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The second part aims to bring some insight into the current political dynamic by examining the power relations in the coalition and the mentalities typical of the major factions: the '*siloviki*' and the liberal. In particular, the *'siloviki'* are critically examined with regard to their history, their typical modes of thinking, and their rise to influence. The very notion of *'siloviki'* is given a more precise explanation by showing why they have come to power, whom the term *'siloviki'* should actually be applied to, what their mode of thinking is like, and how influential they are likely to be in the future. The study then focuses on the actual siloviki faction: its members, its role, and its influence. A similar presentation of the neglected, yet influential liberal faction is given by way of comparison.

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Joris van Bladel

The Dual Structure and Mentality of Vladimir Putin's Power Coalition

FOI

The Dual Structure and Mentality of Vladimir Putin's Power Coalition

A legacy for Medvedev

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Defence Analysis

Dr. Joris Van Bladel

The Dual Structure and Mentality of Vladimir Putin's Power Coalition

A legacy for Medvedev

Division for Defence Analysis

Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI)

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Abstract

This report analyses the Russian authoritarian regime that emerged under Vladimir Putin and attempts to give a wider context to the so-called FSB-ization of the Russian government.

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The arrival of the new regime of Dmitry Medvedev and his entourage could mark a new era, making this a key moment to revisit the policies adopted by the EU towards Russia. The report concludes with likely scenarios for the future, and it makes recommendations for policy positions and other measures likely to lead to better relations with the Russian Federation.

Keywords:

Russia, democracy, authoritarian regime, FSB, siloviki, power coalition, mentality, domestic policy, foreign policy, Vladimir Putin, Dmitry Medvedev

Sammanfattning

Föreliggande rapport analyserar den auktoritära politiska regim som växt fram under Vladimir Putins presidentskap och försöker sätta den så kallade FSB-iseringen av den ryska statsapparaten i en bredare kontext.

Rapportens första del behandlar Putins huvudsakliga åstadkommanden på det inrikes- respektive utrikespolitiska området. Vidare granskas till vilken utsträckning politiken kan sägas ha uppfyllt det ryska folkets önskemål. Den efterfrågade stabilitet och säkerhet som Putin åstadkommit synes uppväga det faktum att den politiska ledningen slagit in på en auktoritär kurs. Den grad till vilken det ryska samhället verkligen har tagits över av FSB granskas kritiskt och FSB-iseringsprocessen förklaras i en vidare social och historisk kontext.

Den andra delen av denna rapport syftar till att ge viss insikt i den rådande politiska dynamiken i Ryssland, genom att undersöka maktförhållandena inom koalitionen samt de mentaliteter som är karaktäristiska för de huvudsakliga grupperingarna inom den ryska makteliten: siloviker och liberaler. I synnerhet de så kallade silovikerna granskas kritiskt avseenden deras historia, karaktäristiska tankemönster och väg till makten. Själva begreppet siloviker ges en mer precis förklaring genom att peka ut skälen till att de kom till makten, vilka termen *silovik* faktiskt bör appliceras på, hur deras tankemönster ser ut samt hur inflytelserika de kan förväntas bli framgent. Vidare fokuseras på *silovik*-fraktionen: dess medlemmar, roll och inflytande. En motsvarande presentation av den förbisedda, men inflytelserika, liberala fraktionen presenteras som jämförelse.

Den förnyelse av den ryska politiska regimen som Dmitri Medvedevs och hans följeslagares tillträde till makten kan innebära en ny era och utgör ett avgörande tillfälle att se över den politik som EU för mot Ryssland. Rapporten avslutas med troliga scenarier för framtiden och policyrekommendationer som kan leda till förbättringar av relationen till den Ryska federationen.

Nyckelord:

Ryssland, demokrati, auktoritär regim, FSB, silovik, maktkoalition, mentalitet, inrikespolitik, utrikespolitik, Vladimir Putin, Dmitri Medvedev

Executive Summary

The Putin regime draws its legitimacy from three main factors: a successful economy, the Constitution of 1993, and Putin's great popularity with the Russian people. Russia's economic success, contrary to common assumption, is due not only to the high gas and oil revenues, but also to the growth of the consumer and construction industries and some success in attracting foreign investors. The 1993 constitution, which Putin has not altered, legitimizes the continuity between the Yeltsin and Putin regimes. The difference between Putin's regime and Yeltsin's is consequently only a matter of degree, not one of principle, for Putin's super-presidential regime was actually installed by Yeltsin. Western opinion makers generally praise the Yeltsin regime and criticize the Putin one, a tendency that is largely due to a KGB phobia lingering over from the Cold War era. Without neglecting the dubious past of this security service agency, Western observers should try as much as possible to focus on actual results and situations, and avoid any distortion coming from former prejudices.

Above all, the Russian *vox populi* must be taken into account. Putin's policies were tailored to the demands of a conservative population desperately seeking economic prosperity, stability and security. It is telling that the Russian people refer to the 1990s as the time of '*dermo-cracy*', literally 'shit-ocracy'. Putin's political success in meeting these demands had a psychological effect on the population which must not be underestimated.

Putin's background as a KGB officer has been overemphasized by the Western media, and the influence of KGB officers in the presidential administration is similarly exaggerated. The Russian Federation is not a KGB state as it has so commonly been described. Yeltsin's 'family' chose to promote Putin to the presidency because he was young, disciplined, and savvy about military and political affairs, and above all, because he would be loyal to the Yeltsin 'family'. Once in office, Putin surrounded himself with people he knew and trusted. These were people with whom he had worked previously, both during his stint as a KGB officer and also in the office of Anatoly Sobchak, the democratic mayor of St. Petersburg (1991-1996). The resulting group of presidential advisors has been referred to as 'the power coalition'. The solidarity and discipline of the 'men on the horseback' tend to be exaggerated. Actually, the various organizational cultures of the entities that make up the 'military community' in the Russian Federation greatly differ from each other and there is inter-organizational rivalry between the various branches (i.e. between the Armed forces, the troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Federal Security Service, etc.).

Putin's aim was to stabilize the Russian state and establish control over society, while at the same time stimulating the economy, raising the basic standard of living and creating a sense of security and stability. It is no accident that he took KGB director Yuri Andropov as his role model, for Andropov established the proto-perestroika that tried to modernize the economy within the tight grip of the Soviet state. Thus no complicated terminology is needed for classifying Putin's government, which is in fact a clear-cut authoritarian regime. An authoritarian regime is characterized by limited plurality in the political sphere (Russia still has several political parties, NGOs, etc.) and government by a coalition of trustees who, each in their domain, maintain and contribute to the leader's power. They govern according to a certain 'mentality' rather than by ideology. Thus the regime is clearly not a totalitarian one, which uses a strong ideology as a tool to shape policy and also to control the population. An authoritarian regime, on the other hand, still allows a broad range of individual freedoms to citizens who adhere to the (well-known) formal and informal restrictions put in place by the regime. Identifying Russia as authoritarian rather than a totalitarian should by no means be taken as tacit approval or support for it. It is merely an analytical distinction that allows a clearer view of Russian society and government, as they are presently functioning.

The ideal type of authoritarian state is marked by a rhetoric of security and stability that suggests a higher degree of inner cohesion than is actually the case. It can be concluded, then, that the Russian regime is less stable and entrenched than many have suggested. Close observation of the coalition's internal dynamic is essential in order to detect emerging new directions and new priorities in policy. The nomination of Dmitry Medvedev is a crucial event which could, after a period of consolidation of power, lead to significant changes in the coalition. We should expect to see a policy with liberal influences, mainly focused on economic development and legal reform and more oriented towards the West. The influence of the *siloviki* is also expected to decline as more 'civilians'—managers, lawyers, and technocrats — are brought into the coalition. However, this should not lead us to assume that the Russian state is headed straight for democracy. The Russian context remains that of a conservative and authoritarian regime in which the 'man in uniform' will still need to be placated, not ignored.

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Preface

On the eve of the formal power shift in Russia much has been written about the character of Russian politics, especially concerning the signs of a failing democracy and a more aggressive foreign policy. In this report, Dr Joris van Bladel has made a thorough analysis of the factors underlying these tendencies, first by addressing the impact of economic growth on the population and its political consequences and then by focusing on the character of the authoritarian regime seen emerging today. He has also thoughtfully analysed the mentality of the political elite influencing this regime and dealt with the issue of securitization. On the basis of this research, he concludes by making a number of recommendations to Western policymakers for improving relations with Russia.

Joris van Bladel was assigned this task by the FOI as a leading sociological expert on Russian military and security thinking, one who uniquely combines a theoretical background and practical experience in this field. This report is the last in a series of complementary FOI reports analysing the current Russian political landscape. The previous reports consist of *Managing Elections in Russia – Mechanisms and Problems* (February 2008) and *The Struggle for Bureaucratic and Economic Control in Russia* (April 2008) by Carl Holmberg . Also, this report provides complementary viewpoint to the reports *Ryssland –En suverän demokrati?[Russia – A Sovereign Democracy?]* (April 2008) by Vilhelm Konnander and *Rysk identitet och självbild [Russian Identity and Self-image]* (April 2008) by Maria Löfstrand. Joris van Bladel's report gives a different and nontraditional perspective on Russian political developments, and hopefully also serves as an incentive for finding new ways to approach Russian policy makers.

Stockholm May 2008

Jan Leijonhielm

Introduction

"Thoughtlessness – the headless recklessness or hopeless confusion or complacent repetition of 'truths' which have become trivial and empty – seems to me among the outstanding characteristics of our time"

Hannah Arendt

Certain moments in history stand out as marking a threshold in time, a moment where events slow almost to a standstill, allowing, and even obliging us to reflect upon what has passed by and what is to be expected. The deity that stands at the threshold, figuratively and literally, is the Roman god Janus, who presided over the first day of the year. As shown on the report cover, Janus had the monstrous trait of two-headedness, with each head facing in the opposite direction. This disfigurement brought him the advantage of being able to see into both the past and the future. The task of reflecting on the past and forecasting the future is far harder without the benefit of such a divine disfigurement, yet it is all the more necessary for us mortals, as we face one of the major threshold moments of recent history. The turning of the calendar from 2007 to 2008, during which this report was written, is not only the symbolic moment of Janus, it also marks a major transition in Russian politics. The best we can do to grasp the spirit of this moment is to turn one face backwards, to analyze the Putin regime, and direct the other face forward, to try and foresee how Putin's regime will influence future developments in the Medvedev era.

Indeed, the entire period of 2007/2008 is yet another pivotal moment in Russian politics, as it is not only the year in which Putin's power reached its summit and his policy grew to full stature, but also a year heralding a major political transition. With the performance of the final, suspenseful acts of the play called 'Operation Succession', the end of the Putin era and the beginning of the Medvedev era has commenced. According to Russian political tradition, such moments initiate anxious and potentially unstable times: 2007 was no exception. In order to fully grasp 'the spirit of this particular moment' or identify the rationale behind the complex Russian reality, we have to force ourselves to look simultaneously in both directions: into the past and the future, towards the other and the self, to the East as well as to the West, and, perhaps the most difficult, to the surface of developments as well as into their depths.

The purpose of this report is not to give an exhaustive, in-depth analysis of the Putin era as a whole. We simply lack the practical means and intellectual know-how to pursue such a goal. However, what is sacrificed in terms of scope is

compensated for by an investigation into the depths of certain phenomena. In particular, we will focus on the nature of the authoritarian regime installed by Putin during his two terms in office, and we will also examine his team, referred to below as the power coalition. Installed by Putin as part of the Presidential Administration, this latter group is at the core of political decision-making and control. In the first part we will give a selective overview of what Vladimir Putin's presidency has achieved, and what it has failed to achieve. We will also briefly touch upon elements of his domestic, foreign and security policy. Although this might initially appear to be a traditional *Putinesque* approach, the actual goal is to present a more comprehensive picture that takes into account the social situation and the *vox populi.* Going beyond the presentation of statistical datasets, this report will examine the repercussion of all these macro-economic data and official political declarations upon the Russian population at large. Although the Russians are regarded as quite obviously rational in their demands for stability, prosperity and security, these same Russian people are very often portrayed by Western opinion makers as strange, unreliable, and therefore to be ignored. This is a grave mistake. If we want to understand the Putin era and discuss its implications on East-West relations, it is essential that the Russian perspective be taken into consideration. Having said this, it is also vital to note that this analysis should never be regarded as providing or justifying any particular ethical stance on political developments in Russia. Starting from a different research angle should never be confused with taking an ethical position regarding a political regime; rather, it is just an attempt to see other facets of a very complex reality.

In the second part, the main focus will be attributed to the power coalition of Putin's authoritarian regime. However, an attempt will also be made to provide some insights into the Medvedev period by trying to peer a little distance into the future. The most important task in this part is to examine the structure and composition of this power coalition. As many analysts have shown, it is clear that the 'the men on the horseback' or the so-called *siloviki*, play a crucial role in this coalition. However, they do not have the monopoly. Western observers have neglected for too long the impact of the 'civilian' faction in the Putin entourage. Just as there are two faces to Janus, one looking back and one looking forward, there are also two faces, or factions, in the coalition: a retrospective *siloviki* faction and a 'progressive' liberal one.

Thus this report tries to comprehend the mentality hidden behind each face, to go beyond static stereotypes, in order to present a more complete view of the members of the power coalition. We will look at what glues the coalition together and what fragments it. Both aspects are important to focus on, as it will show how fragile and mutable the coalition is. This analysis will result in a

presentation of two ideal types of the mentalities found in the coalition: the 'military' and the 'civilian' ones. Identifying types in this way is clearly a form of simplification, yet it is meant to provide insight into the deeper motivations of these factions. In this part we will also reflect upon the complex emotional and factual world behind such loaded concepts as the FSB, KGB, Cheka, *siloviki*, etc. We have to ask the delicate question where the myth of the KGB/FSB ends and where reality starts. This will bring us to the point where we must confront the difficult problem of our own thinking about Russia. How much of the old framework, and how many of our former habits of analysis are still determining our thoughts about this country? In other words, even though the reality of the *siloviki* phenomenon cannot be denied, some other questions still need to be asked. As the French would put it: '*et alors*…', that is, what does it all really mean?

The third and final part will offer some concluding remarks and the implications of the first and second parts of this study will be developed into some policy suggestions regarding East-West relations. Since this report was written during a period of significant political change, there was little information about Dmitry Medvedev, except for his public speeches and other information that had been made public. All prognostication is thus only tentative. The policy recommendations are not only based on the results of the present study; they also take into account the European context and the European experience over the last century. We can draw inspiration from the fact that Europe's exemplary integration has resulted in widespread cooperation and integration among the European nations – despite the long and bloody rivalry between Germany and France. Moreover, Germany succeeded in overcoming a very traumatic past to become one of the most stable, flourishing and most democratic states of Europe.

The assertive and overconfident attitude of the Russian leadership has serious implications for the West, and unfortunately, these relations are not moving in a positive direction. In 2007, serious warnings about 'a New Cold War' were openly pronounced.[1] Assuming that we can indeed identify a specific Russian mindset, we shall ask how large a role this mindset plays in the worsening East-West relations. Inversely, we can suggest ways how the relations can be improved by taking this mindset into account.

This concluding portion of the report is necessarily more normative and subjective insofar as it presents some of my personal opinions. Though certain sections contain language that may seem a bit provocative, the reader should rest

[1] Edward Lucas (2008) *The New Cold War, Putin's Russia and the Threat to the West,* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan).

assured that such provocation is quite intentional, and is designed to examine the other side of the coin, so to speak, so as to stimulate a broader debate. Hopefully a more polyvalent discussion will emerge on this topic within Russian studies (a field that appears too often as based upon consensus, in my view). Concerning policy recommendations, however, it should be clear that these are based on a genuine effort to understand the Russian perspective, along with a desire to provide a counterweight to the sometimes ideology-driven opinions of various influential opinion makers, and, last but not least, with a profound concern about the direction that relations between Russia and the West are heading.

Assumptions and Specific Terminology

This study makes a few assumptions which can be described as 'theoretical'. Since these have all been duly examined and debated elsewhere, I will just mention them and briefly define them here in the introduction; this is done simply to inform the reader about theoretical perspectives influencing this report. Certain sociological concepts are fundamental to this report, namely that of the 'rational actor', 'open organization', and 'coalition/network building' also referred to as 'social capital.' From the field of cultural studies, the ideas of 'binary thinking' and the 'hermeneutical tradition' have proven to be useful.

Hermeneutics originally pertained to explaining the meaning from the point of view of the culture producing the text, specifically the Bible. Later it evolved to include other forms of human expressions (both material and immaterial) which all have a certain appearance, or form, given to them by human beings. The essence of hermeneutics is to understand (in the German sense of *'Verstehen'*) such expressions from the point of view of their context. Fully understanding a given reality consists of interpreting the meaning underlying a form of reality and/or trying to reconstruct the ideas that generate human behavior and artifacts. Consequently, understanding human behavior is not a question of finding general laws in human actions or history, but indeed to interpret this behavior with regard to the historical context and other contingent factors. Each event, each period, and each cultural context should be viewed from within, according to its own logic.

The idea of **cultural binarism** was first proposed by Yuri Lotman and Boris Uspensky in the early 20th century and was more recently explored by Tim McDaniel in 1996.[2] It refers to the view that the Russian culture contains binary

[2] Boris Uspensky and Yuri Lotman (1985) 'Binary Models in the Dynamics of Russian Culture', *The Semiotics of Russian Cultural History: Essays by Iurii M. Lotman, Lidia Ia. Ginsburg, Boris A. Uspenskii*, Edited by Alexander Nakhimovsky and Alice Stone Nakhimovsky, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press), pp. 30-66; and Tim McDaniel (1996) *The Agony of the Russian Idea*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

tensions that can never be resolved, and thus remained divided into opposing camps. For example, *zapadniki* versus slavophiles, modernizers versus traditionalists, etc. Variations of this same idea have been turning up in recent Russian studies, albeit in slightly modified form and masquerading under different terminology. Two examples stand out. First, Stephen Blank, among others, has described Russia's current political reality as a '**zero-sum reality**'.[3] This essentially means that the members of the political elite have everything, while those not belonging to it have nothing. This 'all or nothing' logic is also present in many other aspects of Russian society, and it makes for a rather violent tenor in society, for example, by creating survival strategies such as '*blat'*. Second, Edward Hall uses the concept of a '**high-context culture**' to highlight the importance of boundaries dividing the insiders and outsiders of a given culture, each of whom has his own history and particular preferences.[4]

The **rational actor** refers to the hypothesis that people always form rational beliefs and that they act upon these beliefs. In order for an action to qualify as rational "it must meet three optimality requirements: the action must be optimal, given the beliefs; the beliefs must be as well supported as possible, given the evidence; and the evidence must be a result from an optimal investment in information gathering including beliefs about the options available to them."[5] Clearly, rational behavior has little to do with the distinction between subjective or objective behavior (rational behavior can be quite subjective in the sense that it is individual, not universal), nor does it have any ethical connotation. Calling an act rational is not the same as saying that it is 'good', 'wise', or 'intelligent'.

The **open organization** hypothesis postulates that there is (some) interdependence and exchange between the organization and its environment, which results in flexible and permeable boundaries. This might be illustrated by the organizational changes made to the KGB/FSB, which can be traced back to

[3] Stephen Blank (2008) 'Power Struggles in Kremlin-How Stable is the New Regime?', *Russia After Putin: Implications for Russia's Politics and Neighbors* edited by Anna Jonsson, Stephen Blank, Jan Leijonhielm, James Sherr and Carolina Vendil Pallin (Stockholm: Institute for Security & Development Policy, Policy Memo of March 2008) p. 16.

[4] The concept of 'high-context culture' was also used by Maria Carlson during her lecture 'Why Russia Matters: History, Culture and Identity in the 21st Century' presented at Louisiana Tech University in Ruston (*JRL*, No. 61 of 24 March 2008). The concept was originally used by the anthropologist and psychoanalyst Edward Hall, see: Edward Hall (2007) *Beyond Culture*, (New York: Anchor Books).

[5] Jon Elster (2007) *Explaining Social Behavior, More Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*, (New York: Cambridge University Press) p. 191.

the days of Yuri Andropov at least, and even, some have claimed, to Aleksandr Shelepin (Director of the KGB between 1958-1961).[6]

Finally the broad term **social capital** refers to connections between and within social networks. The term network designates those social and business connections among people emerging from the same school or organization. The concept is critical for understanding the coalition that Putin constructed to manage the country from within the Kremlin.

Sources

This report is primarily based upon an in-depth study of secondary sources such as academic publications and articles in the Russian, Dutch, French, German, and Anglo-Saxon press. These publications are well-known in the community of Russian analysts and, as such, might not add much new information. However, an effort has been made to combine different analytical traditions, particularly since the French and the German perspective differ significantly from the Anglo-Saxon tradition. This synthesis of multiple viewpoints is intended to generate a more inclusive, comprehensive opinion.

Another source of information for this report is the author's own study of the Russian military culture, undertaken from 1997-2004 while preparing his PhD thesis entitled: 'The All-Volunteer Force in the Russian Mirror: Transformation without Change'. Finally, this report draws not only upon written information (books, journals, media) but also of my experience of living amid the Russian barracks for six months, during which over hundred interviews were conducted with conscripts.

One final note: One peculiarity of Janus is that he is often depicted with one melancholy and one smiling face. Moments of reflection inevitably contain a mixture of thoughts about lost opportunities and successes, pros and cons, of achievements and failures which of course give rise to a combination of pride and regret, joy and mourning, and with regard to the future, hope and fear. Yet, the moment of reflection is an important one and we hope to live up to the promising words of Ovid: "a prosperous day dawns: favor our thoughts and speech."

[6] See, for instance, Thierry Wolton (2008) *Le KGB au pouvoir, le système poutine,* (Paris: Buchet/ Chastel).

Part I:

Taking Stock of Putin's Authoritarian Regime

The year 2007 was a significant and critical year in Russian politics. It was the year in which President Vladimir Putin's policies grew to their full stature as well as the year in which the end of his second, final term was orchestrated in full secrecy. We witnessed both the final stage of the Putin era and the preparation for a new, unknown and uncertain stage in Russian politics. The uncertainty and secrecy characterizing Putin's political maneuvers during his succession saga stood in sharp contrast with his great confidence when making domestic and foreign policy. This high level of confidence was supported by the high approval ratings that the president received from the Russian population, between 60 and 70%.[7] Putin's popularity can be seen as both the cause and effect of this confidence. In other words, in full accord with Russia's contradictory nature, 2007 has shown the vulnerability and instability of Putin's super-presidential, authoritarian regime.

The '*preemstvennost* operation' [the succession operation] that has been developing is not new in recent Russian politics. In 1998-99, for instance, the same phenomenon occurred at the end of the presidency of Boris Yeltsin. At that time, it was the so-called 'Family' that orchestrated the succession of their 'heir-protector'. Thus it was the Family who co-opted the then grey cardinal Vladimir Putin and, consequently, brought the KGB/FSB to the influential position it presently occupies. This means that the KGB/FSB never seized power in one or another master plan or conspiracy, but was actually invited to participate in

[7] Carl Holmberg of the Swedish Defense Research Agency (FOI) has qualified this seemingly massive support for Putin. After scrutinizing the facts made available regarding the Duma elections of 2007, he concluded that Putin only was able to count on the active support of at most 50% and possibly as low as 33% of the electorate. Carl Holmberg (2008) *Managing Elections in Russia, Mechanisms and Problems*, (Stockholm: Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), Feb. 2008, User Report FOI-R—2474—SE) p. 4.

politics.[8] The evolution of the relation between Putin and his protégés (especially Boris Berezovsky) has also been interesting to observe. Once Putin had established a power coalition around him, he sat more confidently in the presidential saddle; his grip on society became stronger and he dismissed those who had brought him to power. For those who could not adapt to the new Putin era, life in Russia became difficult, if not impossible. The liquidation or removal of the Yeltsin power elite was relentless and, as the Litvinenko and Politkovskaya cases might illustrate, even murder was not shunned.

These parallel developments lead to two important observations. Firstly, if one compares the Putin era with the Yeltsin one, one finds that certain key features persist while other features change dramatically. This means that Putin's regime cannot be analyzed without comparing and contrasting it to the preceding regime of Yeltsin. Secondly, the phenomena of protection, networking and coalition formation are essential to Russian politics and must be investigated, if there is to be any grasp of the Russian autocracy.[9] This last point should not be seen as an argument in favor of a renewed form of 'Kremlinology', for coalition formation and networking in contemporary Russia, although having strong links with the Soviet era, are much more dynamic and diversified.

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[8] There are many analysts who reject this idea. The French analysts Thierry Wolton and Hélène Blanc, the Canadian security specialist Amy Knight and the Russian journalist Yevgenia Albats all claim that the KGB/FSB has always been a strong agent of control working behind the scenes of the Soviet regime and the Russian government, ready to interfere as soon as the state's or their own organizational privileges were at stake. The main problem with these theories is that they do not explain the fall of the USSR and the 'disaster' of the August coup in 1991. (See, for instance: Hélène Blanc (2004) *KGB connexion, le système Poutine*, (Paris: éditions hors series); Thierry Wolton (2008) *Le KGB au pouvoir, le système Poutine*, (Paris: Buchet/Chastel); Yevgenia Albats (1995) *The KGB, State within a State*, (New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers); and Amy Knight (1997) *Spies without Cloaks: the KGB Successors*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

[9] Protection is not only crucial in Russian politics. In Russian society, networking and/or '*blat*' are important practices for professional and social survival. In the murkier world of crime, one finds the well- known slang word *krysha* (which means roof) which refers to a criminal protection racket, such as a gang that extorts money from a store owner. Later it evolved into a "private power structure" that constitutes an essential feature of the large Russian corporate oligarchies. Each oligarchy is thus like a pyramid, with a political figure at the apex backed by a financial or industrial group. In more general terms, it is important to know that in the ordinary life of the Russian citizen, universal rights are something of alien idea. Rather, Russian society functions on the basis of personal privileges. Access to privileges is obtained by knowing the right people and/or being under protection. From a sociological point of view, the informal division between those who are under protection and those who are not is a significant one, with far-reaching consequences for both sides. (See, for instance, Alena Ledeva (1998) *Russia's Economy of Favors, Blat, Networking and Informal Exchange*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); Alena Ledeva (2006) *How Russia Really Works, The Informal Practices that Shaped Post-Soviet Politics and Business*, (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press); and Vadim Volkov (2002) *Violent Entrepeneurs, The Use of Force in Making Russian Capitalism*, (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press).

In this part, we will try to shed some light on the dynamic and rationale of Putin's policy in its three major and interdependent domains, namely domestic, foreign and security/defense policy. This review is not exhaustive; rather, we shall focus on the rationale and the principles underlying the developments in question. If we fail to make an effort to understand the logic behind the Russian reality, a tendency develops for us to rely instead on conspiracy theories, 'traditional' deterministic concepts, and outdated thinking. We forget those crucial 'axioms' that should guide any investigation, namely: a social actor is always an active player, whose behavior is always meaningful and never irrational, even though he/she may not have clear objectives or coherent projects and may seem to behave erratically.[10] In other words, we will focus on the active, non-determinist and rational behavior of the Russians, both the population at large and its leaders, in order to understand and help explain the phenomena confronting us.

[10] Michel Crozier and Erhard Friedberg (1980) *Actors and Systems, the Politics of Collective Action*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press) pp. 24-25.

1 Domestic Policy under Putin

This section describes the developments in the Russian economy, society and politics under the leadership of Vladimir Putin. These three aspects of Russian life are closely intertwined and simultaneously evolving; the result is a dynamic triangle of interdependent relations. Understanding the *Gestalt* of the system is more important than the analyzing each variable alone, as it will show both the rationality of the system as well as its strengths and weaknesses (given the proverbial weakest link in the chain).

The economic analysis focuses on the impressive statistics measuring economic growth from the period between 2000 and 2007. Russia's economic recovery will be put in a larger context, and some critical remarks will be made concerning Russia's seemingly unbounded growth. The social analysis then links certain macroeconomic and microeconomic phenomena, and brings out some of the social aspects that are not apparent in abstract statistics. The key objective is to understand how Russian society is evolving during this economic boom. Certain fuzzy, but therefore essential, concepts such as 'the mood' among the Russian people, and their opinion about the regime will be reviewed. After listening to the *vox populi* we will turn our focus to developments in the Kremlin. At this point, a broad outline of the authoritarian character of the regime will be given. This analysis, however, must be seen as a kind of introduction to the second part, which will concentrate on the composition and mentality of the elites who are influencing contemporary Russia.

1.1 Economic Growth: the Legitimization of the System

Russia's economic growth is more complex than the raw macro-economic data may suggest. Depending on the perspective one takes, growth may be sometimes more of a problem than an achievement. However, setting all nuances and academic remarks aside, Russia's economic growth is real and significant, and its psychological impact on the Russian population as well as on the leadership should not be underestimated.

1.1.1 Economic Recovery — Impressive Growth Rates

The main macroeconomic indicator that gives an indication of economic growth is the Russian GDP.[11] It gives an estimation of the size of the economy and a measure of particular types of economic activity within a country over a certain time period. The Russian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rose from $ 259.7 billion in 2000 to $ 1.050 billon in 2007, with a real yearly GDP growth rate as shown in the following table:

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Real GDP growth (%)	10	5.1	4.7	7.3	7.2	6.4	6.7	7.0

Table 1: Real Gross Domestic Product Growth in Percentages (2000-2007)

In 2006, agriculture constituted 4.9% of the GDP, industry made up 29.3%, and services made up 55.8%.[12] About 48.7% of the production is destined for private consumption, with an additional 17.5% for public consumption, 17.9% for fixed investments, and 2.3% for stock building. The remaining 12.6% consists of net exports of goods and services.

According to these data, in the year 2006 Russia became the 11th largest economy in the world and the fifth largest economy in Europe.[13] As economic growth is the most convincing index of success for Putin's policy, one that fundamentally legitimizes his regime, the Russian executive branch is very eager to make growth data public. In the last days of the year 2007, the Ministry of

[11] All economic data are based on publications from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Intelligence Unit of the Economist and the CIA Factbook; these data were retrieved from the official websites of these institutes and organizations.

[12] These output data, are, according to some economists, distorted (although technically correct) since the industry output is underestimated while the service output is overestimated, due to a large share of the added value generated by natural resource sectors being reflected not in the accounts of the extraction companies, but in the accounts of their affiliated trading companies. Some analysts recalculated the statistics for the year 2000 and concluded that the output from industry increased from 27% to 47% (the oil and gas sector share of the GDP is about 20%) and the share of the service sector dropped from 60 to 46%. (See Rudiger Ahrend (2006)'Towards a Post-Putin Russia: Economic prospects', *Towards a Post-Putin Russia*, edited by Helge Blakkisrud (Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs) pp.41-42.)

[13] World Economic Outlook Database; International Monetary Fund, October 2007, (accessed at http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2007/02/weodata/index.aspx)., GDP results in 2006 from the World Bank (accessed at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DATASTATISTICS/Resources/GDP.pdf). The countries that precede the Russian Federation are: the United States, Japan, Germany, the People's Republic of China, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Canada, Spain and Brazil.

Finance announced that the Russian Federation had become the tenth largest economy in the world and that by 2020 it would, *ceteris paribus*, be ranked as the fifth largest one.[14] This projection is not just wishful thinking or political spin, because other independent analysts predict that Russia, as one of the BRIC countries, will achieve an annual general growth rate of 3.9% before 2050. The report entitled *Dreaming with BRIC's* enumerates the present favorable conditions in the Russian Federation today, which include a highly educated workforce, growing investment, and a stable macroeconomic policy. Such factors are predicted to put the Russian economy at 6th place in 2050, following China, the United States, India, Japan, and Brazil and, European anxieties aside, in front of the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Italy.[15]

Russia's exports mainly consist of oil, fuel and gas (64.8%) while other export products include metals (13.8%), machinery and equipment (5.8%), and chemicals (5.6%). Its major markets/export countries are European countries like the Netherlands (11.8%), Italy (8.3%), and Germany (8.1%). 5.2% of exports go to China. Russia is dependent upon imported machinery and equipment (50.5%), food and agricultural products (16.6%), chemicals (16.8%) and metals (7.4%). Its major suppliers are Germany (14.2%), China (9.9%), Ukraine (7.1%) and the United States (4.9%).[16] The amount of foreign investment in Russia increased to a total amount of USD45 billion in 2006. Western and Chinese automakers, for instance, were very active in Russia in 2007.[17] Nevertheless, the Russian investment climate is uncertain and risky, due to the arbitrary behavior of the Russian authorities and bureaucracy, increasing state intervention in the economy, and pervasive corruption. Russian authorities have frequently discouraged foreign investment in the oil and gas industry, as it is regarded as a

[14] This was announced by the Russian Ministry of Economics on 24 December 2007. *Johnson's Russia List*, 2007, No. 262 of 24 Dedember 2007.

[15] Goldman Sachs, 'Dreaming with BRIC's: the Path to 2050', *Global Economics Paper* No.99, 1st October 2003, p. 4 (Accessed at http://www2.goldmansachs.com/insight/research/reports/99.pdf.) For a critical view on Russia as a BRIC country, see, for instance: Julian Cooper (2006) 'Russia as a BRIC: Only a Dream?' European Research Working Paper Series, No. 13, University of Birmingham and the European Research Institute, July 2006. (Accessed at http://www.ceelbas.ac.uk/ceelbas-news/events/conferences/russiabeyond2008.)

[16] *Economist*, 'Factsheet of Country Briefing of the Russian Federation', (last accessed on 9 April 2008, at: http://www.economist.com/countries/Russia/profile.cfm?folder=Profile-FactSheet.)

[17] The automakers that have taken their production to Russia include Ford Motor, Renault, Kia Motors, Volkswagen, General Motors, Toyota, Nissan as well as the Chinese Great Wall Motor. They are attracted by the Russian policy that eliminates tariffs on key car components in order to encourage carmakers to assemble their vehicles in Russia. In return, the government asks these companies to gradually increase the proportion of domestically produced parts to 30 percent within 4 ½ years.

strategic industrial sector by the authorities.[18] Such was the case, for example, with big Western oil companies such as Shell and British Petroleum in 2007.

There is a general consensus that the price of oil, which *grosso modo* has risen from $10 per barrel to over $100 per barrel during Putin's presidency, are to a large extent responsible for the impressive economic growth achieved by the Russian Federation. Nevertheless, there are some refinements to be made on this topic:

1. The European Central bank suggested in a recent study that although the impact of the oil industry and the oil prices is considerable, the Russian economy has, since 2004, become relatively less dependent on oil.[19] While the oil prices had a real effect of kick-starting the economy in 2003 and 2004, the impact of the oil prices on the growth rate has been declining since 2004. This fact was also mentioned in the study done by Rudiger Ahrend, who identifies the oil extraction boom as taking place from 2002-04 and attributes growth after 2004 to a consumption boom sustained by rapidly improving terms of trade.[20] Felix Goryunov has pointed out that other sectors showed signs of major growth in 2007 besides the hydrocarbon sector, particularly the retail trade sector, the housing construction sector, telecommunications, the automobile industry and defense industry.[21]

2. Over-emphasizing the oil factor leads to the underestimating of other economic achievements such as the reforms, the prudent macroeconomic management and the structural changes made by the executive branch of the Russian Federation. Rudiger Ahrend, for instance, has indicated that the tax reform and tax policy under Putin's presidency stood in marked contrast with the policy of the pre-1998 period.[22] Nevertheless, it is true that the decisions that brought about the legal and structural changes were mostly made during the first term of Putin's presidency. The Khodorkovsky case, where the executive power arbitrarily took over the

[18] According to the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the strategic sectors are defined as: security technology, arms production, air craft building, space, nuclear energy, natural monopolies and federal mineral reserves. According to the law of October 2006, foreign investments in these sectors need a special permission from a new inter-governmental committee.
[19] Ronald Beck, Annette Kamps and Elitze Mileva (2007) *Long-term Growth Prospects for the Russian Economy*, Occasional Paper Series 58, European Central Bank.
[20] Ahrend, Rudiger, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-55.
[21] Accessed at www.rusbizconf.com.
[22] Ahrend, Rudiger, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

biggest and most successful private oil company Yukos, can be seen as a turning point in Putin's economic policy. This suggests that the time of real market reform occurred during the first term of Putin's presidency and that subsequently, the reform period ended – although it is certainly still quite necessary – and was replaced by a tendency towards centralization and monopolization.[23] Putin's second term in office thus was marked by a qualitatively different way of approaching reform.

3. Although the term petrostate itself is not very well defined and is a rather fuzzy concept, the Russian Federation is not, according to some analysts, a typical petrostate. The share of people employed in the energy sector is too small for Russia to qualify as a petrostate.[24] Moreover, the export of hydrocarbons per capita in Russia is also below the qualifying threshold. While exports total only about three tons per capita in the Russian Federation, this number is 40 to 60 tons in small traditional petrostates such as Qatar or Kuwait.25 Other analysts, however, question Putin's economic miracle. Among them is Lilia Shevtsova, a political analyst rather than an economist, who argues that "Russia demonstrates all the key characteristics of a petrostate: a fusion of power and business, the emergence of a hyper-rich renter class, systemic corruption, state intervention in the economy, and rising inequality."[26] Also the renowned American Russian specialist Marshall Goldman described the Russian Federation as a petrostate when he directly related political developments in Russia to the price of crude oil on the international market.[27]

[23] At the end of 2007, the Russian state owned 43% of the total banking assets and more than 50% of all Russian assets, and it had founded six new state companies in the defense, aircraft, shipbuilding and other high tech sectors. According to the authorities, state planning and state funding of high-tech projects is designed to help Russia overcome its dependence on raw materials. This strategy is designed to bring about a more technologically advanced economy by creating state corporations which will serve as the backbone of these highly competitive economic sectors. (Felix Goryunov (2008) 'Russia Will Face Challenges in Global Recession', *Russia profile*, accessed at: www.russiaprofile.org.)

[24] As Ian Bremmer put it: "Although the energy sector accounts for one-fifth of the economy, it provides only 1% of Russia's jobs." See: Ian Bremmer (2006) 'Taking a Brick out of BRIC, Russia Doesn't Belong in the same League as Brazil, India and China,' *Fortune*, 7 February 2006

[25] Milov, Valdimir (2006) 'Mozhet li Rossiya stat' neftyanym raem', *Pro et Contra*, March-June, p. 11.

[26] Lilia Shevtsova (2008) 'Think Again: Vladimir Putin', *Foreign Policy*, January/February 2008, p. 35.

[27] Marshall I Goldman (2008) *Petrostate, Putin, Power and the New Russia*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

4. Yegor Gaidar, in his book *Collapse of an Empire: Lessons for Modern Russia*, has argued that a collapse in the price of oil will lead to the failure of the Russian state.[28] This line of reasoning assumes that the current Russian government would repeat the same mistakes as the Soviet government, which had no budgetary discipline and which placed no budgetary limits on the military *inter alia*. However, according to Russian official sources the Russian government has no intention of repeating the Soviet mistakes; the military budget is stated to remain under control since no military expansion into foreign territories is being planned. Furthermore, Russia has now accumulated a significant reserve.[29] Indeed, in 2004, the Russian government decided to create a Stabilization Fund supplemented by the windfall revenues from oil exports. This Fund has grown over the years to the astonishing amount of $370 billion in April 2007, allowing the Russian Federation both to pay its Soviet era debts to the Paris Club in the summer of 2006 and to invest in a Pension Fund.[30]

These subtler aspects aside, however, there is no doubt that the oil and gas sector still plays a crucial role in the Russian economy. This is why many economic analysts in the West remain skeptical about the sustainability of Russian growth. They have expressed worries about the 'oil curse' 31 and warned about the risk for 'Dutch disease'. The term 'Dutch disease' is used to describe a dangerous over-investment in the hydrocarbon sector to the detriment of all other industries, leading to insufficient diversification of the economy.32 In addition, other analysts have pointed out some serious structural flaws in the Russian economy, such as the poor state of Russia's human capital (especially the disastrous

[28] Yegor Gaidar (2007) *Collapse of an Empire: Lessons for Modern Russia*, (Washington: Brookings Institute Press).

[29] Keynote speech given by the Russian ambassador to Belgium, Vadim Lukov: 'A debate on Current and Future Developments in the Russian Federation' at a public symposium at the Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium) on 27 November 2007. (http://soc.kuleuven.be/iieb/ibl/home-nl.htm.)

[30] Data retrieved from the website of the Russian Central Bank, address: www.cbr.ru.

[31] Jason Bush (2005) 'Russia: The Curse of $50 a Barrel', *BusinessWeek*, May 16, 2005 (accessed at: http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/05_20/b3933083_mz054.htm.)

[32] The Dutch disease refers to the experience of the Netherlands, the UK and to a lesser extent Norway, who, in spite of a booming gas industry, experienced serious structural economical problems during the 1970's and 1980's. Empirical data showed that an economy that is overly depending and focused on the hydrocarbon industry will ultimately struggle with serious structural problems, since other industries producing tradable goods will be neglected, so that they lack sufficient investment and innovation and fail to attract new labor. Increasing unemployment, decreasing productivity in other industries and imbalances in the economy are the result. See for instance: Otto Latsis (2005) 'Dutch Disease Hits Russia', *Moscow News*, June 8-14, 2005 (accessed at: http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/engsmi/922.html.)

demographic situation and the dramatic figures concerning life expectancy[33]) and its productive capital (e.g. the bad state of the infrastructure). All of these factors together have been undermining the Russian economy and will continue to do so in the long term. As Lilia Shevtsova states, "Russia produces growth without development."[34]

1.1.2 The Impact of Economic Growth on Society

Having reviewed the economic growth statistics, the next step is to determine what these impressive macro-economic growth statistics mean for the Russian people at large. To provide the necessary context for this interpretation, some indices are presented here that should give a more concrete idea about the standard of living and the quality of life in Russia. The standard of living is a kind of index to measure the material living conditions, or the quality and quantity of goods and services available to people, as well as the way these goods and services are distributed within the Russian population. The notion of quality of life, on the other hand, includes not only the material aspects of life but also more subjective elements, such as leisure, safety, cultural resources, social life, mental health, and environmental quality issues. Although these indices will not be discussed at length here, the longitudinal development of these indices during the presidency of Vladimir Putin is noteworthy. It is those seemingly insignificant movements upward, however small and uncertain they may be, which are vital for understanding the Russian population's positive attitude towards Putin. For many Russians, he is the president who brought them through a pivotal time and converted the negative social trends into positive ones. Ending the downward spiral of material uncertainty has been Putin's main achievement.

Keeping in mind that the GDP per capita is a rather indirect indicator and therefore only approximates the standard of living in a country, the following chart shows a clearly increasing line in the GDP per capita:

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[33] The life expectancy at birth data in the Russian Federation in 2003 are 58 years for men and 72 years for women. Since 1992, the Russian population has fallen by 6 million people, and if current low birth and high death trends continue, the country will lose approximately 18 million people by 2025. This means the population could drop from 142 million recorded in the 2002 census to 124 million. The World Bank predicts that if current ill health continues, the life expectancy of Russian males will fall to 53 years. Data from: World Bank (2005) '*Dying Too Young: Addressing Premature Mortality and Ill Health due to Non-Communicable Diseases and Injuries in the Russian Federation'* (accessed at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTECA/Resources/DTY-Final.pdf.). Official Russian data from 2005 are similar. Rosstat has published life expectancy at birth data of 58.9 for men and 72.4 for women. (Russian Federal Service of State Statistics (Rosstat) accessed at http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/2007/b07_12/05-08.htm.)

[34] Lilia Shevtsova (2008) *op. cit.*, p. 35

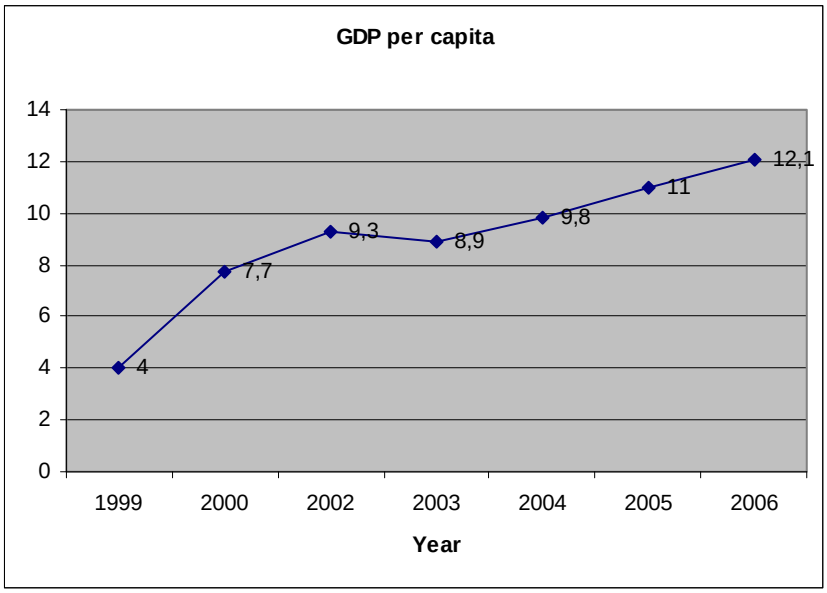

Figure 1: GDP per Capita in 1000 USD

According to the Russian Ministry of Finance the monthly nominal average wage was 6,832 rubles in 2004, 10,975 rubles in June 2006 and 13,540 rubles in October 2007.[35] A study of the World Bank stated that: "The real wage in total industry in Russia […] has increased by 72 percent since 1999. The current dollar monthly wage in industry in 2004 was over $250, an increase of 67 percent in just two years, and a remarkable 266 percent increase over the $75 per month in 1999."[36] The Federal Service of State Statistics (Rosstat) presents, as shown in the table below, a longitudinal overview of the average monthly nominal accrued wages of employees working in enterprises (1995-Thousand RUR). The Russian data in the table have been completed with data from the World Bank, which gives the following overview of the average US dollar wage:[37]

[35] Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation, www1.minfin.ru.
[36] Raj M. Desai and Itzhak Goldberg (Eds.), 'Enhancing Russia's Competitiveness and Innovative Capacity', *Document of the World Bank*, April 2007, p. 22 (accessed at: http://ns.worldbank.org.ru/ica/Russia_ICA.pdf.)
[37] Data retrieved from the websites of the Federal State Statistics Service (www.gks.ru) and the World Bank (www.worldbank.org)

Year	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Average monthly wage (RUR)	472.4	2,223.4	3,240.4	4,360.3	5,498.5	6,739.5	8,554.9	10,727.7
Average monthly wage (US$)			112.4	138.6	179.4	237.2	301.6	394.7

Table 2: Average Monthly Wage in RUR and US$

According to data from the World Bank, the percentage of people living below subsistence level is shown along with the unemployment rate in the following table: [38]

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Share of people living below subsistence (%)	27.3	24.2	20.6	17.8	15.8
Unemployment	9.0	8.1	8.6	8.2	7.6

Table 3: Share of People Living Below the Subsistence Level and Unemployment Rate

A problematic economic indicator, however, is the consumer price inflation rate. In the table below, the consumer price inflation rates are presented from the last 6 years. Despite the fact that the inflation rate decreased, the Russian government did not manage to reach the established target of 8% in 2007. In that year, the inflation rate increased to 11.9% due to rising food prices, additional budgetary spending prior to elections and a capital inflow of $80 billion.[39]

[38] Data from World Bank website (accessed at: siteresources.worldbank.org/INTRUSSIANFEDERATION/Resources/macromay2006.pdf)

[39] Based on the following sources: the *Economist*, 'Country Report: Russia' (accessed at: www.economist.com); IMF Country Report 07/352 (October 2007) (accessed at: http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2007/cr07352.pdf); and the analysis of Felix Goryunov (accessed at: www.rusbizconf.com).

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Consumer price inflation (average %)	15.8	13.7	10.9	12.7	9.7	11.9

Table 4: Consumer Price Inflation (2002-2007)

Despite the fact that the International Monetary Fund and other economic analysts have warned that these data indicate a serious weakness in the economy, it is important to note that the annual inflation rates of the 1990s, which were over 20%, and the aberrant 80% rate in the post-crisis year 1999 have all been consigned to memory.

Another index measuring the standard of living, and a better one according to some, is the Gini coefficient, which shows inequality of income distribution in a given country. The Gini coefficient is a figure between 0 and 1; the lower this coefficient is, the more equal the income, while a higher figure corresponds to greater inequality of wealth distribution. Although the Gini data are not univocal for Russia, a trend can be detected in recent years, given that the Gini coefficient rose dramatically from 1991 (Gini= 2.1) to 1994 (Gini=4.1). In 2006 the Gini coefficient remained at 4.1, according to Rosstat. This income inequality is high in comparison with the Soviet era (in 1990, Gini= 2.9) and in comparison with Western European and Scandinavian countries, but not abnormally high in comparison with, for instance, the US (in 2006, Gini=4.7) or China (in 2006, Gini=4.6).[40] In the Russian Federation, there is thus a rather high income inequality, which has however stabilized. This challenges Lilia Shevtsova's view that inequality is on the rise.

A more general index providing an indication of well-being is the Human Development Index (HDI) that has been used by the United Nations since 1990. According to the HDI reports, this index gives a composite measure of three dimensions of human development: living a long and healthy life (measured by life expectancy), being educated (measured by adult literacy and enrolment at the primary, secondary and tertiary educational level) and having a decent standard of living (measured by purchasing power parity (or PPP) and income). The HDI provides thus a broader prism for viewing human progress and the complex relationship between income and well-being. According to this index, the Russian Federation ranks 67th in the world. The following table shows the HDI index for the fifteen years since the fall of the Soviet Union:

[40] Data from Rosstat (accessed at: www.gks.ru) and the CIA Factbook 2008, (accessed at: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook.)

Year	1990	1995	2000	2005
Human Development Index	0.815	0.771	0.782	0.802

Table 5: Human Development Index for the Russian Federation (1990-2005)

It is significant that the HDI index of 2005 is comparable with that of 1990, the year when the index was first calculated for what was then still the Soviet Union. This data confirms that some aspects from the Soviet socio-economic reality have crept back into the Russian Federation.[41] Despite this recent upward trend, it should be noted that the HDI is not designed to reflect the huge variation in quality of life from place to place; these variations can be particularly large in a land as vast as Russia. Nevertheless, despite these huge differences, the HDI is going up, albeit slowly, even in the straggling areas of the Russian Federation.[42]

1.1.3 Public Perception of Economic Growth and of Putin's Regime

The aim of this section is to examine how the Russian people have responded psychologically to the positive economic trends. It is undeniable that Vladimir Putin managed to turn the depressed and pessimistic mood of the 1990s into a more positive national frame of mind. This change in mood was not yet apparent during the first term of Putin's presidency,[43] but at the end of his second term the majority of the Russians were seeing definitive positive economic and political

[41] The discourse of returning to the Soviet-era level is also heard with regard to GDP data: "By 2005 real GDP reached almost 90 % of the pre-reform level of 1990. But this fact conceals wide variations across sectors and regions. Value added in manufacturing was less than 70 percent of the Soviet maximum. The oil and gas sector reestablished its pre-reform level of output. And services – trade, transport, communications, and finance –exceed it." Raj M. Desai and Itzhak Goldberg (Eds.), op. cit., p. 13

[42] Boblev, Alexandrova, & Zubarevich, 'National Human Development Report: Russia's Regions: Goals, Challenges, Achievements' *UNDP Russia*, 15 May 2007 (accessed at http://www.undp.ru/nhdr2006_07eng/NHDR_Russia_2006_07eng.pdf)

[43] See, for example, V.V. Fedorov and A.M. Tsuladze (2003) *Epocha Putina*, (Moscow: Eksmo Publishing House), and the analysis of two political analysts, Lilia Shevtsova (2005) 'The Logic of Backsliding' and Nikolay Petrov, 'Russia on the Eve of Regime Change' in the study edited by Adomeit Hannes & Anders Aslund, 'Russia versus the United States and Europe- or "Strategic Triangle"? Developments in Russian Domestic and Foreign Policy, Western Responses, and Prospects for Policy Coordination', Berlin/Moscow: *SWP Berlin/Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, October 2005, pp. 13-28. (Accessed at http://www.carnegie.ru/en/pubs/books/9479RussiaGMF_end_Carnegie.pdf.)

developments in their country.[44] The majority of the Russian population, for instance, responded affirmatively to the question of whether they thought that they (and their families) would live better in the coming year [2008] than they do at present [2007].[45]

A contradiction is seen here between Russian public perception and the political tendency towards an increasingly authoritarian regime. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, the real reform period of Putin's leadership must be situated in his first presidential term. His second term, on the other hand, was marked by greater economic centralization, monopolization and limitation of economic (and political) freedom, in addition to which a larger share of the GDP was reserved for state production. The Russian mood, however, was not synchronized with these developments; it was as if there was a kind of delay mechanism in the public reaction. The people showed themselves more confident and more trustful in the second term of Putin's leadership than his first term. The apparently contradictory coexistence of the Russian population's growing optimism and the regime's tendency towards more authoritarian rule has nothing to do with an innate desire in the Russian people for a strong leader. Rather, as the above social and economic indices suggest, it is due to the time lapse between economic policy decisions and their eventual effect on the Russian population at large. Moreover, though the Western ideal of democracy may emphasize political rights, such as freedom of speech and assembly, above all others, and however much we might expect the former Soviet state to be dismissive of materialistic concerns, in actuality, many Russians seem to be more eager for mobile phones, holidays abroad, material well-being and a sense of security and order instead of information. This sort of development is more like de Tocqueville's warning of a 'despotic democracy.'[46]

Naturally, none of these observations about the Russian mood can be proven statistically or in concrete terms. They are drawn from a wide range of cultural sources, including polls, newspaper articles, and private conversations. Perhaps they can be taken simply as suggestions about emerging trends. It is the promise of future opportunity, not the present economic reality, which is raising the

[44] Concerning the economic situation, 71% of the respondents see the situation as positive (versus 23% as negative and 6% with no opinion) and as for the political situation, 70% of the respondents see the situation as positive (versus 16% negative and 13% with no opinion). 'Social Trends of Russians in the Summer of 2007', *The Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VCIOM)* 27 August 2007, Press Release No. 750. (Accessed at http://wciom.com/archives/thematic-archive/info-material/single/8652.html, last accessed December 16th 2007.)

[45] *Ibid*. 71% answered positively versus 13 % negative and 15% with no opinion.

[46] Alexis de Toqueville (2005) *Democratie: wezen en oorsprong*, (Kampen/kapellen: Agora/Pelckmans), p. 30.

national mood and creating new optimism. For there are still plenty of people in Russia forced to live in poverty. It is well-known that in 2008, despite a booming economy and growing consumption (especially in Moscow and St. Petersburg), most of the Russian population is unable to share this wealth. Many people in the Russian Federation are still unable to purchase the necessities for what is considered to be a decent life. Yet again, there is some hope for a better future. This social and psychological factor is of course difficult to quantify and make tangible. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to neglect the power of potential. One hears Russians saying that they are proud to be Russian again; even young students who were not caught up in the cult of Putin.[47] It must be acknowledged that President Putin has accomplished something enormous insofar as he has been able to alter the country's mood from depression, defeat, trauma and shame into a rather positive mood showing glimpses of hope. Even if the support for Vladimir Putin has some worrying aspects, including a certain adulation, the emergence of a personality cult and nationalistic tendencies, we have to acknowledge that notions like 'hope', 'positive expectations', 'trust in the president', and the effects of charismatic leadership are important factors for the mood of a country. Even though the West may have its doubts about the democratic standards of the Duma elections of 2 December 2007,[48] in which *Edinstvo* posted an overwhelming victory that was interpreted by the party leadership as a public affirmation of Putin's popularity,[49] the results should not come as any surprise, nor should they be written off merely as the result of manipulation or fraud. The votes cast by the Russian population were authentic, and the message they sent was strong.

[47] In a personal interview, a Russian student volunteered that she was proud to be Russian again (Dec. 2007)

[48] The Belgian senator Geert Lambert was an observer in the city of Yaroslav during the parliamentary elections and was interviewed by the author (December 19, 2007; Brussel, Belgium). His main criticism of the elections was the monopolization of information and election propaganda by United Russia, the party of the president. He could not find any political propaganda other than for *Edinstvo* and it was only outside the city that he found some bill boards for the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia. In one election office he found one police officer who distributed propaganda material to the voters (for LDPR) and he observed the strange practice that United Russia organized an exit poll, when people were leaving the election office. The rationale of that was not clear to the senator. Besides these remarks, he did not observe major problems during the parliamentary elections. For a thorough study of the Russian Duma elections, see Carl Holmberg (2008) 'Managing Elections in Russia, Mechanisms and Problems' (stockholm: *FOI/Swedish Defence Research Agency*, FOI User Report, FOI-R-2474-SE, February 2008).

[49] *Edinstvo* (United Russia), officially received 63.4% of the votes. (The Communist party of the Russian Federation won 11.6 % of the vote, the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia had 8.1% and Fair Russia had 7.7%. The other 7 parties who participated did not win enough votes to get any seats in the Duma).

For analytical reasons it is equally important to examine the rationale behind these developments as to observe them from the Russian perspective. Democracy, for instance, has become a word (and therefore a concept) with a very bitter taste in the mouth of many Russians. In Russian slang, democracy is referred to as '*der'mocracy'*, which can be translated as 'shitocracy'. For many Russian citizens, democracy stands for trauma, defeat, chaos, uncertainty, insecurity, and poverty. It is nearly impossible to underestimate the damage done by the Yeltsin regime. Moreover, many Russians believe, correctly or not, that this overly corrupt and inefficient regime was set up and unconditionally supported by the West, notably by advisors who flew in to Moscow to promote 'shock therapy'[50]; and that Western leaders supported Yeltsin for his anti-communist stance.[51] They also hold that money from the West interfered in Russian politics so as to promote--even impose-- a political and economic model on Russia. Democracy, so the myth goes, stands for chaos brought about by the West as part of its scheme to destroy the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation. It does not matter if these assumptions are accurate or not, or whether they are misperceptions or propaganda. What matters is that these notions are alive and well among the Russian public. And again, it is important to mention the great contrast between the economic achievements of the Putin era and the economic disaster of the 1990s. Once this factor has been given its due, there is no need for the usual conspiracy theories, or for outdated historical clichés that the Russians cannot change, or are predestined to have an authoritarian leadership, or remain anti-Western by nature. Russia's politicians and population are generally rational in their actions. Understanding the Russian logic does not mean condoning their actions. Nor does it mean that recent Russian developments can be seen as anything less than disturbing, even alarming; thus we are required to adopt a political stance. This question is taken up again in the last section of this report, which gives some recommendations for policy positions to adopt towards Russia.

1.2 Political Developments: the Rise of an Authoritarian Regime

At the time of the publication of this report in 2008, the Russian Federation has undeniably become an authoritarian regime *par excellence.* As a result, there is

[50] On this subject, see the chapter on Russia and the account of the confrontation between the American advisor, Jeffrey Sachs, and the Russian Government, as reported by Naomi Klein (2007) *The Shock Doctrine, The Rise of Disaster Capitalism.* (New York: Metropolitan Books).

[51] In 1992, for instance, USAID provided 2.1 million USD for legal and economic advisors to assist Gaidar with his 'shock therapy'.

no need for the vague terminology and political spin that is often used in the current political discourse about Russia. Many strange words are often mentioned, such as 'pseudo', 'imitation', 'illiberal', 'guided', 'managed' or the Kremlin's own 'sovereign' democracy, the (German) neologism '*demokratura'* as well as 'soft authoritarian regime'. Either there must be great confusion on this point, or perhaps there is simply great resistance to calling the Russian Federation under Putin for what it is, an authoritarian regime. (The theoretical features of such a regime are briefly presented below.) Looking at the authoritarian tendencies is useful insofar as it results in a broad (albeit incomplete) overview of the political developments during the Putin era. The theoretical background supporting this section has mainly been borrowed from the political scientist Juan J. Linz, who contrasts the model of the authoritarian regime with the democratic and totalitarian regimes.[52]

If one can speak of a continuum with a competitive democracy at the one end, and a totalitarian regime at the other, an authoritarian regime can be placed somewhere in between them, but closer, quite logically, to the side of the totalitarian regime. In this sense, an autocratic regime is a kind of hybrid system that may cause analytical confusion, for it contains elements of both freedom and control. The freedom in the regime, though only partial, can be used as a defense against (Western) critics, or slanted to reassure Western governments. Yet this freedom is always partial and embedded within an autocratic framework.

To properly determine the extent to which the Russian regime has indeed become authoritarian, Putin's government can be compared to the ideal authoritarian type. Linz attributes three characteristic features to the autocratic regime, namely: (1) the degree of pluralism, (2) the formation of coalitions, and (3) the prevailing mentality. He sees the authoritarian regime as "a political system with limited, not responsible, political pluralism, without elaborated and guided ideology, but with distinctive mentalities, without extensive nor intensive political mobilization, except at some points in their development, and in which a leader or occasionally a small group exercises power within formally ill-defined limits but actually quite predictable ones."[53] The rest of this section elaborates upon these three criteria and applies them to the Russian situation.

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[52] Juan J. Linz (2000) *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers); Juna J. Linz and Arturo Valenzuela (Eds.) (1994) *The Failure of Presidential Democracy, Volume 1, Comparative Perspectives*, (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press); and H.E. Chehabi and Juna J. Linz (1998) *Sultanistic Regimes*, (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press).

[53] Juan J. Linz (2000), *op. cit.*, p. 159.

The Degree of Pluralism

The most distinctive feature of an authoritarian regime is the existence of limited pluralism. While in a democracy there is unlimited pluralism and in a totalitarian regime there is monism (one party that reigns) it is characteristic for an authoritarian regime to have a limited number of independent groups or institutions active in society and politics. An authoritarian regime even encourages their emergence, yet leaves no doubt that the rulers will ultimately define which groups they will allow to exist and under what conditions. Possibly there is a single party or privileged party that occupies more or less an important place in the realm of limited pluralism. All these aspects of limited pluralism are present in Russia. The Russian executive branch defines what is and what is not allowed in the political arena, both institutionally and regarding content, formally and informally. As long as the prescribed limits are respected, there is a relatively large amount of leeway for the Russian citizen to move about.

Yet, if one consciously or unconsciously trespasses these lines, life might become difficult if not dangerous. Russians can easily go abroad to spend their holidays in exotic resorts, but critics of Putin's security, military and strategic policy or the murky world of corruption are harassed, jailed, and even killed. The number of well-known cases of Anna Politkovskaya, Alexander Litvinenko, Yuri Shchekochikhin, Sergei Yushenkov, Paul Khlebnikov, along with cases that reverberate less in the West, such as Eduard Markevich, Natalya Skryl, Valery Ivanov, Aleksei Sidorov, Yevgeny Gerasimenko, all add up to make the Russian Federation the third deadliest country in the world, ranking after the conflict-ridden countries Iraq and Algeria, according to the data of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CJP). Journalists without Borders, an NGO that monitors the security of journalists, places the Russian federation on the 147th place of 168 countries on the Press Freedom Index.[54] Moreover, in the Russian Federation, individuals can still accumulate huge wealth, just as they could under Yeltsin, provided that they refrain from meddling in politics and avoid becoming too influential and independent in strategically important industrial branches. The economic liquidation of Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Boris Berezovsky and Vladimir Gusinsky and the continuing survival of other (Jewish) tycoons such as Roman Abramovitch may illustrate this point.

[54] A very thorough analysis can be found in Martin Sixsmith (2007) *The Litvinenko File, The True Story of a Death foretold*, (London: Macmillan); data from the website of the *Committee to Protect Journalists (accessed at*: http://www.cpj.org/regions_07/europe_07/europe_07.html#russia); and data from the website of Journalists without Frontiers (accessed at: http://www.rsf.org/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=639.)

True, there are independent political parties in Russia, there are different media sources, and there are various active Non-Governmental Organizations. But it is also clear that the executive branch sets the rules of the political game, mostly by legal and bureaucratic means: it is the government, often supported by the Duma itself, for instance, that has decided to reorganize the NGO world, by means of all kinds of registration procedures and by setting all kinds of rules that have to be fulfilled in order to be recognized as a legal, acceptable non-governmental organization. The liberal parties were hindered from entering the Duma during the last parliamentary elections when the threshold percentage for representation was raised from 5% to 7%; and virtually all independent media have been taken off the airwaves or circulation through all kinds of legal and bureaucratic (mostly tax) regulations. Despite the fact that there are several independent political parties active in Russia, it may also be clear that Putin's party and specific youth organizations such as *Edinstvo* and *Nashi* occupy a privileged place in Russian political life. Vladimir Putin kept his word when he, in 2000, announced the 'dictatorship of the law'. Despite the fact that corruption is still abundant in the Russian Federation,[55] Putin can indeed be considered as a legalist in the sense that he advocates strict conformity to the law. Yet the problem lies, besides the lack of separation of powers, in the vagueness of the laws and the arbitrariness in their application. In other words, for some people and in some circumstances he practices a strict conformity to the law, while in other circumstances there is absolute lawlessness, to the extent that Dmitry Medvedev speaks about 'legal nihilism'. This makes the regime unpredictable and opaque and, thus it can not be classified as a constitutional state. Shevtsova rightly claims that in Russian politics 'it is hard to decipher the line between real and fake'.[56]

The Formation of Coalitions

According to Linz, an authoritarian regime is led by a coalition that reflects the power of various groups and institutions. The coalition members, brought together by the head of the regime, support him in return for a seat at the center of power. The leader is not only responsible for holding his coalition together; he

[55] According to Transparency International, a German NGO fighting corruption around the world, Russia had a corruption score of 2.3 in 2007. The 'corruption index' defines corruption as the abuse of public office for private gain, and measures the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among the country's public officials and politicians. The score ranges from ten (no corruption) to zero (highly corrupt). A score of 5.0 is considered by Transparency International to be the borderline figure between countries that have serious corruption problem and those that do not. Despite Putin's promises to fight corruption, the data from Transparency International suggest that Russia's corruption level has not changed much: in 1999 the corruption score was 2.4, in 2002: 2.7 and in 2005: 2.4.

[56] Lilia Shevtsova (2008) *Op. Cit.*, p. 37.

must preserve it against potential challenges to its power. Thus he may choose to neutralize other groups and institutions by bringing their leaders into the coalition. The continual process of co-opting the leaders of various groups is the mechanism by which different sectors or institutions become participants in the system. This process of co-opting that goes on in an authoritarian regime also gives rise to an elite class with similar backgrounds and career patterns. For example, the elite class contains fewer professional politicians relative to the number of people recruited from the bureaucracy, technically skilled elites, the army, the secret services, interest groups and sometimes, religious groups.

Russia thus corresponds to this ideal type quite closely. Vladimir Putin, himself co-opted by 'the family' at the highest level of political power in the Kremlin, surrounded himself with people who he could trust and who were strong enough to alter the power of the Yeltsin elite and consequently change the balance in Russian politics. As there were no organically grown political parties in Russia from which Putin could recruit, he found influential powerful and trustworthy people from his native city St. Petersburg and recruited people with a professional background like himself from the KGB/FSB. There is nothing mysterious in this phenomenon, and what it represents is not a planned coup by the KGB, but in a certain sense, a rather lucky opportunity that was created by the people that surrounded Yeltsin. The KGB/FSB-ization of Russian politics is a normal result of co-optation within an authoritarian regime. It is also noteworthy that, despite the fact that Putin has been surrounded with people in uniform, there are also other factions in the Kremlin. Ian Bremmer and Samuel Charap, for instance, have stated that currently three to ten factions can be distinguished which influence the policy of the Kremlin, with liberals, technocrats and *siloviki* being the most important among them.[57] The Kremlin is thus not a coherent, monolithic group but a coalition of several factions. Nor is it an extension of the FSB headquarters. The fact that Dmitry Medvedev, the selected heir of Vladimir Putin, does not have a KGB/FSB background is an obvious sign that the FSB is not in total control. Moreover, his appointment will have a great impact on the future development of the Russian authoritarian regime.

During the tense period when Vladimir Putin's successor was chosen, there were clear signs of nervousness among the various subgroups of the KGB/FSB,

[57] Ian Bremmer and Samuel Charap, (2006/7)'The Siloviki in Putin's Russia: Who they are and What They Want', *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 1, Winter 2006-2007, pp. 83-92 and also Ian Bremmer, 'Who's in Charge in the Kremlin', *World Policy Journal*, Vol. XXII, No. 4, Winter 2005-2006. (Accessed at: http://www.worldpolicy.org/journal/articles/wpj06-1/bremmer.html.)

indicating that even the KGB/FSB is not a monolithic organization, but a 'normal' complex organization composed of different coalitions and factions.

Finally, in order to better understand the Putin regime and to grasp its internal logic, it would be worthwhile to study how political developments of the Putin era have emerged from the Yeltsin period. To a certain extent, the characteristic features of the Putin regime were already present in embryonic form in the Yeltsin era. Or as Shevtsova has declared, "Putin's presidency has revealed the true nature of post-Soviet power, which in the Yeltsin years was obscured by indeterminacy."[58] For example:

- 'independent' media were used to influence political events and for the personal political interests of tycoons who owned these media; thus the media were not free and independent;
- some 'dissidents' were already being harassed and imprisoned by the authorities, including Grigory Pasko, Igor Sutyagin, Aleksandr Nikitin, Mikhail Trepashkin, and Valentin Moiseev for meddling in 'strategic matters';
- the independence of the juridical system had become questionable already during the Yeltsin period, especially from 1996 onwards. Practices such as telefonnoye pravo, (or 'telephoned justice,' which refers to a telephone call placed from a more highly positioned person to a judge or a prosecutor, leading to a sentence) and shpionomania (referring to cases where environmentalists and scientists were accused of espionage and in which the KGB/FSB influenced the course of the juridical process) were common practices during the Yeltsin era. All this limited the freedom of civil society;
- the Constitution of 1993 installed a strong presidential regime under dubious circumstances;
- it was Yeltsin, together with the most hard core economic reformers (Yegor Gaydar, Anatoly Chubais) who sidelined the parliament and other independent institutions;
- the elections of 1996 were highly influenced by the Kremlin and cannot be called free democratic elections;
- some unresolved political murders (e.g. Galina Starovoitova) took place;
- military and security officers were involved in cases of corruption, blackmailing, racketeering and other illegal mafia activities;
- the war in Chechnya was started in 1994 by Yeltsin's entourage;
- people were co-opted who had a KGB and military background in the Kremlin (e.g. Aleksandr A. Korzhakov, Yevgeni Primakov, Sergei Stepashin, etc.);

[58] Lilia Shevtsova (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 21.

- intrigues and doubtful influences were found in the Kremlin;
- dictatorial measures were taken against political opponents, especially the Communist Party;
- etc.

This is not to say that the Yeltsin regime is identical to Putin's, but that many features of Russian politics under Putin are differences of degree rather than of principle.

The prevailing mentality

The third parameter that defines an authoritarian regime concerns 'the software' of an authoritarian regime, which Linz defines as being a mentality, not an ideology.[59] The distinction is based on the writings of the German sociologist Theodor Geiger and Michel Vovelle.[60] Broadly put, ideologies are developed systems of ideas, often developed in depth by intellectuals and objectively codified in writing. Mentalities are ways of thinking and feeling that provide non-codified ways of reacting to different situations; they are experienced more as subjective individual beliefs than as rational generalizations. The following table summarizes the distinction between a mentality and an ideology:

Mentality	Ideology
Intellectual attitude (instrumental, practical); subjective	Intellectual content; objectified
Psychic predisposition	Reflection, self-interpretation
Fragmentary, formless, fluctuating, open system, not binding	Total, firmly formed, closed belief system, binding, commitment
Previous (closer to past and present)	Later (utopian, future)
Concept of social character	Concept of the sociology of culture

Table 6: 'Mentality' versus 'Ideology'

The specific mentality of the Putin regime will be studied in the second part of this report. It should be emphasized that mentalities, unlike ideologies are less likely to be used to influence society, or diffused among the masses. Thus the Russian regime does not seek to impose the *siloviki* mentality upon the people, but they very well might try inculcating the population with a nationalist or patriotic ideology. Mentalities are less prone to be used in education, less likely to come in conflict with religion or science and more difficult to use as a test for loyalty. Mentalities, in other words, are the software of the leadership, of the

[59] Juan J. Linz (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 159.
[60] Theodor Geiger (1969) *On Social Order and Mass Society, Selected Papers*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press) and Michel Vovelle (1992) *Idéologies et mentalités*, (Paris: Gallimard).

elite, not to be disseminated among the masses to mobilize them, for example, or to regiment and control them. This does not mean, however, that the leadership will refrain from using other methods to mobilize the masses. It is clear that Putin uses nationalism along with elements of the Russian and Soviet past (e.g. the re-introduction of the Soviet Anthem, glorifying the Soviet/Russian history, privileging Russian orthodoxy, etc.) in order to mobilize, unify and regiment Russian society, yet this is not related with the actual mentality of the leadership.

Two more remarks about authoritarian regimes might be useful as they may shed some light on specific aspects of Putin's regime:

Firstly, authoritarian regimes often claim to be necessary for modernization or for carrying through much needed political adjustments. Very often they see themselves as 'transitional regimes' which have to pursue tough, but obligatory policies in order to correct certain undesirable political or social situations. Indeed, Putin himself states that Russia needs order, control, stability, and the re-institution of the 'vertical power' axis to recover its superpower status. Many of Putin's decisions and attitudes can be seen as a kind of antithesis of the policies pursued during the 1990s: order grew in place of chaos, unification and centralization gained over fragmentation and decentralization; loyal team members took over from disloyal politicians, pride vanquished shame, etc. All these shifts in emphasis can be seen as adding up to a larger purpose, that of Putin's quest for control. Given how successfully he gradually imposed this control during his two-term presidency, the Putin regime might even be called a 'counter-democracy'.

Secondly, the historical study of authoritarian regimes shows that it is the military in particular, or more broadly, men in uniform, who are predisposed to this type of regime. Apparently, and this is a point taken up in the following part, a close correlation exists between the military mentality and authoritarian regimes. Other military/political figures from the 1990s can illustrate this. Aleksandr Lebed, for instance, constantly referred to the Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet as his political role model and pointed to that regime as his preferred political model.

Finally, it is useful to keep in mind that an authoritarian regime differs from a totalitarian one in certain ways, as this point may need to be clarified. According to Linz, a totalitarian regime is characterized as having (1) a totalistic ideology, (2) a single party committed to this ideology and led by one man, the dictator, aided by a secret police, and (3) a monopoly over the main forms of interpersonal interactions in industrial mass society. It is essential in a totalitarian regime that

all three features be simultaneously present.[61] Thus the Russian state cannot be classified as totalitarianism, since it lacks two of the three elements, namely, a totalistic ideology and tight monitoring of interpersonal contact. The lack of an ideology also means that the FSB cannot strictly be classified as secret police, in the totalitarian sense. Certainly, the FSB is an influential constituency of the *siloviki*; yet it never determines actual policies.

What is to be seen now in the Russian Federation is an exceptional, unusual and confusing situation where the FSB is a security/intelligence service that participates in day-to-day politics relying on its techniques to influence, control, and manipulate society. In other words, the FSB has developed into an agency that acts, at times, independently of the Kremlin and in pursuit of its own economic and political agenda. It is no longer a mere tool in the hands of a totalitarian dictator. Moreover, the unpredictability of the FSB is heightened by the fact that it does not always fully control its own officers, or restrain them from seeking private financial gain. Thus the organizational cohesion of the FSB is highly questionable.

The origin of this disorder and the lack of organizational control in the FSB can be traced to the chaotic, turbulent period after 1987 (the year perestroika was given a second push) in tandem with the lack of reform in the security sector. More specifically, KGB/FSB individuals and networks were suddenly no longer employed by the state, and thus they were looking for any available opportunities; organized crime, security companies, private businesses, etc. Consequently, the KGB/FSB participation in Russian politics is due to circumstances, not conspiracy. That is, FSB-ization is the result of various different structural forces that arose from a given set of circumstances. Often out of necessity, the former security agents took advantage of whatever window of opportunity opened itself to them. Thus the role of the FSB in Russian politics remains unpredictable and highly changeable. One cannot even foresee how long they will manage to stay close to the center of political power.

[61] Juan J. Linz (2000) *op. cit.*, p. 159

2 Foreign Policy under Putin

In 2007, Putin's confidence as a leader rose to new levels, thanks to his achievements in the economic sphere and the political support of the Russian people. This rise in confidence parallels his more aggressive stance in matters of foreign policy.[62] The Kremlin seems bound for all azimuths of the globe in a bid to re-establish its presence and influence. It has become more active in the territories of the former Soviet Union (Central Asia, the Caucasus and other CIS countries), as well as in the Middle East (especially Syria), South America (Venezuela in particular) and even in the Arctic. This geographic expansion is just as evident on the seas as on the land, given Russia's expansion of its naval power. Russia has also been seeking to play a larger role in world affairs by trying to facilitate breakthroughs in long-standing conflicts on the Korean peninsula and in the Middle East. By doing so, Russia wants to position itself as a state that cannot be ignored. Moreover, Russian leadership is apparently taking a more definite stance in many international disputes, both old and new, between Russia and the West. Among these are its views on the Iranian nuclear program, the installation of US radar and interception infrastructure in Europe, the Eastern expansion of NATO and the EU, the Russian suspension of the CFE agreements, the Russian military presence in Georgia and Moldova, and the opposition to Kosovo's independence. The Russian government also seems capable of resorting to Soviet style tactics in that it does not refrain from intimidation, threats, and bold pronouncements. For instance, high-ranking officers regularly comment on Russian nuclear strategy and make reference to the re-targeting of European cities. Flights by missile-carrying strategic bombers have been resumed in order to send signals to previous cold-war opponents such as Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States. Finally, Russia has been resorting to intimidation tactics in its trade relations, using its control over the gas and oil supplies to influence countries like Ukraine, Belarus and even the EU.

In its drive to re-establish itself as a superpower, Russia is also 'flexing its military muscles' by investing in long-term modernization plans, organizational reforms, military exercises and other activities. The Russian Armed Forces, after being in a state of serious organizational crisis for more than fifteen years, are

[62] One should see Putin's policy as a '*Gestalt'* as it does not make sense to establish a relationship of cause and effect between domestic and foreign policy. Putin's policy pursues a multi-track agenda in which all elements – economics, domestic, foreign and security policy- co-develop, reinforce each other and are interdependent.

moving beyond the troubled period of the 1990's.[63] Most significantly, they are modernizing their nuclear arsenal and conducting R&D into other high-tech weaponry needed for modern warfare. At the start of 2007, Putin approved a seven-year-long, 200-billion USD rearmament plan to develop state-of-the-art airplanes, missiles and ships. On a more general level, Russia has developed a booming weapons industry which, besides acting as one of the mainstays of its economy, also serves as an important diplomatic tool for re-establishing international influence. Russia has signed sizeable weapons contracts with India, Saudi Arabia, China, Venezuela, Sudan, Syria, etc. The weapons industry has grown so strategically important that it has been returned to the control of the Kremlin, which now has a monopoly on the entire sector. These organizational reforms and modernization campaigns are accompanied by a heightened military activity. Military exercises are organized on a more frequent and intensive basis; they serve to test new weapon systems and also to train various branches of the armed forces to operate in coordination on a strategic level. Moreover, there is an increase in international military cooperation, with a growing number of joint exercises being carried out, especially with Asian countries. In August 2007, for example, Russia organized a military exercise under the aegis of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and joint military exercises have been announced with India, China and other countries. Finally, Russia wishes to re-establish itself as a major naval power in both blue and white water. The Russian navy has increased its visibility in international waters, and it has begun building up old naval bases while also establishing new ones (most recently claiming a position in the Mediterranean).

All these developments have led to rising speculation on the start of a new rivalry between East and West in Europe, perhaps even a second Cold War. Partnerships and cooperation between Russia and the West again seem out of reach, and certainly it is utopian to speak of full integration as we once did. Western political actions tend to be answered with counter-actions, not by negotiations or debate. Consequently, the common ground required for a reasonable settlement of disputes is shrinking. The necessary mutual trust is simply not to be found.

However disturbing we might find all these developments in foreign and security policy, we should not be greatly surprised. With the possible exception of the period from 1991-1993, the Russian elite only grudgingly accepted what was

[63] For an in-depth study of this organizational chaos see, among others, Joris Van Bladel, (2004) The All-Volunteer Force in the Russian Mirror,Transformation without Change, PhD dissertation, State University of Groningen, (accessed at http://dissertations.ub.rug.nl/faculties/arts/2004/j.j.e.van.bladel/); and Pavel Baev (1996) The Russian Army in a Time of Trouble, (London: Sage Publications Ltd).

regarded by many in the Russian elite as 'the diktat' of the West. Western policy makers are all too aware of this fact, showing a certain nervousness when they lack sufficient leverage to influence Russian domestic and foreign policy. The West was already using its control tactics back in the Gorbachev period when, for instance, during the Houston G7 summit of July 1990, economic shock therapy and political reform were imposed and coupled to economic support from the West. In his memoirs, Gorbachev later complained about being pressured at that summit.[64] Moreover, he felt abandoned when a year later, in 1991, the G7 nations did not absolve Soviet debts, an action which was needed to avoid a catastrophic economic crisis. In 1992 Yeltsin used special powers to impose shock therapy, thus planting the seeds of an authoritarian regime, yet no critical voices were heard from the West. The shock therapy failed to a large extent, and Russia remained dependent upon loans from the IMF and the World Bank and remained weak economically for many years.

The idea of a unipolar world led by the United States was always opposed by the members of the Russian foreign policy elite. This was already clear in the mid-1990s when Yevgeny Primakov rose to prominence in the Kremlin.[65] His long-standing goal as foreign minister was to establish a multi-polar world in which a more important role would be played by Russia, China and India. It was obvious that Primakov's opinion reflected the one held by the majority of influential persons in the foreign policy and defense arenas. The NATO bombing campaign against Serbia in the 1999 Kosovo dispute caused the old fears of a threatening NATO to resurface. This military campaign was one of the major elements contributing to the actual anti-western stance taken by the security, defense and foreign affairs establishment. It should be noted that the campaign occurred before Vladimir Putin took office. Putin and his entourage should not be held responsible for creating Russia's increasingly anti-western attitude, for in fact it was already present in the security sector. Putin simply made pragmatic use of this sentiment when he needed it to influence events on the international stage.

The anti-western sentiments were aggravated further by the unilateral policies and actions of the Bush administration. Despite a brief period of détente in which common interests led to close collaboration in the war against terrorism and nuclear proliferation, Putin was very soon disappointed in the unilateral actions of the United States. Past apprehensions and suspicions re-emerged, and soon the once familiar phrases about the 'encirclement of the motherland' and 'the international conspiracy against Russia' were no longer kept out of Putin's public

[64] Mikhail Gorbachev (1996) *Memoirs*, (London: Doubleday), p. 122.
[65] Evgueni Primakov (2001) *Au Coeur du Pouvoir, Mémoires Politiques*, (Paris: éditions des Syrtes), pp.158-315.

speeches. He blamed the West for lacking gratitude, respect and loyalty, and soon the anti-western voices in the Kremlin were growing stronger. Certain sensitive, chronic developments strengthened Russia's long-standing conviction that the US and the West did not have good intentions regarding their country; these included support for the colored revolutions in the Near Abroad (Ukraine, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan), the installation of anti-ballistic radars in Poland and the Czech Republic, and finally, the recognition of Kosovo's independence (on top of the 1999 war). The basic fact is that Western actions are misperceived by the Russian foreign policy and security establishment; they may also be consciously misrepresented.

The position of Russia's security and policy leaders can be better understood by taking into account how they regard the international scene. The West, in particular, is viewed with suspicion, anger, revenge, and feelings of betrayal. Moreover, in the geopolitical realm they are accustomed to the use of traditional military might to exert international influence and pressure. No matter how much the spokesmen of the West might go on reassuring Russia about their good intentions, whether it be said by NATO, the EU, or Washington, Paris, London, Berlin or Brussels, these pledges will not be perceived as genuine. On the contrary, such reassurances will only reinforce the existing suspicions about the West. Given the lack of trust, no real communication is likely to occur, and then both parties will fall back into past habits, consciously or not. To a certain extent, one can say that the rivalry between Russia and the West, that is, the Cold War, has never ended in the hearts and minds of the security and foreign policy establishment of the Russian Federation. Until this dynamic between Russia and the West is overcome, the relationship will not improve. Successful diplomacy will not only require a great deal of time, but also a willingness to deal with a troubled, difficult partner, along with sincere efforts to build up trust.

Consequently, Russian foreign and security policy must be seen within the international context and in relation to Western actions and deeds. The Russian elite interprets western actions in accordance with their stereotypes about the West. Thus it is essential to take a more detailed look at the current Russian leadership. The second part of this report is devoted to such an investigation.

Part II:

The Mentality of Putin's Coalition Partners

In the first part of this report it was argued that Russia is an authoritarian regime *par excellence*. The Putin administration itself generates a good deal of political spin to the contrary, calling itself by other, more sophisticated classifications, but these should not distract us from the true picture. Identifying Russia as authoritarian here is not meant to carry the weight of a moral judgment; it is purely an analytical observation. For it is by comparing Russia with the ideal type of authoritarian regime that we can better analyze, evaluate, and make predictions about the Russian leadership. In the ideal type of an authoritarian regime, for instance, an autocrat's power is always endangered, and his control is never complete or total. Thus the autocrat must rely on a coalition of personal connections to influential and trustworthy individuals if he is to maintain control over the chaotic, turbulent and threatening socio-political scene. Authoritarian regimes are often 'idealistically' driven, for example, aimed at rescuing the country from '*der Untergang'* and reversing a downward spiral of chaos. The basic goal of the authoritarian elite is to restore stability and predictability, and this goal naturally leads to more centralization, and direct control.

Those who belong to the coalition are selected based on their ability to tighten social control and ensure political stability. They must be known and trusted by the autocrat, but they may not appear as overly ambitious or powerful. Nor may there be any single faction in the coalition that overpowers the other factions or the autocrat himself. For those invited to join, loyalty is the key to remaining on the executive team. Should this loyalty ever falter, the offending group is quickly and ruthlessly forced out of the centre. Inside the coalition the various factions constantly compete for a higher, more influential rank and for a closer relationship to the autocrat himself. In other words, a vicious competition goes on among those who are drawn to the centre of power like moths to a flame. Consequently, behind the façade of stability and control an authoritarian regime is fraught with intrigues taking place behind the scenes and always threatening the coherence of the coalition. These intrigues, when combined with the lack of transparency, make it so that the public at large is often confronted with

unexpected and sudden personal changes, or odd political decisions whose rationale is not immediately apparent, and rarely explained.

For instance, in the wake of the Beslan debacle in 2004, Putin decided to change the system for choosing the heads of the Federal Subjects of the Russian Federation, so that they would no longer be directly elected but rather, proposed by the President and then approved by the elected legislatures of the Federal Subjects. This is a somewhat illogical anti-terrorist security measure, but it is a perfectly understandable as a way to impose greater control on the regions in the Russian Federation. The Yukos affair in 2003-2004 may seem to be a good example of irrational behavior, yet it makes perfect sense as part of the competition for assets occurring between the *siloviki* and the 'liberals', which are the two main factions in Putin's coalition. Many of these 'irrational' decisions are either instrumental ones to preserve political/societal control and to get rid of untrustworthy individuals, or products of competition among the coalition partners. In the patrimonial society – or as the American-Russian sociologist Vladimir Shlapentokh calls it, the feudal society of the Russian Federation,[66] politics is an all or nothing enterprise, a zero-sum game, and there is so much at stake for coalition factions that the competition among them may escalate to the point of viciousness. Blackmail, *kompromat* (compromising material), and the apparently common practices of contract killings and poisoning make part of Russian political practices. In other words, because all members holding power in an authoritarian regime are under continual threat (whether imagined or real), and because its idealistic motivations are often regarded with suspicion, the political regime gradually becomes conservative, irritable, defensive and paranoid. The façade of Putin's political slogans of unity, coherence, and stability conceals a reality that is more diverse and dynamic, more secretive and opaque, more cynical, and therefore a vulnerable and unstable political system.

In this part, two main aspects of Putin's authoritarian regime are discussed, namely the composition of the power coalition and its mentality. As there is already so much published research (and speculation) about the composition of Putin's coalition and the role of the power institutions in it, this report is limited in scope. It gives an overview of the available data about the factions composing the authoritarian coalition. More importantly, this overview takes a more critical position about concepts like 'militocracy,' *siloviki*, etc. Something like a 'KGB mythology' has recently become common in the international media and in some, though not all, academic discourse. This report will defend the opposite view, namely, that the Russian Federation has not become a KGB state. This is not to

[66] Vladimir Shlapentokh and Joshua Woods (2007) *Contemporary Russia as a Feudal Society, a New Perspective on the Post-Soviet Era*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan).

say that the influence of the power institutions has not dramatically increased; it has done so, and this is an alarming trend. Nevertheless, this is quite explicable and thus should not surprise us too much.

The second half of this chapter discusses the mentality of the leadership coalition, that is the mental framework of the different participating factions. Before explaining what mentality is taken to mean in this report, let us specify what it is not. As mentioned in the first part, a mentality is not an ideology. It is not as explicitly defined and intellectually fixed as is the case with ideologies; instead it remains more as something tacitly understood and flexible. Having a certain mentality, unlike adhering to a certain ideology, does not entail seeking to impose one's views on the rest of society.

Throughout this report, a 'mentality' should basically be understood as a characteristic way of looking at problems or phenomena. It refers to the particular software, so to speak, that is running in the minds of those in power, for example, those who supports and spearhead a regime's political goals. It is closely related to the concept of organizational culture.

The typical mentality of Putin's inner circle is a complex one, formed by the accrual of many layers as originally indicated; these include both the practices of the state institution in which the members are socialized, and the set of specific historical, sociological and cultural characteristics of the wider society. The purpose of investigating the mentality of the coalition in power is to bring some much needed refinement to the discussions about their motivations. Much of this speculation in academia and the media goes awry because it clings to the stereotypes of the typical KGB agent, or typical Soviet army officer, stereotypes that have an almost mythological status that hearkens back to the Cold War era. Such stereotypes wrongly influence our interpretation of Russian affairs and hinder our efforts to understand the logic underlying the actions and decisions of the coalition.

3 The Composition of the Coalition in Power

One of the most prominent and influential investigations of the Russian elite was carried out by Olga Kryshtanovskaya, a renowned Russian sociologist who, since the 1990s, has published many political analyses about the post-Soviet elite.[67] The publication that garnered the most attention among Western analysts, however, was not her 1994 study of the financial oligarchy but an article written to caution the world about the rise of the 'militocracy,' which she co-authored with Stephen White. The concept of militocracy had a strong appeal, and it was quickly and gratefully taken up by the Western media. According to Kryshtanovskaya and White, "the main distinguishing features of Putin's elite when compared with that of the Yeltsin regime are the rather smaller proportion of 'intellectuals' with higher academic degrees, the even greater dominance of men under Putin, the more provincial origins of Putin's class, and the increasing proportion of the elite that claimed a military or security background."[68] The authors calculated that the overall percentage of military personnel increased almost sevenfold between the perestroika years and the middle of Putin's first presidential term (2002).

From a structural point of view, White and Kryshtanovskaya noticed important changes dating from May 2003 which led towards a renewed militarization of Russian politics. In particular, they noted that a larger number of the federal agencies within the executive branch were made directly subordinate to the president. They also pointed out the increasing importance of the Security Council. The authors spoke of a 'presidential government' – also called 'the shadow government' by Lilia Shevtsova[69] - that was becoming distinct from the 'government of the Prime Minister.' The presidential shadow government, which contained almost a third of the actual government, incorporated not only the military, security and law-enforcement members of the government, but also the other institutions making up the Security Council. Thus the bifurcation of the Russian Government had already been institutionalized by 2003, long before the so-called 'diarchy' that so many analysts have been speculating about (i.e., a scenario in which Dmitry Medvedev takes over the presidency in 2008 and Putin becomes the prime minister.) Kryshtanovskaya and White often referred to the

[67] Olga Kryshtanovskaya (2005) *Anatomiya Rossiiskoi Elity, (*Moscow: Zakharov).
[68] Olga Kryshtanovskaya & Stephen White (2003) 'Putin's Militocracy', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 19, No.4, 2003, p. 292.
[69] Lilia Shevtsova (2007) *Russia, Lost in Transition, The Yeltsin and Putin Legacies*, (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), p. 100.

Soviet past in their analysis. They noted that "the growing numbers of military and security representatives at all levels of government reflected an increase in the number of military and security agencies themselves, but also the increasing popularity of military and security officials as deputies or governors and their influence in economic and political life."[70]

Although the gist of Kryshtanovskaya and White's argument is accurate, their message is a little too one-sided and alarmist. It is overly reliant on statistics and thus leaves out some highly relevant social and historical context; moreover, it is limited to only a single Russian president, and therefore can draw no comparisons. There are three main ways in which the study could be expanded upon. Firstly, by focusing too closely on the *siloviki*, they neglect the 'liberal-technocrat' faction in the Putin power structure. This faction is an influential one deserving much more attention and study, particularly given nuanced and comprehensive treatment. Finally, it would be useful to explain why the so-called 'KGB-ization of society,' i.e., the rise of the militocracy under Putin, became a reality at all.

In our discussions of the current political situation in the Russian Federation, we in the West sometimes remain too deeply entrenched in our old mental frameworks and overly fascinated by the idea of the KGB. We often rely too much on the oversimplified mechanism of 'the historical parallel' when seeking to describe and explain the Russian reality. These paradigms are no longer accurate. During the post-Soviet period, the KGB/FSB has clearly evolved into a fragmented and hybrid security organization that controls huge economic and financial assets. The old KGB stereotypes and myths no longer apply to the present Russian reality. Again we should bear in mind that the Putin regime is not a deviation from Yeltsin's, but follows logically and predictably from it. The two regimes differ mostly in degree rather than in principle.

It cannot be emphasized enough that there is no such a thing as a KGB-FSB conspiracy, there is no a premeditated master plan to control Russian society, and no one is planning this or that silent 'military coup'. It was by invitation and by necessity that a specific and selected group of 'uniformed men' started to participate in the power coalition. In fact, what the *siloviki* did was to exploit political opportunities that were presented to them by Yeltsin. Moreover, both Yeltsin and Putin recruited the men in uniform out of necessity, as the 'democrats' and the old *nomenklatura* had failed to stabilize the country. For both Yeltsin and Putin, calling upon the *siloviki* was a matter of political survival; it was not the result of any conspiracy on the part of the KGB. Indeed,

[70] Olga Kryshtanovskaya and Stephen White (2003), *op. cit.*, p. 292.

we give the KGB/FSB too much credit when we imagine them capable of taking total control of the country. Such apprehensions come from our longstanding and exaggerated notion of the KGB as an ultra-powerful, fully efficient, omniscient, all-encompassing organization. Such a characterization stands entirely at odds with the overall chaos that has been plaguing Russia for the last two decades.

On the other hand, it should not be denied that the KGB ghost is back in the machine. That is, 'sleeping' officers are prepared to seize upon any possible occasion to show their old KGB reflexes, though this occurs in a non-coordinated way, haphazardly and case by case. (The fact that these actions are not sanctioned, nor rectified, is very troubling, also that the Putin regime condones these actions by its silence, and must ultimately be seen as responsible.) The KGB's impact on society is best characterized as a nebulous, murky process, not as an orchestrated takeover by a single institution or group. If this process is seen for what it is, as a logical result of factors long present in Russian society, there will be less demonization of Putin and a more accurate understanding of his methods and influence.

Before undertaking a detailed study of the coalition factions themselves, we should better define the term 'coalition faction'. Often called a clan in everyday language, a faction is a relatively coherent administrative group or informal alliance, manned by officials sharing a similar bureaucratic background. Broadly speaking, they have a coherent mentality and common strategic goals. A faction is unified and diverse at the same time, for even though it may be composed of different subgroups, and may have different ideas on a tactical level, nevertheless the group closes its ranks when it has to define its position on a strategic level. The horizontal relations among its members are typically more important than the vertical, subordinate relations. Finally, the influence of each faction depends upon its connections; that is, upon the quality and the number of tentacles it can extend into the different government, administrative and economic institutions, thereby gaining access to their financial and administrative assets.

3.1 The Neglected Liberal-Bureaucratic Faction in the Power Elite

Although the existence of a 'civilian' faction has always been recognized by most analysts, these same analysts, for both subjective and objective reasons, saw it as standing in the shadow of the *siloviki* group.

Some analysts have spoken about the liberal-technocrat faction, others have tried to assess the 'bourgeois level' of Putin's regime, and still others simply have called the civilian faction the 'Petersburg liberals'. It was clear from the

beginning of Putin's presidency in 2000 that he counted on former colleagues and acquaintances from two very different sources. The first was the KGB (e.g. from the Leningrad Oblast KGB, while working in Dresden and as FSB head in 1998) and the second was the office of Anatoly Sobchak, the mayor of St. Petersburg (1991-1996). Thus he lived and worked with two entirely different organizational cultures. Yet even though this diverse background was indeed represented in the coalition, the 'civilians' of the Putin coalition were always kind of neglected. It seems as if we only wanted to see Putin's KGB background, as if this aspect of his biography dazzled us and blinded us to the complexity of Putin's personality and the political situation he was operating in. Why, for instance, do we pay heed only to Putin's background in the KGB, from which he voluntarily resigned in 1991, while neglecting that he spent several years in business and politics? Is the socialization that takes place in the KGB stronger and more in-depth than that occurring in the circles of politicians and businessman engaged in the monumental task rebuilding their own country? Is the network resulting from KGB membership so much stronger than a 'civilian' network? Certainly, the KGB socialization is designed to be lifelong and total, but how successfully does this take hold in reality? The mind frame of the Cold War may still be prejudicing our thinking about Russian politics. The mere fact that Medvedev was appointed as the next president calls into question our preconceptions about Russia.

According to Ian Bremmer and Samuel Charap, the *siloviki* were the most influential faction during Putin's second presidential term, but they noted that two other factions, the liberals and technocrats were also highly influential at the end of 2006.[71] The liberals are united by their common approach to (liberal) economic policy. But even if their political conviction is market friendly, it is significantly more interventionist than Western liberalism. This group is generally comprised of economists and former business people. The technocrats also have a significant influence on all political matters; and are led, according to the same authors, by Dmitry Medvedev who is closely connected to the CEO of Gazprom, Aleksei Miller.

Sharon and David Rivera have studied the problem from a more quantitative approach by calculating the significance of the participation of civilian economist, lawyers, bureaucrats and liberals in Putin's coalition. They called this participation the 'bourgeois factor.'[72] Their research has shown that the militarization of Russian society is indeed occurring, but that western reports

[71] Bremmer Ian and Samuel Charap (2007), *op. cit.*, p. 88.
[72] Sharon Werning Rivera and David W. Rivera (2006) 'The Russian elite under Putin: Militocracy or Bourgeois?', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 22, No. 2, 2006, pp. 125-144.

have exaggerated the phenomenon and overestimated the number of *siloviki* who have been taken into the power elite. If some erroneous statistical assumptions made by Kryshtanovskaya and White are corrected, the number of *siloviki* is seen to have tripled, not increased sevenfold, since the 1980's. In 2002, the share of people with a military education was only 11.2% instead of 26.6% as Kryshtanovskaya and White stated. Finally, in 2002, only 4.5% of the political leadership was employed, in 1996, in a military or security fields (whether as an officer in the FSB, military, MVD, the tax police, or in a military research institution). In other words, the Riveras came up with a lower number of military men in the power coalition, and they toned down the impact of military socialization in the Russian elite. In contrast, they came up with a rating for the civilian/bourgeois level of the Putin coalition. They stated that 20.7% of the 2002 elite were working in the economic sector in 1996, with approximately 5.0% of these in state-owned enterprises and about 16.0% in private business. Moreover, their data also show that 26.8% of Putin's elite received an economic or legal education. These statistics led them to conclude that "the Russian elite –even several years into the presidency of former KGB lieutenant-colonel Putin- was considerably more bourgeois than militocratic."[73] With the appointment of Dmitry Medvedev as Putin's successor, their conclusions seem to be closer to realisation than the alarmist messages about the influence of the *siloviki* that we have read on a daily basis.

Yet another detailed analysis of the 'Petersburg liberals' was made by Konstantin Simonov. In the *Russia 2005 Report* of the Polish Eastern Institute, analysts distinguished at least three subgroups in the 'civilian faction': The 'Petersburg Lawyers', the ' Petersburg Economists' and the 'Old Moscow' group.[74] They identified Dmitry Medvedev, who was the head of the Presidential Administration at the time, as the informal leader of the civilian faction. The results of Simonov's investigation of the three factions are summarized in Appendix I.

Taken together, the research of Bremmer & Charap and Simonov has the following implications. Due to the declining influence and the ambivalent loyalty of the 'Old Moscow' camp, the 'civilian' faction of the power coalition can be seen as having the two main pillars, the 'lawyers' and the 'economists,' or, in the terms of Bremmer and Charap, the 'liberals' and the 'technocrats'. On a purely quantitative level, the influence of the civilian faction should not be

[73] Sharon Werning Rivera and David W. Rivera, *op. cit.*, p. 140.
[74] Konstantin Simonov et al., (2006) *Russia 2005: Report on Transformation*, Warsaw: Foundation Institute for Eastern Studies, pp. 11-16 (accessed at: www.forum-ekonomiczne.pl/docs/reportRU_2005_publisher.pdf).

underestimated. In order to understand future developments in Russian politics it is absolutely imperative to observe how this faction evolves, both internally and externally. It is not possible to precisely foresee what will happen after Medvedev becomes the new president of the Russian Federation. Yet it is clear is that once Medvedev becomes the new autocrat the cards in political game will be reshuffled, despite the Putin's regime's talk of 'continuity' and 'stability.' Quite possibly, the men in uniform may have less influence on political scene. More on what to expect from Medvedev's power coalition is found in the section dealing with the civilian mentality, section three of this part.

3.2 The 'Unknown' Siloviki Faction in the Power Elite

Based on the quantitative data of Sharon and David Rivera, the previous section of this report concluded that the impact of the *siloviki* is real, but exaggerated. An analysis by Simonov deals with the *siloviki* faction, or as he calls it, the 'Petersburg *siloviki*'. This faction consists of five subgroups. The informal leader is Igor Sechin, who, since 1999, has been the Deputy Chief of the Presidential Administration, and also Chairman of the Board of Directors of Rosneft since 2004. Rosneft is a state-owned Petroleum Company that was created when Kremlin took over most of the assets of Yukos, which until then had been the largest private oil company in Russia, owned by oligarch Khodorkovsky. It was Sechin who allegedly orchestrated the Yukos takeover, which was not fully supported by the Medvedev camp. Simonov's analysis is summarized below, and more thoroughly presented in Appendix II.

- The 'radical *siloviki*' are the people closest to Igor Sechin, and who are most insistent about state appropriation of the hydrocarbon industry's assets
- According to Simonov, the most prominent spokesman of the 'personnel men', the second subgroup of the *siloviki* faction, is Viktor Ivanov.
- The third subgroup is called the 'Lubyanka men'; led by Army General Nikolai Patrushev, former Director of the FSB and closely connected to Army General Rashid Nurgaliev, Minster of Internal Affairs (MVD).
- The fourth subgroup is called the 'Power Businessmen' and is led by Viktor Cherkesov, the former head of the Federal Drug Control Service.
- Finally, Colonel General Sergei Ivanov, Deputy Prime Minister responsible for the defense industry, aerospace industry, the nanotechnology and transport sectors, and also the former Minister of Defense, is called a 'liberal Silovik'. Of the *siloviki,* he is the one who most easily maintains contact

with the civilian faction of the coalition. Thus Ivanov might be regarded as a kind of transitional figure between the factions.

A somewhat similar analysis concerning the *siloviki* faction has been conducted by Bremmer and Charap. They emphasize the hierarchy and the rivalry in the *siloviki* faction. They define this faction as 'an informal network of government officials and businessmen, led by the core group of Sechin, Ivanov, and Patrushev, who share similar political views, pursue a common political agenda, and seek joint control over economic assets'. In other words, for these authors, the *siloviki* are united by their outlook and interests rather than by some institutional background. They describe the *siloviki* clan as not a collection of equals, but as a set of concentric circles with one core, and secondary and tertiary groups based on seniority, political influence, and control over resources and institutions. The core circle of the *siloviki* clan is composed of people having the closest contact with the president and also among their own members. The core circle includes the three most influential members of the *siloviki*: the triumvirate Igor Sechin, Sergei Ivanov, and Nikolai Patrushev. The secondary circle includes Sergei Bogdanchikov and, Viktor Cherkesov. As for the tertiary level, Bremmer and Charap imply that the network is more fluid and unstructured. For instance Vladimir Ustinov became a member of this third circle after prosecuting Khodorkovsky. They continue by noting that some members of the tertiary circle are heads of minor government agencies or former deputies of core members.

From this overview of the subgroups of the *siloviki*, it should be clear that the concept of '*siloviki*,' derived from the term *silovye struktury or silovye ministerstva*, is rather vague and imprecise, and does not fully correspond to reality. This ambiguity was pointed out by Brian Taylor when he noted that the concept is sometimes used to refer to the power institutions themselves, sometimes to the personnel of those structures and sometimes to a specific clan in Russian politics (the one revolving around the deputy head of the presidential administration, Igor Sechin). Bremmer and Charap go so far as to call the concept of *siloviki* a misnomer. Actually, the term *siloviki* should be reserved for the coalition faction that stands in opposition to the 'civilian clan' of Putin's coalition. While using the concept of *siloviki*, the following considerations should be kept in mind.

Firstly, the term *siloviki* is too broadly applied. It is meaningless to call everyone working in the power ministries *silovik*. Even if this correct from a linguistic point of view, politically this idea is simply absurd. Only people occupying a key political function and having a certain relationship to the nucleus of the 'military' clan can be classified as *silovik*. According to Victor Yasmann, this group

consists of about 6,000 security-service alumni, although it is not clear how this figure is reached.[75]

Secondly, though the concept of *siloviki* is too broadly applied, it is at the same time defined too narrowly. As shown above, the group of actual *siloviki* includes prominent members having no military or security background whatsoever. It would be a mistake to leave these 'civilian' people out of this clan, for they are a crucial component of the *siloviki* faction. Indeed, as the overview as presented above also shows, the accumulation of economic and financial assets is more of an essential feature in the *siloviki* faction than in the liberal one. Lilia Shevtsova also emphasizes this point in her latest book 'Lost in Transition,' describing how the group of old Yeltsinite oligarchs has been mostly replaced by a new generation of bureaucrat-oligarchs. The blending of purely capitalist interests with state interests, as demonstrated by the members of the power institutes (and especially the FSB), is not only a highly undemocratic phenomenon, it is dangerous insofar as it breeds corruption, abuse of power, blackmail, murder, etc. From an analytical point of view, this phenomenon also shows that the KGB/FSB (and other power institutes) has gone through fundamental changes and has little to do with the notions we formed of them during the Cold War. The actual KGB lacks internal control and cohesion; it now has multiple interests and plays many roles in society. This observation is very clearly shown in Martin Sixsmith's book on the Litvinenko case. Sixsmith presents the FSB as an organization in which mid-level officers acted as uncontrolled, independent agents who used their FSB background to pursue their private interests. This lack of coherence and supervision is not only alarming, it should also make us skeptical of the idea that the president is controlling, in a Stalinist way, every single event that is happening in his empire. When the KGB performed assassinations of émigrés and KGB defectors during the Soviet period, the authorization was always ultimately given by the Secretary General of Communist Party. Given the widespread chaos of the post-Soviet period, however, one may question whether the so-called 'political' murders were executed with the authorization or even the knowledge of the senior FSB leadership. Moreover, it is important to remember that there is no such thing as total control. The fact that we have observed the central authorities exerting greater control over the population and the region, which is undeniable, does not however automatically entail a state of complete control. Given the immensity of

[75] Victor Yassman (2007) 'Russia: Siloviki take The Reigns in Post-Oligarchy Era', *RFE/ RL*, 17 September 2007. (Accessed at: http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticleprint/2007/09/e586c752-2739-406a-aaa8-a99b09b1f810.html; last accessed 28 November 2007).

the Russian Federation, and the complexity and chaos of its daily life, the control which Putin exercises is hardly likely to be total, let alone totalitarian.

Thirdly, if we limit the term *siloviki* to refer to the 'Power Institutions' we also run into problems. As the research of Carolina Vendil Pallin demonstrates, the concept of power institute is problematic and open for discussion. She concludes that the following ministries, services and agencies can be regarded as 'power institutions'; another term she uses is 'the presidential block':[76]

- the Ministry of the Interior (MVD),
- the Ministry of Civil Defense and Emergency Situations (MChS),
- the Ministry of Foreign affairs (MFA),
- the Ministry of Defense (MoD),
- the Ministry of Justice,
- the State Courier Service (GFS),
- the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR),
- the Federal Security Service (FSB),
- the Federal Service for Control of Narcotics (FSKN),
- the Federal Protection Service (FSO),
- the Main directorate for Special Programs (GUSP),
- the presidential Directorate for Administrative Affairs (UDPRF).

These institutions are considered to be power institutions because most, but not all of them dispose of armed troops or special units, or simply carry weapons while exerting their duty. For instance,

- the MoD disposes of approximately 1,037,000 troops in the Armed Forces, along with 14,000 troops in the Special Construction Service (Spetsstroy Rossii), and 50,000 Railroad Troops, which, since 2003, have been re-subordinated to this ministry,
- the MVD disposes of approximately 180,000 Internal Troops,
- the MChS has approximately 30,000 Civil Defense Troops,
- the FSB controls the Federal Border Guard Service with approximately 200,000 troops and the Federal Agency on Governmental Communication with approximately 55,000 troops,

[76] Carolina Vendil Pallin (2007) 'The Russian Power Ministries as a Political Tool', *Russian Power structures, Present and Future Roles in Russian Politics*, edited by Jan Leijonhielm and Fredrik Westerlund (Stockholm: FOI Base Data Report, December 2007) p. 24. See also Franz Walter (2001), 'Russlands "andere Truppen" Eine Obskure zweite Armee?', *Osteuropa*, Vol 51, Nr. 11/12, Nov/Dec 2001, 1342-1349.

- the Federal Protection Service disposes of the Presidential Regiment of approximately 3,000 men,
- the GUSP has 20,000 troops.
- By contrast, the MFA, the UDPRF and the SVR (perhaps) are unarmed.

Yet the 'gun factor' is not the only important criterion for identifying the power institutions. One must also consider whether the institutions have access to crucial information which they can manipulate for their own ends (e.g. the GFS and the GUSP). In other words, these institutions become key instruments for controlling society and developing a foreign/security policy, for example. The list of power institutions presented by Pallin is a good starting point, but it should include at least a few other institutes, in particular:

- the Federal Migration Service, headed by FSB lieutenant General Konstantin Romodanovsky, and is subordinated to the MVD,
- the Federal Customs Service, led by Andrei Belyaninov who worked for the KGB from 1978-1991; this service falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, and disposes over approximately 10,000 men for special physical protection,
- the Ministry of Culture and Mass Communication, led by Boris Boyarskov who worked for the KGB and who is assumed to have close relations with Sechin.

These three agencies are also key instruments of control. The former two services are able to monitor the movement of goods and people to and from the Russian Federation, while the third agency is able to supervise the mass media, telecommunications and cultural heritage, and thus constitutes the soft power of the regime. All three institutions are tightly under control of the *siloviki*, though they cannot be called *siloviki* in a strict sense.

Fourthly, there is another, often neglected reason why the concept of *siloviki* should be used with care. The 'presidential block' should not be seen as a monolithic entity, since there is a large difference in the level of public trust in the MoD, the FSB, and the law enforcement agencies. All three are seen and known as subject to corruption, but the police and the law enforcement agencies (MVD) are viewed as the most corrupt, followed by the FSB and the armed forces. Statistically measured, the MoD has the highest level of trust (31%), followed by the FSB (25%) and the law enforcement agencies (12%). It is striking that the FSB is regarded as far more corrupt than its predecessor, the KGB (formerly always perceived as one of the least corrupt organizations in the Soviet Union).

A more complete picture is given by the table below summarizing the level of trust in public institutions in Russia. The data are based on a poll conducted by the Levada Center in April 2005 and published by Vladimir Shlapentokh.[77] It is striking that the 'democratic institutions', such as the State Duma, the Federation Council and the political parties, received the lowest trust of all listed institutions.

Institution	**Trust level**
President	47%
Church	41%
Army	**31%**
Security agencies	**25%**
Media	24%
Regional authorities	17%
Attorney general's office	16%
Courts	15%
Federal government	14%
Local authorities	14%
Police	**12%**
Trade Unions	12%
State Duma	10%
Federation Council	10%
Political parties	5%

Table 7: Level of Public Trust in Institutions in the Russian Federation

Thus, since public perception and trust varies so widely for the different power institutions - i.e. the army, security agencies, and police- it is somewhat absurd to consider them all belonging to a single entity or group of persons called the *siloviki*. Again, it is only possible to accept this concept of *siloviki* as a political label designating a specific faction of the power coalition in Putin's regime.

Two more remarks about the specific components of the *siloviki* faction should be added:

Firstly, based on the above analysis, it is clear that the military (the MoD) plays a less prominent role in the power coalition than the FSB and the MVD. It might be seen as a mark of Putin's success that he was able to silence the military and even turn them into close supporters of the regime**.** Revolts during the Yeltsin period, led by generals such as General Aleksandr Rutskoi, Lieutenant-General

[77] Vladimir Shlapentokh (2005) 'Trust in Public Institutions in Russia: the Lowest in the World', *Johnson's Russia List*, No. 29- 9186, 27 June 2005, (accessed at: http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/9186-29.cfm.)

Aleksandr Lebed, Lieutenant-General Lev Rokhlin, Army-General Valentin Varennikov and Colonel-General Leonid Ivashov no longer occurred after 2002. Putin, in his turn, co-opted the generals Valeryi Shamanov and Gennadi Troshev, two battle-hardened soldiers who were openly critical of his administration during his first term in the office. Shamanov and Troshev were eventually given the positions of Advisor to the Minister of Defense and Presidential Advisor on Cossack Affairs, respectively.

Any analysis of civil-military relations in Russia must take into account the complex dynamic between the MoD, MVD and FSB. All too often the study of Russia's 'military' is limited to the MoD, when in fact the focus should be expanded to include the whole 'security sector.' The list of power institutions above shows the level of actual complexity that characterizes Russia's defense and security landscape, a condition that directly results from Russia's inability to demilitarize society after the Soviet Union collapsed. Efforts to reform the defense and the security sector were less than successful, since the changes made merely reduced the numbers of troops without fundamentally altering the system. Quantities changed, but nothing was different on a qualitative level.

Secondly, some nuances should be made to the generally accepted argument that security and military organizations are disciplined and cohesive. The army remains plagued by bleak social and economic conditions leading irregular discipline, abuse of recruits, disregard for rules, etc, and its members are often torn between their personal needs and the demands of the organization--even officers must often take second jobs to survive. It might even be said that the discipline shown by employees of Gazprom is more effective and consistent that that of the armed forces, since the private sector is geared to real productivity, and cannot be allowed to lapse into irregular habits or outdated procedures.

For instance, there has been a constant struggle in the Ministry of Defense between the maverick army general Anatoly Kvashnin, the former Chief of the General Staff, on the one hand, and the former Ministers of Defense, Marshal Igor Sergeyev and his successor Colonel-General Sergei Ivanov, on the other. This struggle clearly illustrated the lack of unity in the MoD and showed that strongly differing opinions were held on issues of strategy, reform, civil military relations, etc. Battle-hardened officers hated the arm chair officers and the 'warriors' took a stand against the 'bureaucrats'. The officer corps of the MoD has never been able to speak with one voice and they even took their internal battles into the public realm. The majority of the Russian generals are provincial thinkers unable to look further than the limits of their organizational chart.

Another example of such an internal organizational struggle among FSB officers is the so-called Cherkesov affair that took place in October-November 2007. This

struggle was, to use the terminology of Bremmer and Charap, an attempt by people from the secondary circle to fight their way into the core circle of the *siloviki* faction. Indeed, the affair grew out of the rivalry between Sechin and Patrushev, on the one hand, against Cherkesov and his ally Viktor Zolotov. (The former is the Director of the Federal Anti-narcotics Service, and the latter is the head of the Presidential Security Service). Following the efforts of the Cherkesov group to accede to the core circle, retaliatory measures were leveled against them, perhaps orchestrated by Sechin and Patrushev, leaders within the core circle. For example, in October 2007, General Aleksandr Bulbov, Cherkesov's right hand man, was arrested in a Moscow airport and charged with illegal wire tapping and accepting protection money. Bulbov denied these charges and claimed that his arrest was in retaliation for his investigation of the *Tri Kita Company*. Later, another ally of Cherkesov and Zolotov, the organized crime-linked businessman Vladimir Barsukov, was arrested along with two agents (or possibly former agents) of the antinarcotics service. In another instance, Konstantin Druzenko and Sergei Lomako, two officers of the St. Petersburg branch of the antinarcotics service, were poisoned in October 2007. Cherkesov finally took the unusual measure of writing an open letter in the Russian paper *Kommersant*, in which he accused his adversaries of unfair play. As a grand finale of this affair, the nationalist newspaper *Zavtra* published an article, in which veterans of the security service, including the last chief of the Soviet KGB Vladimir Kryuchkov, made an appeal for unity and solidarity among the *Chekisty*[78].

3.3 The FSB-ization of Society: a Different Explanation

The work of Kryshtanovskaya and White gives no indications for why the FSB-ization of society occurred in the manner and time that it did. The gaps in this important issue were actually filled in by the Birmingham school, composed of authors such as Betina Renz, Julian Cooper and Edwin Bacon.[79] The only element of explanation Kryshtanovskaya and White provide is when they refer to

[78] For a brief summary of the *siloviki* clan war, see Holmberg, Carl (2008) *The struggle for bureaucratic and economic control in Russia* (Stockholm: Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), April 2008, User Report FOI-R—2474—SE), Appendix 1.

[79] See for instance: E. Bacon, B. Renz, and J. Cooper (2006) *Securitizing Russia: The Domestic Politics of Putin*. (Manchester University Press); B. Renz (2006) 'Putin's Militocracy?: An alternative interpretation of the role of Siloviki in contemporary Russian politics', *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 58, Nr. 6, 2006, pp. 903-924; and B. Renz (2005) 'Russia's "Force Structures" and the Study of Civil-Military Relations', *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol 18, 2005, pp. 559-585.

'the presidential project', by which they imply that there was a plan within 'the Family' to explicitly designate a military president. According to Kryshtanovskaya and White, the 'Family' first screened (and declined) Nikolay Bordyuzha, Aleksandr Lebed, Yevgeniy Primakov, Sergey Stepashin, and many others before their choice fell upon Vladimir Putin, who most completely fulfilled their criteria for the next president. Putin was indeed a fairly young KGB officer who had some political experience and who had proved his unquestionable loyalty to the people he had worked with previously. Indeed, the loyalty Putin showed towards Anatoly Sobchak, his patron in St. Petersburg, may have had some shadowy aspects, but it impressed those people in the 'family' who would need protection once they had left the safety of the Kremlin. Since the country was also in ruin and deep chaos, the 'Family' hoped that the strong hand of a security officer could reverse this trend. These findings of Kryshtanovskaya and White may be true, but they do not explain the FSB-ization of Russian society or the 'securitizing' of society, as they call it. There are deeper structural causes underlying this phenomenon.

Despite the fact that the power institutions were constantly under 'reconstruction', and in grave financial need, the Yeltsin regime always co-opted military and security officers in order to appease these potentially threatening institutions and build good relations with them. The threat posed by these organizations was not necessarily political, but rather, was first and foremost a social one. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation inherited an enormous military and security machine which could no longer be funded. Thousands and thousands of officers were left on their own, abandoned and frustrated, and they had to struggle to survive. Many of officers of the security sector had to leave the forces, and others abused the system in order to survive or just greedily enrich themselves. The former KGB agents, however, fared far better than the rest of the former military and others in the security sector.

It is natural enough that KGB officers were best able to enter civilian life and even attain quite influential political and economic posts. Most of them were well educated, spoke several languages, had seen different parts of the world and were trained to adapt to new situations and environments. The network of colleagues from 'the forces' was their social capital. There is also the crucial fact that no thorough de-KGBization of society took place after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In Russia there was nothing like the political and 'spiritual' process of de-Nazification that occurred in Germany after 1945, a process that was key for making this country one of the most prominent democracies in

Europe. To borrow a phrase of Orlando Figes, the KGB could only be discussed in whispers in the 1930s and afterwards.[80] Thus, as the KGB never went through a process of repentance, reflection and/or re-education, it was never reformed (despite the work of organizations like *Memorial*). In fact, a contrary tendency developed: as the influence of the KGB/FSB grew stronger in the Putin era, its officers did not refrain from demonstrating nostalgia for the KGB and Soviet era, nor from reinstalling the KGB mythology.[81] From this perspective, the observation of *Memorial's* director, Arseni Roginsky, makes sense, when he claims that Russia's political problem is not related to democracy as such, but to a lack of historical knowledge. Russia has not learned to cope adequately with its past.[82] Realizing this is crucial for observers trying to understand, influence, and change the current state of affairs in the Russian Federation.

It was due to the lack of any real democratic reforms that the 'securitization' of society took place. Reform cannot be accomplished on the political level alone excepting the organizational and the social ones. All of these dimensions of reform are important and all have been more or less neglected, not only by Yeltsin's administration, but also by his western advisors, and finally, by analysts who studied the defense sector from an obsolete perspective. The western analysts thus failed to see the security sector as a complex body that requires not only a military threat analysis but also a political, cultural and a social study.

3.4 Synthesis of the Composition of Putin's Power Coalition

In order to recapitulate and summarize this section, the results of French analyst Arnoud Kalika's overview of Putin's power coalition, an excellent and thorough

[80] Orlando Figes (2007) *The Whisperers, Private Life in Stalin's Russia*, (London: Allen Lane).
[81] See for instance, Yevgenia Albats (1995) *KGB, State Within a State, The Secret Police and its hold on Russia's Past, Present and Future*, (New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers); David Remnick (1994) *Lenin's Tomb, The Last Days of the Soviet Empire*, (New York: Vintage Books) especially the chapter on Lazar Kaganovich); Anne Applebaum (2004) *Gulag: A History of the Soviet Camps*, (London: Penguin Books Ltd.), (which contains a powerful introduction pleading for the De-KGBization of Russian society), Orlando Figes, *Op. Cit.;* Nanci Adler (2002) *The Gulag Survivor: Beyond the Soviet System*, (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers); Sarah Mendelson (2001) 'Democracy Assistance and Russia's Transition: Between Success and Failure', *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 4, Spring 2001, pp. 69-103, and especially Sarah Mendelson & Theodore P. Gerber (2005/6)'Soviet Nostalgia: An Impediment to Russian Democratization', *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 29, Nr. 1, Winter 2005-2006, pp. 83-96.
[82] Laura Starink (2008) *De Russiche kater*, (Prometheus: Amsterdam), p. 110.

study, are presented.[83] His independent findings largely corroborate the research of Bremmer and Charap and that of Konstantin Simonov.

He presents a group of Putin's intimate advisors, of which Sergei Ivanov is the closest, followed by the trio Nikolai Patrushev, Viktor Cherkesov, and Dmitry Medvedev; Dmitry Kozak is found at a little more distance. These advisors have most frequent and unhindered communication with the President and are thus closest to him. They belong to the different factions of the president's core circle. According to Kalika's classification, the core circle consists of the **Muscovites** (Jokhan Polyeva, Aleksei Gromov, Aleksandr Abramov, Vladislav Surkov, Sergei Yastrzembski, Sergei Prikhodko), the **Lawyers/Liberals** (Dmitry Medvedev, Dmitry Kozak, Igor Shuvalov, German Gref and Aleksei Kudrin) and the ***siloviki*** (Sergei Ivanov, Nikolai Patrushev, Boris Gryzlov, Vladimir Ustinov, Sergei Pachachev, Viktor Ivanov, Igor Sechin). Kalika also includes six others in the core circle: Viktor Cherkesov, Viktor Zolotov, Yevgeny Murov, Vladimir Kozin, Yuri Shevchenko, and Sergei Stepashin.

A secondary circle, according to Kalika, acts as a kind of 'reserve bench' ('le cercle de rechange'). It is populated with about 20 people who are eager to play in the field of the first circle, and it consists of three somewhat surprising groups, including the **Secret Services/businessmen** (*'services spéciaux/hommes d'affaires*), the **artists** and **old friends**. The faction of the secret services/businessmen includes, among others, Andrei Belyanin, Sergey Chemezov, Boris Gryzlov, Nikolai Bobrovski, Sergei Vyazalov, Alexander Grigoriev, Ilya Klebanov, Leonid Reiman, and Vladimir Yakunin. Within the faction of artists Kalika places, *inter alia*, Iosif Kobzon, Nikita Mikhalkov, Mikhail Boyarski, and Krill Lavrov. Finally, Putin's group of **old friends** includes Arkadi Rotenberg, Vladimir Remzin, Alexander Nikolaev and Vladislav Yakovlev. The following drawing is based on of Kalika's analysis and can be seen as a kind of synthesis of Putin's power coalition.

[83] Arnoud Kalika (2008) *l'Empire Aliéné, le système du pouvoir russe*, (Paris: CNRS éditions).

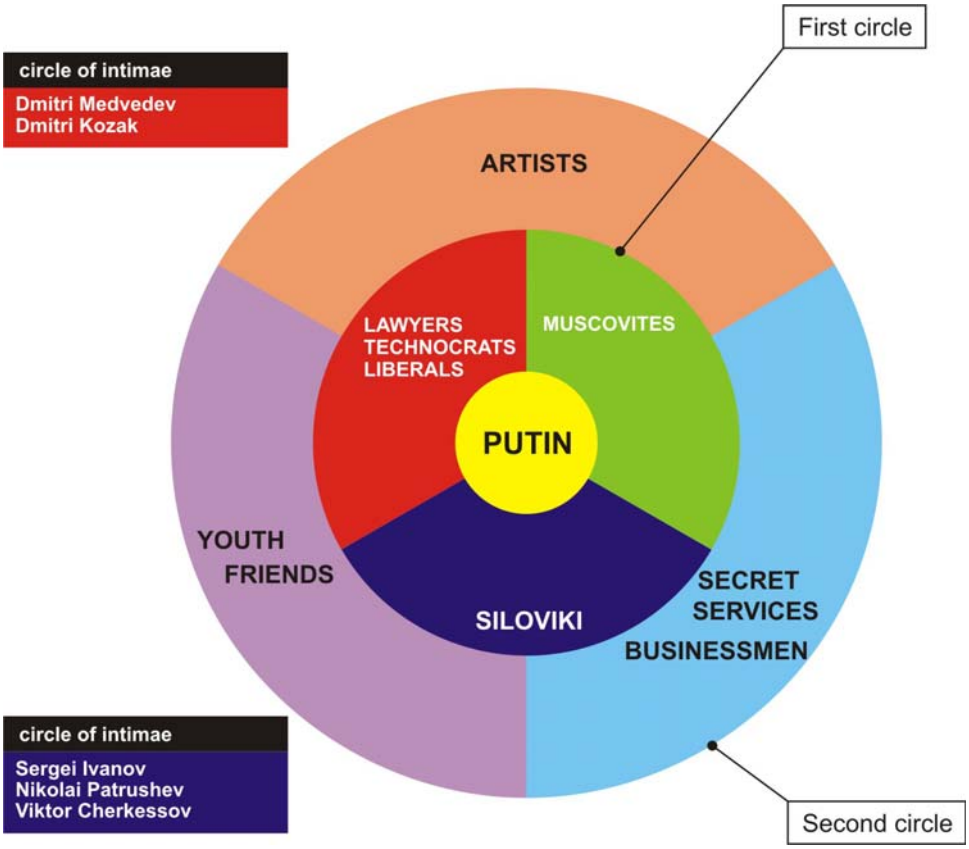

Figure 2: Overview of Putin's Power Coalition

4 The Mentality of the Coalition in Power

To study the 'mentality' of a group means to analyze the network of ideas, beliefs and attitudes that are collectively held, either consciously or unconsciously, by a certain group. In general, one studies a specific mentality in order to try and understand the actions and behavior of a specific, distinct group. The very idea that there is such a thing as a 'mentality' is based on the fundamental, albeit controversial, hypothesis that certain mental categories help to determine a person's approach to life, their mind, and their perceptions of the physical world. Originally, the concept of mentality was used by French sociologists, such as Lucien Lévy-Bruhl and Emile Durkheim, anthropologists such as Claude Lévi-Strauss and French historians such as Jacques Le Goff, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre (founders of the Annals School) and Fernand Braudel. It is little surprising that this concept was criticized for being imprecise, subjective, and non-quantifiable, features that made it difficult, if not impossible, to study. The concept was said to be unverifiable because it was a tautology, an example of circular reasoning. That is, the term mentality can be taken as so all-inclusive that it can be used to explain and interpret all phenomena and behavior whatsoever. Besides the tautological argument, there was a deeper criticism leveled against the idea of mentality: that thinking is not done by groups or collectivities, but only individuals. In other words, the primacy of the individual was defended against the *mores* of the collectivity.[84] In fact what is observed in this controversy is the classic opposition of the 'psychologist' who is focused on the individual versus the 'sociologist' whose attention is fully drawn on the 'group' and 'group influences'; the 'artist' who is more interested on the particular versus the 'scientist' who is focused on the general; the philosopher who is a passionate supporter of 'the free will' versus the behaviorist for whom all is determined. Ironically, the Anglo-Saxon approach staunchly defended the individual against determination by the social context, but at the same time continued to subscribe to the idea of mentality.

It is somewhere between these two extremes, then, that our definition of mentality must be situated. Such a definition is not meant to pin down its metaphysical essence, but simply to come up with a workable concept that can assist with the practical questions of understanding things from another's

[84] G.E.R. Lloyd (1990) *Demystifying Mentalities*, (New York: Cambridge University Press), pp. 1-13.

viewpoint. Thus, for the purposes of this study, a few assumptions concerning 'mentality' have been adopted.

A middle ground position is taken concerning the autonomy of the individual versus the socialization processes coming from the environment. The factors 'context' and 'choice', 'nature' and 'nurture', 'determination' and 'free will' are all taken into account because it is indeed individuals, not groups, who carry out political actions; yet they do so in a specific historical, cultural context. This is in contrast to the approach taken by the international media, who often describe Putin as having the character of a merciless KGB agent, a character they imagine as running so deep that they even see it in his 'the cold, emotionless eyes.' Certain others, including renowned analysts and biographers, claim to have found, in a trivial childhood story from Putin's own autobiography, evidence of his cruel personality. (The story involved Putin chasing rats in the *kommunalka* as a boy).[85] Certainly we cannot ignore the 17 years Putin spent in the KGB, but for the purposes of this report, the socialization during these years will be considered as having the same impact on Putin's psyche as the years he spent in Russian business and politics.

Firstly, the factor of 'contingency' plays a role. That is to say, an individual is often confronted with unexpected choices and/or opportunities. Presented with these opportunities, people make their own decisions. True, the fact that Vladimir Putin was recruited by the 'democrat' mayor Sobchak (1991-1996) does not necessarily prove that Putin a democrat at heart, but it shows that he made a conscious decision to change his career and he supported Sobchak who had opposed the August 1991 coup in which the *siloviki* and conservative forces tried to preserve *manu militari* the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, the danger of mentality studies is acknowledged, as these may confirm or create various prejudices and presumptions. A certain amount of common sense and skepticism is needed in any discussion of mentalities.

Corresponding to the factions of the coalition, two 'ideal types' are presented here: the mentality of the 'civilians' and the mentality of the '*siloviki*'. Again, the descriptions of these two mentalities must be seen as a kind of reference, or intellectual benchmarks for measuring real behavior and understanding the behavior of the coalition members. One might object that positing a certain *siloviki* mentality is entirely at odds with the earlier part of this report, in which

[85] Elbert Toonen (2005) *Vladimir Poetin*, (Soesterberg: Uitgeverij Aspekt), p. 9. Also, Willian Taubman, the renowned biographer of Khrushchev, resorted quite extensively to the rat chasing metaphor to characterize Putin's personality during the, 'Does Leadership in Russia Matter', *Columbia-Harvard Russia/Eurasia Forum*, February 21-22, 2008, New York City.

so much trouble was taken to refine the term *siloviki*, (a term that has rightly even been called a misnomer, by Bremmer and Charap). That is, earlier we stressed the internal diversity and the different, sometimes contradictory organizational cultures in the group of the *siloviki*, (of which the FSB, the MoD and MVD are the most prominent) while here, one single ideal mentality is presented for the whole *siloviki* faction. For the purposes of this study, it is useful to assume that there is something like a 'military mind' that is shared by the *siloviki*.

Thus, the coalition comprised of *siloviki* and civilians would not hold together as coalition at all unless the members shared some common beliefs, ideas and attitudes. Thus, in addition to pointing out those elements that divide the coalition, those that unite it are also pointed out. What follows is a presentation of (1) the common conservative discourse that unites the coalition as a whole; (2) the mentality of the 'liberals' regarding the organization of the state, the economy and foreign affairs; and (3) the mentality of the '*siloviki*' with regard to the same issues.

4.1 Russian Conservatism: the Uniting Force

The term conservatism is not a univocal one. Some authors see conservatism as an attitude towards life, others as a political ideology, or a vision of human nature, or a philosophy.[86] The essence of conservative thought is tradition, in that the past is the point of reference for matters of religion, culture and nationhood. Conservatives often want to preserve the values and customs of an earlier time, and nostalgically refer to an 'Arcadian past', an ideal era to which one seeks to return, a timeless utopia. In Putin's Russia there is a general tendency to glorify the past. The *siloviki* tend to exalt the Soviet past, particularly the Golden Period under Leonid Brezhnev, and especially Yuri Andropov. The liberals, on the other hand, tend to look back to the Imperial period, especially that period of Russian cultural history called the Silver Age (from roughly 1890 to 1917).

Conservatives, contrary to 'radicals' (progressive, left wing forces), reject revolutionary change and instead favor either the *status quo* or gradual change. Those who prefer *status quo* tend to make society static, while others (the real conservatives according to some accounts) can tolerate moderate and progressive change. Nevertheless, conservatives are usually suspicious about new, 'unproven' or alien ideas that have not stood the test of time. Presented with new

[86] Paul Cliteur (2005) *Natuurrecht, Cultuurrecht, Conservatisme*, (Leeuwarden: Universitaire Pers Fryslân), pp. 249-287.

ideas, they show a predilection for stability and control. They show an aversion towards risk and experimentation, and they feel a visceral anxiety of the 'unattended consequences' of reform. Conservatism refers to a tradition that has roots in the religious, cultural history of the nation and is translated in a system of beliefs and customs. It values traditional institutions such as the family, the church and certain traditional state institutions, such as the armed forces and, if applicable, the monarchy. Drawing upon familial, religious and patriotic values, conservatives build up a national identity. This identity enhances the unity and loyalty among people who share it; it becomes a source of pride and serves as a mobilizing force. Moreover, it excludes those who do not share the 'constructed' identity. Conservatism is often closely related with nationalism, and it prizes patriotic values such as duty and sacrifice.[87] There is a special attachment to national symbols such as a national flag, national historical icons, founders and emblems and special support for those artists who represent the nation's values. Here are some examples, none more significant than any other, of how Putin tried to re-install a national identity:

As a symbol of national unity eliciting feelings of patriotism and respect for Russia's history and system of government Putin in 2000 adopted a new text for the **national anthem** written by Sergei Mikhalkov, who was a co-author of the Soviet versions of 1944 and 1970. Mikhalkov is also the father of the well-known film director and actor Nikita Mikhailko famous for films like 'Burnt by the Sun' and 'The Barber of Siberia'. These films have a conservative connotation insofar as the Barber of Siberia glorifies the Russian Imperial past and the film 'Burnt by the Sun' is dedicated to those who are burnt by the revolution. Also in 2000, Putin installed the double-headed eagle as the **national emblem** marking the continuity of Russian history. Regarding the resurgence of these national symbols, Yevgeny Yasin wrote that "the three national symbols of Russia represent the three pillars of our value system. The double-headed eagle of the Byzantine Paleologus dynasty, a coat of arms discarded after the 1917 Bolshevik revolution and re-established by the democratic revolution of the 1990s, symbolizes the old Russian traditions. The Soviet-era national anthem invokes comforting memories of a recent past, which many people feel nostalgia for because of the problems associated with the present reform. And the pre-revolution tricolor national flag has become the symbol of a new democratic Russia since August 1991. On the one hand, these three symbols are argued to symbolize the continuity of Russia's statehood at different historical stages, as well as to create a combination of its traditional culture together with the new

[87] For an extensive study of the conservative mentality of the Russian military, see Joris Van Bladel (2004) *op. cit.*, pp. 153-199.

energies of the present."[88] Yasin continues, however, with the warning that "these old symbols may be an incendiary mix that is capable of frustrating the country's progress."[89]

Further, the Russian authorities are actively making efforts to inculcate young Russians with conservative values. In July 2005, the Russian government allocated $17.5 million to patriotic education through the state program '**Patriotic Education of Russian Citizens in 2006-2010**.' In this program, the state promotes a sweeping range of conservative values. These include loyalty to the fatherland; national history, especially military-historical themes; and traditional folk culture, in an effort to enhance interethnic and interracial harmony and instill values as tolerance and diversity. The program also encourages sports and literature, and stresses value of entrepreneurship. In response to the demographic crisis, the program also makes suggestions about family planning.

The government also promotes the spiritual-moral unity of society provided by the **Russian Orthodox Church**, which is a staunch supporter of the patriotic education program. In addition to this state-run program, the Kremlin also supports the **Pro-Putin youth movement *Nashi*** that is asked to help the authorities with their fight against alcohol and drug addiction, violence and racism. *Nashi* counts about 50,000 members, which makes it the most popular youth movement in Russia. Its manifesto puts forth values such as sovereignty, nationalism, competitive modernization. A specific interpretation of democracy (based on Sukov's concept 'sovereign democracy') is promoted, along with certain anti-western sentiments are promoted. *Nashi* is a hybrid mixture of Soviet/communist ideology, renamed 'historical optimism' and liberal economic values. For example, it endorses Soviet social achievements such as the 8-hour workday, free public education, unemployment insurance, workman's compensation, universal suffrage, rights of women, etc.[90] Its mass meetings are enlivened by thousands of waving flags and, loud modern patriotic music, and proclamations of love and loyalty to Russia. There is also an upper stratum in the *Nashi* movement, and its members, the 'commissars,' receive political training, from well-known political experts.

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[88] Yevgeny Yasin (2003) '"Russian Soul" and Economic Modernization', *Global Affairs*, No. 3, July-September 2003, (accessed at: http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/numbers/4/489.html.)

89 Ibid., p. 3

90 The Nashi manifesto and commentary, 'Manifest molodezhnogo dvizheniya "nashi" s kommentariyami' is published online at the address: http://www.nashi.su/ideology. (Note that the extension .su refers to the Soviet Union.)

In July 2007, a new school **textbook on the history from 1945 to 2006**, was issued for teachers, which promoted the conservative vision of the strong state and glorified Putin's policies. It was rumored that the 'radical *silovik'* Surkov influenced the textbook's author regarding the account of Putin's Sovereign Democracy (a concept spun by Surkov himself); the final version of the book stresses that Russia's only guarantee for democracy lies its sovereignty, namely, a strong state, a strong army, a strong economy and a strong nation.[91] The Russian authorities are making every effort to indoctrinate the Russian youth with conservative, patriotic values so that young Russians will be more eager to comply with the military draft or volunteer for the armed forces. This indoctrination also points to the Kremlin's apprehension regarding the color revolutions occurring in Ukraine, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan, which showed that youth of these countries were capable of toppling their own conservative governments.

Two historical figures in particular gained something of a heroic status during the Putin era: KGB chief and CPSU General Secretary Yuri Andropov and the conservative philosopher Ivan Ilyin. In 1999, when Putin was still head of the FSB, he asked former dissident Roy Medvedev to give a lecture on the virtues of Andropov, and on December 20, 2000 (not coincidentally, 'Chekists Day'), Putin unveiled a plaque in memory of Yuri Andropov at the Lubyanka, headquarters of the FSB in Moscow. Commenting on these events, Anne Applebaum wrote in 2000 that "Andropov was not just a faceless apparatchik: he is still known for his fervent belief that 'order and discipline' as enforced by the methods of the KGB — arrests of dissidents, imprisonment of corrupt officials, the creation of fear — would restore the sagging fortunes of the Soviet economy".[92] While Andropov is known in the West as 'the Butcher of Budapest' for his involvement in the Soviet invasion of Hungary to oppress the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and as a Cold War hardliner, he is seen by Putin as a patriot and as great reformer. It is indeed Andropov's dual policy during the period of so-called proto-perestroika that initiated the economic competitiveness and political control that Putin developed during his own presidency.

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[91] Tony Halpin (2007) 'Textbooks rewrite history to fit Putin's vision', *TimesOnline*, 30 July 2007, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/europe/article2163481.ece; and A.V. Filippov (2007) Noveishaia Istoriia Rossii, 1945-2006 gg.: Kniga dlia uchitelia, (Moskva: Prosveshchenie), (accessed at http://www.prosv.ru/umk/istoriya/index.html.)

92 Anne Applebaum (2000) 'Secret Agent Man, Vladimir Putin and the Future of the KGB', The Weekly Standard, April 10, 2000, (accessed at: http://www.anneapplebaum.com/politics/2000/04_10_weekst_kgb.html.)

Ivan Ilyin, a prominent religious and political philosopher, is a completely different personality. He was an anti-communist, an émigré to Germany who became the main ideologue of the White Movement. In 2005, with the support of the Kremlin, especially the civilian faction of Putin's Power coalition, Ilyin was reburied at the Donskoy Monastery in Moscow. The event was accompanied by huge media coverage and applauded by members of the cultural elite such as Nikita Mikhailkov and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. In the same year, his collective works were republished in Russia as a 23-volume set. In particular, his thoughts on the Russian conservative mentality still hold relevance for us. Ilyin was a conservative monarchist who attributed the tragedy of the 1917 revolution to the weak and damaged self-esteem of the Russian population. He accepted inequality in Russia, he accepted that the national interest stood above the interest of the individual, he defended the strong centralized authority exerted by the monarch, he affirmed the values of the Orthodox Church, and he assumed that the state was held together by traditional values instead of a social contract. His rhetoric of re-establishing Russian self-esteem in the wake of the damaging period of the 1990's is particularly appealing to the Kremlin's spin doctors.

What is noteworthy here is the mixture of both Imperial and Soviet historical symbols and heroes in support of the conservative discourse of the Putin regime. As mentioned above, the *siloviki* tend to refer to the Soviet past, while the liberals tend to refer more to the Imperial period. Both groups are consistent with the conservative philosophy insofar as they reject revolutionary movements such as the Russian revolution in 1917, the revolution of 1991, the nationalistic uprising in Chechnya and the Kosovo independence movement.

Furthermore it was remarkable to see how, in June 2007, the Russophile dissident Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, while refusing the state literary prize offered by Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin, did accept the State Price from Vladimir Putin. Their meeting at the prize giving ceremony was not the first meeting between Putin and 'the Conscience of Russia,' for already in September 2000, Putin made a highly publicized visit to the writer's home. Putin praised the author's work for serving the good of Russia. This event should remind us to distinguish between the labels of 'democrat', 'human rights advocate' and 'dissident' of the Soviet period. In fact, the three have little in common, and it is these sorts of vague comparisons that prevent us from seeing Russia clearly. This distinction has also been made clear by the Dutch journalist Laura Starink, who interviewed the 'guardian angel of perestroika' Lyudmila Saraskina. [93] Based on her interview, it is clear that Saraskina, a distinct anti-Soviet activist, is very much in favor for Putin as a president while being quite harsh in her

[93] Laura Starink (2008) *De Russische kater*, (Amsterdam: Prometheus), pp. 71-91.

condemnation of the so-called democrats, and more generally about the Yeltsin regime. Is it not strange that these same Russophile dissidents who fought so idealistically and at enormous cost against the Soviet regime are now in favor of the Putin regime? It is striking, too, that these insiders make a distinction between Putin's past as a KGB officer and his performance as a president. Attention should be paid to these nuances of Russian reality.

An excellent investigation by Amadine Reganmey shows the efforts of the authorities to create new war heroes from the battle of Argun, fought in 2000 during the war campaign in Chechnya.[94] The striking thing about this initiative is that this battle was hopelessly lost by the 6th company of the Pskov paratroopers, and 84 out of the 90 soldiers were actually killed. Nevertheless in the last seven years the soldiers have been commemorated with at least four monuments in Pskov and Chechnya; the authorities also had streets named after these soldiers and sponsored patriotic films and television serials about them. The extensive commemoration of these fallen heroes was meant to bring meaning to an otherwise senseless battle and, more broadly, to the war in Chechnya. The films promoted military values such as courage, sense of duty, self-sacrifice, incorruptibility, solidarity and devotion to Russia. Although these films were never critical towards either military or the war effort in Chechnya, they were strikingly popular with the population at large.

Many more examples could be given, but it is clear that there exists a state-sponsored effort to link Imperial and Soviet Russia to contemporary Russia in order to restore the image of the country's grandeur.

In addition to this deep longing for the past, there is also a yearning for the kind of stability and predictability often linked to traditional values, particularly martial ones. The Kremlin focuses their efforts to instill these traditional beliefs upon Russia's youth, who 'deviated from the conservative path' during perestroika, glasnost, and the crisis of the 1990's. It is no coincidence that in the last two decades, the military often complained about Russia's pampered and morally deviant youth. These complaints about morality were somewhat hypocritical, as the armed forces only offered civilian society its zinc coffins and abused, traumatized soldiers, and it only dealt abuse and neglect to individual soldiers and their families. In other words, the Putin regime has promoted conservative values *par excellence.* These values are largely shared by the

[94] Amandine Regamey (2007) 'La 6e compagnie: les interprétations d'une défaite russe en Tchétchénie [The 6th Company: debates around a Russian military defeat in Chechnya]'in The Social and Political Role of War Veterans, The Journal of Power Institutions In Post-Soviet Societies, Issue 6/7;. http://www.pipss.org/document913.html.

liberal-civilian faction and the *siloviki* faction, and they help to keep the coalition together.

It should also be mentioned that the Russian people in general have a conservative world view, and thus the conservative rhetoric falls on quite fertile soil. There is a high esteem for traditional institutions in Russia such as the military and the Russian Orthodox Church. Traditionally, the president, the church and the military are the institutions most trusted by the Russian population. For instance, interviews of Russian soldiers and draft dodgers revealed that their refusal to be drafted was often not necessarily due to anti-militarism, but was simply a survival strategy. Most of the soldiers had no fundamental problems with the military as such and never disputed the necessity of the armed forces. Some of them even regretted that they could not serve, as they actually had respect and admiration for the military.[95]

Putin's power coalition is in a certain sense imprisoned by the conservative mentality of Russian society. According to opinion polls by the All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VTsIOM), fifty-five percent of all Russians said the country needed stability and evolutionary reforms, and 29 percent disagree, saying Russia needs radical social and economic reforms. The number of 'conservatives' in society has increased from 50 to 55 percent over the past four years, while the number of 'radical reformers' dropped from 39 to 29 percent. [96]

While in every society there are conservative forces, it is another thing to have a society in which the conservative mentality has such a wide appeal. In contrast, most western countries today have a mix of conservative and progressive forces, leading to a different social dynamic. The dichotomy between the conservative and progressive mentality can be illustrated by the opposition between the modern versus post-modern society, or the industrial society versus post-industrial society (Daniel Bell), or the second wave society versus third wave society (Alvin and Heidi Toffler). In this report, it suffices to use the definition of the 'progressive' mindset provided by Alex Inkeles: [97]

- a readiness for new experience and openness to innovation and change;
- a readiness to form or hold opinions and to recognize the diversity of existing opinions;

[95] Joris Van Bladel (2004) *'Op. Cit.*, pp. 160-186.
[96] Report by RosBusinessConsulting, *Johnson's Russian List* No. 25, 4 February 2008.
[97] Alex Inkeles (1976) "A Model of the Modern Man: Theoretical and Methodological Issues", in: Cyril Black, *Comparative Modernizations*, (New York: The Free Press), pp. 320-348.

- a specific orientation towards time: emphasis on the present and the future rather than the past. An acceptance of schedules and punctuality;
- efficacy, which refers not only to potential mastery over the natural environment but also to potential control over problems arising in social life;
- planning, anticipating and organizing future activities;
- trust in the regularity and predictability of social life, allowing for calculability of actions;
- the sense of distributive justice: the belief that rewards should be in accordance with skills and contributions;
- interest in formal education and schooling;
- respect for the dignity of others, including those of inferior status or power.

A society with a progressive mentality is differently organized than one in which full conservatism reigns. In the latter, the political, economic and social spheres are organized bureaucratically. In a progressive society, however, the main organizational principle is the post-bureaucratic organization. It is worth giving a quick overview of the principles of a post-bureaucratic organization; the following list of principles is drawn from research of Charles Heckscher:[98]

- consensus is created through institutionalized dialogue, not through acquiescence to authority, rules, or traditions;
- dialogue is defined by the use of influence rather than power, and decisions are brought about through persuasion rather than by commands or orders;
- influence depends initially on trust, and on the belief that all members seek mutual benefit rather than maximal personal gain. In other words, interdependence is essential;
- there is a strong emphasis on the organizational mission and less upon universal values. Employees thus need to fully understand the key objectives so they can coordinate their actions accordingly;
- information is widely shared, and there is an effort to make more explicit the relation between individual jobs and the purpose of the whole mission. ‘Brain’ and ‘hands’ are not separate entities, but complementary ones.

[98] Adapted from Charles Heckscher (1994) ‘Defining the Post-Bureaucratic Type’, in *The Post-Bureacratic Organization, New Perspectives on Organizational Change*, Edited by Charles Heckscher and Anne Donnellon (London: Sage Publications), pp. 25-28.

Individuals can break free from the boundaries of their 'defined' jobs and think creatively and cooperatively about improvements;

- The focus on a mission is to be supplemented by guidelines which are principles rather than rules. Principles are not abstract; they express the reasons behind the rules that are typical for bureaucracy;
- influence is exerted in a fluid, changing way, so that decision-making processes must be frequently reconstructed. Authority can not be directly read from the organization chart;
- relations based on influence are wider and more diverse than the traditional authority-based relations of traditional 'communities', but they are also shallower and more specific. Influence is a matter of 'knowing who to go to', rather than a matter of building a stable network of friendship-based relations;
- it is a relatively open system at the boundaries. There is far more tolerance for letting outsiders enter and letting insiders leave;
- an effort is made to reduce rules and concomitantly there is increased pressure to recognize the variety of individual performances;
- there is an expectation of constant change, and therefore the organization sets up time frames to be able to adapt to the unstable environment. In an extremely unstable, ever changing environment, the manager must be able to handle different time frames.

Compared to a progressive organization such as this, the government based on such 'vertical power' as Putin has created is of limited effectiveness. The same is true of the major corporations in the business sector, particularly the state-controlled ones. For example, the Gazprom CEO Alexei Miller has been described by analyst Gemma Pörzgen as an authoritative leader who is fanatically obsessed with control and order, whose company is strictly hierarchically organized. Delegation is not a habit of the Gazprom manager: he personally oversees the hiring and firing at all levels, from managers to secretaries.[99] Miller's management style clearly shows that bureaucratic rule is still the main principle of Russian economic organization. Such a conservative bureaucratic mindset limits the reform possibilities that will be required for Russia wants to live up to its grand aspirations in the 21st century. My own 2004 study of the Russian military's inability to reform, showed that the conservative

[99] Gemma Pörzgen (2008) *Gasprom, Die Macht aus der Pipeline*, (Hamburg: Europäische Verlaganstalt), p. 38.

mindset of the Russian military posed an insurmountable obstacle to otherwise intense efforts to modernize the forces. Though there was great political and societal pressure, and a pressing need for a more efficient force, the transition from a mass army to an all-volunteer force was something of a debacle. It was simply impossible to impose a 21st century organization model onto an organization with a mindset from the 19th century.[100]

In the following section some specific aspects of the mentality of the members of Putin's power coalition will be discussed. Following the outline presented by Konstantin Simonov, these elements are organized around the themes of statehood, economy and foreign policy.[101]

4.2 The Mentality of the Liberals

The main concern of the liberal faction is the economy, for they want to lead Russia into the post-industrial global marketplace. Rather than aiming to promote political liberties and rights, they tend to encourage the rule of 'an enlightened bureaucracy' in the manner the French state organization, one characterized by a far-reaching dirigism and sweeping bureaucratization. Yet they are not opposed to a certain amount of self-government at the territorial level. For example, Dmitry Kozak, minister of regional development, recently proposed to grant more power to the regions, including greater authority to develop independent investment policies.[102] The liberals want to prevent power institutions from becoming extremely influential in Russian politics, particularly the security agencies. For instance, it is well known that Dmitry Medvedev opposed the illegal take-over of Yukos, which was a conspiratorial move planned by the *siloviki*.

The liberals, unlike the *siloviki*, tend not to favor any specific industries in the Russian economy, aiming instead for an equal playing field. Since they strive for an economic climate that stimulates investment, they promote tax reform and the rule of law. They also seek to create a supportive climate for small and medium-size companies. The strategies Dmitry Medvedev was putting forth during his

[100] Joris Van Bladel (2004), *op. cit.*.
[101] Konstantin Simonov et al., (2006) 'Russia 2005, Report on Transformation',: *Foundation Institute for Eastern Studies*, 2006, p. 11-16.(accessed at: www.forum-ekonomiczne.pl/docs/reportRU_2005_publisher.pdf).
[102] Nikolai Pretrov (2008) 'Kozak's New Macro Regions', *Moscow Times*, 5 February 2008, as published on *Johnson's Russia List*, #2008- 25, 5 February 2008.

'presidential campaign' were clearly anti-monopolistic, anti-inflationary, and intended to help diversify the Russian economy.[103]

The liberals are clearly more oriented towards the West, both to the United States and the Europe. This does not mean that they will carry out orders coming from the West or that they can be serving as a marionette for carrying out western aims. They are first and foremost conservative 'Russophiles.' Yet compared to the *siloviki*, they tend to be more benevolent towards the West. That is, they do not oppose closer cooperation with the West provided that their own interests are taken seriously. The liberals, for instance, do encourage business with Western companies. It may be that the main lever to influence Russian politics is the promise of increased cooperation between the Western and Russian business worlds.

The liberals' mentality seems to be best equipped to confront the challenges of the 21st century. Because of this, one must come to the conclusion, counter-intuitive as it may seem, that they are actually more of a 'threat' than the *siloviki* because they are capable of creating the kind of progressive institutions that will become a tough competition for the West.

4.3 The Mentality of the Siloviki

In line with to their nostalgia for the golden period of the Soviet Union under Brezhnev and Andropov, the *siloviki* model for the organization of the Russian Federation is the Soviet Union. Thus they support maximum centralization of state resources, strengthening of the armed forces and security service, maximum control by establishing a vertical power structure, and limited public interference with the executive office.[104]

They also promote a strong connection between the Russian Orthodox Church and the armed forces (MoD, MVD and FSB alike), for both institutions are

[103] Dmitry Medvedev's speech at the Krasnoyask Economic Forum on 15 February 2008 (accessed at: http://www.medvedev2008.ru/english_2008_02_15.htm) and the Financial Times interview of him published 24 March 2008. (Accessed at: http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/f40629a8-f9ba-11dc-9b7c-000077b07658.html?nclick_check=1).

[104] Jean-Marie Chauvier (2004) 'Russia Nostalgic for the Soviet Era', *Le Monde Diplomatique*, March 2004 (accessed at : http://mondediplo.com/2004/03/11russia.)

closely tied to the state, and both claim to have a spiritual mission of defend the country.[105]

Most *siloviki* are used to working in the shadow and in secrecy, thus they do not like to be supervised. Faced with democratic institutions such as the parliament, independent media or an independent justice system, they tend to force them from the political stage. They will do everything to gag these institutions, and given their mentality and their technical means to control society, they do not shrink from intimidation, harassment and violence. In their eyes, democratic oversight threatens the stability of the regime.

They prefer to have maximum centralization and they are fervent supporters of the authoritarian state. They would opt for the powers of state being more consolidated than even in the Soviet era, in which power structures were always controlled and checked by the Communist Party. The *siloviki* would like to see a symbiosis of the security sector and the Kremlin in the post-Soviet period, thus they take Yuri Andropov as their hero and look to his policies for a model of how to organize the state.

Thus they want to maximize the role of the state in the economy.[106] They would have it manage national wealth as well as large properties, and give privileged positions to the energy industry and other strategic industrial sectors such as the weapons industry. These industries would serve as the main engine driving the economy and as a lever to back up a more assertive foreign policy.

It is in the sphere of foreign policy that the *siloviki* want to achieve the most domination. Since they see a growing number of rivals threatening the country from all sides, they rely on the Soviet idea of strengthening the heartland by creating a buffer zone around the country. In their mindset, all development just outside their borders is seen as a threat to the Russian Federation. Regardless of whether this threat is real or imaginary, all Western actions in what the Russian see as their traditional sphere of influence will be perceived as hostile. The *siloviki* want to have influence over the Near Abroad and CIS countries, if not by exerting military power, then by supplying raw materials, regulating visas,

[105] For a good overview of the historical bond between the KGB and the Orthodox Church see: Keith Armes (2001) 'Chekists in Cassocks: The Orthodox Church and the KGB' *Demokratizatsiya*, April 2004. (accessed at: www.demokratizatsiya.org/Dem%20Archives/DEM%2001-04%20armes.pdf -). Adrian Blomfield (2008) 'Orthodox Church Unholy Alliance with Putin', *Telegraph*, 26 February 2008 (http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1579638/Orthodox-Church-unholy-alliance-with-Putin.html.)

[106] Victor Yasmann (2007) 'Russia: From silovik Power to Corporate State', *RFE/RL*, 25 September 2007. (http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/09/72D3EFD3-7C5C-4CEC-AF91-9A609FF08218.html.)

maintaining military personnel and bases, and controlling ethnic groups on the territory of the Russian Federation.

The *siloviki* are also outspoken anti-Westerners, particularly regarding the United States and NATO.[107] Only countries of South-East Asia are regarded as potential allies, followed by other BRIC countries such as Brasil, though to a lesser degree. Although economic ties with Brazil have increased, they regard China and India as their main new allies. In fact, this latter alliance is an old idea of Primakov's, who in the 1990s proposed a triangular strategic alliance between Russia, China and India in order to counter the hegemony of the United States.

The alliance with Asian countries has not only a military aspect (military exercises, weapon exports, command and control exercises), but also a very significant economic-energy aspect. Cooperative geological explorations of the Veninsky Block have been undertaken as part of the Sakhalin-3 project and there is increasing collaboration in the steel sector. The pipeline strategy which is promoted by the *siloviki* favors traditional European allies such as Serbia and Bulgaria. Europe's current fear of becoming totally dependent upon Russia for gas delivery could become a reality if the *siloviki* are allowed to pursue their policies. However, frictions are evident between the 'liberals' and the '*siloviki*,' especially regarding the pipeline strategy, since the former are clearly more orientated towards the West.

In conclusion, the *siloviki* tend to promote centralization, control, and elimination of (democratic) oversight while favoring an anti-Western foreign policy. They are orientated instead towards China and India. They perceive the world mainly in geopolitical terms, and view it from the old Soviet perspective. Thus they tend to anticipate external threats from all sides and at all times. They are used to operating in secrecy and are reluctant to reveal their operational methods and habits, and thus they place little trust in the world outside their own security forces. Many of the *siloviki* also have strong thirst for revenge, because they experienced the fall of the Soviet Union as a humiliating disgrace, one that was exacerbated by Western reaction. That some hard-line generals are returning to the earlier Cold War rhetoric, and reviving some Soviet military habits (such as sending ships out into international waters and monitoring airplanes near NATO borders) may illustrate this point.

[107] The Economist (2007) 'Putin's People', 23 August 2007. (http://www.economist.com/opinion/displaystory.cfm?story_id=9687285).

5 Peering into the Future: Medvedev's Power Coalition

It is obviously impossible to predict the future, and this section of the report makes no attempt to do so. However, certain elements of Dmitry Medvedev's policy priorities have become more apparent since he was designated as Putin's successor in December 2007 and elected as the third president in March 2008. Medvedev's main focus in his domestic policy seems to be legal reform. He seems quite convinced that judicial reform is necessary to modernize the country, noting himself that 'legal nihilism is a major brake on modern Russia's development.'[108] The legal reform he foresees must create a framework in which the economy can flourish. In other words, law and business will be at the center of Medvedev's focus, in accordance with his background. This stance is not so entirely different from Putin's, but Medvedev gives the impression that law enforcement is not only about control, domination and coercion, but also depends on changing convictions and attitudes. Medvedev has begun to offer striking and unusual ideas for increasing law and order that are indicative of a different mentality than the *siloviki*.

For example, while discussing a potential anti-corruption campaign to promote the observance of law, he said he planned on providing 'stimuli for *bona fide* officials.'[109] In the same context, Medvedev has tried to motivate legal specialists to learn more about anti-corruption laws in other countries. The president has also spoken about special legal education programs aimed at changing public attitudes about abiding by and knowing the laws. Finally, Medvedev has pointed out that judges must be held to higher standards; this would be accomplished in concrete terms by re-evaluating the necessary education and legal experience and revising the typical workload. Putin's hint that Medvedev will have the power to grant amnesty to Mikhail Khodorkovsky, former owner of Yukos, may suggest some liberalization of the Kremlin's economic policy. This marks a change from 2003-2004, when it was clear to insiders that Medvedev remained opposed to the Kremlin's case against Khodorkovsky. Nor has it been any secret that Medvedev did not support the concept of 'sovereign democracy' as promulgated by Surkov.

In other words, there are various indications that Medvedev's policies will emphasize the development of a more liberal economic climate. However,

[108] Itar-Tass (20 March 2008) 'Legal Nihilism Major Brake on Russia's Development', *Johnson's Russia List*, Nr. 60, 20 March 2008. #4.

[109] Itar-Tass (2008) 'Medvedev: Anti-Corruption Plan Should Include Stimuli For Bona Fide Officials', Johnson's Russia List, No. 60, 20 March 2008.

notwithstanding these positive and promising ideas, Medvedev fails to mention one of the most urgent and problematic aspects of the Russian juridical system, namely the independence of the judicial (and the legislative) branch. At the moment, it is a well-known fact that judges do not feel secure enough to defy the authority of the Kremlin. The traditional role of a Russian court was simply to mete out punishment, not to determine innocence or guilt, since by definition, a person brought before a court is guilty – a habit of the Soviet era.

Concerning the economy, Medvedev has promised to focus his attention on several areas: diversification of the economy, small business development, foreign investment and the persistent problem of inflation. Based on the National Priority Programs, long-term, state-sponsored investment programs initiated in 2004, Medvedev is also likely to emphasize improvements in healthcare, housing, education and agriculture. Moreover, the new president has stressed the importance of improving the transport and industrial infrastructure and that of the social sector (hospitals, orphanages, prisons, etc.). Another sign that there is some leeway for 'decentralization' in the Russian economy is the announcement of Dmitry Kozak, a close ally of Medvedev, that the republics and regions of the federation will be given more liberty to plan and manage their own economic policy.

In fact, Medvedev's chief political goals and priorities are not radically different from those of Putin himself, as the latter mentioned on December 30, 1999 in one of his first public speeches called 'Russia at the turn of the Millennium'. It is possible that history will look back on the period of Putin as one of consolidation, with Medvedev's era being the subsequent liberalization of the regime, making room for flexibility and pragmatism. In that case, Medvedev might be seen as more as a modernizer, rather than a democrat, as Yassman and Jensen suggest.[110]

Concerning foreign policy, it is a well-known fact that Medvedev favors a (moderate) pro-Western policy, more so than President Putin did, and certainly more than the *siloviki* faction. According to Nicolai Petro, Medvedev regularly refers to the early stages of the the European Union, which began as a stable partnership for trading coal and steel, the primary products of the industrial

[110] This latter distinction is not trivial, for simply by differentiating between modernism and democracy, important questions are raised about the relation between them. Russia has historically accepted a certain 'modernization' in the technological, economic, cultural and military-industrial sectors, but has thrown up barriers against political and organizational models coming from the West. For more on this issue, see Richard Pipes (2005) *Russian Conservatism and its Critics, a Study in Political Culture*, (New Haven: Yale University Press).

economy of that time. [111] Medvedev, looking to this example, also favors establishing a healthy trade partnership between the EU and Russia. In Petro's view, a key aim of Russian foreign policy will be to enhance security by sharing risk.[112] Nevertheless, even if Medvedev's stance towards the West proves less confrontational and more aimed at cooperation, it must be not be forgotten that Medvedev also seeks to transform Russia into an energy superpower, one that does not want to be overpowered or dictated to by the West. Perhaps less saber rattling will be seen, but Medvedev is nonetheless a pragmatist focused on political success and concrete results, and whose main goal remains securing Russia's sovereignty. This was perhaps Putin's message when he warned the Western media that Medvedev will not be easier to deal with than himself. Medvedev should not be underestimated, and it would be a mistake, just as there has been an 'overreaction' towards the KGB President Putin, to 'downplay' the liberal lawyer and businessman Medvedev. Medvedev's record from his time as chairman of Gazprom is hardly encouraging; his character of a liberal businessman and a lawyer seems not to have any positive effect on the extensive corruption, the chronic structural underinvestment nor the meagre profit margins of Gazprom.

Based on the above analysis, it is clear that the composition of Medvedev's coalition will be crucial for the direction his policy will take. The new president is certainly aware that putting together his coalition is a sensitive task, not to be done hastily; yet he has already given a few indications of his future appointments. Most analysts agree that the personnel changes will not occur drastically and, thus, no 'palace revolution' is to be expected. With the appointment of Putin as prime minister, it is evident that the relationship between Putin and Medvedev will be crucial, and by extension, the relationship between the president's office (the Presidential Administration) and the prime minister's office (the Cabinet). Strictly interpreted, the Constitution dictates that the president shall hold the highest position in the executive branch. Thus it is possible that Medvedev, after consolidating his presidential power, will prefer to

[111] In fact, Medvedev misrepresents the European Cole and Steel Community. The initial purpose of this organization was not to exchange natural resources, but to pool the two countries' supplies of coal and steel and have them managed by a High Authority. In other words, France and Germany, along with other countries that elected to participate in this system, gave up part of their national sovereignty in order to build up trust and confidence in each other and to overcome a century long rivalry. Robert Schuman and Jean Monnet, the initiators of this idea, hoped for a spill-over effect that would result in greater cooperation between these two countries. This small but decisive initiative, as we know, was the beginning of the whole integration process that culminated in the European Union, currently composed of 27 member states.

[112] Nicolai Petro, 'The Medevedev Moment', openDemocracy, 28 February 2008. (accessed at: http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/globalisation/institutions_government/medvedev_moment.)

pursue his own policy priorities and will force his opponents out of presidential administration. Predictions that Medvedev will be a kind of lackey designated to carry out Putin's policy are not only premature, but they seem to forget about the dictates of the Constitution and the political praxis of the last fifteen years.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Relative to the events of the 1990s, the Putin regime displays both change and continuity. Many analysts fail to grasp the less than democratic forces underlying Yeltsin's regime, and this leads them to misunderstand Putin's presidency as well. There is clear political continuity between the two regimes insofar as many of the practices and developments described above took root in the 1990's and grew to their full stature in the following decade. At the same time, Putin made political changes in order to counter what he saw as undesirable tendencies dating from the Yeltsin era, even to the point of bringing about what may be called a 'counter-democracy'. To carry out these political changes, Putin relied on former colleagues he knew and trusted, drawing both from the KGB and his time in business and politics. He chose people who were loyal, efficient, and pragmatic, and who were capable of using rational analysis to bring order and control to the country. Further analysis of the composition of the political elite is essential for understanding Russia's authoritarian regime, and may shed some light on the how the political scene will develop in the near future.

In economic terms, Putin's presidency stands in sharp contrast with that of Yeltsin. Economic achievements under Putin resulted not from luck alone (i.e., the market price of oil) but also from a clear economic strategy and committed leadership. This economic success helped bring a long-absent sense of hope to the Russian public, and remains a key reason for Putin's present popularity, despite his curtailment of certain freedoms and democratic rights, since they contribute to the Russia's overall stability, security and order. The economic recovery has given the regime a renewed sense of self-confidence, one bordering upon audacity. This new attitude has triggered major revisions in Russia's foreign and security policy, putting Russia back in the center of the international stage, not to be ignored.

Regarding the governing faction, there is a conservative mindset common to all the members. This conservatism serves as a more or less stable basis uniting the liberals and the *siloviki* in the coalition, preserving it and allowing it to function. All the coalition's members share the goal of a strong, independent, prosperous and respected Russia. The conservatism of the coalition has deep roots in Russian society, thus neither the power coalition nor the *siloviki*, in particular,

have the same connotations in Russia as they do in the West. The coalition is seen as highly successful, due to Russia's economic performance, and it can count on the support of the Russian population.

Having said this, however, it should be noted that the coalition between the *siloviki* faction and the 'civilian' one is clearly a marriage of convenience. They have very different opinions on how the economy should be organized, the role of the state in the society, the status of the armed forces in society, and the relationship with the West. Yet the relationship between the *siloviki* and the liberals should not be reduced to the usual simplistic cultural binarism that one often finds in Russia, for example, between the 'Slavophils' and the 'Zapadniki' or the 'Russophiles' and the 'westernizers'. The factions are not so antagonistic that they are unable to cooperate in a strategic alliance. Indeed, they seem to collaborate well enough to reassure Putin as to their ability to run the country, since he chose to leave office rather than remain the arbiter and ultimate decision-maker in the power coalition.

Nonetheless, it should be kept in mind that coalitions are always strategic alliances, and thus always temporary. It remains to be seen how Medvedev, once sworn in as the third president of the Russian Federation, will rebuild and lead his own new power coalition.

How will the dynamic of the coalition develop, what will the top policy priorities be, and quite importantly, how will the composition of the coalition itself develop, i.e. who will be its members and what will be the relationships among them? There is nothing to rule out a scenario in which the *siloviki* split up and begin openly fighting among themselves.

The chief conclusion of this report is that we must resist our old tendency to overestimate the impact of the KGB/FSB, and we must not underestimate the importance and the impact of the 'liberals'. The liberals seem to better equipped to confront the challenges of the future. Moreover, their alliance is less rigid, and thus less vulnerable, than that of the *siloviki*.

On Making Recommendations

This section provides some recommendations on how to improve relations with the political elite of the Russian Federation, based on the conclusions and forecasts given above. In trying to find a *modus vivendum* in a difficult, strained relationship, it is not so important which party is right. What matters is the attitude needed to genuinely understand 'the other'. Russia and Europe, and by extension, the Western world, are stuck with each other, there is no other solution

than to cooperate. The forgotten stockpile of nuclear weapons dating from the Cold War should remind us of this fact. The Western world should refrain from a dogmatic, principled attitude and opt for a pragmatic, empathetic and self-critical attitude towards the Russian political elite and the Russian population at large. We should, however, stop short of renouncing our own values and accepting all Russian positions without skepticism.

This report has focused on critically analyzing the composition and the mentality of the Russian political elite. As a result of taking such a long detour through the landscape of the Russian political psyche, our recommendations tend to have a more hermeneutic perspective. That is, they concern our interpretations of how the other side acts and thinks, while also being more critical and reflective with respect to our own actions and thinking. The suggestions offered here are not ordered with regard to any urgency or importance. It is simply is a list of different ways to improve a relationship that is seriously strained, and indeed, has been described as being at their lowest point since the Cold War in 1991. Before presenting these ideas, however, a disclaimer should be made: if either of the two parties is reluctant to cooperate, then the idea of improving the relationship between Russia and the West will remain only that, an idea. No advice will make any difference unless both sides clearly decide to cooperate and to improve relations. This show of willingness is essential, and the first contacts with the new president should focus on this fundamental point. A ‘memorandum of understanding’ is not an empty gesture; on the contrary, it is critical step in building a new relationship. In addition, any situation in which one side depends too much upon the other should be avoided. All one-sided dependency should be avoided as it installs fear and it creates mistrust, anger and *revanchist* ideas. Ideally, East and West should be equal partners in a relationship that maximizes (economic) interaction with each other, where each side accepts or at least tolerates the other’s differences. These (economic) interactions should establish trust and interdependency, and should be the starting point for a healthy relationship between Russia and the West.

There can no leeway allowed for territorial ‘zones of influence’, in which one or the other party, Russia or the West, has more rights than the other based on historical legacy. As these zones are now occupied by independent states, these states have the sovereign right to establish their own relations with whatever country is preferred. Everything possible should be done to avoid the formation of ‘blocs’ on the European continent, and ‘inclusion’ should take priority over ‘exclusion’. Though this may be the ideal, it is clear that the actual situation on the European continent is an altogether different one. The Russian Federation has evolved into an authoritarian political system sustained by a complacent, confident attitude, while the West, especially during the last eight years, has

followed an inefficient, ineffective foreign policy that has made the world a more dangerous, complex place. The actual results of this foreign policy unfortunately have nullified all possible good intentions on the part of Europe. The looming economic crisis in the West makes the future of East-West relations look all the more bleak. Therefore, the only option to improve the relationship with the Russian Federation is to take a prudent, realistic and pragmatic stance towards it. All efforts should be made to preserve the European continent from future armed conflicts.

In deliberating over these recommendations, two recent and interrelated historical experiences were kept in mind. The first has to do with the democratization of Germany after the Second World War.[113] The second is the origin of the European Union, a successful effort at political integration which depended on the rapprochement between France and Germany. In the second half of the twentieth century, Germany managed to become one of the most prosperous and the most democratic states in Europe, and did so without posing a threat to any other state. The present German state is thus a remarkable accomplishment, and the forces behind this phenomenon should be intensively studied. One thing is clear: the main impetus behind this democratization process comes from within Germany itself. This impetus has been kept alive by a steady succession of dedicated and circumspect politicians, who are quite aware of the political sensitivities of the past, and the special burden they carry to keep the country from an authoritarian track. For instance, it is well-known that the first stage of the de-Nazification process attempted in the occupation zones -- which was radical, ideological, and externally imposed -- did not work. It created unintended consequences and turned the country into chaos. Rather, the second state of de-Nazification, which was more pragmatic and created benevolent external conditions for positive reform, had better results; the reforms were more organically integrated into the German society rather than imposed from outside. One of the important external conditions that helped to create this success was the rapprochement between France and Germany, also called the 'engine of European integration'.[114] This relationship should be studied closely, for it serves as the second historical inspiration for these recommendations. What is important to keep in mind is that the Franco-German relationship should never be taken for granted. It is a fragile and sensitive relationship that needs the personal attention of the highest political offices both in Paris and Berlin. Therefore, the methods used to maintain this key relationship should be studied.

[113] Other successful examples of democratization in Europe could be mentioned, such as the more recent developments on the Iberian Peninsula in Spain and Portugal.

[114] The efforts of insightful, pragmatic and generous American presidents to create the conditions for a prosperous post-war Europe are also worth mentioning here.

Recommendations

- The Western states should critically and objectively examine their own attitude towards the Russian Federation, and determine whether Russian allegations of a Western negative bias are correct or simply arguments invented to destabilize the relationship.
- They should reflect critically on style used to address the Russians. Setting a good example is far more effective than preaching to Russia from the pulpit 'of democracy and human rights', exhorting them to follow universal standards. The French-German model of piecemeal economic cooperation after the war which paved the way for European integration is easily harmonized with the aims of Medvedev, a modernizer favoring cooperation with the West.
- Confidence-building measures are indispensable, and participation in these should be required from both sides. They should preferably not be delegated to politicians, but instead by non-official organizations such as universities, businesses, and artistic programs. For example, given Dmitry Medvedev's background in law and economics, there is an exceptional window of opportunity for the major universities of both Russia and the West to create exchange programs in their law and economics faculties.
- The West should be cautious when applying Western concepts to the Russian context. Though there may be a few exceptions, for the most part Russia lacks real grass root organizations that have grown out of a broad base of support. Russia in general remains a traditional society in which personal initiative is discouraged.
- Russian democrats should not be assumed to resemble the left-wing, progressive, international orientated forces that we have usually associate with this term. Russian intellectuals feel a greater affinity to 'humanistic values' and are moved by compassion, consciousness, sincerity, aesthetics, nature, etc.
- As shown in this study, the term *'siloviki'* should be used with strictly and with restraint. The West should not be too apprehensive about them, but rather try to include them in dialogue and interaction. Military academies and other educational establishments might play a role here.
- Promoting cooperative projects in certain key areas will lead to further cooperation between Russia and the West and help increase trust. Two obvious fields for this are the economy and legal reform. In both fields, Russia stands to benefit from an exchange of ideas and from more tangible

collaboration. Such cooperative projects should target limited, critical areas that lend themselves to concrete, effective measures, for instance aiming at curbing inflation and fighting corruption.

- Western financial support of Russian research programs or NGOs should be curtailed, since in the current climate such support is easily interpreted as an imposition of Western influence. As the Russian Federation is now in the economic and financial position to co-fund research projects, cooperation should be easier.
- It should never be forgotten what a terrible ordeal the 1990s were for the average Russian citizen. The Western strategy for Russia, despite good intentions, was hardly the best one. We must not ignore or play down the present economic success of the Russian Federation.
- In order to fight simplistic conceptions of history, Western states and Russia could create forums of multinational academic teams to do joint historical research. Similarly, the common study of the arts and social sciences should be strongly encouraged.
- The Russian Orthodox Church could be more involved in the dialogue between East and West and ecumenical approaches encouraged.
- The West should promote and aid modernization in the Russian Federation, rather than democratization. This is particularly true since the former does not exclude the latter.
- The only possible legitimate change in the Russia's political situation in Russia is change that comes from the Russian people themselves. To achieve this, Russian students could be invited to Western universities, and vice versa. More books and internet sites in Western languages might be translated into Russian, and vice versa.
- In all dealings with the Russian diarchy it is important to acknowledge both Medvedev and Putin, while also respecting the protocol and being very conscious about the division of labor between them.
- One fundamental area where the West has the obligation to insist on reform is the area of legal reform. Russia must respect its international obligations, and it needs an independent judicial branch

Appendix I

In the *Russia 2005 Report* of the Polish Eastern Institute, a detailed analysis of the 'Petersburg liberals' distinguished at least three subgroups in the 'civilian faction': The 'Petersburg Lawyers', the 'Petersburg Economists' and the 'Old Moscow' group.[115] Analysts lead by Konstantin Simonov identified **Dmitry Medvedev,** who was the head of the Presidential Administration at the time, as the informal leader of the civilian faction. The results of Simonov's investigation of the three factions can be summarized as follows.

Dmitry Medvedev is not only the informal leader of the 'liberals', he is also the leader of the 'Petersburg Lawyers.' This group has a clear relationship to Gazprom, where Medvedev, beginning in 2000, rose up the ladder through several senior posts to finally end up as chairman of the board of directors. Simonov's analysis, like Bremmer and Charap's analysis, shows Medvedev as having a close relationship with **Aleksei Miller**, his right hand and CEO of Gazprom. In addition, **Dmitry Kozak**, formerly the Plenipotentiary of the President in the Southern Federal District and the minister of regional development in the government of Viktor Zubkov since September 2007, is considered a member of the Petersburg Lawyers. Others include **Sergei Naryshkin**, the Deputy Prime Minister of Russia for external economic activity, (focusing on collaboration with the CIS countries) and **Valery Nazarov**, General Director of the Federal Property Management Agency and a member of the board of directors of Russian Railways.

The subgroup of the 'Petersburg Economists' includes the following: **German Gref,** the Minister of Economic Development and Trade in 2005; **Aleksei Kudrin** minister of Finance; **Aleksei Zhukov,** Deputy Premier; **Igor Artemiev**, the head of the Federal Antimonopoly Service; and **Anatoly Chubais**, Chairman of the Board of RAO UES of Russia (which controls the electric power industry). Gref and Kudrin were prominent liberal reformers in the government of Mikhail Fradkov. When government of Fradkov was replaced by that of Viktor Zubkov in September 2007, Gref was dismissed as minister and became the new president of the largest bank of Russia, Sberbank. Kudrin remained Minister of Finance and became Deputy Prime Minister, ranked at the same level as Dmitry Medvedev and Sergei Ivanov. In January 2008 he became the head of a special government working group to develop anti-inflationary measures.

[115] Konstantin Simonov et al., (2006) *Russia 2005: Report on Transformation*, Warsaw: Foundation Institute for Eastern Studies, (accessed at: www.forum-ekonomiczne.pl/docs/reportRU_2005_publisher.pdf.)

The third subgroup in the liberal faction is the 'Old Moscow' group, whose name refers to the connection its members had with Boris Yeltsin's power coalition (also called 'the Family'). Three different clusters can be distinguished in this subgroup; in the first cluster, there are people like **Alexander Voloshin**, **Valentin Yumashev, Mikhail Kasyanov** and the oligarch **Roman Abramovich**. Their influence is clearly declining if not completely played out, especially after Putin consolidated his position as president. Voloshin was forced out as head of the Presidential Administration in 2003 and Mikhail Kasyanov was dismissed from the post as prime minister in February 2004. Mikhail Kasyanov then joined the opposition against Putin. He also tried to run against Dmitry Medvedev during the presidential elections. (His candidacy was rejected by the Election Commission in January 2008 ostensibly because some of his supporters' signatures (13%) were deemed invalid.) The second cluster is composed of Yeltsin's presidential aides who survived the start of the Putin era and became fully embedded in Putin's administration. This cluster includes **Vladislav Surkov**, **Jakhan Polykhaeva, Sergei Prikhodko, Larisa Brycheva** and **Sergei Yastrzhemsky**. Another researcher also puts **Mikahil Lesin** in this group; he was Yeltsin's media advisor and PR manager and became Putin's minister of Media and Special Advisor to the president.[116] Vladislav Surkov is generally seen as a prominent ideologue in Putin's administration. The third cluster in the old Muscovite group includes the following: **Mikhail Fridman** from the Alpha Group; **Vladimir Potanin**, the owner of Interros and Norilsk Nickel; and **Iskander Makhmudov,** the owner of the Urals Mining and Melting Company. These men are especially important since they are the only members of entire civilian coalition with significant economic and financial assets. Since 2003, the civilian and *siloviki* factions have been competing more and more on the level of asset accumulation, Simonov notes. The loyalty of the old Muscovites to the 'civilian' camp is not guaranteed, for there is a continual effort on the part of the *siloviki* camp to erode their unity, particularly by manipulating their assets.

[116] Arnoud Kalika (2008), *L'Empire aliéné, le système du pouvoir russe*, (Paris: CNRS éditions), p. 26.

Appendix II

In the *Russia 2005 Report* of the Polish Eastern Institute, another analysis by Simonov deals with the *siloviki* faction, or as he calls it, the 'Petersburg *siloviki*'.[117] This faction consists of five subgroups. The informal leader is **Igor Sechin**, who, since 1999, has been the Deputy Chief of the Presidential Administration, and also Chairman of the Board of Directors of Rosneft since 2004. Rosneft is a state-owned Petroleum Company that was created when Kremlin took over most of the assets of Yukos, which until then had been the largest private oil company in Russia, owned by oligarch Khodorkovsky. It was Sechin who allegedly orchestrated the Yukos takeover, which was not fully supported by the Medvedev camp.

The 'radical *siloviki*' are the people closest to Igor Sechin, and who are most insistent about state appropriation of the hydrocarbon industry's assets. Its members include **Vladimir Ustinov**, Minister of Justice in the Zubkov government and formerly the Prosecutor General of Russia; **Sergei Bogdanchikov**, CEO of Rosneft and, since late 2004, Director General of Gazprom Neft, formerly called Sibneft, and **Sergei Oganesyan**, Head of the Federal Energy Agency (Rosenergo) a branch of the Ministry of Energy. However, soon after the reshuffling of the government in September 2007, Oganesyan voluntarily left the state agency that coordinates oil export and was replaced by **Dmitry Akhanov,** formerly the Chief of the Strategy Department of the electricity company UES, and close to the 'liberal' Chubais. Akhanov's taking the post suggests that it has been taken over by the 'civilians'. It is significant that neither Ustinov, who is a lawyer, nor Bogdanchikov, an engineer, nor Oganseyan, an engineer, have any security or military background. As for Sechin, his background is more ambivalent. He was trained as a linguist in Leningrad, but served in Angola, which might suggest that he had connections with the KGB. However, Putin and Sechin did not meet each other until they worked together in Sobchak's office. Nevertheless, the fact that Simonov labels this subgroup as 'radicals' suggests that this is the very heart of the *siloviki* group. It is striking, therefore, to see that none of its members have a military or security background, which results in the group having a 'civilian' disposition.

According to Simonov, the most prominent spokesman of the '**personnel men',** the second subgroup of the *siloviki* faction, is **Viktor Ivanov**. Ivanov is Deputy

[117] Konstantin Simonov et al., (2006) *Russia 2005: Report on Transformation*, Warsaw: Foundation Institute for Eastern Studies. (Accessed at: www.forum-ekonomiczne.pl/docs/reportRU_2005_publisher.pdf).

Head of the Presidential Staff for Personnel, having a close connection to the military industrial complex and the aircraft building industry. Ivanov is also the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Aeroflot. Viktor Ivanov is an ex-KGB officer having a similar career trajectory as Vladimir Putin, and he is seen as one of the president's closest allies.

The third subgroup is called the '**Lubyanka men**'; led by Army General **Nikolai Patrushev** who is the current Director of the FSB and who is closely connected to Army General **Rashid Nurgaliev**, Minster of Internal Affairs (MVD). The close connection between the FSB and MVD is a critical relationship to bear in mind, given the complexity of the defense and security sector. It is also interesting to note that Rashid Nurgaliev, like Putin, has acquired a PhD in Economics.

The fourth subgroup is called the '**Power Businessmen**' and is led by **Viktor Cherkesov**, the head of the Federal Drug Control Service. The name of this subgroup is derived from the fact that these men manage important economic assets. It includes **Leonid Reimann**, Minister of Information Technologies and Communications, **Vladimir Yakunin**, Head of the Russian Railroads who has, quite remarkably and importantly, close relations with the Orthodox Church, **Igor Levitin**, Minister of Transport, and **Aleksandr Rumyantsev**, Head of the Federal Agency of Nuclear Energy. Simonov's study of 2005 pointed out a rivalry already developing between Sechin and Cherkesov.

Finally, Colonel General **Sergei Ivanov**, First Deputy Prime Minister responsible for the defense industry, aerospace industry, the nanotechnology and transport sectors, and also the former Minister of Defense, is called a '**liberal Silovik**'. It is rumored that Sergei Ivanov still oversees the Ministry of Defense that was formally led by **Anatoly Serdyukov**, an economist with close connections to Viktor Ivanov. Although Sergei Ivanov was for a long time seen as a potential candidate for the presidential elections in 2008, he stands somewhat outside the mainstream *siloviki* circles, since he does not share the expansionist attitude of the *siloviki* faction. Of the *siloviki*, he is the one who most easily maintains contact with the civilian faction of the coalition. Thus Ivanov might be regarded as a kind of transitional figure between the factions.

Appendix III

Tatiana Netreba of the weekly paper *Argumenty i fakty*, has subdivided the people around Medvedev in four categories: protégés, allies, comrades, and companions; it is quite unclear what these labels actually indicate; though they may suggest a certain hierarchy.[118]

Protégés
Anton Ivanov (Chairman of the Supreme Court of Arbitration) Aleksandr Konovalov (Presidential Envoy in the Volga Federal region) Nikolai Vinnichenko (Court Marshal) Oleg Kutafin (Dean of the Moscow State Academy of Law) Igor Drzdov (Head of administrative apparatus of the Supreme Court of Arbitration) Sergei Kazantsev (Constitutional Court Judge) Sergei Mavrin (Constitutional Court Judge) Vladimir Yaroslavtsev (Constitutional Court Judge)
Allies
Vladimir Sobyanin (Director of the Presidential Administration) Vladislav Surkov (Assistant Director of the Presidential Administration) Aleksei Miller (CEO Gazprom) Anatoly Chubais (RAO Unified Energy Systems) AleksandrVoloshin RAO Unified Energy Systems) Yuri Chaika (Prosecutor General's office) Roman Abramovich (Governor of Chukotka) Sergei Stepashin (Auditing Commission) Alisher Usmanov (Gazprominvestholding) Oleg Deripaska (Basic Element)

[118] Tatiana Netreba (20008) 'Staff Merry-Go-Round, Contours Of the New State Power Structure', *Argumenty I Fakty*, No. 10, March 2008, as mentioned in *JRL* #2008-53, published March 11, 2008.

Comrades
Arkady Dvorkovich (expert directorate of the Presidential Administration) Igor Shuvalov (Presidential Aide) Aleksei Gromov (Presidential Press secretary) Natalia Timakova (Presidential PR Department) Pavel Krasheninnikov (lawmaker, chairman of the board of the Russian Lawyers Association) Alexandra Levitskaya (Deputy Minister of economic Development)
Companions
Aleksei Kudrin (Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister) Andrey Fursenko (Minister of Education and Science) Tatyana Golikova (Minister of health and Social Development) Elvira Nabiullina (Minister of Economic Development and Trade) Viktor Kristenko (Minister of Industry and Energy Venue) Yuri Trutnev (Minister of Natural Resources) Viktor Cherkesov (Federal Service of Drug Enforcement) Aleksandr Abramov (Businessmen and founder of Moscow Business School Skolkovo) Vardanjan (Businessmen and founder of Moscow Business School Skolkovo) Valentin Zavadnikov (Businessmen and founder of Moscow Business School Skolkovo) Leonid Mikhelson (Businessmen and founder of Moscow Business School Skolkovo)

A comprehensive analysis by Victor Yasmann and Donald Jensen suggests that Medvedev has successfully established good relations with key people having the most powerful positions in the Russian political system.[119] They are listed as follows:

[119] Victor Yasmann and Donald Jensen, 'In Focus: Putin's Choice: A Profile of Dmitry Medvedev, Regional Analysis', RFE/RL, March 23, 2008 (accessed at: http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2008/03/e40b38e0-6f45-475a-bae5-a51cd13ccac8.html.)

Liberals
Aleksandr Voloshin (Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister) Anatoly Chubais (Head of Unified Energy Systems) Sergei Prikhodko (Foreign Policy Aide to Putin) Igor Shuvalov (Personal Aide to Putin) Elvira Nabiullina (Minister of Economic Development and Trade) German Gref (Head of Sberbank) Valintina Matviyenko (Governor of St-Petersburg)
Oligarchs
Alisher Usmanov (Gazprominvestholding which controls Gazprom Media) Oleg Deripaska (Businessman, Basic Element) Roman Abramovich (Businessman Governor of Chukotka) Aleksandr Abramov (Businessman and founder of Moscow Business School Skolkovo)
Contacts in St. Petersburg
Valentin Zavadnikov (Chairman of Industrial Policy Committee of the Federation Council) Leonid Mikhelson (Head of Novatek gas company) Zakhar Smuskin (Board Chairman of Ilim Group) Boris and Michail Zingarevich (Members of the Board of Directors of the Ilim Group) (These names are also to be found on the board of trustees of the Moscow Business School Skolkovo)
Various *siloviki* groups
Aleksandr Bortnikov (Deputy Director of FSB) Yevgeny Shkolov (Head of Economic Security Department of the MVD) Oleg Safonov (Deputy Minister of internal Affairs) Igor Zavrzhnov (deputy Director of the Customs Service) Sergei Stepashin (Chairman of the Audit Chamber) Viktor Cherkesov (Director of the Federal Antinarcotics Service)

In addition to the contacts listed above, Yasmann and Jensen’s analysis indicates that Medvedev is likely to draw upon some of the following groups for his presidential staff: key figures who advised Medvedev during his election campaign, past associates in the Kremlin, fellow law students from St-Petersburg State University, business associates from Gazprom, and members of Putin's former presidential team, selected legal experts and *siloviki* leaders. These groups can be broken down as follows:

Key advisors from election campaign

Vladimir Sobyanin (Head of Putin's Presidential Administration, who took an absence of leave in order to lead Medvedevs election campaign)

Valentina Matviyenko (Governor of St. Petersburg)

Vladimir Resin (First Deputy Mayor of Moscow)

Associates from the Kremlin

Arkady Dvorkovich (Head of the directorate of experts within the Presidential **Administration**)

Tatyana Golikova, (Minister of Health and Social Development who has close relations with: Viktor Cherkesov)

Elvira Nabiullina (Minister of Economic Development and Trade)

Igor Shuvalov (Presidential Aide and presidential Advisor on the G8)

Vladislav Surkov (Deputy Chief of Staff of the Presidential Administration and Aide to President Putin)

Natalya Timakova (Head of the Presidential Press Service)

University fellows

Konstantin Chuichenko (Head of Legal Department of Gazprom)

Aleksandr Gutsan (Deputy Prosecutor-General)

Anton Ivanov (Chairman of the Supreme Arbitration Court)

Nikolai Vinnichenko (Head of the Bailiff Service/ Federal Court Marshals service)

Ilya Yeliseyev (Deputy CEO of Gazprombank)

Gazprom/Business

Yuri Kovalchuk (Director of Rossia Bank, which holds 49.9% of Gazprombank)

Zakhar Smushkin (Chairman of Ilim Group)

Alisher Usmanov (Chairman of Gazprominvestholding)

Boris and Mihail Zingarevich (Members of the Board of Director of the Ilim Group)

Putin's Former Presidential Team

Anatoly Serdyuko (Minister of Defense)

Tatyana Golikova, (Minister of Health and Social Development)

Sergei Kiriyenko (Head of the State Nuclear Energy Monopoly)

Legal background

Sergei Dubnik (Deputy Head of the legal Department of Gazprom)

Pavel Krasheninnikov (Chairman of the Board of the Russian Lawyers Association), **played** a leading role in Medvedev's election campaign.

Siloviki, (all these siloviki belong to the anti-Sechin group of the siloviki clan)

Aleksandr Bortnikov ((Director of the Economic Security Directorate of the FSB)

Viktor Cherkessov (Chairman of the Federal Antinarcotics Service)

Yevgeny Murov (Director of the Federal Protection Service)

Yevgeny Shkolov (Deputy Interior Minister)

Viktor Zolotov ((Director of the Presidential Security Service)

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