4 Imperial Revival

A structural theory cannot predict which collapsed empires will revive; it can only point to the structural conditions that make revival possible and likely. In so doing, the theory need not go beyond its domain and thereby flirt with theorizing everything. Collapse comes about from the chance intervention of shocks that push a system, however vigorous or decayed, over the edge. Revival, in contrast, is not serendipitous: it can occur only if the empire that collapsed possessed certain characteristics when the shock struck. As a result, revival is not just a return to the status quo ante. In a very real sense, revival is the continuation of the status quo ante: revival is what *would* have happened if shocks had not intervened. As we know, such a counterfactual conditional can hold only if a theory underpins it. That theory is, for better or for worse, the theory of decline presented in this book.

As I argue in this chapter, a relatively strong core state constitutes a necessary condition of revival, and the evenness of decay and the degree of continuity are its facilitating conditions. Thus revival is impossible if decay is advanced or if, even with minimal decay, the postcollapse core state is weak. Alternatively, if and when revival is possible, it is more likely to occur if decay is even and territorial continuity is substantial. Although my discussion of the aftermath of collapse in the Habsburg, Ottoman, Romanov, Wilhelmine, and Soviet contexts will, naturally enough, corroborate my theoretical expectations—this is, after all, the final chapter and provocative conclusions are de rigeur—I emphasize that the appearance of inevitability is stylistic and not causal.

Conditions of Revival

In the absence of significant decay, and, as always, ceteris paribus, we expect the former core to possess a full-fledged state comprising an experienced state elite, a coherent bureaucratic apparatus, and a functioning army and police force. We also expect all peripheral entities at best only to approximate states. As imperial outposts they necessarily lack the organizations that constitute fully developed Weberian states, possessing only emasculated elites, incoherent collections of administrators, and, perhaps, directionless forces of coercion. Under conditions of advanced decay, core states will be substantially weaker, whereas peripheral entities will more closely approximate actual polities.[1] In a minimally decayed empire, therefore, a former core possesses greater "state capacity" than its former peripheries; in empires suffering from advanced decay, state capacity will be more evenly balanced between core and periphery.[2] Because revival is premised on the former core state's ability to dominate the former periphery, minimal decay, or its equivalent, is, for obvious reasons, a prerequisite of revival.[3]

That equivalent is the relative capacity of the core state. Decay may be advanced and former peripheries may possess substantial state capacity, but a former core, if it is especially large and resource rich, can still confront the peripheries with formidable political challenges.[4] It is impossible to say how large and powerful the core will be at the point of collapse, but there is no reason that, compared to the periphery, some cores cannot be tiny, others relatively small, and still others huge. Other things being equal, the larger and more resource endowed the former core, the greater its ability to project power and to dominate the former periphery. A powerful core is therefore the functional equivalent of minimal decay.

These fairly straightforward realist observations, when combined with my comments regarding extent of decay, suggest that postimperial core-periphery relations can, ceteris paribus, be structured in these ways:

I. A powerful core with poorly endowed peripheries
II. A powerful core with well-endowed peripheries
III. A weak core with well-endowed peripheries
IV. A weak core with poorly endowed peripheries

A powerful core and poorly endowed peripheries (I) are almost certain to be implicated in a reconstituted imperial relationship. We expect the

former core to dominate the former peripheries, the former peripheries to continue to be dependent on the former core, and the chances of the former peripheries' joining together to balance against the core or even to cooperate with one another to be small. With all these structural forces in place, the complete reestablishment of empire is highly probable. Empire is also possible if a powerful core confronts well-endowed peripheries (II), but we have no way to determine the degree of possibility. Depending on how powerful the core is and how advanced decay was, we can imagine a range of outcomes, from the core's dominating the periphery to both sides' being involved in continual tugging and pulling to their coexisting in the form of a commonwealth. The remaining two combinations preclude revival. A weak core and well-endowed peripheries (III) will probably coexist as independent states. A weak core and poorly endowed peripheries (IV) should drift apart, with the former retaining its independence and the latter perhaps falling under the hegemonic sway of other powers.

Although empire is most likely to reemerge in full bloom when a powerful core looms above poorly endowed peripheries (I), the possibility of imperial revival will be enhanced when a powerful core faces well-endowed peripheries (II) under two conditions—the decay is uneven and the empire is territorially continuous.

Because some peripheries will be more decayed than others in unevenly decayed empires, we expect informally ruled peripheries to have greater state capacity than formally ruled ones. We also expect the former to be the beneficiaries of greater economic development, information aggregation, and resource accumulation. In sum, just as we expect less decayed empires to be more likely to revive than more decayed empires, so too we expect the less decayed parts of unevenly decaying empires to be more likely to be brought back into the fold than the more decayed parts.

Territorial continuity, and especially contiguity, is another facilitating condition of both partial and complete revival. Postimperial borders are likely to be administrative demarcations and not real boundaries marking off one territory and one set of political and economic institutions from others. As a result, a more or less seamless web of institutions should continue to span borders.[5] As the core will have penetrated the periphery with its institutions in imperial times, we expect the core's economic activities, social norms, and political practices to have disseminated and perhaps taken root. Peripheral institutions and conventions may also have made some headway into the core. Institutional penetration and interpenetration translate

into an intermingling of populations, at least along the administrative border between core and periphery, with inhabitants of the periphery likely to settle in the core and inhabitants of the core likely to settle in the periphery, where they can serve as agents of the empire as well.[6]

Different combinations of the extent and evenness of decay will, if core power is held constant (i.e., large), also have a differential effect on the likelihood of imperial reconstitution. Thus evenly distributed advanced decay precludes the possibility of imperial revival. Evenly distributed minimal decay facilitates complete revival, whereas unevenly distributed advanced decay should permit the revival of imperial relations between the former core and those parts that were least decayed. Finally, unevenly distributed minimal decay should make partial reconstitution likely. If the empire is continuous, we expect partial revival to be even "more possible" under conditions of unevenly distributed advanced decay and "more likely" under conditions of unevenly distributed minimal decay. If the empire is discontinuous, we expect partial revival to be "less possible" under conditions of evenly distributed advanced decay and "less likely" under conditions of evenly distributed minimal decay.

If all four factors—extent of decay, evenness of decay, relative core power, and continuity—are present in just the right way, postcollapse relations between territorially contiguous former peripheries and their former core almost perfectly approximate the conditions under which a strong metropole, a vulnerable periphery, transnational forces, and a facilitating international environment interact in Michael Doyle's scheme to produce imperial penetration of the periphery by the metropole.[7] We therefore expect the probability of complete imperial revival to be high when decay is minimal and evenly distributed at the time of collapse, the relative power of the core state is great, and the empire is territorially continuous. Complete revival—indeed, revival of any kind—should be less or least probable when decay is high and evenly distributed and when the relative power of the core state and continuity are small.

Naturally, any number of intermediate outcomes can also be constructed. Thus a low level of decay in just two of N peripheries bordering on the core, in combination with large relative core power, should facilitate the emergence of at least part of the former empire. In contrast, a high level of decay in a contiguous empire on the one hand and a still-powerful core on the other may or may not result in empire—the outcome is indeterminate and contingent—but it is likely to produce unstable relations between the former

core and the former peripheries, as they jostle for definition in highly uncertain circumstances.

Reimperialization

How do our case studies stack up against these expectations? The next section briefly illustrates how the four factors affected post-Habsburg Austria, post-Ottoman Turkey, post-Romanov Russia, and post-Wilhelmine Germany—leading to, respectively, no imperial revival in the first and second cases, substantial revival in the third, and instability and attempted revival in the fourth. Although the fit is not perfect, it is sufficiently close to support the theory and warrant applying it to post-Soviet circumstances.

The Habsburg and Ottoman Empires

The extent of decay varied for most of Habsburg history but in general was greatest in Hungary, Croatia-Slavonia, and Lombardy, and smallest in Bohemia, Moravia, and Galicia. The *Ausgleich* of 1867 institutionalized decay by granting Hungary something in the nature of satellite status vis-à-vis Austria. Soon thereafter Czech nationalists claimed autonomy for Bohemia, the Polish nobility strengthened its hold on Galicia, and the empire became increasingly less formal even within Cisleithania.[8] As a result, decay was both advanced and fairly even when World War I broke out. Finally, the empire had been highly continuous since the late 1860s, by which time outlying territories in Belgium, Germany, and Italy had succumbed to attrition.

Decay afflicted the Ottoman Empire in similar fashion. Ottoman power reached its height in the seventeenth century. Thereafter the drift toward decay and informal rule began, resulting in substantial attrition in the nineteenth century, when various territories acquired independence—Egypt under Muhammad Ali was the most significant instance—or, like Tunisia, Libya, and the Dodecanese Islands, were lost to other states. The territories that remained Ottoman—such as Lebanon, Syria, Serbia, Montenegro, and the Romanian principalities—increasingly became the bailiwicks of peripheral elites.[9] The empire was also discontinuous, with peripheries located far

from the core, at distances that were reinforced by natural barriers, such as deserts, mountains, and large bodies of water.

Situated on the downward slope of the parabola at the time of collapse in 1918, the Habsburg and Ottoman realms bequeathed comparatively low levels of state capacity to Austria and Turkey. In the former, decay had advanced to such an extent that, after the *Ausgleich*, Hungary was for all practical purposes a second core. In the decades that followed 1867, Bohemia and Moravia not only acquired extensive political rights but also became the driving force of the empire's economic development. In 1918, therefore, Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia stood on more or less equal terms as ministates with more or less equal endowments of resources.[10] Kemalist Turkey was more robust as a state, having asserted its sovereignty in the face of military interventions by the Triple Entente and Greece. However, Turkish elites could do little to rectify the interwar geopolitical imbalance that had emerged in response to the regional instability in their neighborhood. To the south were territories under British and French mandates; to the north and east was the Soviet Union; to the west were states that had emerged from successful liberation struggles against the Ottomans in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[11]

The Russian Empire

Imperial Russian rule varied; generally, it was or became most formal in territories acquired in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Kazan', Astrakhan, Belorussia, and Little Russia) and most informal in such later acquisitions as Poland, Finland, Transcaucasia, Bukhara, and Khiva—where local nobles, emirs, and khans served as peripheral elites.[12] Like the Habsburg empire, the Romanov realm decayed, but, unlike the Habsburg empire, decay in late imperial Russia varied both in terms of breadth and depth. The empire was also highly discontinuous, with significant chunks bordering on the core and just as many peripheries distant therefrom.

Compared to the non-Russian protostates that declared independence in 1918–1919, Bolshevik Russia, which housed the empire's urban and industrial base, possessed impressive armed forces, elites, and resources.[13] Small wonder that the Bolsheviks could easily defeat most of the non-Russian nationalists in the course of 1918–1921. As I noted in chapter 3, where external intervention by Germany or Austria-Hungary abetted internal state building

on the one hand and where the devastation of the front by-passed peripheries on the other, the non-Russians could and generally did succeed in claiming independence. Where such fortuitous circumstances did not intervene, non-Russian states fell to the Bolsheviks with relative ease.[14]

The German Empire

Decay in the German Reich was minimal, perhaps even nonexistent. Germany had emerged as a unified empire only in 1871. In the four decades that followed, it had experienced impressive industrial and military growth, consolidating its state capacity, establishing firm control over its Slavic borderlands, and extending imperial rule into Africa and the Pacific. Germany was an empire in ascendance, not in decline.[15] But it was also both highly continuous, possessing territories in Mitteleuropa, as well as highly discontinuous, with several overseas colonies.

As an ascendant empire, the Reich bequeathed substantial state power to interwar Germany. World War I deprived it of Cameroon, Togo, South-West Africa, East Africa, New Guinea, Tsingtao, Alsace-Lorraine, and parts of Prussia and Poland, but it left the core state and its efficient agencies intact. Moreover, despite onerous reparations and postwar hyperinflation, the economic base remained strong; Germany had been Europe's economic powerhouse before the war and had experienced little actual destruction. Only the military had been reduced to a shell of its former self. As Andreas Hillgruber puts it, "Despite the severity of its defeat in 1918, Germany remained the strongest power in central Europe in economic—and potentially in military—terms. With hindsight, it seems obvious that the German state had the opportunity to regain the hegemonic position it had lost in the First World War."[16] Although the state capacity of interwar Germany was thus generally high, that of many of Germany's neighbors was, individually and collectively, comparable and with respect to military affairs probably superior.[17] France and England remained imperial powers, Poland and Czechoslovakia could capitalize on their relative autonomy within tsarist Russia and Austria-Hungary to build effective states, and the totalitarian Soviet Union was able to mobilize vast resources.[18]

As table 4.1 shows, the four empires fit, *more rather than less*, the pattern described earlier. I had claimed that the probability of revival will be highest if the extent of decay is low and the evenness of decay, core power, and

TABLE 4.1 Probability of Revival

	Habsburg	Ottoman	Romanov	Wilhelmine
Extent of decay	High	High	Medium	Low
Evenness of decay	High	High	Low	High
Power of core	Low	Low	High	Medium
Continuity	High	Low	Medium	Medium

territorial continuity are all high. The probability of revival will be least if the extent and evenness of decay are great and both core power and continuity are low. Of course, where peripheries are the beneficiaries of advanced and even decay, and the former core is not a great power, the empire does not revive, even with respect to peripheries located just across postimperial borders. Post–World War I Austria and Turkey could not, by this logic, have expanded, because a necessary condition of empire, an imbalance of state power, was absent. In contrast, post–World War I Russia enjoyed an overwhelming power imbalance with respect to many, but not all, former Romanov territories, and especially those adjacent to it. In such circumstances partial revival was hardly foreordained but highly likely.

Developments in post–Wilhelmine Germany were far more complicated than this shopping list suggests. The role of Adolf Hitler and the rise to and seizure of power by the Nazis are a central part of the story. Moreover, Nazi expansion entailed far more than imperial revival; it was also an obvious instance of imperial expansion.[19] My checklist suggests only that attempted revival, if not expansion, was both possible and likely, given the concatenation of relations within which the former core and former peripheries were involved in the postwar period.[20]

One factor played an especially important role in the arguments of German expansionists and in facilitating revival—continuity. In the postwar configuration of state boundaries, a substantial number of ethnic Germans located in western Poland, Bohemia, Moravia, and Austria—most of whom were products of Habsburg imperial rule and collapse—were transformed, discursively and ideologically, into "beached" diasporas ostensibly in need of immediate rescue via annexation.[21] Although my theoretical scheme has nothing to say about this transformation, it does suggest why it mattered.

These German minorities were located just across the border with Germany. Once they were identified as abandoned brethren, their presence facilitated cross-border ties and cross-border German influence. Konrad Henlein's Sudeten German Party, like the Nazi Party in Austria, is a case in point: both were supported and financed by the NSDAP in Germany and could make the case for *Anschluss* as well as facilitate Nazi penetration of both states.[22]

The implications of this analysis for post-Soviet Russia are obvious. First, Soviet imperial decay was advanced but uneven—high in the east-central European satellites and relatively low in the non-Russian republics. Second, post-Soviet Russia has, despite its many difficulties, retained enormous relative state capacity. And, third, continuity serves to reinforce the porousness of boundaries, the interpenetration of institutions, and the salience of Russian minorities beached in the newly independent post-Soviet states. Because the conditions prevalent in post-Soviet Russia closely resemble those in the post-Romanov and post-Wilhelmine contexts, we have no choice but to expect partial reimperialization in the former Soviet space.[23]

Soviet Decay

Consider, first, the extent and evenness of decay, where decay is a function of the degree of imperial and totalitarian rule (figure 4.1). If we examine Russia and its neighbors in terms of state capacity and resources, the Soviet empire's successor polities fall into four distinct categories. The first group consists of entities that emerged from the USSR's informal empire in east-central Europe. They were least totalitarian and least imperial and, upon attaining independence in 1989, were best equipped to act as genuinely independent states. In general, they possessed more or less complete state apparatuses, bureaucracies, elites, armies, police forces, and courts, relatively coherent economies, as well as a variety of autonomous social institutions, if not quite full-fledged civil societies.[24]

The second, third, and fourth sets consist of the successor polities of the formal empire—the other non-Russian republics, the Baltic states, and the regions of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR). The non-Russians possessed their own Communist Parties, bureaucratic apparatus, and the accoutrements of symbolic sovereignty, but they failed to inherit an effective state apparatus.[25] Their bureaucracies were shapeless; their ministries were either understaffed or nonexistent; and their policy-making and

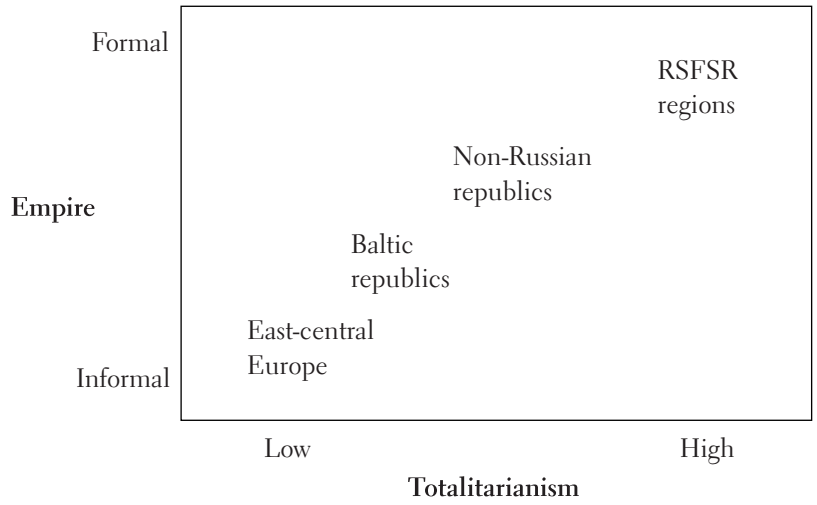

FIGURE 4.1 Post-Soviet Institutional Legacies

policy-implementing cadres, trained to receive orders from Moscow, were anything but effective elites. As I argued in chapter 3, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania occupied an intermediate position between the informally ruled east-central Europeans and the formally ruled non-Russians. Finally, the RSFSR had, in Soviet times, been a conglomerate of ethnically organized administrative regions, representing an "inner empire" within the empire. The RSFSR's ethnofederal regions survived collapse and resembled pale copies of the non-Russian successor polities. Like the non-Russian entities, Russia's ethnofederal regions had no state apparatus. But they also had no coherent political elites, having lacked their own Communist Party organizations in Soviet times.[26]

As the core, Russia was in a class of its own. Although it inherited the bulk of the imperial-totalitarian state apparatus and its elites, two Soviet-era deformations afflicted that state. The bureaucracies that staffed central ministries were too large for, and too mismatched with, scaled-down postimperial, post-totalitarian purposes. And the institutions that stood out within the panoply of state agencies inherited from the Soviet period were the still-powerful secret police and army, which were assured a disproportionately

influential position in the state by virtue of the comparative weakness of other political institutions.[27] Although they were imposing in Moscow, Russian state agencies had little control over elites and institutions in outlying Russian regions.[28] Totalitarian decay had loosened *P-C-P* bonds in Brezhnev's times, while imperial collapse had severed them completely. That weakness was compounded by another carryover from imperial times—Russia's ethnofederal structure.[29]

Two additional factors enhanced the relative standing of the ethnofederal regions. First, in a vast country with a poorly developed communications and transportation network, distance effectively sheltered regions from the postimperial state centered in Moscow. Sakha-Yakutia, for instance, is several thousand miles from Moscow. Tatarstan and Bashkortostan are substantially closer in geographic terms but still relatively sheltered by Russia's poor highways, both physical and virtual. The second factor was economic. Although the central state apparatus in Moscow was huge, it was resource poor. It generated few revenues on its own and, as a result of imperial collapse, was hard-pressed to extract resources from the rest of the country. In contrast, many ethnofederal regions were resource rich. Tatarstan had substantial petroleum deposits; Sakha-Yakutia was awash in diamonds and other natural resources; Bashkortostan had oil.[30] Although the ethnofederal regions lacked states, their protoelites had easy money and could embark on state building.

Russian Power

The conventional wisdom has it that Russia is hopelessly weak.[31] Compared to the United States, of course, Russia may be a third-world state with nuclear arms; compared to its neighbors, Russia still is a military superpower and an economic giant.[32] The first war with Chechnya in 1994–1996 seemed to be, as Anatol Lieven put it, the "tombstone of Russian power."[33] The second war that began in 1999 showed that Lieven's judgment was at least premature. More important, regardless of that conflict's denouement, it demonstrated that the Russian military was able to pursue a full-fledged war twice. It may not have done so with the élan that NATO displayed over Kosovo, but it proved that it had the capacity to mobilize soldiers and send them into battle.[34] Russia's neighbors would not, in all likelihood, have been able to engage the Chechens even once. Most have no armies to speak of, and Ukraine—which does have a substantial military—would almost cer-

tainly have failed even more miserably than Russia in 1996.[35] Table 4.2, which shows the enormous disparities between Russia's power resources and those of its neighbors in the near abroad, needs no comment.

Table 4.3, meanwhile, illustrates the degree to which Russia has retained economic links with its former peripheries. While the countries of east-

TABLE 4.2 Power Balance between Russia and Its Neighbors: Russia's Percentage of Total

	Population			GDP			Armed Forces			Defense Budget		
Year	**1995**	**1997**	**1999**	**1995**	**1997**	**1999**	**1995**	**1997**	**1999**	**1995**	**1997**	**1999**
Russia	50	50	50	90	91	89	65	61	57	95	94	94
Armenia	1	1	1	*	*	*	3	3	4	*	*	*
Azerbaijan	3	3	3	*	*	*	4	3	4	*	*	*
Belarus	3	3	4	2	1	1	4	4	5	*	*	*
Estonia	1	1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Georgia	2	2	2	*	*	*	n.a.	2	1	*	*	*
Kazakstan	6	5	5	1	1	2	2	2	4	*	*	*
Kyrgyzstan	2	2	2	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Latvia	1	1	1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Lithuania	1	1	1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Moldova	1	1	1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tajikistan	2	2	2	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Turkmenistan	1	2	2	*	*	*	*	*	1	*	*	*
Ukraine	17	17	17	3	4	4	19	19	18	1	2	1
Uzbekistan	8	8	8	1	1	1	1	3	4	*	*	*

Note: Asterisk denotes less than 1 percent. All figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1995–1996* (London: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 75–167; *The Military Balance 1997/98* (London: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 73–163; *The Military Balance 1999–2000* (London: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 79–170.

TABLE 4.3 Russia's Share of Non-Russian States' Trade, 1997

	Imports from Russia as % of Total Imports	Exports to Russia as % of Total Exports	Russia's Percentage of Republics' Trade
Armenia	30	16	19
Azerbaijan	21	21	21
Belarus	63	54	58
Georgia	28	15	18
Kazakstan	34	46	39
Kyrgyzstan	16	29	23
Moldova	62	28	42
Tajikistan	8	15	12
Turkmenistan	n/a	11	n/a
Ukraine	26	47	37
Uzbekistan	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: Calculated on the basis of figures contained in Lawrence R. Robertson, ed., *Russia and Eurasia Facts and Figures Annual*, vol. 25, pt. 1: *CIS and Russia* (Gulf Breeze, Fla.: Academic International Press, 1999), pp. 40–41.

central Europe and the Baltic have shifted their trade almost entirely away from Russia, many of the non-Russian republics have remained dependent on it. Most dependent are Belarus (with 58 percent of its total trade involving Russia), Moldova (42 percent), Kazakstan (39 percent), and Ukraine (37 percent)—each of which has large Russian-speaking minorities and three of which (Belarus, Kazakstan, and Ukraine) both border on Russia and are among the geographically largest, most populous, and economically most important ex-Soviet republics. Significantly, both Ukraine and Belarus are also highly dependent on energy imports from Russia.[36]

In sum, although few ex-Soviet republics are subordinate to or dependent on Russia across the board, all are, to use Rajan Menon's turn of phrase, "in the shadow of the bear."[37] Only Ukraine remotely compares with Russia in terms of power resources, but its army is in abysmal condition, and its trade and energy dependence nullifies most of its potential for full indepen-

dence.[38] Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakstan, and Uzbekistan are energy independent, and the Baltic states have largely succeeded in decoupling their economies from the former Soviet space, but all are incomparably weaker than Russia.[39] Indeed, the overall level of disparities is so huge that it is inconceivable, at least to me, how they and the resulting dependencies could disappear in the foreseeable future.[40]

Continuity

Revealingly, the boundaries of the USSR's successor states are termed *transparent* by Russians and non-Russians alike. Like most state borders, they are not coterminous with the nations that claim them. Unlike many state boundaries, however, post-Soviet borders—as the products of Soviet administrative, and not planning, priorities—fail even to encompass integrated economic spaces.[41] And inasmuch as most successor states lack a developed state apparatus—that is to say, coherent, complex, and institutionalized Weberian organizations—it is not even clear that their so-called boundaries are the institutionalized features of any kind of entity. Arguably, the boundaries are just cartographic lines, as there is little in the way of distinct entities on either side for them to separate.[42]

As befitted the boundaries of administrative regions, republican borders—as well as the status of some republics—were subject to more than two hundred almost routine alterations from 1921 to 1980.[43] Most changes involved minor border adjustments; some were substantial. For instance, the Karelian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) was created in 1923, upgraded to the Karelo-Finnish SSR in 1940, and then demoted to the Karelian ASSR in 1956. The Moldavian ASSR was formed on the left bank of the Dniester River, as part of Ukraine, in 1924, only to be merged with a full-fledged Moldavian SSR located on territories annexed from Romania in 1940. The Ukrainian SSR was expanded to include formerly Polish provinces annexed by Stalin in 1939–1940 and then, in 1954, was bequeathed the Crimea by Nikita Khrushchev. The territory of the later Kazakh SSR went through especially complex permutations involving several name changes as well as transfers and acquisitions of territory.[44]

Not surprisingly, the borders between and among most of the post-Soviet states, and especially between Russia and its neighbors, are minimally guarded and controlled.[45] Although all post-Soviet governments have at-

tempted to introduce customs regimes, they have not been successful in regulating travel and trade and preventing smuggling. Andrea Chandler's description of the situation in Russia applies with equal force to the non-Russian states as well:

> The first problem in customs-control structures is one of chaotic and contradictory state organization. . . . The second, related institutional problem is the weakness of border controls. In countries that are newly setting up customs administration, smuggling problems are to be expected. . . . Under Soviet rule the main purpose of customs officers was to examine passenger luggage and baggage; but in the aftermath of the Soviet collapse the application of customs controls to freight, imports, and exports expanded Russia's customs volume and functions before the country had sufficient capacity to cope with them.[46]

Two factors promote porousness. First, transportation routes—roads, railroads, and air routes—generally connect ex-peripheral states to the former core, Moscow. Thus it is both possible and easy to cross borders. Second, many border regions, especially in Estonia, Latvia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakstan, are populated by Russians or Russian speakers. Indeed, the majority of the twenty-six million ethnic Russians living in the near abroad are concentrated in border areas.[47] Regardless of whether these populations are loyal to their state of residence, are developing separate identities, or pine for annexation, the mere fact that culturally homogeneous populations straddle transparent borders adds to their transparency, makes it more difficult to impose controls, and facilitates the cross-border movement of ideas, goods, practices, norms, and so on.[48] The relationship between the United States and Canada is similar and instructive.

Creeping Reimperialization

It is hard to imagine how the east-central European states could be brought back into a Russian empire. They are independent, they are of strategic importance to the United States and Western Europe, and they are far from the former core. By the same token, Russia's relations with many non-Russian polities in the near abroad so closely approximate the preconditions of reconstitution already described as to lead us to expect some form

of reimperialization, probably partial and probably creeping, to take place. Russia already has a central state apparatus; the non-Russians are still in the process of building a central state. Russia has enormous power resources; the non-Russians generally do not. Almost all the non-Russian polities border on Russia. As if that were not enough, many non-Russian states are almost as dependent on Russia economically now as they were in Soviet times. All in all, this set of circumstances would seem to destine the non-Russian states—including, quite possibly, the Balts—for some combination of informally imperial or hegemonic relations.

Were life static, we would have little to add to this picture. But we have no reason not to expect conditions to change internally and externally. Russia and its neighbors may well become relatively weaker or stronger—in terms of state capacity, power resources, and economic strength—in the foreseeable future. Indeed, in the two years after the August 1998 financial crash, Russia experienced substantial economic growth, which, even if unsustainable in the long run, demonstrates that Russia *can* grow.[49] Because continuity may be held constant, we can imagine nine outcomes of Russia's interaction with its neighbors (see table 4.4).

Not all these outcomes are equally likely. Given the parlous condition of Russia and most of its neighbors after ten years of post-Soviet change, it seems reasonable to conclude that the institutional weight of empire and

TABLE 4.4 Possible Outcomes of Russian–non-Russian Interaction

		Russia		
		Becomes Weaker	Stays the Same	Becomes Stronger
Non-Russians	Become Weaker	*Chaos*	Empire	Empire
	Stay the Same	Independence	*Creeping Re-Imperialization*	Empire
	Become Stronger	Independence	Independence	*Independence*

totalitarianism, and not bad policies and bad leaders making bad choices, best account for their weakness.[50] If so, it is not unreasonable to expect Russia and its neighbors to undergo roughly parallel processes—of weakening, strengthening, or stasis—for the foreseeable future. This suggests that the outcomes on the diagonal formed by italics in table 4.4 are most likely—ceteris paribus, of course. Thus, if all states grow weaker, internal and external chaos is likely to result. If all states grow stronger, then, despite any tensions and conflicts, the non-Russians are likely to retain their independence. If things remain more or less the same as they are, however, creeping reimperialization is likely, because the structural imbalances alone could, by virtue of their force in a geographically contiguous context, push these entities toward one another—quietly, almost stealthily, without military campaigns, expansionist blueprints, and other imperialist paraphernalia.

But other things may not remain equal for three reasons. First, Russia might experience economic recovery sooner and with greater vigor than the other states—partly because of the progress it has already made, partly because of its vast energy resources, and partly because the West has an interest in Russia's recovery.[51] Second, the ineffectiveness and likely demise of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) will facilitate reimperialization.[52] Although non-Russian policy makers generally viewed the CIS as a vehicle for promoting Russian domination—which, to be fair, it probably was—the CIS did, as a multilateral organization, also promote significant relations between and among the non-Russian states—and thus was the very opposite of an empire. If, as seems likely, the CIS fails, political and economic relations between Russia and the non-Russian states will increasingly become bilateral and thus potentially imperial.[53] (President Vladimir Putin's preference for bilateral relations with the non-Russians cannot be considered as corroborating this proposition but as merely reflecting or illustrating underlying structural forces.[54]) With or without the CIS, Belarus may already be on the verge of becoming a Russian province; Armenia, Kazakstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan are, for all practical purposes, vassal states.[55]

Third, two strictly exogenous developments—the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) on the one hand and globalization on the other—will in all likelihood accelerate creeping reimperialization. NATO and EU enlargement will, to be sure, remove a variety of east-central European states from Russia's sphere of influence. But enlargement will also create mutually reinforcing institutional boundaries between those countries included in the EU-NATO in-

stitutional space—Euroland—and those farther to the east that are excluded therefrom.[56] In turn, we have good reason to believe that most post-Soviet states will be unable to cope with the challenges of globalization. Their isolation from the global economy in general and from Euroland in particular will reinforce East-West cleavages and East-East dependencies. As a result, the most likely outcomes in table 4.4 are located somewhere between the italicized diagonal and the upper-right corner, all involving some form of imperial reconstitution.

EU-NATO Expansion

Baltic, Ukrainian, and other non-Russian policy makers frequently invoke the specter of NATO membership for their states, but one suspects that they must know, as Western policy makers do know, that such an option is not likely for many years to come. First, their militaries, economies, and polities are much too backward; second, many are, as Western policy makers privately concede, not defensible; and third, the West has effectively consigned some to the sphere of influence of what it hopes will be a relatively benign Russia.[57] As a result, although there is hope for Slovakia and Slovenia and a sliver of hope for Romania and Bulgaria, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and the Baltic states are probably fated to remain between two blocs.[58] These blocs may not call themselves blocs, and they may and will sign innumerable documents to settle high-strung non-Russian nerves, but semantic preferences, high-flying phraseology, occasional joint maneuvers, and the very long-term promise of the Partnership for Peace will not change the brute fact that these non-Russians will not be in NATO when it matters most—now and in the near future. Words and activities are no substitute for institutions. In this sense, membership in NATO is a zero-sum game: one is either inside the alliance and embedded in its institutions or outside and left out in the cold.

Although the creation of a security vacuum is an important concern for the states sandwiched between NATO and Russia, the true structural significance of NATO enlargement is, above all, that it deepens the institutional divide between Western Europe and states to the east.[59] Just as the EU is constantly deepening, so too NATO is redefining itself as both a security alliance and a promoter of democracy, human rights, and stability.[60] Increasingly, the EU and NATO may become, as their supporters hope, complementary parts of a "new Europe," with both claiming to be different insti-

tutional expressions of the same, as well as same kind of, countries: more or less prosperous and more or less stable industrial democracies that define themselves, and only themselves, as European in culture and spirit.

Protectionist measures related to imports of agricultural products, textiles, metals, and other raw materials already limit east European access to EU markets, but the deepening of the new Europe will create virtually insurmountable barriers to nonmembers.[61] The EU's body of laws, the *acquis communautaire*, consists of about 100,000 pages of rules and regulations affecting all aspects of life of member states—from the shape of bananas to the shape of civil society.[62] Membership in NATO requires a commitment to both democracy and the market, a military capable of being integrated into NATO structures, and an economy strong enough to sustain such a costly effort. With Europe in the process of constructing an interlocking set of highly sophisticated institutions related to democracy, rule of law, civil society, and the market, the expansion of both the EU and NATO into east-central Europe is nothing less than the extension of already formidable European institutional boundaries eastward.[63] And unlike the transparent boundaries between and among the post-Soviet states, those between Euroland and its eastern neighbors will be opaque.[64] Seen in this light, the Schengen Agreement of 1995, which discontinued passport and border controls within Europe while creating legal barriers to the movement of non-EU populations into or through Europe, only formalized the EU's already impassable institutional barriers.[65]

The following example illustrates the logic of the emerging situation. Until 1998 Ukraine and Poland enjoyed unusually close political and economic relations. In particular, Ukrainian laborers and traders could cross into Poland with few restrictions. Not surprisingly, the Polish-Ukrainian border also became a conduit for migrants, refugees, and criminals seeking to enter the European Union.[66] With Poland on the verge of membership in the EU, however, Brussels insisted in 1998 that Poland's border controls be brought in line with Schengen. Warsaw, in turn, informed Kyiv that continued access to Poland for Ukrainians would be contingent on Ukraine's establishing Schengen-like controls on its border with Russia. That Ukraine will fail to establish such controls goes without saying. The boundary is transparent, the cross-border ties are too many and too dense, a Russo-Ukrainian population straddles the border, and the Ukrainian state is too weak to impose such controls or to risk alienating the superpower next door. Once it becomes clear that Ukraine has failed, Poland will have no choice but to comply

fully with Schengen and cordon itself off from Ukraine.[67] Bratislava, significantly, abolished visa-free travel to Slovakia for Ukrainians *after* Vladimir Meciar had been deposed, and its chances of EU membership grew accordingly.[68]

Even if Western European policy makers were more than rhetorically committed to expanding the European Union eastward—Germany's former chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, has explicitly stated that Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus do not belong in the EU—only Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania could possibly be ready for membership in the foreseeable future.[69] All the other post-Soviet states have a rickety government apparatus, minimal rule of law, a depressed and malfunctioning postcommunist economy, a creaky democracy bordering on authoritarianism, and a barely visible civil society. At the same time as most of the postcommunist states are making at best incremental progress toward meeting the membership criteria of EU-NATO, the Euroland states are transforming, or hoping to transform, their own relations both quantitatively and qualitatively. While the East Europeans develop arithmetically, with very low positive slopes at best, the West Europeans are developing exponentially. The developmental gap between Euroland and its eastern neighbors can only grow, while the institutional barriers between them will rise and thicken.

Table 4.5 illustrates the enormity of the EU's institutional distance from the Soviet successor states. I have modified the ratings developed by Freedom House to measure institutional development in eight categories—political process, civil society, independent media, governance and public administration, rule of law, privatization, macroeconomics, and microeconomics. On my modified scale, 1 represents the least development and 7 the most development. I have then added the ratings to convey the degree of interconnectedness between and among institutions and to stress that, taken together, they constitute a coherent whole.

To denote ongoing institutional change, I assigned the countries that belong to the EU scores of 56 (*7 x 8*) for 1997, 60 (*7.5 x 8*) for 1998, and 64 (*8 x 8*) for 2000. Once the euro becomes a common currency in 2002, the European economies become even more integrated, and further steps are taken to promote common judicial, legal, and political norms and policies—even if they stop far short of European statehood or federation—the EU's score is likely to jump to 72 (*9 x 8*) and in time to 80 (*10 x 8*). In contrast, unless we believe that the post-Soviet states are likely to experience sudden economic and political takeoffs anytime soon—and the stability of their scores militates against such a conclusion—all but the Balts are likely to remain in the 10–35 range for years to come.

TABLE 4.5 Institutional Distance Between Euroland and the Post-Soviet States

Year	2000	1998	1997
Euroland	64	60	56
Estonia	48	48	47
Latvia	46	46	46
Lithuania	46	47	46
Georgia	33	29	28
Moldova	33	32	33
Armenia	30	28	29
Russia	30	32	34
Ukraine	29	29	31
Kyrgyzstan	28	29	30
Kazakstan	24	24	24
Azerbaijan	22	21	21
Tajikistan	18	16	15
Belarus	13	14	17
Uzbekistan	13	13	14
Turkmenistan	10	10	11

Note: All figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Because the 1997 ratings had only one number for the economy, I multiplied it by 2 to make the figures consistent with those for 1998 and 2000.

Source: Adrian Karatnycky, Alexander J. Motyl, and Boris Shor, eds., *Nations in Transit, 1997* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1997); Adrian Karatnycky, Alexander J. Motyl, and Charles Graybow, eds., *Nations in Transit, 1998* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1999); Adrian Karatnycky, Alexander J. Motyl, and Aili Piano, eds., *Nations in Transit, 1999–2000* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 2000).

Globalization

Globalization will prove to be equally devastating for most of the Soviet successor states. Although scholars disagree on what exactly globalization is and when it began, they do seem to agree that globalization involves flows of information, goods, people, and resources across state boundaries and that

these flows, which probably began no later than the nineteenth century as by-products of capitalism and imperialism, have recently accelerated.[70] Put this way, today's version of globalization amounts to a spin-off of untrammeled capitalism and rampant modernization. Edward Luttwak's term, *turbo-capitalism*, may therefore be a more accurate designation for ongoing processes in the world economy.[71] It may also be more helpful in enabling us to appreciate why the Soviet successor states are unlikely to fare well. Backwardness may have advantages, as Alexander Gerschenkron once maintained, but it is hard to see just what the advantages of failed socialism could be in an unremittingly and mercilessly capitalist world.[72]

Tables 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, and 4.9, which measure the competitiveness of the post-Soviet economies, the level of their perceived corruption, their openness, and their economic creativity, provide a good sense of how far they are from meeting the challenges of the global economy.

Significantly, Russia and Ukraine score abysmally low on all four indexes; the five Central Asian and three Caucasus states score equally low, or lower, if and when they appear in a rating; Bulgaria is also no stand-out; if better data existed, Belarus and Yugoslavia would surely figure as among the very least competitive, open, and creative and among the very most corrupt. If these four indexes are broadly reflective of a country's ability to cope with globalization, the post-Soviet states will, to put things bluntly, be globalization's losers—at least in the foreseeable future. As such, they will suffer several consequences. First, they will recede institutionally even further from the states grouped within the European Union. As Euroland's institutions respond and adapt to globalization more or less successfully, those of the East will either stagnate, relatively, or experience indigenous forms of development different from and perhaps even inimical to those in the EU.[73] Second, their incapacity to compete in the global economy will reduce their chances of embarking on and adopting successful market-oriented economic reform. As a result, a tendency to seek "third ways" involving greater state intervention is likely to take hold. Authoritarian solutions are especially likely if and when relative economic stagnation continues and "confining conditions" appear to require "revolutionary breakthroughs."[74] Third, both developments are likely to increase the isolation of these countries from more developed countries and their dependence on one another—and especially on Russia, the former core and current military and economic power.[75]

That dependence, as we know from tables 4.2 and 4.3, is already quite high. Some post-Soviet states, such as Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, are

TABLE 4.6 Competitiveness Ratings, 1999

Singapore (highest score)	2.12
United States	1.58
Average of top 15 countries	1.25
European Union	0.57
East-Central Europe	-0.74
Hungary	-0.39
Czech Republic	-0.4
Poland	-0.67
Slovakia	-0.72
Bulgaria	-1.5
Ukraine	-1.94
Russia (lowest score)	-2.02

Note: The top fifteen countries are Singapore, the United States, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Canada, Switzerland, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Ireland, Finland, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and Norway. The east-central European or post-Soviet countries given here are the only ones listed in the report.

Source: World Economic Forum, *Global Competitiveness Report*, 1999 <<http://www.weforum.org/publications/GCR/99rankings.asp>> (November 15, 1999).

likely to cope with globalization satisfactorily and thus to leave the sphere of Russia's economic influence. Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and the five Central Asian states are as unlikely as Russia to transform their polities, economies, societies, and cultures in the thorough manner that global competitiveness supposedly requires. Worse, if they attempt to do so rapidly and comprehensively, they will in fact be embarking on revolution from above or courting revolution from below. And no inductive or deductive grounds exist for expecting anything but calamity to result from such adventures.[76] In any case, societal breakdown and state failure will not enhance these countries' ability to compete in global markets.

TABLE 4.7 Corruption Perceptions Index, 1998–1999

	1999	1998
Average of top 15 countries	8.9	9.0
European Union	7.6	7.6
United States	7.5	7.5
East-Central Europe/Balts	3.8	
Ex-Soviet States	2.4	
Slovenia	6.0	
Estonia	5.7	5.7
Hungary	5.2	5.0
Czech Republic	4.6	4.8
Poland	4.2	4.6
Lithuania	3.8	
Slovakia	3.7	3.9
Belarus	3.4	3.9
Latvia	3.4	2.7
Bulgaria	3.3	2.9
Macedonia	3.3	
Romania	3.3	3.0
Croatia	2.7	
Moldova	2.6	
Ukraine	2.6	2.8
Armenia	2.5	
Russia	2.4	2.4
Albania	2.3	
Georgia	2.3	
Kazakstan	2.3	
Kyrgyzstan	2.2	
Yugoslavia	2.0	3.0
Uzbekistan	1.8	
Azerbaijan	1.7	

Note: A score of 10 "represents a perceived level of negligible bribery," whereas zero "represents responses indicating very high levels of bribery." The 1998 index did not survey all the countries included in the 1999 index. The top fifteen countries are Sweden, Australia, Canada, Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Germany, the United States, Singapore, Spain, France, Japan, and Malaysia.

Source: Transparency International, *The Transparency International 1999 Corruption Perceptions Index*; *The Transparency International 1998 Corruption Perceptions Index* <<wysiwyg://4//http://www.transparency.de/documents/cpi/index.html>> (November 18, 1999).

TABLE 4.8 Openness of Emerging Markets, 2000

Singapore (highest score/most open)	86
Estonia	78
Average of top ten countries	77
Slovenia	74
Lithuania	73
Latvia	70
Romania	70
Hungary	66
Czech Republic	60
Poland	60
Bulgaria	57
Slovakia	52
Russia	52
Ukraine	48
Uzbekistan	32

Note: Because the "scores represent the averaged sum of the 0–10 scores a country received on each of the 16 areas of market openness," the highest score possible is 160. The top ten countries are Singapore, Chile, Hong Kong, Estonia, Peru, Slovenia, South Africa, Lithuania, Venezuela, and Taiwan.

Source: Tuck School of Business, *Emerging Markets Access Index*, 2000, <<http://www.dartmouth.edu/tuck/news/media/pr20000525_emai.html>> (June 14, 2000).

In sum, the deepening and broadening of EU-NATO will, in conjunction with globalization, divide Europe into vastly different, perhaps even incompatible, halves. And in the Europe to the east of Euroland, states will, ceteris paribus, have no alternative to accepting the reality of relative Russian dominance and their own economic dependence on one another and, above all, on Russia. A hublike structure could take shape if individual non-Russian states are compelled to confront their isolation from the world and their

TABLE 4.9 Economic Creativity Index, 2000

United States (highest score)	2.02
Average of the top 15 countries	1.38
European Union	0.85
Hungary	0.66
Poland	0.56
Czech Republic	-0.15
Slovakia	-0.29
Russia	-0.90
Ukraine	-1.21
Bulgaria	-1.43

Note: The top fifteen countries are the United States, Finland, Singapore, Luxembourg, Sweden, Israel, Ireland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Iceland, Switzerland, Hong Kong, Denmark, Germany, and Canada.

Source: World Economic Forum, *Global Competitiveness Report* <<http://www.weforum.org/reports_pub.nsf/Documents//Home + − + Reports + and + Publication + − + Competitiveness + − + Competitiveness + Report + − + Economic + Creativity + Index>> (September 25, 2000).

dependence on Russia by either institutionalizing that dependence and/or by transforming their relations with Russia into the centerpiece of their foreign policy.[77] Johan Galtung almost certainly overstates the case by arguing that "today Russia is an ordinary, expansionist occidental country, and a minimum concrete agenda would be based on Slavic culture and religious orthodoxy, building a Soviet Union II based on Russia, Belarus, eastern Ukraine and northern Kazakhstan."[78] Rather more likely is that reimperialization—quiet and evolutionary—is likely in some parts of the former USSR and that hegemony is a sure bet for most of Russia's neighbors.[79]