

Plato and aristotle politcs



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The figure and influence of Vladimir Putin in relation to Russian foreign policy.

writing service letter “ Be not afraid of greatness; some are born great, some achieve greatness, and others have greatness thrust upon them.” William Shakespeare. With the case of Vladimir Putin, I believe that his case began as one whose greatness with regards power was to some extents ??? thrust upon him??? by the previous President.

Yeltsin hand-picked Putin in times of great distress where the post of Prime Minister was replaced some five times in the space of two years. Putin therefore achieved greatness, even though he was born into a very humble social stratus. His main task was to preserve his reputation as well as his power. It is a task that until now he fulfilled well as President and seems to continue relatively well despite the criticism and controversy surrounding him, not unlike Bush or Berlusconi. He is not flawless but a good captain and rudder director for Russia. His emergence out of near total obscurity in a space of three years is spectacular in itself.

Starting as a KGB agent with a post in Berlin to becoming the President of Russia is quite a feat. One may argue that his rise to the current position was largely due to circumstances; a case of being at the right place at the right time. However, he has been in power for quite a while and the foreign policy under his rule has found a surer footing. He has reached agreements with President Bush who is quite admirable towards him and finds him a figure worth of respect.

He was appointed at times where the situation was literally rock bottom. Putin has little charisma; his image is that of a steely type of business figure but one who is reasonable and effective. What he lacks in charisma and smiles, he makes up for in being a strong, disciplined role model for the Russian youth who are major supporters of his schemes. Appointed at a time where the situation was at rock bottom and the only way is via improvement, he seems to have made much out of the situation given the fact that before him five Prime-Ministers within the space of two years. Putin was meant to last longer. The only way was up and then forward. Putin in several respects was the man for the job. With the case of Russia, because of culture, geopolitics and many other factors, I believe that the Western World is a bit idealistic to expect the same level of democracy it has embraced for quite some time by now.

The context is different and contrary to the West. Putin may seem as unspectacular when compared to the heroic Gorbachev or the boisterous, ??? man-on-the-tank figure??? of Yeltsin. These two had to destroy a system which was no longer working. When he was first appointed as President CV wisely, he was not that impressive as today. However the low profile, clean slate situation proved to be an opportunity to impress as an effective ruler, even though at times not democratic, something the West needs yet to grasp.

Russia is a special case most of the time and does not fall under the democratic boundary. It is neither European nor Asian. It is simply Russian. I would place Putin as a modern day Medici ruler like figure as the people, out

of either love or fear seem to respect him. He has brought Russia in a proper and realistic direction.

He also boosted the nationalistic sentiment. Yet the issue with Russia is whether to adopt a policy of co-operation with the rest of the world or ??? *spetsifika*???, a special case of it being on its own, the romantic idea which is according to Putin unlikely with regards foreign policy with the rest of the world, especially on topics such as terrorism, something which he does not subject to territories. The phrase first used regarding Gorbachev as being ??? a man the West can do business with??? has been used in the case of Putin as well. ??? Vladimir Putin??™s first four years showed his commitment to the newly chosen course of great-power normalization, or great-power pragmatism.

??? He quickly leaned toward engaging the West. His strategy bore some similarity to Mikhail Gorbachev??™s, but whereas Gorbachev faced a crisis of human civilization that had resulted from arms races, social and economic stagnation (thus poverty), and environmental destruction during the Cold War, Putin sought to frame as the global threat of terrorism. In this respect, he seems to have done a fairly good job as Bush was fairly respectful towards him and claimed to have grasped a gaze through his soul via his eyes, however melodramatic it may seem. With regards figure and ideology, Putin appears to be very much a neo-Stalinist for the West (a notion resulting in the product of anti-Russian campaigning) and a Peter the Great figure he enjoys at home among the general people. The Cold War mentality never seems to cease, yet for better or worse, the West has to deal with Russia whose sheer size and population, let alone its resources make it a leading

figure in world politics. His is a figure of law and order, perhaps placed even before freedom at most of the time. As previously mentioned American Cold War campaigning against Russia did a lot of damage to the image of such a country.

DC Comics, as well as James Bond novels always depict the bad guys as Russians or Russian allies and Communists. For most of the time, Russians were the dummy figures of evil. Like Putin, I don't think they are misconceptions but publicity strategies.

Putin expressed his disgust at this. I don't believe these are misconceptions. I think this is a purposeful attempt by some to create an image of Russia based on which one could influence our internal and foreign policies. With cases like Anna Politkovskaya, Garry Kasparov and Dmitri Muratov (the editor in chief of the Novaya Gazeta), the democratic and human rights level in Russia may be well and good for a Spartan and militant State but when compared to the rest of the world, there is yet much to be done.

It is very difficult to place Putin under a political ideology per se for he is a driver on a bus not a passenger and most of all a pragmatist. The idea of handling foreign relations seems to be very much on his terms, especially with the idea that in his time, he and not the foreign Minister was boss. Dr Bobo Lo coined the term 'Le Consensus, C'est Moi' as an adaptation of the Sun King's quote, 'L'Etat, C'est Moi' which in several respects is very true to Putin. Bobo Lo also described him as a shape shifter, somehow like a Machiavellian Prince who puts pragmatism first. His policies

are elastic with regards adaptation and effectiveness. His policies appear to be cordial yet strictly business like at the same time. Thus, as a conclusion I would say that Putin is a decent start after the turbulent times of the Post Cold War instability.

He has managed and invested the inheritance quite well and built much of the way for the following rulers. For better or worse, he kept constancy in a firm home and built up a demolished foreign policy over the ruins of Yeltsin.