



# VLADIMIR PUTIN AND RUSSIAN SOVEREIGNISM

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As we mentioned in [a previous article](#), Boris Yeltsin's period of government in Russia led the country into unprecedented economic chaos and a real danger of fragmentation. The savage privatization of companies and infrastructures gave birth to the emergence of the so-called "oligarchs," former officials and politicians of the communist regime who had accumulated a great deal of power and wealth with these privatizations, wealth that contrasted with the growing misery of the majority of the Russian population.

In September and October 1993, the discontent of a large part of the population against Yeltsin's policies led to the uprising of the Duma (parliament) against the president. The previous elections had given a majority to Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, a populist and nationalist leader, but the very presidentialist structure of Russian politics meant that in reality the Duma had very little power. In the uprising would converge the patriotic and illiberal forces that would form the basis of the patriotic movement that would be led by Vladimir Putin: Zhirinovskiy's nationalists, the Russian communist party (actually national-communist) of Gennady Zyuganov, and tsarist and orthodox religious groups. Despite their ideological differences, these groups had in common their opposition to liberalism and Westernism, and their defense of the integrity and sovereignty of Russia.

The rebel deputies made a strong stand in the Duma building, which was shelled by military units loyal to Yeltsin. The uprising was crushed. But from this point on Yeltsin's political line began to waver. Yeltsin's eight years in power had been a truly dark period in Russian history, with an anti-national government allied to the interests of foreign powers. His policy of change towards a Western-style liberal society was based on Western foreign investment and large loans from international financial institutions. However, none of this materialized in reality—the loans from the International Monetary Fund were in dribs and drabs, immensely smaller than promised and served only to pay the interest on the foreign debt.

In a way, a certain parallel can be drawn between the Russian and Spanish transitions: Governments that respond to foreign interests, dismantling of industry, privatization of companies and danger of fragmentation due to growing nationalism. The only difference is that in Spain there has not been the patriotic reaction that took place in Russia.

Although the uprising in the Duma was crushed by force, it showed the failure of the Yeltsin project. The oligarchs, enriched by savage privatizations, and who supported liberal and pro-Western policies,

withdrew their support for the president and promoted an unknown—Vladimir Putin, thinking that he would carry out a policy more in line with their interests. Yeltsin resigned on December 31, 1999, so the year 2000 was the beginning of a new era in Russia.

Vladimir Putin was a bureaucrat. He had nothing to do with the patriotic and sovereigntist forces that had led the 1993 uprising. But Putin came from the Security Services (the former KGB) and was educated in the idea that these services, together with the military might, were meant to defend the national interest.

From the beginning of his mandate, Putin advocated a more assertive and nationalistic foreign policy, which would not be subordinated to the interests of the Western powers, and which gave him the support of the Russian military elite. But, at the same time, he skillfully enlisted the support of Boris Berezovsky, the leading oligarch of the Yeltsin era, who thought, wrongly, that Putin would further his interests.

Putin forced the oligarch Vladimir Gusinsky into exile. He also brought about the fall of Roman Abramovich and Alexander Voloshin, other powerful oligarchs. Subsequently, the new leaders of these clans helped him to drive out Berezovsky.

In fact, from the very beginning, Putin initiated a battle for control of the economy, which led to a confrontation with the oligarchs. He succeeded in exiling Berezovsky and Abramovich. Subsequently, in July 2000, he arrested Vladimir Gusinsky, the largest media owner, accusing him of having stolen ten million dollars from the state-owned Russian Video company.

In 2003, near the end of his first term, Putin arrested the powerful oil millionaire Mikhail Kodorkovsky, accusing him of tax evasion and corruption. Even at that time, and using these arrests as an excuse, the West began to accuse Putin of "authoritarianism" and of returning to the police methods of the Stalinist era. This campaign was joined by the media (*New York Times*, 2003, *Washington Post*, 2003); and the U.S. State Department itself claimed that the basic freedom of Russians was in danger. As we can see, the Western (more specifically US) animosity towards Putin goes back a long way, from the moment he refused to be a puppet—like his predecessor, Yeltsin.

Kodorkovsky perfectly represented the former functionary of the communist apparatus, enriched by

the savage privatizations of the Yeltsin era. He tried to use his immense fortune to finance his campaign for the Russian presidency, emboldened by Western support, which presented him as a representative of "liberal and democratic" values.

The concentration of wealth in the hands of a few oligarchs had caused some 31 million Russians (more than 20% of the population) to subsist on the equivalent, or less, of 50 dollars a month. According to a UN study, half of the Russian population lived in poverty; and according to figures from the Russian State Statistics Committee, in 2002, more than forty million Russians suffered from malnutrition. In such circumstances, it no longer seems so strange that many Russians longed for the Soviet era.

Together with this data concerning the quality of life, the destruction of the state health care system should also be noted. All this led to a drop in life expectancy from 70 years for men in the Soviet era to 57 years.

The Putin government's political offensive against Kodorkovsky was central to President Putin's second election in 2003. It projected an image of fighting against the oligarchs that made him very popular for a population that, in the words of political scientist Yuri Tsyganov, wanted to see all Russian gangsters prosecuted and punished for the social destruction they had caused in Russia.

Kodorkovsky was noted, not only for the accumulation of great wealth, but for his intention to use it politically. He had made large contributions of money to what he called "democratic opposition parties," and had tried to exploit social discontent to instigate a change of regime.

In view of all this, the Western propaganda that keeps talking about "Putin's oligarchs" is pathetic, when precisely what has characterized Putin's domestic policy has been the persecution and economic and political neutralization of these oligarchs, enriched during the Yeltsin period, and who had been characterized by their support for liberal and Westernist ideas in Russia.

Towards the end of his second term, in 2007, Putin gave an important speech at the Munich Conference on security policy. In this speech he set out a whole doctrine of international relations based on multipolarity, a doctrine that is essential to know in order to understand the deep roots of the current conflict with Ukraine.

This doctrine can be summarized in the following points:

1. The unipolar model of the world is not only unacceptable, it is impossible.
2. The USA has overstepped its national borders in every sense, imposing its economic, political, cultural and educational policies on other nations.
3. Decision-making on the use of military force should be at the UN.
4. NATO is advancing its border forces to our borders.
5. What happened to those promises given by our Western partners after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact?
6. With one hand "charitable aid" is given, with the other hand economic backwardness is preserved and profits are collected.
7. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has become an instrument for securing the interests of some states against others.
8. Russia, in its millennia-long history, has always had an independent foreign policy. We will not change this tradition.

With these eight points Putin clearly established the basic lines of his international policy. The mere fact of maintaining the unity of Russia against the policies of balkanization and disintegration of the Yeltsin era readily meant a confrontation with the unipolar "New World Order," cherished by the US after the collapse of the USSR. Maintaining Russian national pride, the refusal to ask for forgiveness, the uninhibited assumption of its own history (from Tsarism to the USSR)—constituted a provocation towards the ideology of this "New World Order," which consists of nothing more than exporting and imposing the values of American society on the entire globe.

To all this must be added the low permeability of Russian society as a whole to the ideological project of Agenda 2030, with all its tentacles: neo-feminism, climate hysteria, gender ideology, immigrationism and multiculturalism. Russia has become a problem for the "New World Order," a "problem" with a vast

expanse, reserve of raw materials and nuclear weapons.

During the Trump period, nothing serious happened. Trump proved to be the least globalist of all US presidents (he did not initiate any war), more concerned with domestic issues of the American nation, and whose moves in international politics did not clash (at least head-on) with Russia.

With the arrival of Biden everything changed. This character, who is nothing more than a puppet of the neo-con sectors of the Democratic Party, made it very clear in his electoral campaign that his policy would be aimed at making the USA once again the world LEADER. This meant that the USA would return to the policy of Unipolarity (disguised as "multilateralism") and, therefore, confrontation with any power that opposed them.

Let us recall that the neo-cons are the spokesmen of a messianic vision of America as a nation united only by a creed capable of extending to all humanity. In the neo-con theory, the USA is a "universal nation" that has "human rights" as its foreign policy axis, in the same way as the Soviets had Marxism-Leninism. Biden's America is thus once again the expansive epicenter of "liberal democracy."

For the neo-cons, that is, for Biden, liberal democracy and the market economy, can be built anywhere in the world, with the help, if necessary, of American fighter-bombers and missiles; or, better still, of a puppet state—as in the case of Ukraine. Any opposition is "tribalism," Nazism, Stalinism or all three at once. Naturally, the arms lobby smiles complacently.

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