

# Military Organization's Role and Place in the Recent Russia (Russian Militocracy)

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## **Abstract**

Military could perform different roles in a state. In democracies civilian control and supervise of the military leaves it acting in the defense areas mostly. In military juntas, the military is involved in a state governing, but usually does not intervene other spheres of social life. The extreme of military influence and domination is a military state phenomenon. Here the military not only leads the governing but also transfers its values, culture and philosophy to the entire state. There have been military states in the past but what we see today in a majority of cases are military juntas. Russia under Putin rule is different. The military here is becoming a leading power, a provider of ideas and a realizer of tasks. It is loved and admired by Russian elites and is spreading own culture and values to all society. Some time ago, Russian experts analyzing a process of military infiltration into administrative and political areas of statehood named this as a militocracy. Now militocracy is expanding, the military organization is penetrating country's leadership minds and hearts and moving the entire state to a status where social, cultural and economical and other spheres of life become dominated by military with the military mindset prevailing. The military values and institutional characteristics become dominative as well. The state become almost a military state. This situation became possible due to Russian military organization remaining a Prussian military type creature with specific philosophy, values, working culture, etc. To succeed in domination and secure achievements, the military organization worked out an entire system of programs and actions allowing not only regaining a power but strengthen own positions. Next to a physical infiltration of the military personnel into other social groups, those actions also include designing and applying a military "Modus Operandi" in the state governing, spreading military mindset, culture, values to the nation and participating in a creation new Russian elites.

**KEY WORDS:** *General Staff, militocracy, Russian military organization, institutional characteristics, Russian elites, National Defense Management Centre, Russian Doctrine*

## **1. Introduction**

Since the earliest times warwaging and military, related activities have been among essential state activities. It is almost imposible for a territory possessing attributes of the state to survive without its own military unless it has a strong military protection provided by other like Island (NATO), Greenland (Denmark) or Svalbard (Norway); is surrounded physically by countries which historically accepts "Status Quo" like Andora, Lichtenstein, Monaco or is located far away from others like Aruba, Cook islands, Dominika, Falkland islands, Marshall Islands, ect.. In all other cases a majority of states have a military as a highly organized, well trained and armed force maintained by them and authorized to play an adequate role in the statehood. In democracies, a principle of a civilian control over the military prevets it from gaining too much influence but one knows examples of military becoming in lead (military junta) and, as an extreme case, dominative and fully influencing all areas of statehood. Historically those extreme cases with the military penetrating "all and evetyhing" are known under a "military state" name.

Then someone says "a military state", usually Sparta pops up as a first example. For quite a few people a first image of Sparta comes from the movies "300" and "300 Rise of Empire" where all starts and ends with brutal and at the same time charming warriors earning a respect. For those who decide to get deeper into this issue an omnipotent internet quickly disperses that surface picture and explains that: "Sparta was a warrior society .... where culture was centered on loyalty to the state and military service.... A Spartan (a citizen) was taught that loyalty to the state came

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before everything else.... The Spartans' constant military drilling and discipline made them skilled at fighting ..... arts, learning and philosophy was centered on a warrior culture..... and all this indoctrination into this lifestyle began since a birth of a Spartan.” [1]. Realizing how awkward and personal identity crushing approach this might be a wish to abolish that life style and leave it for movies only prevails in the average westerner's head.

Greek philosopher Xenophon once said” [Sparta was] everywhere admired and nowhere imitated. He might had been a good ancient philosopher but not a prophet. The Sparta was not the only case of such a military domination. A state with military culture presented and prevailing was a medieval Germanic Sparta analog - Teutonic Knights Order settled in Balts tribe - Old Prussians - lands on the southeast coast of the Baltic Sea. Since twelve century knights as a military elite worked out own military culture which emphasized a loyalty, devotion and professionalism. Though not possessing all state's attributes the Order kept performing as a quasi state and in the first quarter of sixteenth century became a foundation for another prominent Germanic military state – Prussia (the Kingdom of Prussia). While building this unitary state Prussian rulers relied on the military very much by employing an extraordinary well-organized and effective army and introducing military mentality and culture elements into the statehood. As a result, Prussia reached its Gloria time, exercised the most of its influence in the 18th and 19th centuries, and ceased to exist de facto in the XX century only.

This article explores a very new but at the same time very similar to the Prussian case – Russian Federation becoming a state with imperial ambitions where the military organization influence is growing and becomes dominative in political and other country's life. The scope of analysis covers two separate and interrelated areas: the Russian military organization as such with its values, culture, philosophy and the strategy and tactics the organization uses to enter and change Russia's statehood.

The Russian military organization as such with its values, culture and philosophy is not well explored. Among clues explaining this is a fact of Russian military remaining a Prussian military type organization. Forbidden by the Treaty of Versailles as “an efficient military instrument” the Prussian type military organization was abolished in a majority of democratic Western countries after the WWII and as a result majority of analyses in the West were done not from political or geopolitical but from historical perspective. The soviet military organization if studied was studied also not from political but from secret services and intelligence perspectives. In the USSR and recent Russia combined academic studies about the organization used to be and remain in a short supply as well. The author will try by using process tracking analysis to combine available historical and other cases data and to present findings through a prism of political estimate.

Academia and western analysts in the early two thousands have studied the second area - a strategy and tactics the military uses to enter and change Russian political processes and statehood jointly. Among experts, which devoted their efforts it, is worth to mention Olga Kryshchanovskaya, Oxana Gaman-Golutvina, Bettina Renz, Sharon W. and David W. Riveras, Stephen White and others who concentrated mostly on analyzing a composition of Russian elites and a role of the military there. Recent studies on the topic are quite limited.

Because of both areas being limitedly explored, a problem arises of determining what values; “modes of operating” the military is suggesting for the recent Russian political leadership, and what real role and place Russian military organization has in country's statehood. To find answers historical studies and original works of military theorists on Prussian and Russian military culture were revised by applying a content analysis. To explore strategic and „modus operandi“ issues recent political and other documents, decisions, reforms and announcements will be analysed.

## **2. Recent Russian military organization**

Since the last two decades, Russia is witnessing growing its military involvement into all statehood areas. Modern forms of forgotten in the West militocracy are visible again. Tasks the recent ruling Russian leadership promotes and the military organization is ready to implement are very similar to those the Prussian rulers sounded and military assisted to happen centuries ago – to make the country a superpower and an empire. Today, differently from a majority in the Western countries, Russian military organization remains a follower of Prussian military organization and continues using its culture and philosophy in the modern environment. It subscribes to ideas of the recent political elite to recreate former country's Gloria and to achieve this through relaying on country's history and tradition. It promotes similar state values and virtues (loyalty and devotion to the state, a common-sense patriotism) and proposes efficiency, austerity and discipline to achieve this.

The recent Russian military organization has acquired a special attention from the Russian leadership not accidentally. A closer look taken its functioning might be seen as being very close to the „ideal bureaucracy“ described by Max Weber and the organization itself represents an „organisation implementing principles of scientific management“ [2]. The ideal bureaucracy was analysed by other researchers also and described as a system characterised by a

division of labour, a clearly defined organisational hierarchy, detailed rules and regulations including a way of working, a personnel selection, carrier policies and impersonal relationships in the organisation [3], [4], [5]. All these characteristics are so well presented, imbedded and followed in Russian military organization, that de facto it could be described as a structure with strong rules, rational decision making procedures and requirements, standardised functioning methods, etc., or simply to say, as an ideal biurocracy.

## 2.1 Prussian roots of Russian military

Prussian “soldier-king” Frederick William First as a frugal “bourgeois” reformer of Prussian administration and an admirer of military culture. He supported the military elite (the Prussian General Staff) in maintaining Teutonic Knights’ virtues, transferring them into own “modus of operandi” and becoming a foundation for the organizational behavior accepted by the entire state. Respectively, as time flew, the Prussian military added other “good basic virtues” like honesty, reliability and diligence by this significantly influencing entire nation’s culture and finally turning efficiency, discipline and austerity into the German national character stereotypes. As a result, Prussia had reached up to the state with a highly advanced administration and legal system, as well as a loyal officer and state official’s corps and possessed a kind of common-sense patriotism. In Prussia the militarization of the state through militocracy – an involvement of military elites (the General Staff) and military minded individuals into statehood – became especially well established and obvious.

Impressed by the “Prussia’s success story” the Russian tsar Paul the First (Paul I), after accepting the throne and witnessing a miserable disorder in the state, decided to follow Prussians. He considered his aristocracy as lazy, ignorant and selfish with morale spoiled. The tsar planned to turn Russia into a unilateral state with only one, absolute ruler and a strong, loyal and professional national officialdom, which had to consist of nobleman and non-nobles. Paul I assumed that introducing and spreading Prussian military culture could help him to fix the elites and empire. He also was not satisfied with the military. After the Seven-year war (1756-1763) Prussian Army was admitted to be the best in the Europe with discipline and officers’ professionalism prevailing, so Paul I saw it as an example to follow and found necessary to introduce Prussian ideas into Russian military. Starting with Prussian type of military drill in troops as mandatory, (Gatchinskiy regiments) and ending with officers training and accountability for effectiveness as a norm, the Prussian military culture had to become a substitute for a protectionism in the tsaritsa’s Caterine II officer’s corps. [6]. With the Paul I gone and many of his ideas abolished, contrary, the military culture remained and got accepted. Even the western Tsan Su - Carl von Clausewitz contributed to promotion of such a mentality in Russian military. He served in the Imperial Russian Army during the Russian Campaign and participated in the Battle of Borodino.

## 2.2 Institutional culture, characteristics and values

The Prussian (and recent Russian) military organization possesses some exceptional, conservative and in certain cases applicable only to the organisation features. Among the most important Prussian military institutional characteristics is a conviction that military in general and its elite (the General Staff) in particular are the best suited to solve the most complicated tasks by preparing (and implementing) the best quality solutions.

Another feature associated to the organization is a rejection of self proclamation and identification. The Prussian military elite preferred and advocated as a norm to remain behind decision making scenes and be satisfied with a role of the best advisors and assistants to any ruler. Rational for such a position could be summarized in a motto „not to appear, but to be“. While explaining this institutional desire to remain anonymous and leave „reaping laurels“ to a leader, Mr. H. Morgan, the British expert on Prussian General Staff, quoted famous Niccolo Machavelli “The ideal Prince need not, and indeed should not, possess virtuous qualities, but he should always contrive to appear to possess them. [7]. This remains valid in Russia today, then a huge work done by military staffs becomes a merit for small number of representatives from the elite.

Acceptance, advocacy and promotion of an existence of elites or castes is another feature to be affiliated to Prussian (and Russian) military. In general, militaries could be divided into soldiers and officers. In the officers corps, depending on his/her posting, an officer could be either a commander or an ordinary staff officer. The Prussian approach introduced a third category – special officer status, a military elite. At the time of Prussian General Staff sunrise this was a new idea, today it became quite an awkward practice still kept in some militaries (including Russia). The field marshal Helmut von Moltke who was a supporter of such approach had his rational and logics to explain this. This could be seen in the “Four Officer Attribute Matrix” which was built to demonstrate his way of thinking.

Officers' division according field marshal Helmut von Moltke

Field Marshal Moltke's Four Officer Attribute Matrix		<i>Initiative</i>	
		<i>Lazy</i>	<i>Energetic</i>
<i>Intelligence</i>	<i>Smart</i>	<b>Commanders</b> Make the Right Things Happen but in the Easiest Possible Manner (Discover)	<b>General Staff Officers</b> Direct the Right Things to Happen (Capture)
	<i>Dumb</i>	<b>Menial Tasks</b> Follow Orders to Perform Routine Tasks that must be Done by an Officer (Maintain)	<b>Eliminate</b> Will Make Things Happen – but the Wrong Things (Destroy)

Source: <http://old-soldier-colonel.blogspot.com/2011/07/field-marshal-moltkes-four-types-of.html>

According to prevailing traditions officers could have been either commanders (leaders) or staff officers (supporters for leaders). This remains valid in majority western countries today. If to apply the Moltke's matrix, they are either "smart or lazy" but "making right things to happen" or "dumb and lazy" and "following orders to perform routine tasks". The Prussian military and the field marshal himself thought differently - the officer's Corp could be divided into four groups. The first (commanders) are very important, but usually they are best suited for turning plans prepared by super-professionals (General staff officers) into life. The second group is those super-professionals who seek perfectiveness in what they do. Those people could be good commanders but they contribute better by being those who direct indirectly. The Prussian tradition separates them from other officers and puts into a separate group - the General Staff Service (GSS) simultaneously imposing special requirements to become its member and assigning exceptional privileges. Among those privileges, the most important is a right "to disagree with the plans or orders of his commander and appeal to the highest commander directly" [8]. The third group is a potential pool for candidates to the military elite and the fourth field marshal's verdict is quite cruel.

A revolutionary at that time proposal, the Prussian system introduced, was related to officer's career and chances to become the elite. At those times officers came mostly from noblemen. The nobility automatically was taken as the main criterion to become the military elite. While ignoring nobility or other inherited merits as selection criteria and advocating professionalism and devotion as main features Prussian culture proposed an opportunity to any smart and devoted officer to become the elite. It offered a career lift opportunity to anybody who was qualified. To prevent outsiders deciding on an officer being qualified or not the Prussian military elite (General Staff) established a rule that only the elite itself decides who is fit and who is not to join "the club". In practice this was done by assigning a responsibility for search, challenge and selection of candidates to the elite/caste itself. This remains valid today. As an example the supreme commander V. Putin while addressing General Staff officers tasked „General Staff officers and senior mission-commanders encourage junior mission-commanders to show creativeness and initiative. Any General Staff officer could participate, supervise and guide a selection process. GSS officers as commanders are pinpointing perspective junior officers, testing them on the job and in case of being satisfied with results assigning officer „to the commanders pool“ and passing him/her as candidates for an additional training.

Before any officer becomes the General Staff Service he/she has not only to pass through the selection process but to get an additional specialized training and education as well. And here comes one more specifics of Prussian (and Russian) military organization – the elite prepares and trains itself. This training and education is provided by a specialized educational institution belonging to the GSS. In Russia since tsars' times it was and today remains the General Staff Academy (GSA). As a result all the elite is given the same knowledge, accept and respect the same values and virtues and is able, as saying goes "to understand each other without words".

Special behavior requirements and (as a reward) privileges are mandatory to the elite. In recent Russia's case special extra requirements to the General Staff officer about dress code, working culture, etc., are presented in a "General Staff officer's work style manual" (rus.«О стиле работы офицеров Генерального штаба» manual, which was introduced in February 2018 [9]. Next to the requirements, privileges and the special status of the General Staff are fixed in Russian Laws. In 8 Apr 2013 Putin signed changes to the National Law on Defense. There a special General Staff status is approved by the President not the defense minister and only the General Staff is responsible



to prepare and implement the State Defense Plan. There are other privileges as well. Prussian culture suggested availability of key (commander's) positions for the GSS officers. Russian military organization turned this into a rule. All key positions (not only commanders) at highest levels belong to the elite. In Russian military only General Staff Service (GSS) officers are highest commanders or executive agents of the commander at each echelon of a military hierarchy. Declassified CIA documents [10], and recent open sources prove only the General Staff officers occupying high-level commanders and Staff positions in the General Staff and key positions in Joint Strategic Command (JSC) and Operational Commands (OC) staffs. In a divisional level General Staff officers occupy commander's and chief's of staff posts. A regiment or brigade commander as a special case is also assigned to the GSS, but normally those are the highest posts for a non-GSS officer to have and are the last selection point for potential GSS candidates.

Among other important Russian-Prussian military culture characteristics is certain GSS "Modus of operando" prescribing while working to seek efficiency (and effect) by synchronizing all actions and activities and concentrating only on the results. A "Win-Win" case here is not acceptable, in the Prussian military culture the main principle is a "zero game" rule where "you win or lose". To achieve a task nothing could object the GSS work. While working (planning) and acting the General Staff officer must follow only rules approved by the General Staff. Other regulations, agreements and laws should be considered only then they contribute to success. While describing this phenomenon H. Morgan wrote: "The Hague Conventions are treated by the authors (the GS officers) as little more than "scraps of paper" the only "laws" recognized by the German Staff are the military usages laid down in the pages of the Manual and resting upon "a calculating egotism" and injudicious "form of reprisals" [11].

Morale, traditions, ethics etc. apply and should be considered only as long as they contribute to the result. H. Morgan wrote that for the GS officer the morality is a very important but not the most important thing. His "The War book of the German General Staff" states that the GS officer must understand and consider all feelings, suffering and losses a war brings to people, respect property, prevent and punish looting. But this remains valid only until it is not contradicting with the task achievement. While describing General Staff officer's considerations in his work H. Morgan wrote "Should the women and children the old and the feeble be allowed to depart before a bombardment begins? On the contrary, their presence is greatly to be desired (ein Vortheil) it makes the bombardment all the more effective) [11].

Summarizing different experts' thoughts on Prussian „Modus of operandi,, one could see it being based on following principles: all activities must be planned; all actions must be synchronized in time and space; new methods, tactics, technologies, means or simply to say everything what is new and could contribute to a result, must be considered. A recognition of importance of science and technologies is very essential. In Prussia's times railways, telegraph, steam engine and other new at that time technologies were closely analysed by the General Staff trying to find a place for them to get a war waging more efficient. [12], [13]. Russian military organization also maintains the same mentality and since broke up of the USSR devoted to science and technologies a particular attention. In 1994, the National Military Science Academy (NMSA) a non-governmental institution equivalent to the National Science Academy (NSA) was established. It was supposed to be an independent platform for the military science and research and analyse and proposes applications of new technologies and methods in the military.

And last but not least feature affiliated to the Prussian and especially Russian military organisation is an „addiction“ to produce, modify and update internal norms, procedures, requirements etc. With proper paper work being one of „an ideal bureaucracy“ symbols Russian military organization, since Bolsheviks gaining the power, institutionalized this activity. In 1921 a special unit to deal with all internal norms, statutes, regulations, normatives, manuals and so was established. It remains active today as a unit in the MOD named a „Board of security of military service and troops“ (rus. Управление службы войск и безопасности военной службы) and responsible for keeping all norms, requirements, rules, standards etc. updated and valid.

### **2.3 Particularities of the recent military organization**

In Prussia, General Staff culture emphasized and required officers to maintain maximum professionalism and minimal involvement into politics. As a result, despite the military having a big influence in the state building and managing, it did not see itself as an active participant in politics. Loyalty to the sovereign (King, Emperor, Leader) who represented the State and devotion in providing him professional assistance prevailed and officers tended to stay aside politics. This behavior norm became so deeply rooted in the military mentality that even during Hitler's Reich a majority of professional militaries remained outside Nazis politics and party and were comparatively apolitical. Nevertheless an understanding that a full separation between a war and politics is impossible existed already at that time. Carl von Clausewitz kept arguing that during a war militaries confront not enemies only, they confront and must interact with civilians (and among those are politicians) and concluded this in a form of an aphorism "War as the continuation of politics by other (i.e. violent) means). [14].

Russian military organization on this matter demonstrates an obvious difference. Bolsheviks and Lenin himself while repeating the famous Carl von Clausewitz's aphorism opened a door for the military to join politics. With a general opinion of the proletarian war lasting forever dominating a new Russian (soviet) military became naturally destined to be a part of Russian politics. Quite soon the military accepted its involvement in political processes and even in shaping strategic decision-making process as a normal thing. As a result military methods and approaches used in war fighting became applicable and useful in all areas of Bolshevik statehood. The concept progressed and the General Staff attitude toward civilians (politicians) also began to change. Clausewitz's thoughts that a war is a result of former politics and then it starts it occurs not in a vacuum but in certain political environment became valid. Russian military theorists, academics, even political leaders accepted and argued that military involvement into politics is very important if not essential. Politics is not an obstacle for a war and fighting, in contrary, true and appropriate politics could help war fighting. Country's political leadership has not to stay aside and observe how military fights but actively assist military in doing this. To help fighting it must understand an essences of war and listen what the military is suggesting and recommending to do in other (not military fields). During a war or preparing to a war stages each and every political decision must be done following this type of thinking. Those kinds of ideas were promoted in Russia by A. Svechin or Marshal B. Shaposhnikov and met in Lenin's and Stalin's works.

A respect the military organization gets from a ruling elite is another peculiarity well seen while dealing with Russian military organization. "Russia has only two allies. They are her Army and Fleet" this Russian tsar Aleksandr III quotation served as the best recognition of Russian military and showed its status in tsarist Russia. Bolsheviks' devoted special tributes to the Red Army as well. During firsts years of soviet rule Lenin and the party was place on the edge - they were embattled by foreing countries and confronted by own armed oposition. Quite a few Party members put on uniforms and joined the Red Army. Fighting shoulder to shoulder with former tsar officers who joined Bolsheviks accepting them as new leaders of Russia, revolutionist like Lev Trockij or Joseph Stalin became accustomed to such military culture and found it useful enough to transmit it into state repressive, secret, armed services and even the party itself.

Today, the military organization is on a rise of overarching respect and acceptance. Political elites take as a normal thing politicians (civilians) thinking in a military style and militaries actively involved into non military areas. Military approaches and "modus of operandi" became applicable in all Russian social and statehood areas and as Clausewitz stated could "be used as a heavy sword or a light sharp rapier" in a hands of political rulers. [14]. The best example of such a philosophy penetrating is a recent new generation (Hybrid) warfare concept, so called "Gerasimov's doctrine", which was developed by militaries and implemented by the entire state.

Centralization and a unity of command could be taken as affiliated more to the Russian military culture. It fallows a tradition of Russian rule where a tsar was taken as the solely ruler. During the soviet time and under a famous Bolshevik and later communist party addiction to concentrate power this became overarching. Today both: Russian political leadership and the military admit and admire this. Next to already mentioned characteristics like the orientation to results and effectiveness, this serves as an effort multiplicator in all activities done.

The last but not leat peculiarity of Russian military organization is its size and shape. During the USSR times the organization as such was not so noticable. The ministries of Defense (MOD) and Interior Affairs (MIA) and the Committee for the State Security (KGB) were the biggest entities quite often compeeting among themselves but still trying not to cross „red lines“ established by the Communist Party. The party assigned a political regime protection for the KGB, the control of soviet civil order for the MIA and the state defense for the MOD as their main missions. After the collapse of the USSR this huge military conglomerate broke. The KGB failed to perfor the mission and crumbled into different special services (Federal Security Servise FSS, Foreign Intelligence Service FIS, Federal Protection Service FPS, etc.) and as the most experienced in politics and possessing the most of information, finances and influence moved to business and politics. The MIA had a mission slightly changed and was disoriented due to a lot of forbiden things becoming allowed (demonstrations, free trade, private enterprises etc.). It lost its republican branches (MIAs of soviet republics and lacked guidances how to control a society and continue to work under new political enviroment. The MOD was the only one with the mission unchanged. And the military organization elite, the General Staff kept working how to perform the mission in a new political world.

With Putin entering the power Olimpus, the organization started to regain pevious positions and move forward. A new term "Siloviki" appeared in a political sleng. In a reality it was not a new, it was just an abbreviation of a term „force structures“ (rus. silovye struktury) which in Russian language is a synonym of a military organization. Dr. O. Kryshantovskaya, a Russian expert on militocracy, believed that in Russia „siloviki“ were officials (mostly from the top leadership) from the Defense Ministry, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (with responsibility for the police), and the KGB and its successor, the FSB" [15]. Other experts suggested it being bigger and including ten institutionally distinct force structures: the Ministry of Defence (MOD), the Interior Ministry (MIA), the Ministry for Emergency Situations (MOE), the Justice Ministry (Federal Prison Service – MOJ/FPS), the Federal Security Service (FSS), the Foreign Intelligence Service (FIS), the Federal Anti-Drugs Service (FADS), the Federal Protection Service (FPO),

the Federal Courier Service (FCS), and the Agency for Special Programs under the President (ASPP) [16]. Today the organization is bigger with new institutions like Russian National Guard (Rusguard), (RNG) and even paramilitary forces like Russian Cossacks, etc. appeared.

### **3. Military organization in the statehood (militocracy)**

Before going deeper into exploring the issue let us to ask what made military organization so attractive and useful for bolsheviks and for the recent Russian leadership. The answer is such - a majority of soviet leaders were military organization members. A majority of Putin's surroundings and he himself are members of the organization also. The organization culture, values and other characteristics were deeply rooted in their heads. All they also understand very well that Prussian (Russian) military culture and values better than anything else suit different forms of totalitarian governing.

#### **3.1 The place and role of the military in the state**

During the USSR times military organization as such was not so noticeable. All military organization elite being the Party members simultaneously meant that the organization itself was taken as the Party's militarized wing. It was respected and feared. Then the USSR broke the organization lost previous power, respect, social status, money and perspectives and was left with a very short list of choices for future. Members of the organization including its elite could either continue serving and hoping better times to come or had to find a place in "a wild capitalism" which started to prosper in Jelcin's time. Without any other skills except an ability to follow orders and knowing how to kill, quite a few former militaries especially from the MIA and MOD became involved in guarding or racketeering activities. Those, mostly from secret parts of the organization (KGB, MI), who had "right connections" or access to materials, money or information and people from technical services joined different business. Although statistics are not available but cases of military officers (even from political officers' ranks) joining a waking up Russian church as priests or leading religious sects also were known. For the military elite, politics became another option. Generals Alexander Rutskoy or Alexander Lebed are just a couple of examples of charismatic military persons entering politics.

In general, the organization was disorientated, almost falling into separate parts and staying on an edge of survival. Given Jelcin's ruling longer a potential outcome for the organization might have been falling into parts finally, abolishing its Prussian backgrounds and changing like the military of the Democratic Republic of Germany (DDR) did. But what has almost destroyed the organization has helped to save it as well. In a new Jelcins' political environment, democracy pendulum has moved sharply to the right. Right wing conservative academia, new Russian oligarch with military background and military elites unified efforts to move the country to the right. A theoretical and politically doctrinal work named as „Russian Doctrine“ was produced by a big group of economists, philosophers and other experts and academics. All they suggested a restoration of Great Russia, advocated returning and relying on historical unilateral state traditions and proposed the military a place and a role in this process.

Since Putin entering the political Olympus a situation for the organization began to change. Leaving aside discussions how much if any help the organization provided, Putins' arrival was a sign and possibility to regain the former status and influence. The return began with a military reform. The MOD as a backbone institution became a pioneer in restoring its own decent place in the organization at first and a decent place for the entire organization in the state at second. The reform had to prove the organization's ability to transform itself and later the state. The beginning was difficult, the organization was facing problems in almost everything: structures, doctrines, weapons and equipment, personnel, training, logistics, image, respect, financing, etc. Plans prepared according best Prussian military traditions suggested a total disbanding of former soviet type Armed Forces, changing personnel, recruitment, armament and other policies and creating a new, modern force. Then succeeded the reform had to progress and expand by this establishing military domination statewide. It was the most radical change the Russian military forces had to undergo since the breakup of the Soviet Union [17].

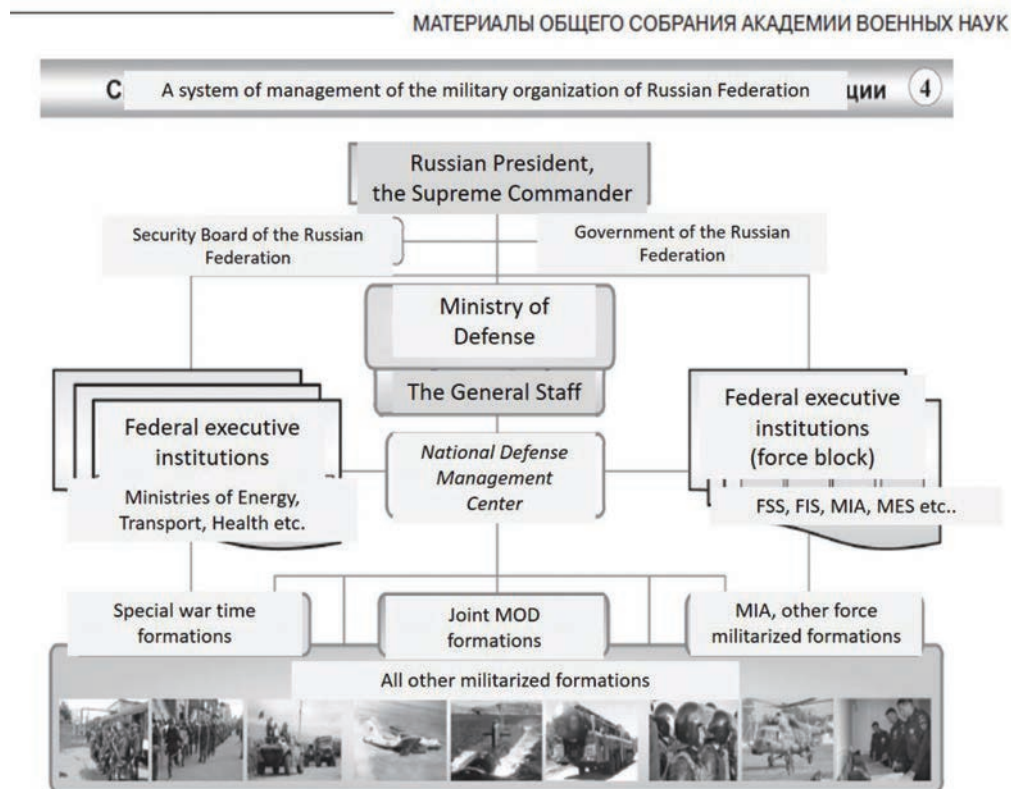
Around 2015 the first stage of reform was completed. All MOD branches were reorganized, new structures established, weapons' modernization programs in place and developments of new strategies and doctrines initiated. Now the military organization was ready to go further to restore its former influence by extending an own grip into civilian areas and state governing [18]. The organization moved to the second stage - to control civilian institutions related to the defense like Ministry of Health, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Transport, etc. It also had to take a leading role in the state management by transferring own management practices and cooperation procedures (C2 in the military language), personnel policies and other organizations' values and philosophy to all state institutions and society.

The Russian Doctrine, already mentioned document of the right wing political forces, saw the state defence as a priority. „National security must be assured in three spheres: physical (territory, economy, demography etc.) mental (political, informational, psychological etc.) and spiritual“ (rus. Национальная безопасность обеспечивается

в трех пространствах: физическом (включая территорию, экономический и демографический потенциал), ментальном (включая политическое, информационное и психологическое пространство) и духовном) and the military organization potentially leading in all three spheres [19]. The National Defence Management Center (NDMC) became the main instrument to work in all three spheres and to gain control and dominance in practice. Officially the center was announced as a working tool of the General Staff and the MOD. In reality, according to prepared plans, the organization was supposed to expand and included other federal executive institutions, the government, a great part of state industrial complex and etc. [20].

Pic. 2

Russian military organization



*The scheme is translated by the author.*

*The original.: [http://www.avnrf.ru/attachments/article/639/AVN-1\(46\)\\_001-184\\_print.pdf](http://www.avnrf.ru/attachments/article/639/AVN-1(46)_001-184_print.pdf)*

But to have the tool is not enough. The organization has to transfer its „Modus operandio“ to the entire state by becoming a supervisor and adviser to civilians. Designing a scheme very similar to the scheme above for the civilian part and getting it implemented became a responsibility of the organization. In 2013 this process was launched by two Presidential decrees: No. 648 from 25th July „To form a system of situational centers working under the same order“ and No.2308 from 1st October 2013, „To develop a concept to create a system of situational centers working under the same order“. The decrees turned on a green light for the military organization to go wide and supporting governmental decisions came later.

Going to the third sphere mentioned in the „Russian Doctrine“ - spiritual matters, it is worth to point it out this area becoming the area of organization involvement as well. Spiritual matters cover a wide spectrum of issues including belief, morale, common values, ideology, etc. Religion is among the most important fields and establishing a close cooperation with Russian Provoslav Church (RPC) and promoting the same mentality of „serving the God, Tsar and Motherland“ is exactly what the „Russian Doctrina“ talks about. Other fields: science, arts, sports, healthcare, education and youth policies, informational warfare, climat change and many more areas are „battlefields“ the organization also needs to demonstrate „good practises“ and „new solutions“, introduce own „modus operandi“, show practices of fast response, coordinated and synchronized actions, involvement of different institutions and orientation toward results.

The last, but not least area the military has (and now is already involved) is a creation of a new Russian elite.



According to the „Russian Doctrine“ Russia is looking to a modern unilateral state form (network empire) with a new type of elite. And this elite must be formed in a different way. Among most progressive ways to form the elite the Doctrine names a service to the state (state and military service) as a prior and puts it on the top of a list. [21]. The organization is already deeply involved into the new elite formation processes and works successfully transferring its culture, mentality and other characteristics into national and state common values.

### **3.2 Practices of entering and dominance**

In late-Yeltsin era the military was neglected by a new civilian political leadership. The main reason was the organization's disagreement with the way new politicians run policies related to the national security. The organization decided "to fix" the situation by taking a control of political process into own hands, to join political life and elites and pursue policies and initiatives allowing to get civilian control done according "military mindset" and without risking Russia's national security interests [22]. It is worth to emphasize that while analyzing Russian civil-military relations and Russian military organization behavior one should not rely on terms of Western models of civilian control but ought to base up the analysis on a traditional Russian pattern. According it threats to Russian internal and external security are instrumentalized by the state as a way of justifying the size and political influence of military and security bodies [23].

The military developed a strategy of its interference into political decision-making process by transforming a rule stating that military could monitor civilians both "non-intrusively" and "intrusively". The soviet system allowed the military organization to effect permanently by "non-intrusiv" monitoring. After the collapse of USSR and with prevailing thoughts of "saving Russia", the organization changed the rule, became more active and made civilians to face "intrusive oversight". To achieve that the organization acted according own traditions and in a unified manner. I would argue that what was taken in the West as Russian clans' battles over the power should not be applicable to the organization at least. As an example, in early two thousands a publicly presented case of a visible confrontation between defense minister I. Sergeyev and Chief of the Chief General Staff A. Kvashnin ought to be viewed and analyzed from Russian military culture perspective as Taylor recommended. The „disagreement“ was simply "maskirovka" done with a task to distract an attention and allow upcoming defense minister S. Ivanov, the former KGB general and the Chief of General Staff Y. Baluyevsky to work calmly a political military guidance known as „Ivanov Doctrine“ and a plan for the upcoming military reform.

The military reform was supposed to prove that the military was capable to transform itself at first and the country at second. After a solid theoretical and practical preparation it started in 2008 and was supposed to be finished in 2020 [24]. In practice the pure military matters were almost finished in the year of 2015 and later it was directed to change other organization's branches (like MIA, MOE, etc) and non military entities [25]. As a result the MIA was reformed and the Police and Russian Guard appeared, non-state but loyal to the state paramilitary organizations like Russian Cossaks' or Chechen leader's Kadyrov Force stood up and military industries were reformed and returned to the state. It was especially important for the organization to demonstrate an ability "to make things to happen", so the official announcement about finishing the reform on time the defense minister S. Shoygu made in early 2021 [26].

#### **3.2.1. Militaries infiltrating recent Russian elites**

While talking about former militaries entering physically other social groups one needs to accept that, as it has been already mentioned, after the Cold War thousands of them were retired and joined business and (in smaller numbers) other areas. The study does not analyse a success of members of military organization in business, but quite a few (especially from the KGB) became prospective businessmen owning banks and companies. Some remained in the business, others later decided to try politics.

The appointment and election representative from the military organization is not unique to the Putin's rule only. Already back in 2000 Russian researcher A. Mukhin wrote in his book "Spetssluzhby Rossii i 'bolshaya' politika" that in Jelcin's years militaries were invited and accepted to Russia's first 'party of power', „Nash Dom-Rossiya“ and received important appointments. As examples named were the former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin who was former KGB officer. Nikolai Svanidze also ex-KGB official was appointed to be a head of the state television channel RTR and Eduard Gendeliev (KGB lieutenant) received the news programme, "Vesti" in his channel [27].

Statistics on the number of members of organization in political parties is not available, but taking into account that political parties accept all (including junior military rank holders) a percentage of people with military background and mindset must be big. One of indirect indicators showing that number being big is a number of organization members in the highest political body – the Parliament of Russia (Duma). After screening parliamentarians' biographies from the all Dumas' the author found the percentage of organization members in the Lower House increasing from 8,6 percent in the first Duma to 11-16 percent in the following ones. increasing.

Table 1

## Military organization entering the Russian Parliament

aDuma	Houses	Total	Military organization members*	Percentage
1 <sup>st</sup> 1993 - 1996	Lower House	450	39	8,6
2 <sup>nd</sup> 1996 - 2000	Lower House	450	51	11,3
3 <sup>rd</sup> 2000 - 2003	Lower House	450	57	12,7
4 <sup>th</sup> 2003 - 2007	Lower House	450	69	15,3
5 <sup>th</sup> 2007 - 2011	Lower House	450	73	16,2
6 <sup>th</sup> 2011 - 2016	Lower House	450	64	14,7
7 <sup>th</sup> 2016 - 2021	Lower House	450	57	12,6
8 <sup>th</sup> 2021 - 2026	Lower House	450	61	13,3

\* Dependence is confirmed from the parliamentary CV (a graduation from specialised military educational institution)

### 3.2.2 Military organization involvement into state governing

Military entering into other spheres in Jelcins' times was just a beginning. „Since Putin became elected as the president in March 2000 appointments of men with military organization background to administrative (alongside political posts) started to mount. Quite soon it became evident that this phenomenon was a conscious policy choice most probably dictated not only by Putin's desire for authoritarian policy but by the Russian military organization to gain control over the country by exploring the potential of the “military mindset” [28]. The first influx of personnel from the organization into governmental positions was mostly visible and discussed. The second one was less discussed, unless such individuals became very active in political life or after using so called „administrative potential“ were elected into regional or state parliaments.

Sharon W. Rivera and David W. Rivera, two western analysts studying the topic, quoted Russian sources stating that in yearly two thousands only in St. Petersburg up to 6,000 representatives from military organization (mostly the KGB) occupied various governmental, public, and commercial posts [29]. Russian analyst O. Gaman-Goluvina argued that as soon as a critical mass of people with military mindset in nomenclatura reaches a certain level, the fright between them and new, mostly criminal oligarch intensified with the last little by little being removed from politics, administration and even certain business. Relying on other researches she provided a numbers of the military in Putin's cohort in the period of 2000–2002 rising from 11.25% to 25.1% compared to the Yeltsin's period [30]. The situation with military organization speeding up to occupy as much as possible space in other areas and increase a control until the third Putin terms (until 2012) is the best seen in a table prepared by Dr. O. Kryshnanovskaya and S. White in 2009.

Table 2

## Military organization entering Russian elites in the new Russia

	National leadership	Government	Governors	Upper house	Lower house	Average
Gorbachev cohort 1988	5	5	–	5	4	4
Yel'tsin cohort 1993	33	11	2	3	6	11
Yel'tsin cohort 1999	46	22	5	7	7	17
Putin cohort 2002	58	33	10	15	9	25
Putin cohort January 2008	67	40	21	17	14	32

Source: Ol'ga Kryshnanovskaya & Stephen White (2009) *The Sovietization of Russian Politics, Post-Soviet Affairs*, 25:4, 283-309, DOI: 10.2747/1060-586X.24.4.283

A temporary break in Putin's rule (Medvedev's presidency) hasn't changed that tendency. People from military organization continued to pour into elites (including the state governing). The only difference observed was that former secret services' representatives were joined by members from other branches of the organization. According O.Kryshchanovskaya and S. White research in the president's Medvedev new team numbering fifty five people only nine had some experience of work in the KGB or its successor bodies, others came from other organization bodies including two from the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and fifteen from the Procuracy [31].

Next to people entering the state services and public bodies the practice of state management began to change as well. As it has been already mentioned in the military reform the idea to centralise the C2 of all military organization forces succeeded, so now the time came to extend this concept and style to the entire country. At the end of 2014, with the establishment of the National Defence Management Center (NDMC), a process of military organization gaining leverages to command and control the entire state accelerated. Only from the first look taken the NDMC represents the inside organization management. In reality, it makes a foundation for an overarching control of everybody and everything. Due to its functions including an implementation of the state defense plan, more than fifty federal bodies (ministries, agencies, state corporations, etc.) and thousands of industrial and other entities and enterprises are already "plugged" into the center. It integrates ministerial and other C2 centers into its own net. In case of necessity, it can take an upper hand and overrun those C2 centers. One of the center's cells, so called a military actions support cell, supervises activities done by military industrial complex and/or industries that perform the defense orders. The center works in a 24/7 and 365 mode. This means that the MOD already performs a permanent daily control and no war type mobilization is needed to get the system to work [32]. Last year the center celebrated its fifth anniversary. Three documentaries produced by Russian military TV "Zvezda" broadcasted the center's ability by employing new technologies and digital governing techniques to control state institutions' involvement into defense related activities and to extend its tentacles from the ministry's CP to an ordinary front line state border observation post. It was also mentioned the center having approximately 180 different situational response plans for a wide spectrum of emergencies and crisis already prepared. A new position of a duty general who is authorized to take over any of those situations at any time and has a right to report directly to the President is introduced as well [33].

As it was mentioned the process was launched by those two Presidential decrees we mentioned above. Later, on 14 July 2017, with the experience from the NDMC available, the Government passed a decision N. 839 to create an intergovernmental information exchange and monitoring system allowing monitoring and exchanging data among different institutions. It was one more state leadership permission for the organization to put hands on civilian administrative governance. In 25 April 2019 the National Defense Management Centre held a scientific-practical conference introducing federal regions' authorities with a proposal how to organize a centralized management there and offering the NDMC as an option. Tula region was selected to be the region to start. Few months later a civilian copy of the NDMC, so called a regional management centre for Moscow region was established in Tula. During the center's opening ceremony the governor of the region, former general lieutenant A. Diumin, acknowledged it being the MOD pilot project for civilians [34]. At the end of January 2020 Putin himself visited the center and was shown how a computerised management helps authorities to solve problems reported by citizens (or at least to account them) almost instantly. The center received Putin's approval. Other regions were encouraged to follow. Recently similar technologically advanced, digitalised, interconnected and applying especially designed software centers are being established in other federal regions.

In April 2021, one more step towards centralized C2 was made. President's administration informed Putin visiting a governmental coordinational center. The Center activated in 12 February 2021 plugs federal ministries, agencies and services into one common digital C2 and information exchange net [35]. Even though not seen in the front line the military organization with its plan to wrap up all the state management into one net continues to work.

### **3.2.3 Military dominance in faith, culture, science, ideology, sports, etc.**

The organization already became the biggest supported and promoter of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) and took initiatives to support spreading the faith. Since 2011 the military is introducing an institute of military chaplains in the organization [36], [37]. The MOD leads with more than a thousand of orthodox chaplains positions introduced [38]. Even other confessions are officially presented in the troops a number of rabbis [39] or mullahs as chaplains is miserable the majority belongs to the ROC. Almost all military garnisons have their own chapels. Commanders encourage religious services to be provided in fields and garnisons. It becomes quite usual baptizing ceremonies during exercises like one which took place in the strategic exercise „Tsentr 2015“ where 370 soldiers became believers right in the polygons [40]. More than a year ago the MOD crowned its support to the ROC by building in outskirts of Moscow the second biggest Orthodox cathedral which was named as the main military cathedral.

Respect and self-confidence is very important for the organization to establish, maintain and share. The organization made a lot of progress in developing a new ideology described in the Russian Doctrine as the „Great

Russia“ ideology. It contributed to the sparking a new wave of common sense patriotism according which Russia is symbolized by the Motherland (rus. Отечество), the Honor (rus. Честь) and the Belief (rus. Вера) and which allows all, despite origin, personal political beliefs and social occupation to become Russian patriots. [41]. Supporting the recent political leadership which works to make the country supreme (empire or global power) the organization has got involved into science, culture, ideology, education and other areas and uses its institutional experience in informational, psychological, legal and other warfares.

Back in 2013 the chief of General Staff of Russian Federation, army General V. Gerasimov emphasized “a value of science and prediction” in all war fighting cases including soft power confrontations. [42]. This became known as so called „Gerasimov’s doctrine“ there all confrontation types between Russia and its opponents in all fronts (military and non military) were summed up under the name of „hibryd war“. The organization transmitted own „Modus of Operandi“ to those activities. As one of examples could be an information warfare battle on the issue of interpretation of history. As soon as a question about the true WWII history arose and the European parliament adopted a resolution on the importance of European remembrance for the future of Europe, Russia coordinated and synchronized all means and actions available through centralized C2 to respond. State and private initiatives including Putin himself writing an article and lecturing were launched in a synchronized and coordinated manner. Everything has been done like in a real war battle. [43].

For the military organization, it is an essential to maintain a high social rating. The military must be loved, admired and respected. The best sons and daughters of the Motherland should be ready and willing to become members of the organisation. Other have to follow. The organization is moving to other spheres. It is already leading the geographical and historical elites and this adds to promotion and rising up its status. The military organization is able to provide the National Geographic association an isbreaker to take youngster from Young Army to Arctics [44] or to open archives to provide favorable facts about the WW II for the Russian Historical association. Glorifying so called Great Patriotic War the military organization is fueling this common sense patriotism where Russia is always right and everything what suits its interests is true and the real truth is not necessary. By this the organization promotes Russian imperial traditions and a role of the ruler as a savior of Russian nation.

The military is involved and shows effectiveness in all other areas as well. It built a few dozens of medical centers during COVID in a month with military engineers flying construction material to the places and working around the clock. Putin named them as an example for all the country to follow forgetting to mention that the organization used its power to ignore established civilian procedures for construction works. The military gets involved into organizing citizens’ leisure, reorientating hobbies and interests. A huge patriots’ bastion, the park “Patriot” was built and became a place for citizens to relax; military forums (like Army Forum) with open military stuff demonstrations and shows are organized. The organization also supports and promotes special platoons for enthusiasts to locate, recover and re-bury WWII soviet soldiers.

The military gives an especial attention to the education and young Russians. Since last few years specialized paramilitary schools - presidential cadet schools - pop up everywhere. The organization is sponsoring them and pupils are getting indoctrination alongside the secondary education. Under the auspices of the defense minister S. Shoigu a paramilitary youngsters’ organization “the Young Army” was established a few years ago. Today it accounts more than 800 000 girls and boys. Provided with the uniforms, organized and led they could get additional military training in the recently established “Avangard” sports and leisure centers where free parachute fall or military driving simulators are available and different sport and other activities sponsored. The organization is organizing geographical expeditions and sponsoring annual Russian language dictation. It established a military TV “Zvezda”, organizes concerts and sponsors movies.

Neither sports are left aside. The organisation has got back to sports. Sport became an instrument to promote both the organization and the state prestige. The famous soviet times’ fitness testings “be ready for the work and defense” (rus. Готов к Труд и Обороне ГТО), is reestablished and for potential soldiers and supporters an annual run – a Heroes Race (rus. Гонка Героев) is organized. Two sports clubs operated by the organization: Central Sports Club of the Army (rus. Центральный Спортивный Клуб Армии ЦСКА) supported by the MOD and “Dinamo” a former KGB and MIA club are contributing the majority of athletes to the national olympic team. Sportsmen from those two clubs have won 45 Olympic medals from 71 the entire country got in this year Tokyo olympic games. Defense minister himself congratulated sportsmen and awarded them with ministerial awards and rank promotions [45].

The organization understood sport’s ability to involve and attract masses. It used competition spirit to promote own popularity by inventing a new phenomenon – military competitions (games). Since 2015, the MOD organizes spectacular competitions among militaries: tank drivers, helicopter and jet pilots, military engineers, signal specialists, etc. More than thirty military specialties participate. Some competitions, like a tank biathlon or aviadarts, attract hundreds of visitors. The idea was developed up to a level then military type competitions became a platform for international relations. Foreign participants invited and coming to participate in the games, again, promote Russia’s and military organization prestige.



All this involvement not only helped the organization to create successfully a narrative of being the most efficient, second to none and the only entity who cares about Russia, but already turned thousands and thousands of young Russians into fans of the organization.

### 3.2.4 Military in a creation of a new elite

Another area showing the militocracy progressing in Russia is a change inside Russian elites. Putin comes from the military organization so he understands very well an importance of having a united elite. It is necessary to create such the elite. People belonging to the military organization or subscribing to its culture and posing its institutional characteristics are becoming a foundation for new elite. As we analyse the militocracy in Russia we see that it is not only about former militaries entering into politics and administration. It is also about a rotation of serving (active) militaries into civilian positions and returning them back to the military service. Already mentioned narrative “the military professionals can do things better than civilians”, made as a normal practice appointing serving General Staff Service officers into crucial state positions outside the military organization. This started more than a decade ago as a way to solve problems and get things done. Here are some examples. The recent deputy defense minister general-lieutenant Janus-Bek Evkurov (Юнус-Бек Евкуров). In 2004-2008 a deputy chief intelligence directorate in Privolzhko-Uralskiy military district, he, the owner the Russian Hero award, suddenly became the President of Ingushetia and “served” until 2019. In July 2020, he returned to active military service and was appointed to be the Deputy Minister of Defense and promoted to a general-lieutenant rank. Another example is general-major A. Matovnikov (А. Матовников). Since 2015 the commander of Russian Special Forces, in 2018 he was appointed to be the President Representative in the North Caucasus Federal Region and after finishing his tour returned to the organization and since 21st Jan 2020 serves as the deputy Commander Ground Forces. Even the defense minister army general Sergey Shoygu himself followed the same path. The long lasting head of one of organization’s braches – the Ministry of Emergencies - in 5th April 2012 he suddenly became elected to the Moscow region Duma and after few months (11th May) became the governer of Moscow region. Sexual scandals a pure civilian defense minister A. Serdiukov got involved speeded up his firing and in 6th November 2012 S. Shoygu became the minister of defence.

There are a number of young and active organization’s elite serving in non-military appointments now. D. Mironov (Д. Миронов) a former deputy Interior minister in 2015-2017, since 2017 is fulfilling duties of the governor of Yaroslavl region and S. Melikov (С. Меликов), a deputy commander Russian Guard in 2016-2019 now acts as a senator in the State Council and since October 2020 is appointed to lead the Dagestan Republic. Already mentioned A. Diumin (А.ДЮМИН) a young and perspective forty four years old general-lieutenant in December 2015 was appointed for a months to be a deputy defense minister and in 2016 was rotated (and successfully won the elections) to be the governor of Tula region. Are they going to stay in those (civilian) positions forever or return like S. Shoygu, Janus-Bek Evkurov and A. Matovnikov back into the active service remains an open question?

As it has already been mentioned, the organization is active in other spheres as well. Generals are heading different national and scientific organizations. The best examples could be the Russian Historical association where the Chief of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service S. Narishkin is a chair or Russian Geographical association headed by the Defense minister S. Shoygu.

Nevertheless, the organization itself also needs young, professional and bright elite. They have to move things forward and could leave implementation tasks for older colleagues. It already became a norm for the President to appoint retired organization elite members to be Presidential representatives in federal regions (rus. федеральный округ), regions (rus. регион) or in other special representative posts. From scanning representatives’ biographies, we find that Putin’s pool of presidential representatives in different places always had a sizable military organization elite presentation. Generals, admirals or equivalents from the KGB: Poltavchenko, Cherkezov, Rapota, Vinnichenko, Safonov. Bulavin; the MOD: Kazancev, Pulinovskiy, Kvashnin, Menailo; the MIA: Latishev; the State Prosecution office: Ustinov, Chaika –all they served or are serving as the Presidential representative in federal regions. Others like Golubev (MIA), Ushakov, Semergey and Sergeyev (former KGB) were Presidential Representatives in regions.

The Russian Doctrine talks about the creation of an absolutely new elite: patriotic, professional and same minded. Despite numbers of infiltrated active and retired organization numbers being big it is still not enough to make the military mindset prevailing. To solve that problem the organization proposed to introduce an institutional (military) culture into elite work by adopting military practices to the elite training. Since last few years there are new projects designed to prepare Russian administrators and even politicians. One of those is a project called “Leaders of Russia”. Initiated in 2018 the project is built on a military idea of creating a carrier lift for talented peoples to reach high positions despite their origin or wealth. The project is to search for loyal and smart people. It covers the entire country and allows everybody from anywhere to register and participate. The project, while it goes, employs different tests and checks to eliminate not smart or motivated enough. It is like in the military where young officers, graduates from military schools enter the service and troops and are passing numerous tests and probes while coping with

challenges in exercises and daily activities. A great part of “Leaders of Russia” training methodology is similar to that used in the military. Especially this is true in a leadership training part where students have to climb mountains or jump to water falls. In the military smart lieutenants and captains are taken under the auspices of commanders and assigned to so-called “commander’s cadre pool”. (Petraitis 2019). In the project the situation is the same - lucky winners get internships in the offices of ruling elite and become candidates to the presidential cadre pool.

Another project, initiated by Putin himself, is a subproject of the “Leaders of Russia” and is called “Leaders of Russia. Politics” It started just a year ago (in the spring of 2020) and is very similar to the “Leaders of Russia”. The only difference is that instead of preparing administrators here everything is designed to prepare new type of politicians for Russian politics. After following a very similar to the previous project training, winners get internships inside political parties. Later they could join them or start own political life. The result any way is achieved - all participants get the same values and mindset. Received knowledge remains and in future it will not matter what party a young and perspective politician belongs to he or she would make political part able to cooperate without problems with a similarly trained administrator or military [46].

But successfully passing “Leaders of Russia” projects or to be in front lines of other initiatives like “volunteers of Russia movement” or “Young Army” is just a first step to join the new elite. Civilians who have passed all training and are selected for promotion have to get a specialized training that is similar to the General Staff Service education. Highest positions (Governors, heads of federal bodies, etc.) since 2015 pass a special course in the General Staff Academy (GS home page). However, a request is not for tens but for hundreds or even thousands to be reshaped and the GSA is not able to satisfy the demand. To get this done President Putin established a training institution named as “State Service Academy (SSA) under the President of Russian Federation” (rus. Российская академия государственной службы при Президенте Российской Федерации (РАГС при Президенте РФ) in 2010. The Academy is designed to train new state administrators and cope with dilemmas arising in the state governance and in 2017 signed a cooperation MOU with the GSA to help to design training programs. One of the SSA functions, alongside to General Staff Academy is to help the recent elite to obtain missing “military mindset”.

#### 4. Conclusions

Prussian General Staff was a very professional military organisation. It added a lot to the Germany’s ability to fight numerous opponents simultaneously for a number of years in the WWI. The culture, philosophy and working style it promoted were oriented to the efficiency and result. The winners of the WWI realized how effective instrument it was and forbade by the Treaty of Versailles such type of military culture to exist. The treaty stated bluntly “The Great Germany General Staff and all similar organisations shall be dissolved and may not be reconstituted in any form” (Treaty of Versailles 1919). In the Hitler’s Reich, the General Staff was not officially reestablished, but its culture and working style remained. Again, the country was able to fight numerous battles in different fronts for more than five years. After the WW II, the West finally abolished this military culture and left it only to historians to explore.

Nevertheless, the Prussian General Staff mentality, the concept of the existence of the elite of military organization remains alive in Russia. Like in the past, such culture contributing to the establishment and rise of Prussian and later German states, now it is contributing again in restoring Russia and promoting its imperial expectations. President Putin is a product of this military culture and knows how to use its potential of that culture.

Russian military organization was able to turn a collapse of the USSR into an opportunity, to create and support a right wing conservative vision of Russia’s future, to convince and become an axis for country’s unification. The organization is infiltrating own members into Russian elites and transferring own values, culture, traditions, morale, “modus operandi” with a task to make them Russian national characteristics. Within those twenty years of Putin’s rule it managed to prove efficiency in actions and loyalty in service. It is able to bear leaders and willing to serve them.

The Russian military organization has already achieved a lot in transferring Russian political system into a totalitarianism dominated by one social group (militaries) and represented by a member from it. It succeeded to getting the militocracy in Russia. Now a thing what scares is a possibility of this social group (military) and the institution (the military organization) becoming so dominative that we might face a modern Sparta reappearing again in a form of Great Russia.

Trakai August 2022

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