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Modernization, Geopolitics and the new Russian Conservatives

By Katharina Bluhm[i]

Key words: conservatism, neoconservatism, Putinism, Russia, Russian civilization, geopolitics, modernization, world economic system, manifestos of Russian conservatism, Izborsk Club, 'Notebooks on Conservatism'

Summary:

The essay takes issue with the simplified understanding of the new Russian conservatism as a state-controlled ideology ('Putinism'), arguing instead that, as a counter-movement to neoliberalism, the issue of catch-up modernization linked to geopolitics and conservative values is of central importance for the new Russian conservatism. In the first part the experimental phase of the new Russian conservatism is investigated in its interaction with Russian political power in the period 2003-2007; the second part deals with the reorganization of the conservatives after 2012. Here the positions of the 'Izborsk Club' are compared with those of the authors writing in the Notebooks on Conservatism.

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1. Introduction

Conservatism in the modern era represents for Karl Mannheim an objective mental structure that is a historically embedded counter-movement to the 'progressive' ideologies of socialism and liberalism.[ii] Samuel Huntington calls it a situative 'positional ideology' that adapts to environmental changes but otherwise shows few stable features.[iii] In both these prominent definitions, heterogeneity, flexibility and reflexivity are considered constitutive for conservatism as a modern political ideology. That the new Russian conservatism appears in itself heterogeneous, is therefore not unusual. Its protagonists even refer frequently to Mannheim and Huntington, whereby the Russians' reference to 'ideology' has for western ears a strangely positive sound.[iv] At the same time the new Russian conservatives operate on three levels: the level of the situative crisis- and world-interpretation, the level of historico-philosophical tradition and identity construction, as well as on a quasi-scientific level of (self-)research into the phenomenon in the context of other conservatisms. The Russian research literature on the new conservatism is in no small part written by authors who also call themselves conservative.

In this paper I provide an interpretation of the new Russian conservatism that starts with the basic themes which can be gleaned from its analyses of contemporary history, proposals for reform and their embeddedness in the historico-philosophical substrate. These fundamental themes lie across classifications proposed by the protagonists themselves, such as 'left- or rightwing', 'red or white', or 'liberal-', 'social-' or 'national-conservative'. They contribute also to explaining the at first glance astonishing array of coalitions and shifting group formations among the new conservatives, although there are by no means clear contours to the particular currents.

With my interpretation I concur with Michael Freeden who accentuates in particular Mannheim in a new way that I find productive for the Russian context in two respects. First, Freeden, with Mannheim, stresses the dynamics of modern conservatism, in which it is not an

issue of preserving some status quo or returning to earlier conditions. Conservatism has therefore nothing to do with a simple traditionalism, or 'holding on' to 'traditional' values or a way of life.[v]

Modern conservatism represents rather a situative ideology of a movement, and for Freeden a particular type of movement, namely an ordered, continuous and in this sense, natural process of change.[vi] Both considerations appear to me to be useful points of departure for identifying the basic themes of the new Russian conservatism within the bounds of its context.

The new Russian conservatism can't be equated with a purported 'Putinism' (however defined), even though the establishment of a conservative 'state ideology' represents for its protagonists an important goal to which they seem to have moved closer over the last decade. Its constitutive theme as a contemporary intellectual counter-movement is — thus my argument — the link between modernization and geopolitics, which is combined with other themes of differing content. This approach I believe is best suited to the problem of recognizing what is really 'new' in the 'new Russian conservatism'. To see it rather as simply a new version of the formula 'Autocracy — Orthodoxy — Nation', coined in 1833 by the Education Minister of Nicolaus II (as suggested for example by British historian and journalist Lesley Chamberlain[vii]), is to misunderstand the temporal nature of this counter-movement. The new conservatives have developed their themes in interaction with the political center and are in part steered from within it. Yet, they also show the effects of tensions with the inner political circle of Putin's regime.

In a first step, I outline the rise of the new Russian conservatism in interaction with the political establishment. After a rather long incubation period, from around 2003 it took on a notable momentum that lasted until approximately 2007. This was a time of seeking, experimenting, and the grouping and re-grouping of its protagonists. The focus here is on the intellectuals who worked explicitly on an agenda of a new conservative ideology and also called themselves 'conservative'. On the basis of the influential 'manifestos' of these conceptualist

ideologues, in a second step I explore the basic themes of the new Russian conservatism that were formulated during this period.

The beginning of Vladimir Putin's third term as President of the Russian Federation in 2012 can be assessed as a re-grouping within the conservative discourse, which is demonstrated in a third step. Two new initiatives come into view at this time: one, the 'Izborsk Club', existing from September 2012, merged with the 'Institute for Dynamic Conservatism' founded in 2009, to form a driving intellectual force of the new Russian conservatism. The other is the 'Institute for Socioeconomic and Political Research Foundation' (ISÉPI Foundation) existing from 2013 that began in 2014 to publish the Tetradi po konservatizmu (Notebooks on Conservatism) (in the following referred to as 'Notebooks on Conservatism' or just 'Notebooks'). The Izborsk Club is the largest grouping of Russian conservatives existing up to now. Despite the vicinity of some of its members to the inner circle of power, precisely this group evidences a relationship of latent tension between the new Russian conservatism and the center of political power.

Although this tension — at the latest with the annexation of Crimea — occurs in a some-what channeled form (as the campaign against the liberal 'fifth column of the West' represented by the political opposition, but above all in the party 'United Russia' and in the government), it has in no way disappeared. By contrast, the ISÉPI Foundation with its Notebooks represents almost in a pure form the type of a 'government-organized non-governmental organization' (GONGO) established from the 'top down'. The Notebooks on Conservatism have adhered primarily to a re-construction of tradition and collective identity and seem to be an attempt to establish an intellectual counterweight to the Izborsk group. The résumé finally will return to the question of what is new about the new Russian conservatism and attempt an answer.

2. The laboratory of the new Russian conservatism (2003-2007)

To date back to 2003, the beginning revival of the new Russian conservatism doesn't mean it was not an issue before then. Already in 1993 the Minister of Economy and initiator of the famous program of the 'introduction of capitalist market economy in 500 days', Egor Gaidar, founded a center for 'liberal-conservative politics', in which (the murdered in 2015) Boris Nemtsov also participated. Initially Putin was also called — in an influential essay by Leonid Poliakov[viii] (today a member of the Izborsk Club) — a 'liberal conservative' because he combined neoliberal economic policy (flat-rate in tax policy, deregulation and opening to foreign direct investment) with a re-centralization and consolidation of state power. On the other side of the political spectrum were the 'patriotic forces' such as the communists and the representatives of a new 'Eurasianism', above all Aleksandr Panarin (1930-2003), Vadim Tsymbursky (1957-2009) and Aleksandr Dugin (b. 1962), whose theses and motives also flowed into the new Russian conservatism. However, for these authors 'conservatism' wasn't the decisive label for what they envisioned. Dugin (who was to head in 2008-2014 the 'Center for Conservative Research' of the sociology faculty at Lomonosov State University) in the early 1990s was inspired by the German 'conservative revolution' of the 1920s[ix] and wrote about a 'conservative revolution' as the 'third way' between socialism and liberalism.[x] Yet, the overarching construct for these Russian thinkers remained the civilization-theoretical concept of 'Eurasia', with which Dugin also made his mark politically.[xi]

From 2003 more and more numerous initiatives and manifestos appeared that sought to establish conservatism as the new ideological brand.[xii] That moment in time is interesting for several reasons. In 2003 Russia was freed from its debts to the IMF, oil prices rose (making possible an increase in mass consumption), Goldman Sachs published its famous 'BRIC Report' which prognosticated that Russia would soon become the fifth greatest economic power in the world. While the oligarchs at first simply had to relinquish their mass media to the state,

Putin was preparing himself for the power struggle with Yukos boss Mikhail Khodorkovskii. Above all however, the new conservatism received an enormous impetus from the 'reshuffling' effect of the parliamentary elections, in which the communists — up to then an important concentration of patriots — lost their position as strongest party to the party 'United Russia' which emerged as the new 'party of power' out of a fusion of two until then competing groups of the political and administrative elites.

With the newly-won room for maneuver, the question for the elites became 'where now?', a dispute over direction on which hinged the future of this Russian political discourse, carried on in part within the new party, and in part, outside of it or at its margins. This struggle over ideas was not an open competition based on diverse resources, but one carried out under conditions of an increasingly centralized (hidden or open) state-funding.

The renewal of conservative ideology stands in a close context with the transition from the 'managed' to a 'sovereign' democracy, conceived by the new, young chief ideologue and earlier Khodorkovskii PR-man, Vladislav Surkov. Surkov also gave the party United Russia the label of a 'conservative' party. The promotion of a 'loyal' civil society through the later established competition-based project funding has had in the creation and destiny of conservative initiatives a significant role.

Among the first initiatives marking the rise of conservatism in Russia from 2003 was the founding of the 'Seraphim Club' by the circle of authors surrounding the business magazine Expert and their manifesto Memorandum: Ot politiki strakha k politike rosta (Memorandum: From the politics of fear to a politics of growth) (in the following referred to as 'Memorandum'), which appeared on 15 January 2003 in Vedomosti, the most important liberal economics daily in Russia.[xiii] Founders and authors of the political group, considered overall to be 'liberal-conservative', were the then editor-in-chief of Expert, Valerii Fadeev, and Aleksandr Privalov, who today functions as the general director of the journal. Part of the project was also the well-known TV-journalist Mikhail Leont`ev. The Club was apparently involved in an internal power

struggle for position in the new party of power; however it rapidly dissolved.[xiv] Leont`ev joined the nationalist-conservative wing of the party 'United Russia', while Fadeev today leads the party's internal liberal platform. In this role he was in early 2013 again co-author of a manifesto – Manifest rossiiskogo politicheskogo liberalizma (Manifesto of Russian Political Liberalism) – that was aimed against 'conservative-reactionary tendencies' and advocated a liberalism that ties the objectives of freedom and private property to those of justice, solidarity and sovereignty.[xv] Approximately at the same time, journalists associated with Egor Kholmogorov and the political scientist Mikhail Remizov founded the 'Conservative Press Club'. Both belong, as do most of the new conservatives, to the late-soviet generation who, at the time the Soviet Union collapsed, were young adults. Unfortunately their new journal The Conservator soon had to fold for lack of financing.[xvi] Longer-living however was the in 2004 newly-founded internet platform pravaya.ru, which quickly became the central medium for the Russian 'orthodox neoconservatism'.[xvii] Despite their conscious borrowing of the self-definition 'new' from the American 'neocons', they began to promptly differentiate themselves from the former, since the American neoconservatism was not so different from the economic liberalism of the 'old' Russian liberal-conservatives of the 1990s. They saw greater affinity between themselves and the representatives of the earlier-mentioned 'conservative revolution' of the Weimar period.[xviii] Pravya.ru flourished until around 2011. Serious problems in financing the platform since then forced it to appeal for private donations.

The cooperation between Kholmogorov and Remizov held only briefly. Kholmogorov is an activist in the rightwing, national-conservative camp and coined the formulation 'Russian Spring' in the wake of the Crimea annexation. In spring 2006 he drafted together with other political publicists the Imperativy Natsional`nogo Vozrozhdeniia (Imperatives of a National Rebirth) that in seven points appealed for the formation of a 'National Conservative Union'. The text appeared on the platform pravaya.ru.[xix] The main political actor behind this appeal was Sergei Baburin, who was preparing the founding of a new, independent party to the right of the

existing parties, but was prevented from this by the Kremlin. The appeal is therefore sometimes also called the 'Manifesto of the National Conservative Union'.

In the same year the conservative news agency APN made public the manifesto on Russian Political Conservatism, of which again Remizov figured as the leading author.[xx] Remizov was subsequently coopted by the political elite and up to now has headed the 'Institute of National Strategy' (INS), one of the many think-tanks close to the government who deal with industrial, innovation, migration and security policies. A further author of this manifesto, Boris Mezhuev, a philosopher and political scientist at Lomonosov University, has over the years also moved closer to the Russian political establishment. Like Remizov, he was a chief editor at APN and the Russian Journal, before he rose in 2013 to the post of assistant editor at the daily newspaper Izvestia which had been owned by Gazprom-Media since 2008.

While both manifestos — Imperatives of a National Rebirth and Russian Political Conservatism of 2006 — were formulated rather in competition with, or at the margins of the 'United Russia' party and probably played no role in internal party debates, two further manifestos from 2005 and 2007 figured, at least in the short-term discussion, as fundamental statements of the party agenda.[xxi] These were, for one, the Russian Manifesto or Russian Project of the 'Center for Social-Conservative Politics', a 'United Russia' think-tank founded two years before under the leadership of the politician Boris Gryzlov. The Russian Manifesto was published in February 2007 and forms the basis of a 'Social-Conservative Union' founded in 2011 within the framework of the party.[xxii] A central role is ascribed to the TV-journalist Ivan Demidov, who was then head of the Kremlin's youth organization 'Nashi' and after 2012 rose briefly to the post of Vice-Minister of Culture. Among the group surrounding the 'Russian Project' was Andrei Pisarev (publisher-in-chief of the Russian Orthodox journal Fon, as well as the already-mentioned TV-journalist Mikhail Leont`ev. One of the main publishers of the online-portal of the 'Russian Project' was Kholmogorov. But already by 2008 the web portal had been discontinued, which researchers and observers attribute to the instrumental character of the

move, since it had the aim of fishing in rightest waters for support in the then upcoming elections.[xxiii] Besides, the party United Russia had very rapidly lost interest in the Russian Manifesto.

The most comprehensive project of a conservative agenda, but which totally bursts the framework of a manifesto, stems from the Center and later 'Institute for Dynamic Conservatism' founded in 2005. Between 2005 and 2007 a wide circle of authors elaborated and debated this circa 800-page tome Russkaia Doktrina — novoe "oruzhie soznaniia" (Russian Doctrine — a New Weapon of Consciousness) (in the following referred to as 'Russian Doctrine' or just Doctrine). It has been presented up to today on the Institute's website as the key document for creating cohesion among a 'new generation of conservatives'. Among the main authors are the Center's two founders — the Russian Orthodoxy-oriented philosopher Vitalii Aver`ianov, and the economist Andrei Kobiakov, as well as the publicist Vladimir Kucherenko who under the pseudonym Maksim Kalashnikov produces frequent populist polemics. On this Doctrine also worked again Kholmogorov, Remizov and Leont`ev. Also involved was one of the most well-known Russian economists, Mikhail Khazin, who already in 2003 together with Center founder Kobiakov and a further author wrote a book influential in Russia that predicted the world economic crisis of 2007/08 and the end of the 'pax Americana'. Both of these economists are leading members of the 'International Eurasian Movement' founded by Dugin in 2003.

The Russian Doctrine marks a certain end-point to the experimental phase because it attempts to provide a synthesis of the new Russian conservatism without making the claim to be a self-contained political theory. This synthesis attempt extends from the formulation of philosophico-theological foundations all the way to detailed reform proposals in nearly all the main governmental areas of the Russian state. The Doctrine otherwise gained in reputation because for a time it enjoyed the beneficent interest of the later Orthodox Patriarch Kirill, who had taken part in the discussions surrounding it.[xxiv]

3. Selected manifestos

The Western audience associates the new Russian conservatism above all with Putin's public appearances from the beginning of his third term in 2012, in which the old-new President introduced to the world a catalogue of universal, conservative 'values' such as (heterosexual) family values, traditional religion, patriotism and state sovereignty.[xxv] This apparent retreat to permanent, 'traditional' values however hides its character as rather a situative counter-movement to the 'progressive' ideologies, above all liberalism, respectively neoliberalism. In the manifestos mentioned, these 'values' play a noticeably subordinated role. What disturbed the new conservatives was not primarily the decadence of the West, but the question of an independent political course for Russia. It is above all, as in the three manifestos to be discussed further below, the connection between modernization and geopolitics that constitutes the basic theme that is, in various ways, brought into connection with other themes: the profound internal as well as external crisis; the unavoidable 'de-globalization' of the world economy; the search for an alternative economic model (national and international); the necessity of a renewal of Russian statehood and its moral fundaments; the critique of the elites, as well as the idea of Russia's mission in the creation of a new international order. The new Russian conservatives however demonstrate significant differences in the radicalness of the crisis diagnosis, their critique of the elites, and in their historico-philosophical grounding.

In what follows I intend to bring out the specific connections between these themes on the basis of the three 'manifestos' — the Memorandum of the Seraphim Club from 2003; the Russian Manifesto of the Center for Social-Conservative Politics from 2007; and the Russian Doctrine (2005-2007) of the Center for Dynamic Conservatism.

3.1 The Memorandum of the 'Seraphim Club' from 2003

In Memorandum: From the Politics of Fear to the Politics of Growth, the fundamental theme of modernization and geopolitics was at first only weakly charged ideologically. The concept

‘conservatism’ didn't even appear in the text, which begins instead with the rhetorical question: Why does Russia remain an economically and politically bankrupted country, while Germany for example had already recovered from the Second World War after only ten years? The reforms from the beginning of the 1990s, the text continues, not only did not get off the ground, but increasingly intensified Russia's dependence on energy exports. Innovative industry branches of the Soviet period had disappeared, and the standard of living, compared to the initial level, fallen even lower. The answer to the question is seen in a continued ‘politics of fear’: The fear of hunger in the early 1990s led to price liberalization; fear of the communists led to a rapid privatization; the fear of the IMF, World Bank and Bill Clinton led to the underfinancing of the state. In ‘de-globalization’ the authors see a great danger, but also a chance for Russia which should be seized. As an alternative model, de-globalization proposes a ‘reasonable’ protectionism, Keynesian-inspired investment policy to stimulate the internal market, and innovation policy — all elements that are also found in other writings of the Russian conservatives. Different from the later manifestos, the Memorandum stresses the necessity of promoting medium-size businesses instead of large (state) corporations (in conservative writings this point has gradually gained importance for pushing forward innovation and national security) — and this is perhaps what constitutes the specifically ‘liberal-conservative’ viewpoint of the Memorandum. While the tone towards the West is still moderate, the elite critique is clearly present: the anxious, unimaginative and self-centered elites must at last take responsibility for the country and trust themselves with the task.

3.2 The ‘Russian Manifesto’ of the ‘Social-Conservatives’ from 2007

In the Russian Manifesto of the social-conservatives of ‘United Russia’, the political-instrumental purpose is apparent. In strong words the authors deplore the destruction of the ‘ideological basis’ of the state, of administration, science and education, and the degradation of the social infrastructure of the country, all of which they feel has led to an ‘internal system crisis’

under conditions of ‘external threat’ (here still generally as the threat of global crisis). Despite these drastic words, the elite critique in the paper occurs only as critique of liberals, who despite the catastrophe of the 1990s wanted to continue the ‘social experiment’ of economic liberalism and would dare to grab power again. Under suspicion of corruption are above all local bureaucrats who should be better monitored, whereby simultaneously a de-bureaucratization and decentralization of administration as well as a stronger cooperation with civil society as potential overseer of public administration is needed.

To stop the ‘depressive process’ in the country, the manifesto's authors call for a ‘national strategy’. Envisioned is a shift to a ‘social-conservative’ economic and social model, the core idea of which again is a ‘moderate’ protectionism. This is part of the general demand for ‘new structures of management of global processes’, in which Russia should position itself as a ‘system-creating center of the world economy’. Innovation is in this manifesto however not a prominent issue. Instead, the necessity is emphasized of creating an ideological foundation for a national strategy of the ‘social conservatism’ seen to best reflect Russian traditions and culture. Such an ideology is necessary for the cohesion of Russian society and the state as a multiethnic entity, and its defense against the Western ‘information war’ in the wake of the ‘colour revolutions’. To this are added the classic motives of European and Russian conservatism such as critique of rationalism and individualism, and particularly of homo economicus — an ominous figure ever-present in Russian conservative texts up to today.

3.3 The Russian Doctrine – an attempt at a comprehensive political platform (2005-2007)

The connection between modernization and geopolitics is eminently present in the Russian Doctrine. With the choice of the concept ‘dynamic conservatism’ the authors consciously aim at the formulation of a ‘movement ideology’ building on tradition, as in Freeden's sense. The back-reference to tradition is not meant to serve the return to a past state of affairs (neither to the traditional autocracy nor the Soviet Union). The emphasis is rather anti-revolutionary (i.e.

revolution as a radical break with tradition is rejected as one of the central evils in Russian history) and restorative (a return to the historic role of Russia in the world). In its societal and world vision and in its elite-criticism, the Doctrine is however at the same time radical.

How the new Russian conservatism combines modernization and geopolitics into a counter-movement can here be seen especially clearly: a Russian geopolitical repositioning is held to be necessary in order to remove the external blockades to modernization created by neoliberal globalization under US hegemony and the thereby imposed liberal economic model. As the community of industrial countries – thus the Doctrine – recognized that they no longer had to compete with the Soviet Union, they exchanged the Bretton-Woods model, promotive of national economies, for that of the neoliberal market economy, where the redistributive effects are advantageous to only the strongest national economies.[xxvi] According to the authors the expected 'de-globalization' corresponds to the end of a long innovation cycle (a Kondratieff wave) that led to global crisis. In contrast to the earlier manifestos, the Doctrine equates this crisis with a 'crisis of the West'.

This chance, they say, should now be used by Russia to turn its developmental deficit into an advantage. Russia should not try to win back lost ground in its former industries, but instead directly pass into a 'post-industrial' age with investments in new economic sectors.

The geopolitical argument implies a messianic role for Russia in the world, a long tradition in Russian historico-philosophical thinking. The Doctrine represents this idea thus: Russia, even if it does not strive to be the center of the world, is of central importance for the preservation of global equilibrium. Without its return to geopolitics therefore, not only Russia, but the entire world is lost.[xxvii]

Because the Doctrine is the most systematic attempt thus far to ground a conservative agenda of renewal for Russia on the basis of tradition, the way it varies and widens the basic

themes should be investigated in more detail. Though the protagonists of the new Russian conservatism subsequently no longer followed any such holistic approach, the specific thematic complex they developed had significant influence thereafter.

Innovation-driven social capitalism in a multipolar world

As in the Russian Manifesto of the social-conservatives, also the Doctrine promotes the departure from the (neo)liberal economic model in the direction of a 'social capitalism', though the term is mentioned less prominently. The demand for a 'moderate protectionism' becomes in the Doctrine a critique of the concept of an 'open economy', as an 'unnatural' form of economy for Russia. The authors argue against membership in the WTO and for a developmental economy on the basis of a mixed ownership structure like that of France and Italy in the 1960s and 70s, South Korea and Taiwan in the 1980s, and China in the 2000s.[xxviii] Limits, they say, should be imposed on the presence of large foreign investors, capital drain stopped, and investment, innovation, industry and monetary policies should put an end to the continual replacement of domestic products by foreign imports. Private domestic investment should be promoted by a revision of the credit system. Further, the stimulation of internal demand should be brought about by, among other things, hefty wage increases and social-policy reforms that decrease market risks for the employed and reduce social and regional inequalities.[xxix] A return to soviet-style planned economy is therefore out of the question, though the amount of planned elements should be increased. Also, the 'new rich' are not to be dispossessed, but called on to take part in programs of charitable work and societal responsibility.[xxx]

In the matter of innovation, the economic-policy critique of the new conservatives focusses on the liberal reform and privatization policies of the 1990s that led to a broad retraction of state financial support of science and research and the destruction of the soviet-era innovation

system, without anything new being put in its place. In the Doctrine a restructuring of the education and research systems is proposed that, also by means of significant pay rises, should bring an end to the 'social crisis' in these areas.[xxxi]

Russian Orthodoxy as civilizational core of the 'Russian world'

The Russian Doctrine follows the idea of Russia as an independent civilization based on Russian Orthodox Christianity. By this the authors understand Orthodox faith not only as a confession (that alone would be too superficial) or a specific church, but rather as a 'social and national way of life'[xxxii] which includes 'orthodox secularization' – a secularization that, different from the European Enlightenment, does not emerge as a break with religion, but rather, transmits religion's moral and cultural core. While the 'conservative claim on religion' is no exclusively Russian phenomenon[xxxiii], the authors of the Doctrine derive from it several specific consequences: First, the Orthodox economic ethic is seen as pre-eminently suitable for the new phase of 'post-industrial' development and for social conservatism.[xxxiv] A quotation illustrates how the economic ethic serves the particular themes of Russian conservatism:

> If one carries over the principles of Orthodox ethics to economic and social life, then one can say that their transposition (or more precisely, their recreation) will produce a post-industrial, social capitalism in Russia. The post-industrialism consists in the idea that the mind of the new entrepreneurs will not so much focus on the material, but on the spiritual, cognitive production which will be the dominant sphere of production in the new epoch. Consequently, the most important areas for social investment in our post-industrial model are those that are guided by the principles of Russian Orthodox ethics, above all: spiritual pedagogy, comprehensive scientific, technical and humanitarian education, innovation and invention, creative self-actualization and the further personal growth of citizens and workers in the economy. The post-industrial cycle is able to lead the Russian entrepreneur class back to a more noble purpose: It is not the purpose to cultivate homo economicus who compete on the world market for satisfying their growing need for consumption, but much more, to make possible the education of progressive and intelligent Russian specialists, and thereby promote Russia's transformation into a balanced model of welfare and prosperity based upon sufficiency (instead of on the accumulation of wealth).[xxxv]

Second, with Christian Orthodoxy as the autochthonous 'power' of Russian civilization, a conception is adopted of the relationship between church and state: the 'symphony' of the spiritual

and political (also introduced as the definition of 'dynamic conservatism') takes place under the primacy of politics.[xxxvi] At the same time the Western concept of the separation of state and nation is rejected. The arguments are well known: Russia was never an ethnically homogeneous nation, and the loss of the State therefore always meant the loss of the Nation.[xxxvii] The 'supra-national' state surely denotes a clear hierarchy of ethnicities (Russians and Slavs are so to speak constitutive for the nation, today making up a bigger majority of the country's population than in Soviet times). Russia is therefore also not, thus the text, a multi-confessional country like the USA, and should not try to become one. The Russian state should however guarantee the other, 'recognized' traditional religions a special status. Orthodoxy however remains the defining force in Russian civilization, identity and statehood. Therefore the differentiation, introduced under Yeltsin, between Rossiiane and Russkie is rejected. The 'Russian model of statehood' should be built on the Greco-Byzantine legal tradition — not on Roman law with its strong protection of individual and ownership rights. Third, the supposed geopolitical mission of Russia is tied to Orthodoxy.[xxxviii] The Orthodox Church is considered to be the only Russian institution present in the entire post-soviet area and with that is in a position to help stabilize the influence of Russia there.[xxxix] It provides a conceptual bracketing on the 'Russian world' that is presented as a 'network structure' including the Russian diaspora in the post-soviet territories but also in Western Europe and the US.[xl]

'Good governance' and elite renewal

With the conjunction of modernization and geopolitics the new Russian conservatism posits the need for a strong state. In the Doctrine the subsequent question is more sharply posed than elsewhere, namely whether the Russian state in its present condition is at all able to manage the tasks that lie before it. The manifestos sketched out here answer this more or less in the negative. The Doctrine, too, diagnoses the elite's lack of ideas and responsibility, its clientelism and corruption. However, the attitude of its authors towards the Russian elite is much more radical,

calling the Russian administration under Putin a ‘committee of oligarchical clans’.[xli] The critique of the poverty of ideas of the elites now shifts to that of the elites' ‘Western orientation’, the ‘traditional disease of our elites’. An end must finally be put to this ‘self-humiliation’:

> They tell us: You're undeveloped and wild, you've never overcome Stalinism, Putin is a new Mussolini, you're uncivilized, you've got no democracy, you smother freedom of expression, etc. Is it possible to satisfy them? Is it possible to ever be recognized as equals? Are we really so bad, and they — so without faults? Today only complete idiots […] or total haters of their own country can't understand […] that the West uses a double standard. It's not that they're good and we're bad. When we behave like they do, a universal cry breaks out: How could you dare to? What do you think you're doing? Who gave you the right? And so we wait quietly for them to let us become like they are, to let us into the club of equals. But their answer is: 'Never'.[xlii]

Western competitive democracy is fundamentally rejected. The authors argue that democracy is no reasonable political aim, no ‘national achievement’ per se, but rather, symbolizes the conquest of the country. Moreover, formal democratic institutions have contributed importantly to blocking upward social mobility in Russian society, since the power elites are not recruited in democratic elections but through a ‘system of nomination’, the absurdity of which has led to an ever further estrangement of the population and today endangers ‘Russia's existence as sovereign state’.[xliii]

Yet that does not mean for the Doctrine's authors that democracy as an instrument of political decision-making should go unused, if it can serve overarching political ideals such as sovereignty and justice.[xliv] Among the new principles of ‘state-building’ belong elements of ‘direct democracy’ on various levels, which will put an end to politics as purely ‘capital-city business’. Societal groups should have direct influence on public administration (monitoring them to prevent corruption) and the legislative process. In addition, a ‘Senate’[xlv] of permanent members has been suggested. At the same time the authors argue for a dynastic monarchy as a center of power, with the monarch as integrating figure and source of stability in an otherwise dynamic society.[xlvi] Though these suggestions have played no further role in the developing agenda of Russian conservatism, they do make clear that their authors are not entirely committed only to Putin and ‘United Russia’.

That is also indicated by the demand for a comprehensive renewal of the elites on the basis of a new state doctrine that would also not shrink from using repressive measures.[xlvii]

3.4 Conservative modernization from the top down and its critics

None of these manifestos was adopted as a party or government program in Russia. Nevertheless, 'conservative modernization' has become a leitmotiv of the term of the Medvedev-Putin tandem (with Dmitrii Medvedev as President of the Russian Federation and Putin as Prime Minister).[xlviii] In the programmatic article Go Russia! from 2009 Medvedev administers a stiff rhetorical rebuff to the 'supporters of the permanent revolution' (whoever that may be) and 'abstract theories' that could risk the security of citizens and the country, as well as to those who would try to duplicate 'foreign models' of democracy. The vehemence with which the innovation problem is however now formulated, seems due rather to the global financial crisis of 2008/09 which revealed the dependence on oil exports as systemic risk, rather than to the influence of the new conservatives.[xlix] Still, Medvedev has pursued in his presidential term rather the 'liberal-conservative' path of the Seraphim Club, though at the end of his term he felt compelled to stress that he was no 'liberal', but a 'conservative-centrist'.[l] Under the tandem Medvedev-Putin until 2011 a comprehensive 'Agenda 2020'[li] was formulated that was to bring Russia onto a path of innovative development and up to today has set out the guidelines of official policy.

Models for this 'conservative modernization' were in 2011 still being sought in the West: in the West-German Wirtschaftswunder as well as in France, Japan and the US.[lii] The further opening to foreign direct investment, state-supported innovation projects such as Skolkovo (a kind of 'Silicon Valley' near Moscow) and the state enterprise Rosnano for the development, application and sale of nanotechnologies, the creation of a development bank and other financing instruments, and finally the acceptance into the WTO in 2011 are examples of the

Medvedev-Putin policy course. Corruption is being combatted by among other things the introduction of an ombudsman.

Not only liberal observers have doubted the likely success of this course, above all because of the post-soviet patronage system and the state's lack of capacity for comprehensive modernization.[liii] Also conservative circles took a critical attitude to this policy path. Especially aggressive was the criticism from representatives of 'dynamic conservatism', who apparently cannot forgive the political establishment for ignoring their doctrine. In February 2010 the Institute organized a 'round table' on the 'significance of the oprichnina' — a tsarist administrative structure with which Ivan the Terrible broke the power of the Russian princes (Boyars). In a report on the debate by Aver`ianov, the 'officious Russian conservatism' of the 'party of the Tsarist Kingdom of the Boyars' (i.e. United Russia) is called schizophrenic because it pretends to want to modernize the economy and society under the conservative' label, but ultimately only understands the preservation of power of the ruling oligarchy. This is neither modernization nor conservatism, he says.[liv] Certainly, the representatives of 'dynamic conservatism' for their part, with their demand for a new oprichnina, or a 'developmental dictatorship', have broken with the conservative idea of an 'orderly process of change', robbing it of everything that is 'natural'.

4. The new positioning of the Russian conservatives from 2012

For Andrei Iakovlev, a profound analyst of the Russian economy and the political elite, two events transformed the political constellation already before the 2014 conflict with the US and EU over Ukraine.

The first event was the global financial crisis which revealed the weaknesses of the model of state capitalism developed from 2003 based on large state corporations and federal bureaucracy.[lv] The second resulted from the 'Arab Spring' and the internal protests against election fraud in the 2011 Russian parliamentary elections. These events further strengthened

the position of the security and military structures within the power elites[lvi] and apparently led Putin to the assessment that the path of 'conservative modernization' was insufficient to save the ruling elite's power and as an economic program.[lvii]

The regrouping of the Russian conservatives should be viewed against this backdrop. The Izborsk Club[lviii] and the ISÉPI Foundation with their Notebooks on Conservatism are two new centers for the construction of a conservative ideology whose leading personalities overlap only a little. Both initiatives arose with the initial support of the presidential administration. Considerable resources went into their websites and media presence. Their political weight and profiles are however distinctly different. While the Izborsk Club is a group of effective propagandists for political and societal change and stands in a relationship of tension with the reigning political powers, the authors of the Notebooks try to provide a philosophico-historical foundation — at least, at first glance — for a moderate Russian conservatism, and at the same time to make it attractive to (potential) western allies. With that a purported value-conservatism takes center-stage vis-a-vis political claims.

4.1 The militant conservatism of the Izborsk Club

The Izborsk Club represents the broadest alliance up to now of Russian conservatives, having established affiliates in Russia, Crimea, Donetsk, and in 2016 also in Moldova. Several of its permanent members have long been part of the political establishment in Moscow and St. Petersburg, or been coopted by it in recent years. The central founding figure and chairman of the Club is the publicist Aleksandr Prokhanov who, ever since the putsch attempt of 1991, has been engaged in the project of a Russian rebirth to imperial greatness and is credited with inventing the formula 'New Russia' (Novorossiia). The most well-known political supporter (and reputed to be an unofficial member) of the Club is First Deputy Prime Minister and national-conservative Dmitrii Rogozin.[lix] A driving intellectual force is again the 'Institute for Dynamic Conserv-

atism', whose founders apparently took renewed hope of political influence with Putin's accession to office. Thus Maksim Kalashnikov entitled his 2012 book expectantly: Stanet li Putin novym Stalinym? (Putin — the new Stalin?).

Among the permanent members who regularly publish on the Institute website and in the journal of the Club 'Russian Strategies', are also the (already mentioned) TV-journalist and Putin-supporter Mikhail Leont`ev who from 2014 has been vice-president for PR at the state oil company Rosneft, the neo-stalinist publicist and Chair of the 'Fatherland Party' Nikolai Starikov, who is commercial director of the First Channel TV station in St. Petersburg, as well as the neo-eurasian Aleksandr Dugin, about whose relation to the 'powers' in the West a lot has been speculated[lx], but who does not figure among the central programmatic figures of the Izborsk Club.[lxi]

Particular intellectual and political clout have had three media-savvy economists and political pundits — Mikhail Deliagin, Sergei Glaz`ev and Mikhail Khazin (the latter already participated in the Doctrine). All three belonged during the 1990s to the liberal reform camp. Deliagin and Gla`zev were long considered by some observers to be rather 'social-democratic' or 'leftist'[lxii], and Glaz`ev in particular has stood by the concept of a 'mixed economy'.[lxiii] Glaz`ev's participation provoked particular public attention since he collaborated on the project of a Eurasian Tariff Union and counts today as among Putin's closest advisors. In April 2014, as one of the strategists responsible for the Russian Ukrainian policy, he was placed on a EU sanction list.[lxiv]

The now openly declared campaign against the West as Russia's 'geopolitical adversary' is already made clear in the strategy paper Mobilization project, as key prerequisite for a 'major breakthrough' strategy of 2012, which can be called the founding document of the Club (in the following called the 'Memorandum')[lxv]. It is the only document of the Club that appears on its website in English. Among its main authors are those of the Russian Doctrine — Aver`ianov, Kobiakov and Kalashnikov — in addition to Deliagin and the Presidential Advisor for Eurasian

Integration, Glaz`ev. In the Izborsk Club Memorandum the basic themes of the new Russian conservatism are varied and again intensified. The 2012 text begins with the prediction of a directly imminent global war.

In the authors' view the confrontation has already begun, and they draw four scenarios for the future of the country: (1) the further disintegration of the society — similar to the collapse of the USSR; (2) the 'direct or indirect occupation' of the country, in which Russia is integrated into the strategies of the conquerors (here as precedents are mentioned Germany and Japan after the Second World War, and the territorial division of the country is not excluded); (3) a 'revolution' with a fundamentally new project for society realized by new actors. As 'best-known illustrations' for this radical change they name 'the inner dynamic of 20th-century revolutions in Russia, China, and Iran; and (4) The implementation of a long-term 'system-based strategy' 'realized by a charismatic leader and a conscientious, patriotic elite'. Even with the radical tone here towards the unruly elites, a conservative ideology (in Freeden's[lxvi] sense) is still advocated that despises revolutionary upheavals.

Scenario 4 is programmatic. As already in the Russian Doctrine, the lack of efficiency of the 'clan-corporative' state represents the fundamental obstacle to a successful modernization, which also endangers Russia's geopolitical positioning. Russia's mission of balancing the power of the West and East in the world has thereby been degraded to one of defense against external enemies and their internal agents. For of what use, they ask, is a rearmament program if a good part of the money simply disappears into the black holes of waste and corruption in the process? Without 'social and institutional modernization' — thus the basic tenor — there is no defensive capability. To achieve that will be necessary first a new vertical cadre mobility for the formation of a 'patriotic' leadership and the mobilization of an 'autonomous' civil society to monitor corrupt apparatchiks. But it remains unclear where the autonomy needed to do this shall come from. There will have to be a war on 'competing power-wielding mechanisms' — i.e. criminals, mafia, corrupt systems and regional clan structures.

The deep internal system crisis is again, and above all, traced to the elite's failure, while the question of institutional quality fades further into the background. Even if the authors can point to several institutional reforms, the disciplining and organizing power of ideology and the will to lead are seen as the decisive activator for renewal. As models for this mode of development, China under Deng Xiaoping, Taiwan, Vietnam, Cuba and above all the Soviet Union of the 1930s-to-50s period are named. But also Roosevelt and Khomeini appear in the text as strategically talented leaders who — through the aid of a 'national mobilization ideology' — are considered to have implemented systemic transformations.

With the demand for a 'national mobilization ideology' by the 'patriotic' parts of the elite, and after a 'great breakthrough', the Memorandum goes further than do previous conservative manifestos. Ideology again does not mean a logically closed world-view, but rather a collection of aims, interpretations and values. But it is no longer just a matter of a normative foundation for a national strategy, as in the manifesto of the social conservatives. Instead the 'patriotic' segments of the elite should establish a new state ideology that guides the populace through drastic structural changes, identifies friends from foes[lxvii] and restores the unity of the Russian State and its position in the world. The normative framework is formed by 'basal values' which come pretty close to formulations from Putin's speeches and contain the consecration of tradition: justice, patriotism, social solidarity, the will to strong leadership and self-discipline. Beyond that, the 'traditional values and ideas of the majority of people' (for example, in what concerns marriage and family) should be resolutely defended.

As to the structural reform measures, again reference is made to the mixed-economy model, however with new accents. Proposed is a clear 'legal institutionalization' of the existing state sectors, that is, the formal division of the economy into a state-managed 'market-economy sector' and 'non-state market economy', as are usual in many developed Western market economies. As belonging to the state sector the authors count the 'military-industrial complex', large civilian firms, banks, research and development institutions, as well as the 'natural monopolies'

(infrastructure companies). By means of this state sector, the renewal of 'socio-economic structures', the creation of an 'internal market model' for growth, as well as the realization of innovation-technological breakthroughs in selected key industries should become possible. The state sector should also be the motor of the planned 'socio-economic Eurasian System' with an integrated market and finance system, common security and foreign policies, scientific research and culture — the core project of the Izborsk group for Russia as an autonomous pole in a new world economic order.

Also this 'Manifesto' has shown but limited political effect. Marléne Laruelle[lxviii] explains the receding influence of the Izborsk group with internal power struggles and Putin's change of policy towards the separatists in East Ukraine which now seems to be rather a case of the proven strategy of a 'frozen conflict'.[lxix] The Izborsk group's newer frontal attack on the elites however is also a reason why the establishment cannot completely warm up to the 'mobilization project'.[lxx]

However, with the new emphasis on 'economic sovereignty' in a multi-polar world[lxxi], the Eurasian project, and in view of the noticeably increased ideologization of the Russian public, the influence of the Club can hardly be denied.[lxxii]

The group's extensive publicistic activity is uninterrupted, and despite all of Putin's support, critics have still not been lacking.[lxxiii] At the same time for the new Russian conservatives the question of alliances has gained in importance, which is also aimed especially at rebutting critical voices in the 'West', though the Izborsk group rejects the right-left political scale.[lxxiv] In their writings the tone has become sharper towards the transnational 'super-elite' and 'finance oligarchy'; meanwhile a value system for a broad international alliance is being worked on. At the same time civilizatory resp. kulturkreis-theory explanatory models, such as those that dominated in the Doctrine, have lost some significance. Aver`ianov sees himself now even as defender of the original 'universal' values of the 'modern West'. The essay Drugaia 'Kholodnaia vojna' (The other Cold War. A strategy for Russia)[lxxv] expresses pregnantly the reflexive and

situative character of these 'universal values' formulated as the conscious 'reversal of the neoliberal doctrine':

1. instead of human rights: the true right (pravda) of 'man';
2. instead of equating freedom with emancipation: freedom as sovereignty;
3. instead of the personality of individualism: the personality of solidarity;
4. instead of democratization: the real power of the people (majority rule and freedom of peoples).

4.2 Value-conservatism as legitimation: the Notebooks on Conservatism

In the same year the Izborsk Club was founded, the 'Foundation – Institute for Socio-Economic and Political Research' (Foundation ISÉPI) was initiated in Moscow (which has a branch office in Crimea but not in Donetsk). The task of this think-tank is the elaboration and propagation of strategic and administrative solutions.[lxxvi] Its Chairman, Dmitrii Badovskii, came directly from the presidential administration (most recently as Deputy Director for internal policy in the Russian President's office) to head the Foundation.[lxxvii]

Why the Foundation in 2014 began publishing its own journal, can only be supposed. That they didn't want to let the Izborsk group alone be the ones to formulate the principles of conservatism, is understandable. Co-authors with Badovskii in the redaction of the Notebooks on Conservatism, Mezhuev and Remizov, are two authors of the manifesto Russian Political Conservatism of 2006. The initial Notebook observed the 140th birthday of Nikolai Berdiaev (1874-1948) who already in a speech by Putin was raised to the status of one of the founding fathers of Russian conservatism.[lxxviii] The Foundation also created a prize in 2014 named in honor of Berdiaev: 'The Heritage of Russian Thought'.

The reference to Berdiaev is interesting in various regards. Berdiaev belonged among the sharpest and most farsighted critics of Russian marxism and the violent stalinist moderni-

zation. He was critical of the West, but not 'anti-Western'. Thus Berdiaev[lxxix] rejected the subordination of Russian Orthodoxy to the power of the 'totalitarian', imperial-authoritarian Russia (the 'third Rome'), as well as to that of the Soviet system, for which he was expatriated in 1922. The containment of totalitarian tendencies in the modern world was for him only possible by making government rule strictly bound to Christian values. He was neither a staunch advocate of kulturkreis theory (which sees in Russia a fully distinct civilization) nor did he belong among the emigre founders of Eurasianism, with which he had only flirted for a time. In his work of 1946 he even built a gallery of the ancestors of the 'Russian idea' which for him was characterized by messianism and universalism, but from which two figureheads of Russian conservatism — the kulturkreis theoretician Nikolai Danilevskii and theocrat Konstantin Leont`ev — were decidedly excluded. To that extent, the Notebooks can be seen as an attempt to create a conservative Russian tradition and identity to compete with that of the Izborsk Club.

With regard to basic themes, the Notebook' authors have until now contributed little of an original nature to the new Russian conservatism. Attention to the modernization and innovation themes, considerations on how the new global order should be designed and so on is only marginal, while critiques of the elite and appeals to an internal crisis are almost totally lacking.

The central questions that move many of the Notebooks' authors, are: Who shall be taken into the theory-historical canon of Russian conservatism? What is originally Russian about it? But can commonalities with European conservatism be established all the same — and if so, what are they?[lxxx] At the same time in Russian conservatism a 'soft geopolitical power' is seen which is directed towards East Europe, but also towards the West.[lxxxi]

With the thematic reduction and the attempt to direct Russian conservatism into a broad (Western) conservative current, a second latent tension appears still more evidently however, namely between conservatism and Eurasianism, between the universalist claim to be a countermovement to the 'progressive' ideologies of socialism and liberalism, and the particularism of

the kulturkreis, resp. civilizational theories. Mezhuev points to this problem with his remark about the indecisiveness of 'our present-day conservative consciousness, also Putin's'. He raises the problem of a solution even to the status of the 'main issue' of Russian conservatism: 'On the one hand we appeal to European conservatives as our partners, as we remark that they, as Russia, are against the legalization of gay marriage for example, as in Russia. […] On the other hand, our geopolitics are formulated in civilizational categories'. [lxxxii]

An answer to this 'main question' is given by Remizov and his author collective in an essay written on behalf of the Foundation. Remizov, who for years has widely analysed European and American conservative and communitarian thought, conceives of Russia not as the civilizational core of Eurasia, but as 'part of European civilization' (but not its 'pupil'), and as the 'other Europe'.[lxxxiii] But geopolitically the authors reject an 'open economy' and cling to the necessity of Russia's building its own 'world-economy' (in Wallerstein's sense). They do not justify this however in a civilization-theoretical sense as do many eurasians and conservatives influenced by them.[lxxxiv]

It would be however wrong to see in this suggestion a joint position of the Notebooks' author-group, since many of them end up, in the search for what is specifically Russian in conservatism, using civilizatory arguments. With Russia as the 'other Europe', the conservatives' ideological critique of liberalism becomes a critique of the present-day European Union as a 'post-Europe' — one estranged from itself by transnational integration, multi-culturalism, immigration, excessive protection of minorities and bureaucracy.[lxxxv] And so Russia's geopolitical mission becomes in this view a mission for (Western) Europe. The catalogues of 'values' that they offer the Europeans vary only slightly. The philosophy historian and head of a research project on 'Current Russian Conservatism' at Lomonosov University, Oleg Avdeev, suggests, for example, the following catalogue of values:[lxxxvi]

(1) Man and woman are fundamentally different and assume different social roles (which is not to reject legal equality, but should imply the rejection of feminism); (2) the traditional institution of the monogamous heterosexual marriage; (3) traditional religious values (in opposition to secularism); (4) traditional morals; (5) national identity, history and cultural traditions; (6) the State may not be a 'guardian' of the economy, but is 'the political expression of the unity of Nation and Culture'; (7) Patriotism as mode of thought (but which simultaneously rejects nationalism).

For still other authors, it is state sovereignty that is even the 'highest spiritual and moral value'.[lxxxvii] For the socially complex and semi-sovereign countries of the EU, even the proposals of the (purportedly) moderate Russian publishers and authors of the Notebooks on Conservatism are thus more than forceful enough to deflate any illusions obscuring the geopolitics that stands behind them.

5. Résumé

External observers sometimes interpret the new Russian conservatism as an attempt to establish a new state ideology based on pre-Soviet traditions that replaces communism but not the imperial ambitions of the Soviet Union.[lxxxviii] Conservatism and Putinism may seem to be one and the same.[lxxxix] Others emphasize the 'purely instrumental character' of the conservative ideology for Putin, which serves chiefly as internal and external political policy legitimation (including for disciplining his own elites). A new 'Potemkin village' is being built in order to distract public attention from the sociopolitical and economic problems of the country.[xc] The increasing ideologization of Russian society from the top down and the fervor liberated by it on different levels (also in the lower socioeconomic ranks) of society might be interpreted as proof for both arguments. The co-founder of the Seraphim Clubs, Aleksandr Privalov — disturbed by a letter from a schoolbook publisher's director to Putin demanding the 'introduction of new subjects,

methods and materials' to raise the 'ideological effectivity' of the educational system — called conservatism Russia's 'newest fashion'.[xci]

The instrumental relation that the inner political circle of power might have to ideology should however not hide the fact that the new Russian conservatism is in fact a counter-movement to socialism and liberalism in Mannheim and Freeden's sense. Its intellectual protagonists belong to the late cohorts of the 'Soviet generation' born between 1960 and the late 1970s who thereby experienced their primary educational socialization in the Soviet Union but spent their occupational life mainly after 1989 and thus also had to deal with the experiences of that period. Though these 'ideology-producers' were in part (but perhaps just temporary) coopted by the elites, they are not simply tools of the political establishment.

The new Russian conservatism is, as I have shown, neither an in itself closed structure for thinking, nor can the distinct currents be clearly separated. Instead, several basic themes dominate which are variously recombined and accentuated. The movement rejecting liberalism in its contemporary form of the 'neoliberal' economic model and liberal competitive democracy, is the core of the new Russian conservatism. Both are despised as the path to a 'dependent (liberal) capitalism' (as has emerged in East-Central Europe[xcii]) and geopolitical insignificance. At issue is an entirely other model of political economy, national as well as international, a more efficient statehood and (at least in the experimental phase) a more equitable model of distribution that however does not include abolishing the market economy. In my view, this is what makes the new Russian conservatism attractive in great part. The aim is thus neither a return to the Soviet Union, nor simply the restoration of Russia's traditional empire. The vehemence with which the greater part of the new conservatives tackles the internal modernization problem differentiates them from the philosophico-culturological 'neo-Eurasians' of the 1990s. With further conservative radicalization the geopolitical components of the political economy are emerging into the foreground of the new conservative thinking, while criticism of the internal situation is weakening in importance.

In the research literature the new Russian conservatives are often referred to as 'national-conservative' or 'nationalists'.[xciii] This surely corresponds in part to their self-identification, but the term obscures the traditional tension between nation and imperium in Russian thinking which precisely for that reason has historically rejected a primarily ethnic or race-based nationalism. Many of the new conservatives turn this argument against a classical European nation-state concept, remaining attached to the 'civilizational' concept that creates a contradictory tension with the universal claims of value-conservatism which has gained in importance since ca. 2012.

Together with the US 'neocons' (who came to power with Bush Jr. and for the new Russian conservatives provided an important background for reflection in their experimental phase) the 'Russian neocons', on the one hand, share geopolitical thinking. The US neocons however never had the problem of a needed catch-up modernization, nor is the American understanding of the state compatible with the Russian idea of unity of people and state — a people constituted by the state. But on the other hand the new Russian conservatives reject the neocons' specific combination of conservatism, neoliberalism and libertarian thought.[xciv]

Their basic critical stance towards the western-dominated globalization and their retreat to the 'nation' as economic and protective space the Russian conservatives share with European globalization opponents and EU critics. At the same time they consciously refuse a left-right classification, which makes it difficult for outsiders to apply to them the attribute 'extreme rightwing'.[xcv] Only with the increasing self-attribution of 'universal' conservative values does the new Russian conservatism move clearly to the right on the European political spectrum. The cultural incompatibility of the European Left and Right in regard to the definition of classical 'modern' or 'European values' seems not to trouble the new Russian conservatives in their search for allies however. Whether and in how far the possibility of an alliance with them is attractive to the European Right depends then again strongly on the European Right's geopolitical positioning. Thus Marine Le Pen may allow herself to be financially supported by Putin

and in the deal approve his geopolitical ambitions. For the Polish national and social conservatives surrounding Jaroslaw Kaczynski, however, the ideological similarities to the new Russian conservatives are certainly insufficient to allow the formation of any alliance.

[i] Translated by Franz Zurbrugg.
[ii] Karl Mannheim, 'Das konservative Denken', in Mannheim, Wissenssoziologie. Auswahl aus dem Werk, Berlin/Neuwied, 1964 [1927], pp. 408-508 (p. 94 f.).
[iii] Samuel Huntington, 'Konservatismus als Ideologie', in Hans-Gerd Schumann (ed.), Konservatismus, Königsstein, 1984 [1954], pp. 89-111.
[iv] See Aleksandr Dugin, 'Novaia Formula Putina', 2014 <http://zavtra.ru/content/view/novayaformula-putina/> [Accessed 7 November 2015]; Sergei Prozorov, 'Russian conservatism in the Putin presidency: the dispersion of a hegemonic discourse', Journal of Politicial Ideologies, 10, 2005, 2, pp. 121-143; Mikhail Remizov, 'Konservatizm segodnia: analiticheskii obzor', 2006 (hereafter: Remizov, Konservatizm segodnia) <www.apn.ru/publications/article1748.htm> [Accessed 24 June 2015].
[v] Michael Freeden, Ideologies and political theory. A conceptual approach, Oxford, 1996 (hereafter: Freeden, Ideologies and political theory).
[vi] Ibid., p. 332 f.
[vii] Lesley Chamberlain, 'Father of Russia's conservatism', 2014 <http://standpointmag.co.uk/node/5459/full> [accessed 3 August 2015].
[viii] Leonid Poliakov, 'Liberal`nyi konservator', 2000 <www.ng.ru/ideas/2000-02-02/8_conserve.html> [accessed 13 December 2015].
[ix] See for example. Martin Greiffenhagen, Das Dilemma des Konservatismus in Deutschland, Frankfurt a. M., 1986 (hereafter: Greiffenhagen, Das Dilemma des Konservatismus in Deutschland).
[x] Aleskandr Dugin, 'Konservativnaya Revoljutsiya', 1992 <http://arcto.ru/article/21> [accessed 13 October 2015].
[xi] See Marléne Laruelle, Russian Eurasianism. An ideology of empire, Baltimore, 2008.
[xii] That year is taken as the starting point by the Russian conservatives themselves; cf. Vitalii Aver`ianov, 'Dva Konservativnye Manifesty', 2006 <http://pravaya.ru/look/8921> [accessed 5 August 2015].
[xiii] See Mikhail Leont`ev, Maksim Sokolov, Aleksandr Privalov, 'Memorandum: Ot politiki strakha k politike rosta', Vedomosti, 15 January 2003 <www.vedomosti.ru/newspaper/articles/2003/01/15/memorandum-ot-politiki-straha-k-politike-rosta> [accessed 20 December 2015].
[xiv] See Remizov, Konservatizm segodnia; E. Kozlova, N. Mel`nikova, Sistema moskovskikh klubov: elita, lobbisty, 'mozgovye tsentry', Moscow, 2006 <www.kommersant.ru/articles/2007/Docs/1.doc> [accessed 13 December 2015].
[xv] See Vladimir Pligin, Viktor Zubarev, Valerii Fadeev, 'Manifest rossiiskogo politicheskogo liberalizma. O sozdanii Liberal`noi platform v partii "Edinaia Rossiia"', 4 February 2013 <http://er.ru/news/96408/> [accessed 3 December 2015].
[xvi] Remizov, Konservatizm segodnia.
[xvii] Marléne Laruelle, Inside and around the Kremlin's black box: the new nationalist thinktanks in Russia, Stockholm, 2009 (hereafter: Laruelle, Inside and around the Kremlin's black box), p. 60.
[xviii] See Remizov, Konservatizm segodnia; Boris Mezhuev, 'Neokonservativnyi proekt dlia Rossii', 16 March 2007 < www.apn.ru/opinions/article11658.htm> [accessed 25 November 2015]; Valerii Senderov, 'Conservative revolution in the post-Soviet Russia: an overview of the main ideas', Social Sciences, 39, 2007, 1, pp. 63-81.
[xix] See Sergei Baburin et al., 'Imperativy Natsional`nogo Vozrozhdeniia', 21 March 2006 <www.pravaya.ru/look/7060> [accessed 3 December 2015].

[xx] See Il`ia Brazhnikov, '"Obmirshchennyi" konservatizm', 27 July 2006 <www.apn.ru/publications/article10058.htm; www.apn.ru/opinions/article10100.htm> [accessed 29 May 2015].
[xxi] Laruelle, Inside and around the Kremlin's black box, p. 32; Aleksandr Verkhovskii, Emil Pain, 'Tsivilizatsionnyi natsionalizm: rossiiskaia versiia "osobogo puti"', Politicheskaia kontseptologiia, 2013, 4, p. 34.
[xxii] See 'Programmnye tezisy Rossiiskogo Sotsial`nogo-konservativnogo Sojuza (RSKS)', 10 January 2012 <http://cskp.ru/analytics/11432/> [accessed 30 December 2015].
[xxiii] Laruelle, Inside and around the Kremlin's black box, p. 31.
[xxiv] The 'Doctrine' and 'Center' resp. the 'Institute for Dynamic Conservatism' were financed by the 'Foundation of Russian Entrepreneurs' which is however not a foundation of an enterprise confederation, but rather claims to finance its societal activities by donations. This NGO founded in 2004 has no website of its own, and names as its founders and operators the Russian Orthodox Eparchy of Ekaterinburg and five private persons.
[xxv] See for example Vladimir Putin, 'Poslanie Prezidenta Federal`nomu Sobraniiu', 12 December 2013 (herafter Putin, 'Poslanie Prezidenta Federal`nomu Sobraniiu') <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/19825> [accessed 24 June 2015]; Vladimir Putin, 'Vystuplenie Vladimira Putina na zasedanii kluba "Valdai"', Rossiiskaia Gazeta, 19 September 2013 <www.rg.ru/2013/09/19/stenogramma-site.html> [accessed 24 June 2015].
[xxvi] Team of authors led by Vitalii Aver`ianov, Andrei Kobiakov, Vladimir Kucherenko, Russkaia Doktrina, Moscow, 2005 <www.rusdoctrina.ru/page95507.html> [accessed 7 August 2015] (hereafter: Russkaia Doktrina), part IV, Ch. 1, 2; In this analysis of the global transformative situation, Immanuel Wallerstein is referred to explicitly. A similar argumentation over the global redistributive mechanism in favor of the US after Bretton-Woods can also be found in Yanis Varoufakis' 'The Global Minotaur' (2013).
[xxvii] Russkaia Doktrina, introduction, section 7; Russkaia Doktrina, part II.
[xxviii] Russkaia Doktrina, part IV, ch. 1, 3; Russkaia Doktrina, part IV, ch. 6, 6.
[xxix] This demand implies a massive critique of the liberal social-policy reforms of 2004 (Russkaia Doktrina, part IV, ch. 3, 10; Russkaia Doktrina, part V).
[xxx] Russkaia Doktrina, part IV, ch. 9, 8.
[xxxi] Russkaia Doktrina, part IV, ch. 12, 2.
[xxxii] Russkaia Doktrina, part II, ch. 5.
[xxxiii] See Greiffenhagen, Das Dilemma des Konservatismus in Deutschland, p. 58.
[xxxiv] The critical reference to Max Weber is noticeable but not developed by the authors. The Orthodox economic ethic's defense against the thesis of the "Protestant Ethic" as the foundation of modern capitalism was directed above all against the Russian debates of the 1990s that refer to Weber.
[xxxv] Russkaia Doktrina, part II, ch. 1, 3; translated by K.B.
[xxxvi] Russkaia Doktrina, part II, ch. 1, 2.
[xxxvii] Russkaia Doktrina, part II, ch. 2.
[xxxviii] Russkaia Doktrina, introduction, section 7; Doctrine, part II.
[xxxix] Russkaia Doktrina, part II, ch. 1.
[xl] Russkaia Doktrina, part III; ch. 3, 7, 6.
[xli] Russkaia Doktrina, part IV, ch. 3, 9.
[xlii] Russkaia Doktrina, introduction, section 3; translated by K.B.
[xliii] Russkaia Doktrina, part III, ch. 7; 7, 5 and 7, 6 (in particular).
[xliv] Russkaia Doktrina, part III, ch. 1.
[xlv] The Senate is to consist, in one-quarter parts each, of the career military class, clerics (predominantly Russian Orthodox) and university-level representatives; one-quarter shall be named by the current head of state. Russkaia Doktrina, part III, ch. 2.
[xlvi] Russkaia Doktrina, part I, ch. 2, 4.
[xlvii] Russkaia Doktrina, part III, ch. 7, 1.
[xlviii] Silvana Malle, 'Economic modernisation and diversification in Russia. Constraints and challenges', Journal of Eurasian Studies, 4, 2013, 1, pp.78-99; Dmitrii Trenin, 'Russia's conservative mod-

ernization: a mission impossible?', 25 May 2010 (hereafter: Trenin, 'Russia's conservative modernization') <http://carnegie.ru/2010/05/25/russia-s-conservative-modernization-mission-impossible> [accessed 6 July 2015]; Andrei Iakovlev, 'Russian modernization: between the need for new players and the fear of losing control of rent resources', Journal of Eurasian Studies, 5, 2014, 1 (hereafter: Iakovlev, 'Russian modernization'), pp. 10-20.

[xlix] Iakovlev, 'Russian modernization'.

[l] See Aleksandra Samarina, 'Martovskie tezisy Dmitriia Medvedeva. Vrag Konservatora-ne liberal. A reaktsioner', Nezavisimaia Gazeta, 28 March 2013< www.ng.ru/politics/2013-03-28/1_medvedev.html> [accessed 9 December 2015]; Ol`ga Lesnikova, 'Pressa Rossii: Medvedev smenil politorientatsiiu', 28 April 2012 <www.bbc.com/russian/russia/2012/04/120428_rus_press.shtml> [accessed 9 December 2015].

[li] See 'Innovative Russia – 2020', a position paper adopted by the party congress in 2011: <www.isma.ivanovo.ru/attachments/1770> [accessed 5 December 2015); V. Mau, Ia. Kus`minova (ed.), Strategiia-2020: Novaia model` rosta – novaia sotsial`naia politika, Moscow, 2013.

[lii] See 'Konservativnaia modernizatsiia v Zapadnoi Germanii', 4 May 2011 <http://er.ru/news/47737/> [accessed 5 December 2015]; 'Konservativnye modernizatsii v stranakh "Bolshoi vos`merki"', 3 May 2011 <http://er.ru/news/47701/> [accessed 5 December 2015].

[liii] Cf. Vladimir Gel`man, 'Sackgasse. Autoritäre Modernisierung in Russland', Osteuropa, 60, 2010, 1, pp. 3-13; Henry Hale, Patronal politics: Eurasian regime dynamics in comparative perspective, New York, 2014; Trenin, 'Russia's conservative modernization'.

[liv] Vitalii Aver`ianov, 'Oprichnina: Modernizatsiia po-russki', 26 March 2010 <www.apn.ru/publications/article22525.htm> [accessed 30 December 2015]; The Oprichnina as violent modernization from above concerns the authors associated with the 'Institute for Dynamic Conservatism' also in other publications. The idea of the 'developmental dictatorship' allows them thus to unproblematically bridge the time from Ivan the Terrible to Stalin.

[lv] David Lane, Elite and classes in the transformation of state socialism, New Brunswick, 2011; Iakovlev, 'Russian modernization'.

[lvi] Andrei Iakovlev, 'The Russian economy at the crossroads. Before and beyond the Ukrainian crisis', Baltic Worlds, 2015, 3-4 (hereafter: Iakovlev, 'The Russian economy at the crossroads') < http://balticworlds.com/the-russian-economy-at-the-crossroads/> [accessed 20 December 2015], pp. 48-52.

[lvii] Shortly after the elections of December 2011, the government announced the massive expansion of military spending and homeland security. The law against 'foreign agents' was adopted, and the development of the Eurasian economic community promoted. Against this background the negotiations on the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU took on an explosive potential and moreover, were being carried out without Russia. An integration of Ukraine into a similarly comprehensive 'Eurasian Union' would have been blocked because of the detailed regulations and standards of the European Acquis Communautaire; on the role of the EU, see Thomas Vogel, 'Überforderung und Desinteresse. Die EU, die Nachbarschaft und die Ukraine', Osteuropa, 64, 2014, 9-10, pp. 51-65.

[lviii] Izborsk is a small town on the Russian-Estonian border, home of one of the earliest-mentioned castles in Russian historiography. The city was fought over again and again. After 1945 Estonia's borders were moved westwards making the city again Russian and symbolizing thus a kind of Russian outpost.

[lix] Roland Götz, 'Isborsker Klub: Russlands Antiwestler', Osteuropa, 65, 2015, 3 (hereafter: Götz, 'Isborsker Klub'), pp. 109-128; Marléne Laruelle, 'A nationalist Kulturkampf in Russia? The Izborsky Club as the Anti-Valday', Paper, presented at the CREES conference 2015 (hereafter: Laruelle, 'A nationalist Kulturkampf in Russia?'; Dmitri Stratievski, 'Die Türme des Kremls. Auch in Zeiten des "Putinismus" liegt die Entscheidungshoheit nicht bei einer einzelnen Person', 16 February 2015 < www.ipg-journal.de/kommentar/artikel/die-tuerme-des-kreml-798/> [accessed 3 August 2015]; Iakovlev, 'The Russian economy at the crossroads'.

[lx] Walter Laqueur, Putinism: Russia and its future with the West, New York, 2015 (hereafter: Laqueur, Putinism); Andreas Umland, Post-Soviet 'uncivil society' and the rise of Aleksandr Dugin: a case study of the extraparliamentary radical right in contemporary Russia, Cambridge, 2007.

[lxi] For a full overview of the permanent members see: <http://www.izborsk-club.ru/lpr/izborsk.php> [accessed 6 December 2015].

[lxii] Laruelle, Inside and around the Kremlin's black box.
[lxiii] See for example Sergei Glaz`ev, 'Konservatizm i Novaia Ekonomika', Tetradi po Konservatizmu, 2014, 1 (hereafter: Glaz`ev, 'Konservatizm i Novaia Ekonomika') , pp. 61-69-.
[lxiv] Gla`zev has been since 2008 also member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, which confers on him thereby a particular academic consecration.
[lxv] Both the Russian original text and the translation were evidently written in great haste. The terms used in the translation do not always do justice to the original. In the following therefore mostly the Russian version is referred to. The original is available at: <http://dynacon.ru/content/articles/975/> [accessed 5 December 2015] and the English translation at: <www.dynacon.ru/content/articles/1040/> [accessed 5 December 2015].
[lxvi] Freeden, Ideologies and political theory.
[lxvii] This is supposed to come about through a clear 'hierarchizing' of internal and external enemies and friends, which should then become strongly anchored in the 'societal consciousness'.
[lxviii] Laruelle, 'A nationalist Kulturkampf in Russia?'.
[lxix] See also Paul Sonne, 'Russian nationalists feel let down by Kremlin, again', The Wall Street Journal, 4 July 2014 <www.wsj.com/articles/russian-nationalists-feel-let-down-by-kremlin-again-1404510139> [accessed 12 November 2015).
[lxx] Andrei Iakovlev states: 'The policy proposals of the Izborsk Club failed to reach this objective, as representatives of the Russian administrative and political elite who have enjoyed the "blessing of civilization" in full measure in the 1990s-2000s would hardly be willing to voluntary return to a society living behind the "iron curtain"'. (Andrei Iakovlev, 'What is Russia defending with its "militant policy"'?, Unpublished Paper, presented at the CREES conference, 2015; This charge can also be read into statements made by the Izborsk group, for example in an interview with Deliagin in January 2016 (<www.izborsk-club.ru/content/articles/8174/> [accessed 11 January 2016].
[lxxi] Silvana Malle, 'Economic sovereignty. A militant agenda for Russia', Working Paper Series at the Department of Economics at University of Verona, 27, 2015.
[lxxii] Cf. also Elena Chebankova, 'Contemporary Russian conservatism', Post-Soviet Affairs, 28, 2015, 3, pp. 319-45; Laruelle, 'A nationalist Kulturkampf in Russia?'; Witold Rodkiewicz, Jadwiga Rogoźa, Potemkin conservatism. An ideological tool of the Kremlin, Warsaw, 2015 (hereafter: Rodkiewicz, Rogoźa, Potemkin conservatism).
[lxxiii] Openly Kalashnikov stresses his disappointment in his book 'Kremlin 2.0 – Russia's Last Chance', which he begins with a letter to Putin. The author offers 'citizen President' a deal: unlimited political support and the personal protection of the 'national-patriotic forces' in exchange for Putin's finally taking seriously the realization of a 'developmental dictatorship'; Maksim Kalashnikov, Kreml`-2.0. Poslednii Shans Rossii, Moscow, 2015.
[lxxiv] See Vitalii Aver`ianov et al., 'Drugaia "Kholodnaia Voina". Strategiia dlia Rossii', 2014 (hereafter: Aver`ianov et al., 'Drugaia "Kholodnaia Voina"') < www.dynacon.ru/content/articles/4410/> [accessed 25 May 2015]; Glaz`ev, 'Konservatizm i Novaia Ekonomika'.
[lxxv] Aver`ianov et al., 'Drugaia "Kholodnaia Voina"'.
[lxxvi] See: Fond ISEPI, 2015 <www.isepr.ru/about/mission/> [accessed 29 May 2015].
[lxxvii] The Foundation's Board is composed of top functionaries (out of the twelve members, two women) from politics, the Russian Industry and Entrepreneur Confederation, the Federation of Independent Russian Unions, a university rector and others. Board Chair is Orlova Svetlana Iur`evna, member of the High Board of the Party 'United Russia'. Besides that, there is a Board of Experts, the composition of which is not indicated. From its inception the Foundation has won yearly financial support from the President which he awards to NGOs in a competitive system.
[lxxviii] Putin, 'Poslanie Prezidenta Federal`nomu Sobraniiu'.
[lxxix] Nikolai Berdiaev, Wahrheit und Lüge des Kommunismus, Darmstadt, Genf, 1953 [1917]; Nikolai Berdiaev, Die russische Idee. Grundprobleme des russischen Denkens im 19. Jahrhundert und zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts, Sankt Augustin, 1983 [1946].
[lxxx] Marine Le Pen, known for her advocacy of an EU dissolution in favor of a loose alliance of European 'fatherlands' including Russia, in the Notebooks is the most often mentioned European 'conservative'. In a text held to be rather programmatic by Benediktov, Kurkin and Mezhuev on 'Modern Conservatism: Parameters of its Transformation', the Front National is named as currently the Russian conservatives' 'closest potential partner in Europe'; Benediktov et al., 'Sovremennyi Konservatizm: Parametry transformatsii', Tetradi po konservatizmu, 2014, 2(1), pp.80-98 (p. 92).

[lxxxi] See Avdeev, 'Konservatizm kak Faktor Miagkoi Sily Rossii', Tetradi po konservatizmu, 2014, 2(1) (hereafter: Avdeev, 'Konservatizm') , pp.66-77; Boris Mezhuev, contribution to discussion, in Arkadii Minakov, 'Rozhdenie russkogo konservatizma: uroki proshlogo', Tetradi po konservatizmu, 2014, 3, pp. 12-31 (p. 27) (hereafter: Mezhuev, contribution to discussion); Mikhail Remizov et al., 'Konservatizm kak faktor "miagkoi sily" Rossii', 2014 (hereafter: Remizov et al., 'Konservatizm') <www.instrategy.ru/pdf/245.pdf> [accessed 20 December 2015].
[lxxxii] Mezhuev, contribution to discussion, p. 27; translated by K.B.
[lxxxiii] Remizov et al., 'Konservatizm', p. 32 ff.
[lxxxiv] Ibid., p. 26 f.
[lxxxv] Ibid., p. 32.
[lxxxvi] Avdeev, 'Konservatizm', p. 74.
[lxxxvii] Aleksandr Tsipko, 'Liberal`nyi konservatizm Nikolaia Berdiaeva i Petra Struve i Zadachi Dekommunizatsii Sovremennoi Rossii', Tetradi po konservatizmu, 2014, 2(1), pp. 31-41 (p. 31).
[lxxxviii] Laqueur, Putinism.
[lxxxix] Tamás Csillag, Iván Szelényi, 'Drifting from liberal democracy: traditionalist/neoconservative ideology of managed illiberal democratic capitalism in post-communist Europe', Intersections. East European Journal of Society and Politics, 2014, 1(1) (hereafter: Csillag, Szelényi, 'Drifting from liberal democracy') , pp. 18-48.
[xc] Rodkiewicz, Rogoźa, Potemkin conservatism; Paul Chaisty, Stephen Whitefield, 'Putin's nationalism problem', 20 April 2015 (hereafter: Chaisty, Whitefield, 'Putin's nationalism problem') <www.e-ir.info/2015/04/20/putins-nationalism-problem/> [accessed 12 December 2015]; Götz, 'Isborsker Klub'.
[xci] Aleksandr Privalov, 'O konservatizme i goskorporatsiyakh', Ekspert, 6 June 2015 <http://expert.ru/expert/2015/36/o-konservatizme-i-goskorporatsiyah>/ [accessed 30 December 2015].
[xcii] See Lawrence King, Iván Szelényi, 'Post-communist economic systems', in Neil J. Smelser (ed.), The handbookof economic sociology, Princeton, 2005, pp. 205-29.
[xciii] Chaisty, Whitefield, 'Putin's nationalism problem'.
[xciv] Harald Bluhm, 'Figuren einer intellektuellen Bewegung: Irving Kristol, Daniel Bell, Leo Strauss und der Neokonservatismus', in Harald Bluhm, Walter Reese-Schäfer (eds.), Die Intellektuellen und der Weltlauf. Schöpfer und Missionare politischer Ideen in den USA, Asien und Europa nach 1945, Baden-Baden, 2006, pp. 41-62; Compared to these fundamental differences, the alleged similarity of the new Russian conservatism to the 'social conservatism' of a Sarah Palin seems to me of a secondary nature (cf. Csillag, Szelényi, 'Drifting from liberal democracy'; Jack Hunter, 'What is a neoconservative?', The American Conservative, 23 June 2011 <www.theamericanconservative.com/2011/06/23/whats-a-neoconservative/> [accessed 27 July 2015].
[xcv] Andreas Umland, 'Neue rechtsextreme Intellektuellenzirkel in Putins Russland: das Anti-Orange Komitee, der Isborsk-Klub und der Florian-Geyer-Klub', Russland-Analysen, 256, 2013, pp. 2-5.