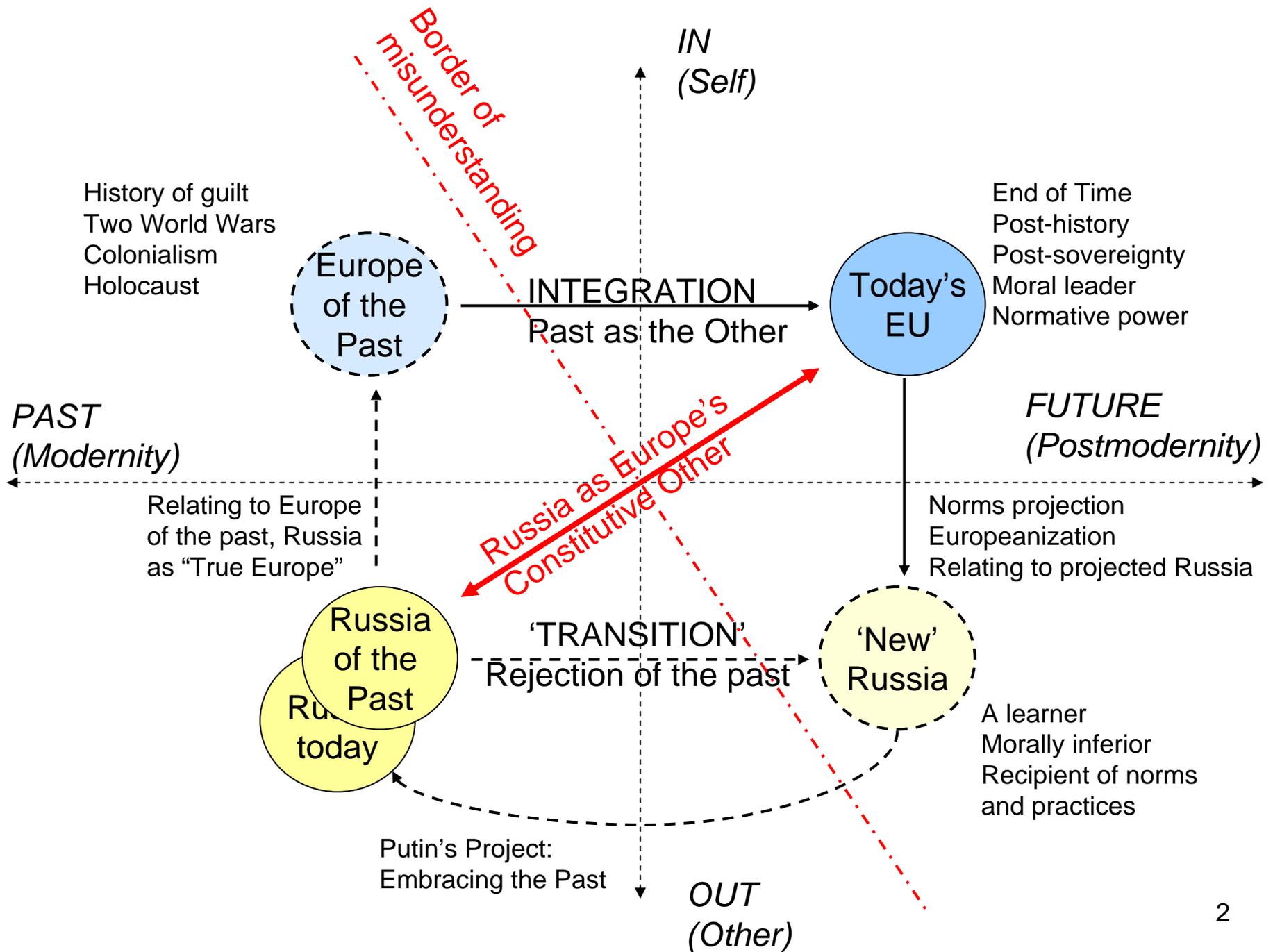




# Europe is What States Make of It: Imaginations of Europe in Russia and the EU

*Sergei Medvedev,  
Higher School of Economics, Moscow  
smedvedev@hse.ru*



# Rituals of Othering

- Othering as a key political speech act, producing collective identities
- Other is positioned outside the political community and territorialized (e.g. East for Europe)
  - Othering is a spatial practice → essentially a Modern act
- Othering can also be a temporal practice: another aspect of Modernity
  - Confronting your own past and your past Self
  - Germany and Europe post-1945: *Stunde Null*, Ground Zero: A moral act of breaking with the past, past as the Other

# European Identity: Othering the Past

- European Integration: A security act and a moral impulse (see the role of Christian Democrats)
  - *Nie wieder*, repentance, rejection of war, Fascism, Holocaust, colonialism, Stalinism, etc.
  - Europe’s moral inferiority and political humility (esp. in the Continent), aversion of foreign and security policy
- Creation of a political community by avoiding explicit territorial othering
  - “a generalized fear of ‘back to the future’ rather than any concrete fear of a specific and spatial Other” (Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, 2003)

# Narrating Europe as a Moral Space

- European integration as a break in linearity and historic continuity
  - Post-historic, post-sovereign, “post-heroic”, post-war
- John Ruggie and Robert Cooper: EU as the first truly postmodern political form
  - New polity, civilian power
  - “Zone of affluence” instead of “zone of influence”
- Robert Kagan’s critique: Europe’s morality as a sign of weakness

# The 1990s: New Liberal Europeanism

- New Geopolitics: Post-Wall Europe
  - West triumphant, East compliant
- New integration advances
  - Deepening: Maastricht, the Euro, Constitution and Lisbon
  - Widening: Enlargement 1995 and 2004-2007, moral implications of reunification of Europe
  - Conditionality: Educating and civilizing the East
- New demography
  - Post-war generations, less constrained by history
  - New Euro-optimism
- New Europeans
  - Moral vindication of the “kidnapped West”
  - Stronger Atlantic allegiance

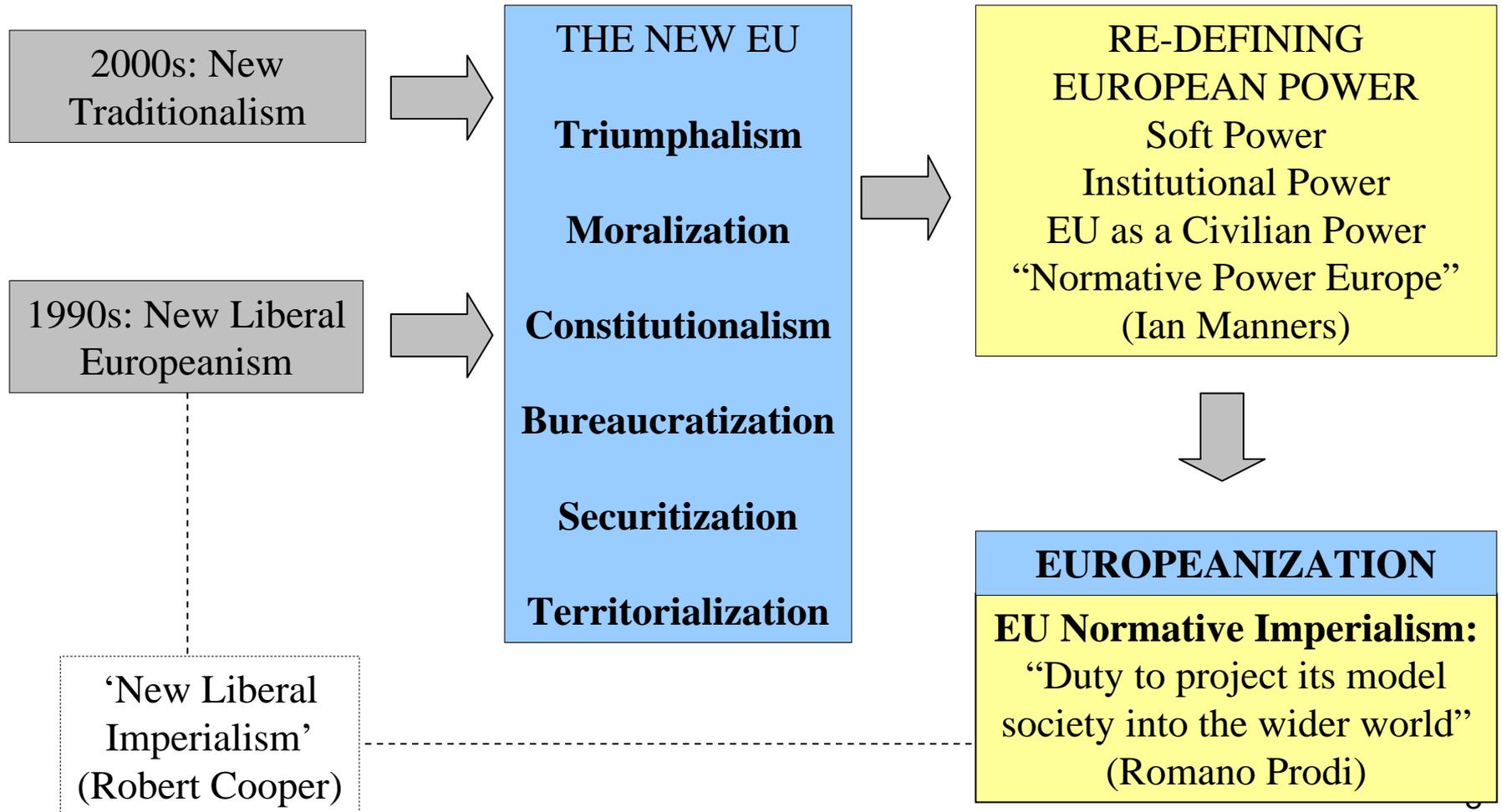
# The 2000s: New Traditionalism

- Kosovo 1999: Reviving the discourse of war
  - Exercise of power as a normative/moral discourse
- Terrorism: 9/11, Madrid and London bombings –  
reviving the discourse of security
- Schengen implementation: Reviving the discourse  
of borders
- The ENP: Reviving the discourse of territory

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= EU is increasingly turning into  
a statist and bounded political community

# From Humility to Hegemony



# Eurocentric Imaginations: “The Wider Europe” Map



The Wider Europe and its Neighbourhood -  
the Greater Middle East and North America

*Source: Council of Europe, 2005*

# Europeanization as Socialization

***Europeanization*** = “Transformation of national politics and policy making in line with modern European values and standards through:

- Legal and institutional obligations flowing from the norms and rules of EU and Council of Europe
- Objective changes in economic structures and interests of individuals as a result of integration
- Subjective changes in beliefs, expectations and identity”

(Michael Emerson, 2005)

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= Social learning and identity change  
(Jeff Checkel, 2001)

# Europeanization in the Historical Context

- A traditional civilizational/missionary discourse
  - A historical construction of Westernness (positing Western values and practices as universal and non-negotiable)
  - A historical construction of Easternness (positing the East as barbarian, devoid of morality and rule of law, a space to be converted and transformed)
- Slavoj Zizek: The “Eurocentric procedure of imposing its own hegemony by means of the exclusionary discursive strategy of devaluating the Other” (2000).

# EU Imagination of Russia

- Russia as a nation “in transit” and a subject-in-the making
  - Lack of proper subjectivity and moral integrity
  - Continuously postponed Europeanness
- Keeping Russia up to the European (presumably superior) standard
  - Conditionality and monitoring
- Vetting imagined/projected Russia against real/observed Russia: Source of permanent frustration

# EU Approach to Russia

- Exporting values, norms and regulations
- Harmonization of Russian law with EU *acquis*
- Extrapolation of EU internal logic for external uses
  - PCA, the ENP, Common Spaces – Watered-down derivatives of the enlargement process
- Expansion without enlargement, “sharing all but institutions”
  - Russia’s multiple obligations without the mega-incentive of membership

## ...Meanwhile in Russia...

- 1991: USSR breakup, ideological vacuum, search for post-Soviet identity
  - Territorial Other (West) no longer meaningful
  - Temporal othering, like in Europe post-1945
- 1986-1996: Narratives of self-denial
  - Repentance and rejection of the Soviet past
  - Civilizational inferiority (“joining the civilized world”)
  - Rejection of national interest (Andrei Kozyrev)
  - Seeking integration into Western institutions (NATO, EU)
- Subscribing to the Western liberal Utopia

# The Transition Paradigm

- The teleology of transition: A Modern script
  - Universal path, linear progress, established benchmarks and criteria
  - Explicit temporal aspect: From Past to Future
- Russia as a nation “in transit” to “normalcy” and “civilization”
  - Coincided with the national archetype of belated modernization and emulation of the West
  - Submitting itself to processes of socialization, disciplining and control
  - Positioning itself as a morally inferior learner, a recipient of norms and practices

# Putin's Reversal

- Late 1990s: post-communist revolution gives way to Putin's Thermidor
  - A “Westphalian Russia”: Comeback of the State
  - Myths of Great Power, national consolidation
- Reconciliation with the past
  - Integrationist mythologies: reconciling post-Soviet, Soviet and Imperial past of Russia
  - Re-writing history textbooks, inventing new holidays (4 November)
- Russia back to the world of history and power politics

# Perceptions of the Russian Elite

- Images of the International System
  - World is divided into modern nation states (YES 66%, NO 11%)
  - The balance of power is the basic mechanism in international relations (YES 60%, NO 10%)
  - The ultimate source of national power is physical (military) force. (YES 42%, NO 56%)
- Self-images of Russia:
  - Russia is and should remain a great power (YES 49%, NO 32%)
  - Russia is treated unfairly (YES 49%, NO 32%)
  - Russia should be an autonomous entity different from the West (YES 47%, NO 10%)

(Petr Kratochvil, *Resisting the EUnticement: The Russian Elite and Europeanisation*, 2006)

# Russian Discourse on ‘False’ and ‘True’ Europe

- “False Europe”
  - EU supranationalism, rejection of the nation (post-Europe)
  - Distrust of the Brussels bureaucracy
  - Stories of EU decline, hopes of EU disintegration
- Resentment at EU patronizing and moralizing attitudes
- “New Europeans” as the US fifth column

# Russia as “True Europe”

- Russian discourse on “true Europe”
  - European heritage of culture and nation (*Blut und Erbe*)
  - Alleged affinity with “old nations” Germany and France + Italy (Dugin on the alliance with Franco-German Europe)
- Russia as the savior of the Continent
  - Past: saving Europe from the Mongols and Nazism
  - Future: saving Europe from degeneration and immorality
- Tradition and memory as Russia’s main discursive resource and justification of a special place in Europe

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= Constructing own normative discourse  
in opposition to Europeanization

# Two Images of Europe

- The EU perception: Europe of the future, post-history
  - Wider Europe: normative, projected
  - Sees itself as a norm-maker
  - Sees Russia as a projected/imagined norm-taker
  - Wants Russia to fit Europe’s own image and model
- The Russian perception: Europe of the past, Europe of history
  - Because history is where Russia belongs
  - Dostoyevsky’s “cherished graves” of Europe
  - Sees itself as a custodian of history and EU as a renegade

# Cognitive Dissonance

- Border of misunderstanding
  - Between the IN-Europe (EU) and OUT-Europe (neighborhood, Russia), but also...
  - Between Europe of the past (Russia's image) and Europe of the future (Europe's image)
- **Russia relates to the imagined Europe of the past, and Europe relates to the imagined Russia of the future**
- As a result, mutual othering of Russia and the EU
  - The “real” Russia does not fit into EU's projected image of a learner and norm-taker
  - The “real” EU does not fit into Russia's idealized image of Europe of nations and traditions

# Political Implications

- Both imaginations of Europe needed internally
  - Consolidating domestic institutions and procedures in Brussels and in Moscow by producing foundational narratives, a sense of belonging and images of the Other
- Systemic and discursive incompatibility between Russian and EU strategies
  - Russia: A conservative ‘Westphalian’ strategy of sovereignization (bureaucracy + sovereign democracy)
  - EU: A revisionist hegemonic strategy of Europeanization (bureaucracy + normative imperialism)

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= Source of crises in EU-Russia relations

# Recommendation:

## Thinking Beyond Modern Scripts

- Reveal the rituals of mutual othering
- Problematize key policy discourses
  - Question “Europeanization” as a messianic and neo-colonialist discourse
  - Recognize Russia’s historical references as politically irrelevant
- Work beyond the Moscow-Brussels framework
  - Bilateralism (France, Germany, Italy, Finland...)
  - Regionalism and “dimensionalism”
- Promote Euro-pluralism: accept the Other as a given, not as something to be opposed or transformed