they in turn are likely to buck-pass responsibilities to other states of similar capabilities when they believe that their alliance is certain. Ideology is a double-edged sword as it can both be a dividing and a unifying force. Monarchies and liberal democracies are ideologies that unify countries as their legitimacy only reaches to their own subjects, while Leninism-Marxism, for example, seeks to unify states under one leader and thus, somewhat counterproductively, paves the way for conflict. One state might be in dire need of aid and so another country can have leverage over its decisions by offering it help in some form, and the more valuable form the aid takes, the more power the supplier has over the recipient.<sup>276</sup>

Were Germany and Russia balancing or bandwagoning against each other between 1870 and 1890? That is rather difficult to say as both Germany and Russia were in a way balancing against and bandwagoning with the other power. One could say they were essentially 'in between' as a result of Bismarck's pursuit of the status quo after the unification of Germany.<sup>277</sup> Russia may have bandwagoned with Germany as it was the greatest threat on its doorstep and Russia had little capabilities to fight a war with this powerful nation, other than with its significantly larger mobilization pool perhaps. However, it gradually slipped over to start balancing against Germany as both states got stronger and Russia started to have rather mixed perceptions of Germany's intentions. In the end it is probably safe to say that Russia started out bandwagoning for the majority of this period, but only ended up really balancing at the end of it and the start of the next period. The balance of power and peace in Europe rested on Bismarck's policies and there is no doubt that he was one of, if not, the most important political figure in late 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe.

Did the situation change after Bismarck's abdication in 1890 until 1914? Yes, unequivocally. The fundamental changes in Germany's policy accompanied with Russia's growing grievances resulted in it forming a balancing alliance with France against Germany and eventually even expanding that alliance to include Britain. The forming of the Triple Entente in 1907 was the culmination of this balancing alliance to oppose Germany's now quite

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<sup>276</sup> Ibid. pp. 29-48.

<sup>277</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Otto von Bismarck - Imperial Chancellor."



militaristic stance in world politics.<sup>278</sup> Combine that with Germany's growing population and industrial might and it's obvious that Germany was a threat to peace and stability in Europe, not to mention that German naval capabilities were growing significantly and it was actually caught in a naval arms race with Britain.<sup>279</sup> However, a large contributing factor in the formation of this alliance was the financial aid that Russia needed from France in order to industrialize,<sup>280</sup> but other than that those two states would only be able to come to each other's aid in the case of war with Germany.<sup>281</sup>

What about the Weimar Republic and the Soviet Union? One would presume that differing ideologies would cause them to drift apart, but that was not the case. Both were isolated on the world stage and were thus automatically drawn to each other. Both states were diplomatically very weak and needed allies, and sharing their grievances towards the western powers united them. Germany was able to conduct covert military research in facilities that the Soviet Union provided and it also produced some hardware for the Germans in return, all of which was prohibited in Germany. The Germans would also share their research with the Soviets.<sup>282</sup> Their geographical situation was this time very different from what it was earlier, as there was now an independent Poland wedged in between them. Additionally, both also shared some of their grievances towards this new state as it was founded on their former territories, lost due to the First World War.<sup>283</sup> It is likely that they had not been so friendly towards each other had they still been neighboring states. There is a distinct possibility that the Soviet Union might simply have invaded Germany as it was very weak after signing the Treaty of Versailles combined with the early Soviet wish to come to the aid of the proletariat masses that were being exploited in the West, or so they thought.<sup>284</sup> With the rise of Nazism in this era, subsequent cooperation came to an end.<sup>285</sup> Yet, both states were not balancing against each other, but one could say that they were rather balancing together against the world, more specifically the western powers. Neither of them was in essence an immediate threat to the other and that most likely bound them even closer to together.

So what is the situation today? The Russo-German relationship has hit an all-time low since the end of the Cold War with sanctions flying back and forth and people talking about a

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<sup>278</sup> "Triple Entente."

<sup>279</sup> Twente, "Wilhelm und die Welt."

<sup>280</sup> KMLA, "Russian Domestic Policy, 1894-1905".

<sup>281</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Dual Alliance."

<sup>282</sup> Vercamer and Pipes, "German Military in the Soviet Union 1918-1933".

<sup>283</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Treaty of Versailles."

<sup>284</sup> "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics."

<sup>285</sup> Vercamer and Pipes, "German Military in the Soviet Union 1918-1933".

'New Cold War' on the rise. Russia is the second greatest military power in the world in terms of conventional military forces and also in terms of nuclear capabilities. Germany does possess a capable military force, but it is nowhere near Russia in sheer power.<sup>286</sup> However, Germany is a part of NATO,<sup>287</sup> which guarantees it the support of other nations, among them the United States. This also has the effect that Germany is in a way both free-riding on the military effort of the United States and also buck-passing responsibilities to the US and its other allies, like France and Britain. Germany has a much stronger economy but that is only useful up to a certain degree. Therefore, Germany is not balancing against Russia, but Russia on the other hand is doing what it can to balance against not only Germany, but the EU and NATO at the same time, as their relationship with both of those organizations in the past has been very shaky.

Naturally, one always hopes for a better future and so the hope is that Germany, along with the rest of the West, and Russia can hopefully soon or at some point in the future set aside their grievances and come to an understanding, however unlikely. Is the West (NATO and the EU) going to lift their sanctions against Russia or find other forms of appeasement, or is Russia going to relax on its nationalistic and militaristic stance and allow closer cooperation with the West? With such a strong and conservative leader as Vladimir Putin that is very unlikely to happen and Russia would need to take complete U-turn from its current path if that were to happen.

The reader might be wondering why there are no cases of Germany and Russia being at war with each other. The answer to that is very simple and it should be fairly clear why they were fighting each other. The First World War was the culmination of the two first cases and the Second World War was the culmination of the third case. The Cold War was considered as a case initially, but seeing that Germany was split into two different states and both of them being occupied by foreign powers, that case was out of the question.

Walt's theory in *The Origins of Alliances* does a good job of explaining alliance behavior in general and it does explain both the historical and the current relationship between Germany and Russia. Furthermore, those explanations are more detailed than those of Neo-Realism. By defining states' relations to each other in terms of threat in many different respects rather than defining it simply in terms of power, one gains a better idea of why states choose to either align themselves together or become enemies. It is apparent that the sources

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<sup>286</sup> GlobalFirepower.com, "World Military Strength Comparison".

<sup>287</sup> NATO, "Nato Member Countries".

of threat are very strong indicators of the perception states will have of one another and it is apparent throughout Germany's and Russia's history that their initial geographical proximity to each other was a great source of concern for the other. Two fairly large and powerful states (in different aspects of course) right on each other's doorstep is a great source of concern and it is no wonder that the Russo-German relationship gradually went downhill from Germany's unification until the First World War. It was then "restarted" after the war, as both nations had a change in government and no longer shared a border and for the most time it was relatively good. Thus one of the most important components of Walt's theory is geography and one could imagine that the Cold War could have turned out a little different if the United States and Russia shared a common border. However, their forces were staring each other down from just across the Iron Curtain through Germany, so one will never know.

One thing is certain: Germany and Russia still exist and applying Walt's theory, their relationship has become somewhat clear and comprehensible.

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