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The “Izborsk Club”: A Call From the Past or Insight into Russia’s Future?

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Since the outbreak of the Arab Spring in the Greater Middle East and the Russian domestic audience’s openly visible discontent over the course of Russia’s development in 2010/11, Russo-Western relations have gone through a series of crises. These are accompanied by a growing anti-Western discourse in Russia’s foreign and domestic policies. A key driver of this way of thinking is the Izborsk Club. Founded in 2012, this platform aligns outspoken anti-Westerners, ultra-conservative intellectuals, and representatives of nationalistic elites. Despite its rapid appearance on the stage and support of (at least part) of the ruling elite, the Club has now become much less visible than one might have expected. This paper speculates on the meaning, functions, and strategic long(er)-term mission of the Club. First, I outline the main milestones in the Club’s history and development, including its key/strategic documents and geographic outreach, paying special attention to the Club’s perception of the Arctic region and Russia’s role therein. Second, I discuss the personalities of some of its leaders to explain the agendas and/or values promoted by the platform. Finally, I speculate – based on the post-2014 developments – about the Club’s prospects, given the growing conservatism and anti-Westernism in Russia’s foreign and, most importantly, domestic policies.

What is the “Izborsk Club”?

Genesis, origins, and doctrinal foundation(s)

The history of the Izborsk Club goes back to September 2012, a year marked by two developments of crucial importance in Russia’s post-2000 history: the Arab Spring and destabilization of the Middle East, resulting in yet another lap of political confrontation between Russia and the West;¹ and the increasing internal instability and polarization of the Russian society, reflected in the growing protest movement that came to be known in the West as the “Snow Revolution.”² In a way, it is reasonable to presume that the creation of the Izborsk Club – an ultra-conservative and anti-liberal intellectual assembly of like-minded thinkers, experts, and officials – was a reaction by Russian authorities and the ruling elite to internal and external challenges.

In September 2012, a large group of Russian neo-conservative intellectuals assembled in the city of Izborsk (Pskov oblast, Northwestern Russia) to celebrate its 1150th anniversary. This event enjoyed the explicit support

of then Pskov Governor Andrey Turchak, now a prominent political figure who currently serves as Secretary of the General Council of United Russia and is the Senator representing Pskov oblast in the Federation Council.

Neither the time nor the venue was coincidental. The choice of timing was commensurate with the general political climate in Russia, which experienced its first anti-governmental protests since Yeltsin's (unsuccessful) presidency. The choice of Izborsk to host this convention should be viewed as a sign of historical symbolism and a tribute to the role that that town has played in Russian history. (The skirmishes between the Russian forces and the German knights in the 13th century took place in this area.) This leads Russians to frequently view Izborsk as Russia's "western outpost" against the West and its "detrimental" influence.³

A combination of these two themes was reflected in both the overall tone of the convention as well as the strategic documents adopted during the inaugural session. Valery Korovin, the director of the Centre for Geopolitical Expertise and one of the founders of the platform, suggested that the essence of the Club is premised on the following "five unifying principles":⁴

1. Russia – is an ideocratic power.
2. Russia – is a country-civilization.
3. Russia has to remain a large (in territorial terms) country.
4. All nations and ethnic groups living in Russia should be developing under the leadership of the "great Russian ethnos."
5. "Social justice" (*sotsialnaya spravedlivost*) as the key vector of Russia's internal development.

The main strategic development goal justifying the Club's emergence was declared in the following way: to create a "patriotic coalition" of forces in the Russian society intended to facilitate "real changes in the lives of Russian people," contributing to the process of nurturing a new generation of patriotically and conservative-thinking young Russian citizens. In effect, the implementation of this goal is reflected in practical policies aimed at the prioritization of youth's military-patriotic upbringing – an element that has become one of the central features of Russia's domestic policy and, to some extent, foreign policy, which has become particularly visible after 2014⁵ – and emphasizing historic-cultural education levelled at developing a very specific, defined as "patriotic-conservative," way of thinking among the Russian youth.⁶

The Club's strategic tasks were outlined as follows:⁷

1. Analytical and policy-related activities associated with the creation of deliverables and documents – designed for both the Russian society and the government – aimed at developing renewed, patriotism-based state policy in all spheres of public life.
2. Educational activities intended to expand the outreach of the Club to other Russian regions, creating a network of like-minded intellectuals in all federal districts of the Russian Federation.
3. The dramatic expansion of the Club's presence in the Russian media on the local, regional, and federal levels, intended to "conquer informational niches [...] occurring due to the moral and intellectual ebb of the liberal society."
4. Concentrating effort(s) on the formation of a powerful political-ideological coalition of like-minded conservative intellectuals – assembling various, and sometimes even conflicting, spectrums and forces

within Russian society – against “foreign centers of influence” (foreign ideological adversaries) and the so-called “fifth column” (domestic foes) operating inside Russia.

The ideas and goals postulated by Club members allow one to define its ideology as “neo-imperial social ultra-conservatism with traits of ethnic nationalism and xenophobia” – as I justify later in this paper. Russian sources argue that the emergence of the Izborsk Club was a “first in Russian history” in attempting to unify and reconcile the positions of all patriotic-conservative forces within the Russian society, ranging from leftist forces to proponents of monarchism.⁸

From this perspective, the ideological foundations of the Izborsk Club sharply contrast with other intellectual platforms widely associated with Russian authorities, including the Valdai Discussion Club (established in 2004). There is every reason to believe that the Valdai Club is not merely representing a more “liberal” part of Russian propaganda that is designed primarily for external consumption, but is becoming an ideological competitor of the Izborsk Club. Incidentally, Mikhail Deliagin, a member of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences and a deputy in the Russian State Duma (the lower Chamber of the Russian Parliament), notes that the Izborsk Club was created not as an addition to but rather as an alternative to the Valdai Club. Other observers have gone even further, describing the relationship between the two organizations (both of which allegedly have connections with ruling elites) as an “ideological rivalry.”⁹

Reflecting on the “Kremlin-Izborsk” link, it is apparent that the creation of the Izborsk Club must have been approved and perhaps even supported by the Russian authorities. Unlike its connections with the Valdai Club, however, the Kremlin has been rather cautious in associating itself with Izborsk. According to one unnamed source from the Presidential Administration, the Kremlin is reportedly interested in the existence of both clubs because they represent two different (and to some extent conflicting) spectrums of Russia’s political thought.¹⁰ In an official comment, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov, when asked about the Izborsk Club, denied the existence of any links with the Kremlin. Nevertheless, the Club did receive a presidential grant for not-for-profit organizations in 2015. The most intriguing aspect associated with the grant was the description of the goal to be achieved: one of the Izborsk Club’s key missions is to “explain what ‘the Russian World’ is.”¹¹

Key branches and regional representation

By the end of 2013, the Club (which started publishing a magazine of its own) claimed to have carried out outgoing sessions in such large and politically strategic cities as Ekaterinburg, Ulyanovsk, Saint Petersburg, Saratov, Bryansk, Belgorod, Tula, Kaluga, Omsk, Nizhny Novgorod, and Orenburg. Russian sources also claimed the Club to have had its outgoing sessions taking place beyond Russia’s territory, with some of the venues located in Ukraine (Donetsk and Crimea), Transnistria (Moldova), Syria, Serbia, China, and Iran.¹² In total, the Club has managed to establish 23 regional branches.¹³ For this primer, I briefly analyze three crucial venues/directions.

First is the southwestern direction, with special emphasis placed on the so-called “Novorossiia” area. In 2014, following the annexation of Crimea and the outbreak of military conflict in southeastern Ukraine, one branch of the Club was opened in Donetsk (the so-called “Novorossiia branch”).¹⁴ The inaugural session brought together experts and political activists from Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkov, Rostov, Kyiv, and Pskov,¹⁵ as well as members of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC).¹⁶ Since its emergence, the main function of this branch has

been concerned with the promotion of anti-Ukrainian, anti-Western/American,¹⁷ and anti-liberal¹⁸ themes and narratives. The branch played a key role in the drafting of the book titled *The History of Donbass*¹⁹ – a propagandist anti-Ukrainian sketch that de facto justifies separatism on the basis of pseudo-historic argumentation. In explaining the meaning and strategic importance of the Donetsk-based branch, Aleksandr Dugin, a key figure in the Izborsk Club, noted that this part of Ukraine has deep symbolic meaning for Russian history and statehood and will become a crucial element in the “reconstruction of the Russian World.”²⁰ Despite these pompous declarations, the activities of the branch (which is essentially managed by just three individuals) have been limited: in 2020, the branch contributed to the publishing of the *Dictionary of a Patriot* handbook;²¹ another area of activity has been moderating the “Novorossiya” (dis)information agency platform.²²

Second, the Far Eastern branch was inaugurated in September 2019 in the city of Vladivostok²³ several days prior to the kick-off session of the 5th Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) – one of the most celebrated international economic-political events held by Russia in this resource-endowed but still economically/demographically underdeveloped part of the country.²⁴ Unlike in Donetsk, the inaugural session in Vladivostok had a clear (geo)economic agenda, with ideology playing a marginal role. The main topics that were addressed by the conveners boiled down to the following three key areas:

- Discussion of the Territories of Outpacing Development (TORs) program.
- The development of the “Free port of Vladivostok” initiative.
- The “Law on the Far Eastern Hectare” decree and its impact on the economy and demographics of the Far East macro-region.

The overall tone of the discussion on the Far East and Moscow’s regional policies was rather pessimistic. The delegates admitted that the region – despite all the initiatives that have been implemented since 2014 – has not become an attractive place for settlers; moreover, the “escape” of locals to other, more attractive parts of Russia continues, and it is not at all obvious how it could be stopped. In the final analysis, the conveners agreed that the main mission of the Izborsk Club is based on two interdependent pillars: first, employing all the intellectual and creative forces of its members (scientists, historians, journalists, artists, and writers) to “inscribe this region on the mental map of Russia, to change its current perception of a distant and drawback region” into a “dream place to live in”; and, second, acting with the Russian government (thus, avoiding unconstructive and/or unnecessary criticism) to contribute to transforming the Far East into a new destination for internal migration.²⁵ Yet, based on available information from open sources, the Izborsk Club’s activities in the Far East have been chiefly concerned with information sessions and some involvement in local youth military-patriotic activities.²⁶ Its involvement in local economic, business-related, and/or political initiatives has remained very limited.

Third, the “Arctic branch” was created in 2016²⁷ with a declared centre in Nizhnevartovsk (Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug), where the inaugural session took place. Notably, the event assembled the most impressive lineup of speakers who discussed a broad spectrum of problems and themes ranging from Arctic geopolitics to the development of local infrastructure, unravelling educational potential, (inter)national tourism, and exploration activities.²⁸ A comparative analysis of the Club’s regional activities indicates that the Arctic region occupies a strategic place on the Club’s agenda, and its level of regional involvement (including

ties with regional political elites) has been impressive. For instance, in 2017, the local governor, Natalia Komarova, underscored her determination to continue building ties with the Club based on “shared values.”²⁹ The Club’s involvement in Arctic affairs became a key factor in the opening up of its new branch in Saint Petersburg, where Club authorities declared that “the Arctic region is the main vector for realizing the Izborsk Club’s ideas.”³⁰ Furthermore, the Club’s chairman, Alexander Prokhanov, specifically highlighted that the Saint Petersburg-based branch will be tasked with dealing with “issues related to the use of [Russia’s] Arctic territories.”³¹ In 2019, the Club’s presence in the Arctic expanded further with the inauguration of the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District (YNAO)-based branch. Interestingly, during the inauguration session, it was stated that the Club would provide input and contribute to the socio-economic development program of the YNAO. While it is difficult to measure the Club’s actual role and input in this process, declarations suggested that the Club’s expertise would play a decisive role, while “local experts and specialists will provide their contribution as well.”³² Another important aspect related to the Club’s Arctic involvement is the clear approval of its actions by Russia’s key figures working in this direction, including the Hero of the Soviet Union (and Russia), Artur Chilingarov.³³

The Club’s determination to expand its involvement in the Arctic received an additional impetus in 2021 when Oleg Rozanov (one of the founders of the Izborsk Club, in charge of regional and international cooperation since 2015) published an article on “Russia – is the Northern Civilization.”³⁴ The article issued a powerful statement, proclaiming the Arctic region as Russia’s natural habitat, its future,³⁵ and its historical opportunity to avoid a “geopolitical impasse” – the prospect of being dominated by either East or West. Rozanov also praised an extremely ambitious initiative by Russian Defence Minister Sergey Shoigu to invest in the formation of new cities in Siberia,³⁶ which would change the course of Russian history and its future development for generations to come. The piece also denied other nations, including Canada, their “genuine” status as Arctic nations, on the basis of an extremely questionable assumption that – in the case of Canadians – the settlers in that country, unlike the Russians, have always been drawn to areas with milder climates (US-Canadian border areas) rather than the North.

This said, in general, the Club’s Arctic agenda – despite its initially declared goals and objectives rhetorically aimed at the elaboration of steps/measures intending to address the demographic and socio-economic issues faced by the macro-region – has been dominated by a combination of overt anti-Westernism and calls regarding the urgent necessity of fortifying Russia’s regional military presence and capabilities. It is telling that most of its writings on the Arctic have been produced not by economics- or business-related experts, but (ultra-conservative) military- and disinformation/propaganda-related figures.

Organization: Who Is in Charge, and Why This Is Important

Given that the Izborsk Club brings together dozens of influential experts, policymakers, members of civil society, and representatives of the Russian political milieu,³⁷ as well as hundreds of local activists, it is unrealistic to discuss each member individually. Instead, to get a better understanding of the Club and its ideology, it makes sense to briefly describe the Club’s leadership – the personalities that shape the Club’s image and reflect its essential features.

Alexander Prokhanov (born in 1938) is a journalist, writer, thinker, and, arguably, one of the staunchest stalwarts of neo-Stalinist ideology among the currently living prominent figures in post-1991 Russia.³⁸ He is also an avid admirer of the North Korean political and social model.³⁹ Prokhanov has been acting as a chairman of the Izborsk Club since its creation. Despite widespread criticism for and accusations of spreading neo-Fascist and anti-Semitic materials,⁴⁰ Prokhanov has managed to retain a high status in Russia's political milieu. Although Prokhanov initially opposed Vladimir Putin (tacitly accusing him of staging terrorist attacks in Moscow⁴¹), he drastically changed his opinion,⁴² which explains his subsequent career growth. After the outbreak of public protests, worsening internal strife in Russia, and growing confrontation with the West, Prokhanov's career took off. On 18 July 2012, Vladimir Putin signed a decree making Prokhanov a member of the Council on Public Television (*Soviet po Obshestvennomu Televideniju*)⁴³ and promoting him to Deputy Chairman of the Public Council at the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation. Later, however, the Kremlin did not make any notable gestures and/or steps that point to its favouring of Prokhanov.

A second notable figure is Sergey Glazyev (born in 1961), a politician and economist, a member of the National Financial Council of the Bank of Russia, and a full member of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Initially a Yeltsin supporter (from 1992-93, he was Minister of Foreign Economic Relations and a member of the Democratic Party of Russia), since 2003 he has become one of the leaders of the Rodina ultra-nationalist right-wing political party. Following his endorsement of Putin's candidacy for presidential election in 2012, Putin appointed Glazyev as presidential aide for the coordination of the work of federal agencies in developing the Customs Union of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia. His rise to prominence coincided with the outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis – which Glazyev described as a Nazi coup⁴⁴ – and Glazyev's overt anti-Western/Ukrainian position. He has been identified as a potential successor of Putin,⁴⁵ yet with the lapse of time, such a prospect seems increasingly unrealistic. Arguably, the zenith – and at the same time, the beginning of the collapse – of Glazyev's political career coincided with the early stages of the Ukrainian crisis, when following the annexation of Crimea in March 2014, he was awarded a medal for his personal contribution to the "return" of Crimea.⁴⁶ Later, the Kremlin's strategy toward Glazyev and some like-minded individuals changed dramatically. This became particularly visible after Glazyev's pivot toward ethnic nationalism and even anti-Semitism⁴⁷ became conspicuous and potentially dangerous to Moscow from a PR/reputational point of view. As a result, on 9 October 2019, Glazyev was dismissed from his previous position of presidential aide.

A third notable figure is Aleksandr Dugin (born in 1962), a stalwart proponent of Neo-Eurasianism and one of the most prominent ultra-conservative and anti-Western thinkers in Russia since 1991. Dugin's rapid rise to prominence also coincided with the Ukrainian crisis, when he obtained semi-mythic characteristics, with many experts underscoring his close ties to the Kremlin and his influence abroad. For example, scholar Marlène Laruelle called Dugin the "main manufacturer of a fascism à-la-russe," citing the eclectic nature of his ideology, which is premised on a combination of various political and philosophical traditions, including Esoteric Nazism and traditionalism/perennialism.⁴⁸ It is also known that Dugin has played a notable role in establishing contacts between Russia and the European far right, far left, and ultra-conservative forces. These contacts, which Dugin established from 1990-92,⁴⁹ proved particularly valuable during the Ukrainian crisis, when Russia sought to garner support for its actions abroad. Of particular importance to Russia were Dugin's ties with French (the National Rally), Hungarian (Jobbik), Greek (Syriza), Italian (Liga Norte), and Austrian (the Freedom Party of Austria) nationalist forces.⁵⁰ As with Glazyev, however, the Ukrainian crisis – during which Dugin played a prominent role, wholeheartedly supporting Moscow and Putin personally – proved the apex of

Dugin's career. In September 2014, Dugin lost his post as Head of the Department of Sociology of International Relations in the Faculty of Sociology at Moscow State University, which he had held since 2009.⁵¹ In response, Dugin identified three factors that contributed to his removal: the wrongdoings of the "Kyiv Nazi," the actions of the Russian liberals and enemies of patriotism, and non-interference by the "lunar" Vladimir Putin,⁵² who Dugin accused of failing to act decisively. Later, Dugin, who rapidly withered away from the public information space, was appointed Chief Editor of the ultra-conservative nationalist platform Tsargrad TV (which is loosely connected to the Izborsk Club), created by "Orthodox oligarch" Konstantin Malofeev. Dugin did not manage to hold onto this position for long, however. In 2017, he was fired without any official explanation.⁵³

The brief description of these three personalities yields two valuable insights. First, it enhances our understanding of who forms the ideological core of the Izborsk Club and its values. Second, and perhaps most important, this reveals a telling pattern: the trajectory and logic of the development of the Ukrainian crisis made Russian political elites distance themselves from these personalities and, to some extent, from the Izborsk Club – their main platform.

Izborsk Today: Oblivion or Anticipation of a New Beginning?

The Izborsk Club's heyday of media and public visibility began in the 2012-14 timeframe. At the same time, the Ukrainian crisis, which also became an hour of triumph for some of its members, marked the growing dissatisfaction of the Russian authorities with this organization, and ultimately their distancing from it. This may be attributed to two main factors.

First, excessive (even by Russian standards) conservatism and hardly concealable traces of ethnic nationalism marked the Izborsk Club's discourse. As other conservative/nationalistic projects, such as the Rodina political party or the notorious Nashi movement, have vividly demonstrated, Russian authorities are now wary of forces promoting this type of ideology. Sometimes, to garner public support and distract domestic attention to other issues, Moscow lightly pulls on the "nationalistic" cord⁵⁴ – a tool actively employed by various political regimes in both Russia and the USSR in the past.⁵⁵ Now, Russia's ruling elites, remembering the bitter experiences of both the USSR and the Russian Empire, act more cautiously in this realm. In effect, as noted by Igor Yurgens, the head of the Institute of Modern Development and a member of the Valdai Club, the Izborsk Club and its ideology are detrimental to Russian state interests. Specifically, he noted that the ideology, rooted in the outspoken (ethnic) nationalism and retrograde thinking promulgated by the Club and its members, was the key cause for "the demise of the USSR." Yurgens also noted that if the Club's ideology prevails, it will stifle Russian modernization and propel "Russia going backward."⁵⁶

Second, ambitions and claims for ideological leadership, mixed with heightened criticism of the Kremlin's policies, have brought disfavour from political elites. Two details are revealing. On the one hand, in the Club's so-called "Ulyanovsk Declaration" released on 9 January 2013, Izborsk's leadership not only called on all ultra-conservative and anti-Western forces inside Russia to unite under the Club's leadership and guidance, but it also implied that, under Russia's current political leadership, the country will continue stagnating and Western nations will continue to outpace Russia in military-industrial and socio-economic development.⁵⁷ At the same time, this criticism is inseparable from Russian conservative-patriotic and nationalistic forces criticizing Putin for the so-called "betrayal of Novorossiia."⁵⁸

This stated, there is every reason to believe that the Izborsk Club – despite the Kremlin distancing itself from the platform and strained relations between some of the Club’s members and the ruling elite – will continue to exist. Russia’s pivot toward conservatism (and even elements of nationalism) and its growing confrontation with the West are likely to make Russia’s (elderly) ruling elite more apprehensive of any changes inside Russia. In this context, the perceived value and usefulness of platforms and networks preaching conservatism and denying changes, such as the Izborsk Club, may enjoy resurgent appeal.

Notes

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- ³ In this respect, Izborsk bears conspicuous similarities to and parallels with another westernmost point: the Kaliningrad oblast.
- ⁴ Aleksandr Savenko, “Izborskiy klub’: vremya imperskoy aktsii,” *Evraziya*, September 13, 2012, <http://evrazia.org/article/2087>.
- ⁵ For more information, see Sergey Sukhankin, “Russia’s ‘Youth Army’: Sovietization, Militarization or Radicalization?” *Eurasia Daily Monitor* Volume: 13 Issue: 180, The Jamestown Foundation, November 9, 2016, <https://jamestown.org/program/russias-youth-army-sovietization-militarization-radicalization/>; Alla Hurska, “Putin Seeks to Garner Support of Russian Youth Through Military-Patriotic Upbringing (Part One),” *Eurasia Daily Monitor* Volume: 16 Issue: 51, The Jamestown Foundation, April 10, 2019, <https://jamestown.org/program/putin-seeks-to-garner-support-of-russian-youth-through-military-patriotic-upbringing-part-one/>.
- ⁶ “Izborskiy klub – mesto sily I kreposti duha nastoyashchikh patriotov Rossii,” *PrimaMedia.ru*, May 28, 2020, <https://primamedia.ru/news/946249/>.
- ⁷ “O klube,” *Izborskiy klub*, accessed November 10, 2021, <https://izborsk-club.ru/about>.
- ⁸ “Izborskiy klub’ predlozhl ideyu ‘Bolshogo Ryvka’ Rossii,” *Voyennoye obozreniye*, February 5, 2013, <https://topwar.ru/23835-izborskiy-klub-predlozhl-ideyu-bolshogo-ryvka-rossii.html>.
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- ¹² Farida Rustamova, “Granty ot Putina dadut za propagandu Russkogo mira I borbu s pedofilami,” *RBC.ru*, December 8, 2015, <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/08/12/2015/5666f9cf9a7947d88622c924>.
- ¹³ “Regiony,” *Izborskiy klub*, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://izborsk-club.ru/regions>.
- ¹⁴ “Bryansk posetila delegatsiya Izborskogo kluba ‘Novorossiya’,” *Bryansk Today*, July 3, 2015, <https://bryansktoday.ru/2015070323251/society/285205>.
- ¹⁵ “Izborskiy klub v Donetske,” *Donbasskaya Rus’*, June 16, 2014, <https://donbassrus.livejournal.com/1244482.html>.
- ¹⁶ “V Donetske sozdan filial Izborskogo kluba,” *Informpskov.ru*, June 17, 2014, <https://informpskov.ru/news/147224.html>.
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- ¹⁹ Sergey Buntovskiy, “Istoriya Donbassa,” August 26, 2017, https://author.today/work/9983?_cf_chl_jschl_tk=__=IkbAC6SAqS57qsnuAzTd_Rsw4q_2cgl26ubCkN35d8I-1636060137-0-gaNycGzNCNE.

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²⁶ “Kto sdelayet Dalniy Vostok silnee?” *Rambler*, May 27, 2020, <https://news.rambler.ru/other/44253365-kto-sdelaet-dalniy-vostok-silnee/>.

²⁷ “Izborskiy klub: kurs - Arktika,” *Izborskiy klub*, July 14, 2016, <https://izborsk-club.ru/9837>.

²⁸ “V Yugre,” *Izborskiy klub*, June 23, 2016, <https://izborsk-club.ru/9929>.

²⁹ Pavel Zheltov and Aleksandr Shuldikov, “Izborskiy klub sformuliruyet yugorskuyu mechtu,” *Yugra-tv.ru*, December 15, 2017, https://ugra-tv.ru/news/society/izborskiy_klub_sformuliruet_yugorskuyu_mechtu/.

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⁵⁸ Among others, many members of the Izborsk Club (including Dugin) accused Putin of excessive servility to the West and domestic “liberal circles,” and of failing to take further steps that would have resulted in the emergence of “Novorossiya” and its ultimate inclusion in Russia.