



# THE WAGNER FACTOR AND THE FAIRNESS PRINCIPLE

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## Experience of Political Analysis

Throughout the Special Military Operation (SMO), the PMC Wagner and Yevgeny Prigozhin have been the center of attention of Russian society and the world community. For Russians, he has become the main symbol of victory, determination, heroism, courage and resilience. For the enemy a source of hatred, but also of fear and terror. It is important that Prigozhin not only leads the most combat-ready, victorious and undefeated unit of the Russian armed forces, but also provides an outlet for those feelings, thoughts, demands and hopes that live in the hearts of the people of war, completely and to the end, irreversibly immersed in its elements.

Prigozhin took this war to the end, to the bottom, to the last depths. And that element is shared by the members of the PMC "Wagner," all those who move in the same direction and towards the same goal—the difficult, bloody, almost unattainable, but so longed-for, desired victory. PMC "Wagner" is not a private military company. The money has nothing to do with it. This is a brotherhood of war, the Russian guard, which was assembled by Eugene Prigozhin from those who responded to the call of the Motherland in the most difficult time for her and went to defend her, being ready to pay any price.

You might legitimately ask, but what about our other warriors? What about the Donbass militia, fighting in inhumane conditions since 2014, forgotten by everyone, but firmly in their post? What about our volunteers, who willingly moved to the fronts of the new Patriotic War, which they identified under the inaccurate name of "Special Military Operation?" What, after all, are the regular troops of various units, smashing the enemy and losing their brothers in a brutal confrontation? What about Ramzan Kadyrov's heroic Chechens? Yes, of course, they're all heroes, and they all bear priceless portions of our common Victory, to which they gave themselves to the end.

But Evgeny Prigozhin and the Wagner PMC is also something else. They are not only ahead of the rest, in the most difficult sections of the front, storming with inhuman tenacity meter by meter, house by house, street by street, village by village, city by city, liberating the native land from a cruel and vile maniacal enemy. They gave this war a style, became its symbols, found the most precise and most sincere words to express what was happening. It is a rare case in which a military feat of incredible significance and scale is accompanied by equally piercing declarations of worldview—understandable to everyone in Russia. This war is a war for justice. It is waged against evil and violence, against lies and deceit, against cruelty and substitution. But if this is so, it is directed not only against the direct

enemy—Ukrainian Nazism and the globalist liberal West that supports it, but also against the injustice that sometimes takes place within Russia itself. Wagner's war is a people's war, liberating, cleansing. Half-measures, agreements, compromises, and negotiations behind the backs of the fighting heroes are not acceptable. The Wagner PMC values life very highly, both their own and the enemy's. And death, the price of which gives the victory, can be paid only for it, and for nothing else.

The aesthetic apotheosis is Prigozhin's programmatic film, *The Best in Hell*. It is the new Hemingway, Ernst Jünger. A great film—about the elements of war, about the price of life and death, about the profound existential transformations that happen to a man when he finds himself immersed in the inexorable process of mortal confrontation with the enemy. And with one that is not something radically different, but the reverse side of himself. It is precisely because Prigozhin not only wages war, but also comprehends war, accepts its terrible logic and freely and sovereignly enters into its elements that he represents such a nightmare for the enemy.

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It is obvious that for the Kiev Nazi regime, which has no such symbols and which truly fears and hates the Wagner PMC the most in this war, as well as for the real actor, pushing Ukraine to attack Russia and fully arming it, that is, for the West, Yevgeny Prigozhin personally is the main priority, concrete and symbolic target simultaneously. And there is no doubt that the enemy knows the value of symbols. It should not be surprising therefore that it is the Wagner PMC that arouses such frenzied hatred of the enemy; and the West has thrown all its forces to destroy this formation and Yevgeny Prigozhin personally.

Inside Russia, people accept Prigozhin unconditionally. He, without any doubts, is the first in this war. Whatever he says or does, it immediately resonates in the heart of the people, in society, in the broad Russian, Eurasian masses. It is one of the many paradoxes of our history—an ethnic Jew, an oligarch, and a man with a rather turbulent past is transformed into the archetype of a purely Russian hero, into a symbol of justice and honor for all people. This says a lot about Prigozhin himself and about our people. We believe deeds, eyes, and words when they come from the depths. And this dimension of depth in Yevgeny Prigozhin cannot be overlooked.

Russian elites are another matter. It is precisely because Prigozhin has made a pact with the Russian people, with the Russian majority, on the blood—his own and that of his heroes from Wagner—that he is most hated by that part of the elite that has not accepted the war as its fate, has not realized its true and fundamental motives, has not yet seen the mortal danger that hangs over the country. It seems to the elite that Prigozhin is simply rushing to power, and, relying on the people, is preparing a "black redistribution." For this part of the Russian elite, the word "justice" itself is unbearable and burns with the fires of hell. After all, Prigozhin is himself from this elite, but he found the courage to renounce the class of the rich, exploiters, cynics, and cosmopolitans, who despise all those who are less successful, and to move to the side of the warring, country-saving people.

In such a situation, analysts who belong to these elites as a kind of domestics wonder: how can Prigozhin afford to behave with such a degree of determination, audacity, and autonomy? Isn't he an experiment by much more influential—indeed, simply the highest—forces in Russian politics, who are testing, by his example, the readiness of society to introduce stricter rules and a more consistent patriotic, people-oriented policy?

In other words, are not Yevgeny Prigozhin and Wagner PMC the forerunners of a full-fledged oprichnina? After all, even in the era of Ivan the Terrible, the oprichnina army was formed precisely in

battles and also, as in the case of Wagner, from among the most courageous, courageous, desperate, strong, reliable, active - regardless of pedigree, title, status, rank, position in society.

What Prigozhin gets away with in Russia's customary political system, no one could get away with. So, the analysts conclude, either he will soon be punished for his impertinence, or this familiar political system no longer exists, and we are witnessing the emergence of some other, unusual, new system, where values will greatly shift in the direction of justice, honesty, courage, and true front-line brotherhood, exactly what the elites hate.

External observers, with all their desire, cannot reliably determine the relationship between Yevgeny Prigozhin personally and the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. Whether or not he coordinates his hard line with the top leadership of the country. There are those who are convinced that Prigozhin's oprichnina is sanctioned from above; but there are those who believe that it is an independent effort—a truth that surprisingly exactly coincides with the expectations of the majority. For the Russian government as a whole, uncertainty is a natural environment. When we are dealing with the personal will of the president, and when we are dealing with the initiative of his associates, who are trying to grasp in advance and anticipate "the commander's intention" (the classic term from the theory of network-centric warfare), no one can fully understand. This is a rather pragmatic approach: in this case, the President is above any conflicts within the elites, and the transformation of the system (above all in a patriotic way) is left with complete freedom. If desired, it can be assumed that all the patriotic—and even the most avant-garde—initiatives (such as the PMC Wagner) are implemented with his tacit consent. But no one knows this for sure—just speculation. Prigozhin cultivates this uncertainty to the maximum extent and with maximum effect.

Meanwhile, love for and trust in Prigozhin and the Wagner PMC are growing, and at the same time, anxiety is growing among the elites.

In Prigozhin, society has begun to see something more than a successful and desperate field commander, a warlord. The configuration in the elites that prevailed in Russia before the SMO allowed (with personal loyalty to the supreme power) for a certain oligarchic stratum the opportunity to remain part of the global liberal globalist system. The people grumbled, lamented and complained about this, but as long as Russia's sovereignty was being strengthened and, as it seemed, nothing threatened the country, this could somehow be tolerated. After the beginning of the SMO, this contradiction was fully exposed. Russia faced a deadly battle with the entire West, which fell upon our country, a West with all

its might; and the Russian elite, by inertia, continued to slavishly follow the land of the setting sun, copying its standards and methods, keeping their savings abroad, dreaming of Courchevel and the Bahamas. Part of the elite frankly fled, and part hid and waited for it all to end. And here the "Prigozhin factor" appeared, already as a politician who became the mouthpiece of popular anger towards the remaining oligarchic elites, stubbornly refusing to accept the new realities of the war and do as Yevgeny Prigozhin himself did, that is, go to the front or, at least, join in the cause of Victory entirely and without a trace. If the West is our enemy, then a supporter of the West, a Westerner is a traitor and a direct agent of the enemy. If you are not at war with the West, then you are on its side. This is the simple logic voiced by Prigozhin. And in his decisive battle with the external enemy, the masses of the people saw a second—future—act, the transfer of similar methods for the internal enemy. And this is "justice"—in its popular, even albeit common people—understanding.

Obviously, this kind of oprichnina would have had no effect on the people themselves, since the victims of "justice according to Wagner" would only be the class enemies of the common people, and today even their political enemies, who happen to side with the very force with which the people are at war.

And more and more strata of society are coming to the conclusion (perhaps too simplistic and linear) that it is the "internal enemies" who are responsible for the slippages and some of the failures at the fronts—that is, the same oligarchs and Westerners who are actively sabotaging the will of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief for Victory. And this is where the factor of "justice" comes in. We are ready to fight like Wagner, to die like Wagner, but not in order to return to Russia before February 24, 2022—to the previous conditions. We demand a purification, enlightenment and spiritualization of society and the entire ruling class. We are not just fighting against the enemy, but for justice.

There is a tremendous time delay, but it is the beginning of fundamental change in Russian society. Yevgeny Prigozhin represents one of the directions. This, above all, is war, where Wagner is the brightest illustration of what meritocracy is; that is, the power of the most distinguished, the most courageous, and the most deserving. The elites of war are those who perform the task best, and there are no other criteria at all. In essence, our armed forces—at least some of their most important—assault—components—clearly need to be rebuilt in a "Wagnerian" way. With one criterion for evaluation: effectiveness. In war, the old criterion—loyalty combined with czarist skills—is no longer sufficient. Loyalty in war is implied; otherwise, immediate execution. But now something more is needed: the ability to cope with the task at hand. At any cost. Even at the cost of one's own and others' lives. This alone brings out the best. And the worst. And all that remains is to put the best over the

worst, and the whole thing will head to Victory.

But this does not only apply to war. In politics, economics, management, administration, even in education and culture, in fact, similar trends are gradually beginning to make themselves known. People of a special kind—Lev Gumilev called them "passionarians"—are able to act in conditions of emergency and achieve significant results. In more prosaic terms "crisis managers." It is possible to speak about "Wagner-principles" in all fields—those, who cope with assigned—the most difficult, unrealizable—tasks most effectively, come to the forefront. Those who do not cope with the task are relegated to the back burner. In the political science of Wilfred Pareto this is called the "rotation of the elite." In Russia, this process is extremely inert and sporadic, and most often it is not taking place at all. War, on the other hand, requires the "rotation of the elites" in an ultimatum manner. This is a real horror for the elites, who are old and incapacitated, moreover, cut off from their matrix in the West.

Eugene Prigozhin outlined the most important vector of the direction in which Russia will have to move under any conditions and in any circumstances. That is why the West wants to destroy it, and is counting on the old and no longer appropriate to the challenges of the moment Russian elites to help it in this. The stakes are constantly rising. Victory is at stake. And the way to it lies only through justice.

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