

Bear Braumoeller, "Deadly Doves: Liberal Nationalism and the Democratic Peace in the Soviet Successor States," *International Studies Quarterly* (1997) 41, 375-402.

I. The goal of the article is to test whether the underlying assumptions about the attitudes of elites and masses in the democratic peace literature are applicable to the Soviet successor states. The central argument is that these assumptions will not apply in key ways. Liberalism is not monolithic, as the democratic peace literature assumes, and certain forms of liberalism seem unlikely to be peaceful. In particular, the bellicose nature of the liberal nationalism associated with the Soviet successor states suggests that the spread of liberalism could actually promote more than inhibit conflict. The article tests a range of hypotheses concerning the applicability of democratic peace assumptions to the former Soviet Union using survey data from Russia and Ukraine in the mid-1990s.

II. Assessing two traditional explanations of the democratic peace:

A. Democratic structures arguments -- leaders of democratic countries are constrained by public opinion; moreover, leaders of democratic states are aware of each others constraints and thus have little reason to fear each other. If this is true, we would expect to find that:

1. Leaders perceive foreign relations as more conflictual than citizens do. (H1)
2. Leaders are more likely than citizens to advocate the use of force. (H2)

B. Democratic norms arguments -- liberalism gives rise to mutual respect and beliefs in both autonomy and freedom from foreign intervention; democracies recognize other democracies as sharing these norms, resulting in peace between them. If this is true, we would expect that:

1. Individuals who are liberals and who perceive another country to be democratic will perceive less conflict with that country than would otherwise be the case. (H3)
2. Liberals are less likely than illiberals to advocate the use of force to solve conflicts. (H4a)

III. Liberal Nationalism -- liberalism and nationalism became intertwined in the national liberation movements that developed in non-Russian Soviet republics. Liberals in such circumstances were faced with a hard choice between abandoning their pacifist preferences on the one hand and continued national subjugation on the other. The former was typically chosen, resulting in "national fronts" that conflated liberal principles of domestic governance with violent nationalism. If this liberal nationalism is genuinely "liberal" in terms of attitudes toward domestic governance, but linked to nationalism and thus more outwardly bellicose than other forms of liberalism, we would expect to find that:

1. Liberals in Ukraine are more likely than illiberals to advocate the use of force to resolve conflicts, especially those involving Ukraine and Ukrainians. (H4b)
2. Liberals should identify themselves with nationalists in Ukraine but not in Russia (see note below). (H5)
3. Liberals in Ukraine should express inclusivist concepts of citizenship. (H6)

Note: Liberal nationalism does not apply to Russia since Russian liberals and nationalists were polarized, not united, by the dissolution of the USSR. Among other things, Russian liberals support for greater self-determination alienated Russian nationalists who opposed importing a political system from Cold War adversaries.

IV. Results

- A. There was significant evidence for the structural constraints perspective. Russian decisionmakers had a more conflictual view of Russia's relations with other countries than Russian citizens did, confirming H1. (This finding was significant but not "robust," i.e. it did not hold consistently across different countries.) Russian leaders were also more supportive of the use of force, though the evidence was not as strong here (H2). In general, the evidence for the structural argument was strongest when the decisionmakers were political and military elites, and weaker when other elite groups had influence over foreign policy.
- B. The democratic norms perspective was strongly supported in one sense, but not well supported in another. Hypothesis H3 was strongly supported by the data -- liberals in Russia and Ukraine who saw another country as liberal were more likely to view relations with that country in a positive light. As for liberal attitudes on the use of force, there was mild support for H4a in Russia, i.e. liberals were less supportive of the use of force. In Ukraine, however, liberals were often more likely than illiberals to advocate the use of force.
- C. The liberal nationalism perspective received significant support. Increasing liberalism of respondents in Ukraine was associated with greater willingness to use force both in defense of Ukrainians and elsewhere (H4b), as well as with greater nationalism (H5). (In Russia, increasing liberalism was associated with a decreasing measure of nationalism as expected.) And Ukrainian liberals were more likely to define citizenship in an inclusivist fashion (H6).

IV. Conclusion: The democratic peace is not applicable in a simple way to the former Soviet Union. The results suggested that peace in the region would be "sustainable... but especially vulnerable to national issues and to the effects of narrow political institutions, both on foreign policy and on foreign perceptions." National issues will be particularly provocative given the character of liberal nationalism that was documented, while narrow political institutions 1) cause a country to be viewed more negatively by neighboring liberal states and 2) remove the structural constraint on the country's own foreign policy.