RUSSIAN STRUGGLE FOR SOVEREIGNTY IN CYBERSPACE
Social media practice as a continuation of information policy.

MARGARITA JAITNER AND JARI RANTAPELKONEN
Margarita Jaitner is student of Societal Risk Management at Karlstad University. Jari Rantapelkonen is lieutenant colonel, doctor of military sciences and military professor in Department Tactics and Operational Art, Finnish National Defence University

ABSTRAC

The culture of mass communication in Russia has been challenged by the emergence of new communication systems. This has forced the state to seek ways to adapt to today's globalized and decentralized information sphere. The Internet penetration in Russia has grown quickly during the past decade, requiring state leaders to look for ways to master social media as a means of quick and potentially two-way communication, enabling it to be a tool for themselves and for promoting national security goals. The intention of this article is to deliver insights into how the current Russian information security policies are related to by the top strategic and operational level. In the first part, this article explores the various related policies and doctrines. The insights are then put into the context of social media narratives of President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev and the practices of the Federal Security Service. This approach reveals that Russia's top leadership recognizes the importance of social media, but struggles with the implementation of the aspects that are regarded as significant for Russia's information security. It is argued, that Russia is recreating the traditional state-centric forms of control in the modern information space and thereby is trying to establish digital sovereignty.

INTRODUCTION - RUSSIAN STRUGGLE OF VALUES

In the recent history the world has seen indicators of how the Internet in general and the social media in particular is viewed as potentially threatening element to the existing world order, as well as how it challenges legal frameworks and the judicial systems. By allowing virtually anyone with access to the Internet to submit and promote messages "the nature of social media challenges the established, state-centric, viewpoint on exercising power" (Jaitner, 2013) in Russia. Social media also challenges the traditional means of communication and requires the state leaders to adapt their techniques of conveying their message to the population.

One of the biggest information wars on the roles and responsibilities of mass media and the use of social media is waged in today's Russia and at its borders. After a long history of relying on elaborate and sometimes blunt methods of mass one-way communication, persuasion, and propaganda, today the state leadership finds its communication skills tried by a force of bloggers and twitterers. The emergence of cybercrime that came alongside with the rise of Internet use appears to be another concern for the state leadership. The attempts to tackle the newly arisen challenges lead to questions within the international community: In a recent pursuit to protect the younger citizens from illicit, potentially harmful information on the Internet the authorities temporarily blocked YouTube and Google. (Securitylab 2012; Blagoveshensky 2012).

Understanding the information policies, their practices and actions, and also narratives of Russian leaders brought forward in this article requires putting them into the context of the Russian history, and presence. This Russian reality is multidimensional where values are deeply intertwined with the country's history. It is necessary to take into account "fundamental values as love for Russia, public unity, the family, individual freedom, democracy, equality of rights, selflessness in Russia's defense, territorial integrity, collectivism, perseverance, conscientious labor, social justice, a multinational culture, and spirituality" (Manilov n.d.). Furthermore, methods and ways Russians have developed in order to cope with the historical, social, and political reality need to be considered. Simply put, one needs to understand the common Russian definition of freedom in order to be able to assess the level of freedom in the country.

Manilov (n.d.) argued that "The systemic crisis that seized the USSR was above all a crisis of values: the loss of common goals, and the growth of pessimism, bitterness, and other negative feelings among the population. Today, a dramatic process of reappraisal of many seemingly inviolable values is occurring. A kind of spiritual vacuum has emerged, in which the nation has become dangerously indifferent towards the absence of common public ideas, of clear notions and traditions that meet peoples' ''deep feelings''".

Indeed, the rhetoric of the common values that are needed to recreate a strong, independent, successful Russia has been repeatedly included in Mr. Vladimir Putin's speeches, in 2007 he stated that "We have an old Russian game - search for the national idea, a search for the meaning of life of sorts. [While] generating novelty, we must at the same time rely on the basic values our people have developed through our more than a thousand year old history. Only then will we achieve success" (Novye Izvestiya 2007). Promotion of common Russian values is a recurring element of Putin's (2000; 2012) speeches and articles through the years of his position at the top of the Russian political hierarchy. Common values are a necessity to recreate the "sacred power" and the "mighty will", and to regain the "great glory" - Russia as it is presented in its national anthem.

1. INFORMATION POLICIES

A number of strategic documents lay out a direction for Russian efforts in regard to information, information security and thus the Internet and its regulation. These doctrines are accompanied by various regulations throughout the federal legislation.

Recent changes to legislation in regard to information and the Internet have drawn significant public attention in and outside Russia, sparking a debate on limitations of information that is published online. Arguments for a free web are met by warnings about illegal or universally immoral content that would be spread because of lack of regulation. The most prominent example are the additions introduced to Federal Law 139-FZ (Russian: 139-ФЗ) “On information, information technologies and protection of information” which outlaws web resources containing information that is regarded to pose a threat to children’s health and development. Such information encompasses child pornography, content that encourages drug use and suicide as well as content forbidden by court decision.

The legal changes of 2012 have created a systematic method of countrywide blocking of access to illegal content. A so-called “unified registry” that includes domain names and universal locators to pages that host the outlawed content was established and is maintained by the Federal Service for Supervision in the Sphere of Telecom, Information Technologies and Mass Communications (Russian: Roskomnadzor). When a web page is deemed to contain illicit material, the respective hosting provider is obliged to contact the owner of the website and require immediate removal of the illicit content. In case of noncompliance the access to the website is to be restricted by hosting provider and Internet service provider.

The changes came into force in November 2012 and during the first month Google and YouTube users were unpleasantly surprised by recurring blockage of services, allegedly because of technical failure, reported Forbes (2012). On 30th November 2012 Roskomnadzor finally stated that search engines, video and news hosting websites have been permanently excluded from the blacklist registry. In a statement provided for the Russian NTV.RU (2012), head of Roskomnadzor, Alexandr Zharov, promised to do everything possible to speedily resolve technical issues that lead to unintended blockage of web resources. But the blacklisting of Google and YouTube had already fueled the Internet activists’ outrage over the new regulations. In the following months the legislation was repeatedly described as an attempt to censor the Internet.

Arguably, any regulations need to be put into perspective before evaluation regarding its overall aims. Particularly because there is yet relatively little legal precedence for the regulation of the web, official policies can serve as an important indicator for the direction the top leadership intends to pursue. Therefore the following sections will provide an overview over prominent strategic documents of the Russian Federation.

Information Security Doctrine

Shortly after Putin’s inauguration for his first term as the President of the Russian Federation, he approved the “Information Security Doctrine of the Russian Federation” in 2000 (Security Council of the Russian Federation, 2000). This doctrine is still in force at the time of writing and continues to be a fundamental component in the Russian information security strategy.

The document defines information security as “the state of protection of national interests in the information sphere defined by the totality of balanced interests of the individual, society, and the state.” The document then lists four significant aspects that are essential to national interests:

- Observance of the constitutional rights and freedoms of man and the citizen

- Information support for the state policy in Russia and abroad,
- Promoting the national information industry, and
- Protecting information resources against unsanctioned access.

Also, a number of internal and external threats are identified, many of which are concerned with information as such rather than the method of delivery. The line between information security as protection of the message and the more physical aspects thereof is remarkably blurred.

Interestingly, restriction of constitutional rights to information by federal or local authorities is rather bluntly stated to be a potential internal threat to citizens' rights and freedoms in regard to information and spiritual life. Also, development of the domestic information and communication industry is encouraged while monopoly of information is described as yet another potential threat. Still, the seemingly implied presumption is that "official" means "truthful". The doctrine points out the importance of "guaranteeing the freedom of mass information and the prohibition of censorship", but the credo is immediately restricted by "not allowing for propaganda or campaigning that serves to foment social, racial, national or religious hatred and strife" and "securing a ban on the collection, storage, use and dissemination of information [...] to which access is restricted by federal legislation."

If the intention of the strategy was to foster trust in official news channels, it wasn't very successful according to Vladimir Pozner. Roughly a decade later the famous Russian anchorman noted that he "does not trust the federal channels' news coverage because they are politically biased", a statement that received the audience's approval, writes Aleksey Demin (2012). Interestingly, even Putin does not deny the media bias: In the year 2000 State of the Nation Putin said that there are "no democratic rules that would ensure "genuine independence" of media". He repeated this thought during the State of Nation address in 2012.

National Security Strategy to 2020

According to Mr. Dmitry Medvedev (2009) the National Security Strategy to 2020 which was established in 2009 "is generally a fundamental and comprehensive document, it is designed on the principle of continuity of state policy in the sphere of national security and, of course, fully reflects national priorities and national interests" of the Russian Federation. The doctrine defines a number of foreign and domestic threats to the Russian Federation and suggests approaches to counter these. In regard to challenges of informational nature, it is identified that the "global information struggle will intensify, threats will increase to the stability of industrialized and developing countries, their socio-economic development and democratic institutions." (Security Council of the Russian Federation, 2009). In this context also a concern with "nationalist sentiment, xenophobia, separatism and violent extremism, including those under the slogans of religious radicalism"(Security Council of the Russian Federation, 2009) can be detected.

According to Nikolay Patrushev (2009), then-Secretary of Security Council, the document is of comprehensive nature and calls for "development and systemic realization of a range of interconnected political, diplomatic, military, economic, informational and other measures". "This document [...] can not be realized only through the efforts of governmental power, achieving the goals and priorities of the Strategy requires the participation of the whole society," explained Medvedev (2009) during a Security Council session. The comprehensiveness is reflected by the choice of areas covered by the document. Culture, in the sense of promoting a culturally unified Russia, is defined as one of the cornerstones for national security. In the informational context this requires providing "accessibility of information technologies, and likewise of information on various issues of the socio-political, economic and spiritual life of society" (Security Council of the Russian Federation, 2009) to the citizens is to be understood as one of such measures. Independence through development of domestic systems and platforms is a logical consequence to this approach.

Information Security in the Military Doctrine

In early February of 2010 a new updated version of the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation was published. As one of the fundamental strategic documents it touches the subject of informational environment as one of the aspects of the operational environment and puts in perspective the importance of informational infrastructure, the disruption of which is stated to be a major internal threat. "Information confrontation", or "information warfare" that aims to shape global opinions is suggested to be of increasing importance for modern conflicts. In accordance with this view the doctrine vows to develop capabilities in this area. Similarly to the aforementioned documents, the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation favors development of domestic systems, in this context - informational systems. (President of the Russian Federation, 2010).

Notably the doctrine does not include any definitions, or limitations, regarding the information environment but simply states its importance. Development of comprehensive military information systems, and their use are recurrently mentioned throughout the document. Gregory Asmolov (2010) explains, that "The broad definition of information security is a traditional part of Russian approach toward this field." Because this approach differs significantly from the Western, he reminds that the doctrine should be analyzed with regard to this difference.

The Outlook: Draft Convention on International Security and Other Important Guidelines

Russian efforts to regulate the cyberspace are not limited to the Russian-language Internet, which is understandable from the point of view of borderlessness of the Internet. In September 2011 the Russian Federation released a "Draft Convention on International Information Security" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 2011), at the second international meeting of High Representatives on Security Issues. This document gives some necessary insights into understanding the Russian view on itself in a global context, the Internet as such and also provides leads regarding the top leader's goals regarding regulation of the world wide web. In this draft Russia takes a very state-centric approach wherein the assumption of a "network-sovereignty" is particularly notable for the purpose of this article.

Furthermore the document discusses both aspects of the Internet: the cyberspace as a network of computers and "information space" as a network of information, although no theoretical distinction between these two is included. Instead, similarly to other Russian strategy and doctrine documents that deal with information or cybersecurity, the line between the message and the technology is very blurred and the document is led by the assumption that what applies for computer networks also applies for content. This, on one hand signals the difficulties to make sense of the "global information network" but on the other hand might be inspired by Russian views on the events of Arab Spring and the dismay over Western involvement during the events. The draft proposal defines activities that lead to erosion of traditional, cultural, moral, ethical, and esthetical values as one of potential cybersecurity threats. In this light the act of conscious dissemination of particular content in a particular segment of the information space can be interpreted to constitute a "destructive information action." This approach corresponds with the overall message given by top state leaders - do not mess with our informational business.

"Digital sovereignty" is yet another term that enjoys popularity amongst the policymakers' Commission of the Council for the Development of Information Society in Russia to describe an essential part of the forthcoming Russian Cyber Security Policy. Ruslan Gattarov (Ivanov 2012), Chairman of the Commission, pointed out that "digital sovereignty" is about "creating an infrastructure" that would even in cases of emergency insure "smooth operation of the Russian internet." Regarding public safety, according to Gattarov (Ivanov 2012), particularly foreign services are an area of concern: "Signing Gmail's terms of services the user officially allows his e-mail to be read for the purpose of matching contextual advertising. Hypothetically, any information in the user's e-mail may be used for the benefit of third parties." He went on explaining how this information can potentially be used for blackmail or economic espionage, as well as how users would blame the government, not only the hackers and cybercriminals, if a domestic service would be affected. Gattarov's concern with foreign online services was most recently operationalized in summer of 2013 with an audit of Microsoft, Google, Twitter and Yahoo, suspecting violations of Russian and international legislation in regard to private data protection, reported ITAR-TASS (2013).

The idea of "digital sovereignty" seems fundamental in yet another Russian guideline: "The conceptual views on the activities of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation in the information space", a document that was released to public in 2012 defines a set of norms and principles in regard to prevention, control and resolution of conflicts in the information space. The document corresponds with other policies and regulations, particularly in regard to the definition of "information war", which includes "confrontation between two or more states in the information space" in order to undermine the political, economic and social system", conduct of "massive brainwashing of the population for destabilizing the society and the state, including forcing the state to make decisions in the interests of the confronting state" (Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, 2011). In line with this, informational resources are defined as "information infrastructure as well as information itself and its flows" (Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, 2011). The document states that the Russian armed forces will operate in the global information space with respect to state sovereignty. The main principles outlined in the document are the rule of law, prioritization, comprehensiveness and effectiveness of action, interaction based on the Information Security Doctrine, collaboration with actors within the Russian Federation and internationally, and innov

The focus on development and promotion of domestic platforms rather than reliance on foreign products are an essential part of Russian informational policies, particularly stated in the Russian Information Society Development Strategy of 2008 (Council on development of the Russian Society, 2008). Formation of a unified information space that also contributes to meet the challenges of national security is presented as one of directions of the strategy. This aspect may correspond with the draft convention on International Information Security that aims to establish a definite principle of informational non-interference into internal affairs of other States. Article 3 excludes the convention to be applicable in cases where actions "are taken within the information structure of one State, citizen, or corporation under the jurisdiction of that State, and the effects of those actions are only felt by" subjects to the State's jurisdiction. Further, Article 5 suggests that any State has "the right to develop its information space without external interference" as well as the right to develop sovereign norms in its own informational space.

It should be mentioned that the draft convention takes regard to universal Human Rights, particularly in its Russian-language version, which according to the Conflict Research Centre (2012) differs from its English-language counterpart. However, it is also acknowledged that exercise of certain Human Rights might be subject to regulation as stated by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. As pointed out in the analysis by the Conflict Studies Research Centre and Institute of Information Security Issues at Moscow State University (2012), potential restrictions to Human Rights are already subject of several international treaties and therefore this aspect does not need to be covered in the Convention. The fact that it was added might be seen as an attempt to confirm these limitations in regard to information space and further promote sovereignty in informational space.

After the efforts to reach an official international consensus on the issue of the global information security, the Russian state leadership introduced and ratified a domestic viewpoint in summer of 2013. The document is officially titled "Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation in the field of international information security in 2020" and includes descriptions of four areas of potential threat. Aside from the conventionally acknowledge threats, namely the use of computerized systems for warfare, cyber terrorism and cybercrime, the document outlines a further threat in form of "interference in the internal affairs of States," "disturbing public order", "hate speech" and "propaganda of incitement to violence". Elena Chernenko (2013) of the Kommersant writes that according to the news outlet's sources, this threat has to be seen as the leadership's reaction to the events of the Arab Spring. According to Chernenko (2013), the document is written in a rather peaceful language and Russia aims to meet the threat through cooperation with its strategic partners, primarily Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa association (BRICS).

2. INFORMATION POLICY IN PRACTICE: RUSSIAN INFRASTRUCTURES AND SERVICES

During the past decade the Internet has become an important source of up-to-date information for a significant part of the Russian population, strongly competing with traditional, particularly the official, mass media. According to Sarah Oates (2013:15), Russia has rapidly moved from relatively low Internet usage in the former Soviet region to the second-largest group of Europeans online. Dmitri Gudkov (2013), member of the State Duma since 2010 affiliated with the party Spravedlivaya Rossiya, spoke of a digital divide during a Foreign Politics Initiative and Freedom House event: "our citizens are divided into so-called TV citizens, who just get information from television, and net citizens, one-third of the [population], who don't watch television and get all the news from the Internet. And for the first time in our history, the most popular Internet search engine, Yandex, outnumbered the rating of Channel 1 television." Given the popularity of the Internet, it is arguably one of the major subjects of the Russian information policies.

Runet - Foreign or Domestic

The Russian social media landscape differs significantly from its "western" counterpart. The "Runet", as Russians themselves call it, is divided from the global Internet by a language barrier and it's historical, political, and social context (Lonkila 2012). This results in different patterns of use of the Internet as a whole, and in the popularity of different platforms. For example, Dovilé Daveluy (2012) argued that "Russians use Internet primarily as a means of communication, while entertainment and business, the important online activity drivers in other European countries, remain secondary."

Internet audiences can be surprisingly domesticated. According to Oates (2013) linguistic reasons are significant - people prefer to search for and read information in their native language. Yet this is not the only reason. The national bias in news coverage - domestic and international - is an important aspect, says Oates (2013). The national bias, however, does not necessarily entail a conscious national sentiment.

Instead of the worldwide leader Google, the Russian audience turns to the domestic search engine portal Yandex (Daveluy 2012). The similarities - at least at the first glance are striking: For example, just like it's American counterpart Yandex launched an own browser in October 2012 as well as an own web mapping application, Yandex. maps. According to Alexa (2013) rating, Yandex.ru ranks first in Russia and is the 17th most popular website globally.

The popularity of the social media platform VKontakte (Russian: In Contact) exceeds that of Facebook in Russia. While Facebook ranks 8th, according to Alexa ranking, VKontakte, with functionality very similar to Facebook, is the 2nd most popular website in the country. Even the look and feel as well as the terminology reminds of Facebook, which the founder and chief executive Pavel Durov does not deny according to Nikolay Kononov (2012). An important difference is, however, the availability of user-shared audio and video content that is allegedly subject to very little copyright control. Integration of audio and video content is probably a strong factor in the platform's popularity but also source of continuous critique as well as repeated legal challenges (Forbes, 2013).

Although the platform primarily caters to the Russian-language audience, the interface offers about 20 other language options including English, German, and Spanish. According to Pavel Durov (2013) the company's "goal is to reach 70% of the Russian market and then to focus on international expansion". The majority of the company is co-owned by United Capital Partners, which is run by Rosneft president Ilya Sherbovich, and Mail.ru, the largest Internet venture in Russia.

VKontakte is not Facebook's only competitor on the Russian market. Odnoklassniki, a classmates reunion website that also features personal profiles, groups and entertainment options and Portal Mail.ru, originally an e-mail hosting platform, that today includes many social media features continuously rank higher in Russia than Facebook.

The American-founded, blogging platform LiveJournal had upon its introduction to the market quickly gained popularity amongst Russians in general and amongst those engaging in political struggle in particular. In 2007 LiveJournal was acquired by the Russian SUP Media, which now accounts for approximately 50% of the Russian web traffic and amongst others runs gazeta.ru. Until late 2012 the company was partly owned by the Kommersant publishing house, which is personally owned by the business magnate Alisher Usmanov, a co-owner of Mail.ru. Alisher Usmanov is probably best known for his position in the partially state-owned Gazprom.

However, to say that Russians generally prefer Russian products would be too simplistic: Despite the availability of domestic alternatives the microblogger Twitter enjoys great popularity and according to Alexa (2013) rating YouTube is the 6th most popular website in Russia. Also, certain user groups prefer "western" platforms to domestic. These groups typically meet Russian-created resources with mistrust with regard to functionality. Many times it is not a rational decision but rather the idea of the ever-advanced west, worldliness, and freedom on the "Bourgeoisnet" (the foreign domains) versus the dusty, controlled Runet. Ironically, the preferred language of many of the users who took the step onto international platforms is still Russian and in this way they never leave Runet in it's wider definition.

Politicization of Runet

Russians have truly embraced social media ever since Internet access became available. Out of approximately 70 million Internet users 83% are active within social media spending about 10.4 hours per month on average surfing the sites of LiveJournal, VKontakte and Co. (ComScore 2011). A likely explanation for the intense use of social media in Russia is the comparably young audience; the absolute majority of users are between 25 and 40 years old (Butenko, Hraybe 2012).

Mistrust in official mass-media outlets seems to be another plausible factor for the popularity of the self-selected and self-created online content. The idea of self-created content is not new to Russia. During the time before the October Revolution self-created content was produced and disseminated in the underground by activists. A culture of the so-called samizdat, literally self-publishing, developed in the Soviet Union and became a backbone of the dissident activity. In this way the avid attraction to social networks can be seen as a continuation of a discourse aside from the state-friendly or potentially state-controlled mass media, in a domain that also promises a certain level of anonymity.

In 2011 the then-upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections sparked a wave of political activity in the Russian social media resulting in a fierce online competition between the supporters of Putin and Medvedev's United Russia and various opposition groups. Shortly after the parliamentary election the political struggle culminated in large-scale physical protests that did not fade until after Putin was inaugurated for his third term as president. Although the political struggle had taken the step into the physical world, it had not left Runet's social media. On the contrary, social media now also became an instrument for coordination of protest activities. Social media "eventpages" were used to organize demonstrations and protest marches and Twitter provided for ad-hoc coordination during protests notifying people about police presence or changing routes. But the pro-Kremlin movement showed itself just as tech-savvy as the opposition. Event pages, groups and blogs became flooded with pro-Kremlin postings and Twitter hashtags that the opposition used during the events were quickly seized by continuously posting unrelated information which obstructed efforts to coordinate protests (Jaitner, 2013).

A few days after the initial large-scale demonstrations in Moscow, VKontakte's Pavel Durov (2011a) claimed to have received and declined a Federal Security Service request to take down oppositional groups. "Official response to the secret services request to block groups", read Durov's tweet with a picture of his trademark - a dog in a hoodie showing tongue, and a scanned copy of the request. Only a few days earlier Durov (2011b) granted support to Aleksey Navalny's oppositional group by extending the limit of possible group activity. Despite Durov's efforts to show that he would not comply with governmental pressure, rumors regarding an alleged cooperation between VKontakte and Kremlin never ceased.

The protests of 2011/12 have shown a widespread strategic use of social media for the political narrative, and for the organization of off-line sociopolitical action. In the last century critics of the Russian government would spread hand-typed and copied anecdotes in the underground, now they do so in virtual groups. Social media constitutes an alternative platform for exchange of ideas by active news consumer as a contrast to passive consumption of state-controlled mass media. According to Liudmila Novichenkova this "enabled ordinary citizens to engage in political and social activism" (Daveluy 2012).

It is questionable whether social media can substantially contribute to changes in the Russian socio-political reality. When the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at Oxford (Fossato et al., 2008) examined Russian social media movements, the findings indicated that the self-created content was an echo of the dynamics of the Russian traditional media and political elites and thus Web 2.0 could not launch any social change (Oates, 2013:15). The events of late 2011 and early 2012, however, challenge this view, at least to a certain extent. Although the large-scale protests of 2011/2012 have disappeared, the oppositional discourse remained present in social media. Key figures are still running blogs and promoting their positions via VKontakte and Co. It remains to be seen, what the impact of this activity will be.

3. CONTRADICTING STORIES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Narratives of Vladimir Putin

Technological advancement is crucial for meeting the Russian economic and societal needs. Already in 2000 President Putin recognized the importance of information technology: "Our country is involved in all international processes including economic globalization. We also have no right to "sleep through" the information revolution that is unfolding in the world" (Putin 2000). Speaking at a meeting with the Supervisory Board of the Agency for Strategic Initiatives in 2012, the President suggested the feasibility of a special fund "through which Internet initiatives will be selected and funded, that have a high social value, to address public interest issues" (RIANovosti 2012a).

In early 2012 the public protests that were fueled by zealous actions online, made denying the relevance of the Internet, and social media in particular, for the political discourse impossible. In February Putin told RIANovosti (2012b), that "social media is a serious means of modern communication". He expressed little concern for the "false material" about himself that was spread online by the opposition, instead, he urged his supporters to adapt to the new media and to voice their opinions in a more effective and talented way than the opposition, using the same platform: "[Our] Response has to be on the same platform. [We] need to respond on the same platform. [We] shouldn't prohibit and expel, act upon the principle "grab and don't let go"". "So that the people [...] can get a different point of view, formal or informal, but one

Российская Газета
Быть сильными: гарантии национальной безопасности для России

"Being Strong" Vladimir Putin, writes for Rossiyskaya Gazeta.

that appeals to them and is based on the realities of life," he continued. He also stated that censorship is impossible and prohibition would not be an adequate response to opposing forces: "Is it possible to control the Internet? It can only be banned... It is the worst that can be done".

Vladimir Putin's disapproval of online censorship, however, does not include malicious activity. "The constitutional right to freedom of expression is firm and inviolable. However, no one has the right to sow hatred, rock the society and the country, and thereby endanger the lives, well-being, peace of mind of millions of our citizens," the President (Putin 2013a) stated before the extended board of the Federal Security Service in 2013. Malicious activity according to the president has to be met with strength and determination: "Nothing should be prohibited. Criminals on the Internet are the only aspects the state has to keep at bay. I think everyone sitting here would agree that when... Internet, let's say, is used by pedophiles, (or) by other criminals, that the society must find some ways to protect itself" (RIANovosti 2012b). Acknowledging that the Internet is not solely a platform for benign political discourse Putin repeatedly calls for virtue in its use: "Internet is like a knife in the hand of a criminal or a doctor. In one case it kills, in the other it heals. Let us not forbid anything. Let us simply work effectively using this tool in a more talented and efficient way than those people who use it for vile purposes" (RIANovosti 2012b).

Ever since the legislation on blockage of web resources that contain illegal content became publicly known, the President recurrently had to justify the law. "The Duma passes and you sign a law that severely restricts the freedom of speech, particularly on the Internet," noted a journalist during a questions-and-answers TV show "Direct Line" in April 2013, calling the legislation a "Stalinist method". "What restrictions to freedom of speech are there on the Internet? In reality the Internet is a space of freedom, and nothing can be restricted or banned there," replied Putin (2013b). "But society can and should bar itself from certain things. From pedophilia, child pornography, the distribution of drugs, and teaching suicide methods. But after we enumerated these three or four items to which we have paid attention and included in the law, what happens, is everything else banned? No." It should be noted that this reply is typical insofar as pedophilia and child pornography are commonly used "good examples" for online dangers.

But Russia's interests in the cyberspace do not end at its national borders. "Russia is a part of the larger world whether we are talking about the economy, or information dissemination, or culture," Putin (2012b) wrote in an article for Moskovskye Novosti. "We cannot and we do not want to isolate ourselves." However, Russia will act upon its own "interests and goals, rather than based on decisions dictated by others." he stated, recognizing that "the internet, social networks, mobile phones and the like, along with the TV have become an effective instrument of both domestic and international politics. [...] The concept of "soft power" is also gaining popularity - a set of tools and methods to achieve foreign policy goals without the use of arms, but through informational and other levers of influence." "Regrettably," Putin added, "such methods are all too often being used to develop and provoke extremist, separatist and nationalistic attitudes, to manipulate the public and exercise direct interference over the domestic policies of sovereign states."

The president has been very consistent in stating that policymaking is nothing that can or should be copied, and that Russia should strive for its own political order based on its own values, meeting its own needs. In the yearly State of the Nation on 12th December 2012 Putin told the Russian Duma and the Federal Council that there is no other choice for Russia but to be a democratic country, on its own terms. "Russian democracy is the rule of the Russian people, with their own tradition, and not [...] standards forced upon us from abroad". Russia is a multinational country that has to remain unified by language and culture, he stressed, reminding that Russia has "1,000 years of history, not only world war I or 1917". This patriotism and what it is to be a Russian should give the people "inner strength" the President pleaded, "Today the Russian society clearly experiences a deficit of spiritual ties that at all times in our history have made us stronger". And strength is, according to Putin, a necessity for building and upholding democracy. In an article for Foreign Policy Journal he (Putin 2012c) wrote that "We will not be able to strengthen our international position or develop our economy or our democratic institutions if we are unable to protect Russia".In a strive for Russia's independence Putin (2012a) expresses concern about foreign influence: "Any direct or indirect outside interference in our internal political process is unacceptable," he said, particularly concerned with political activity that is financed by foreign actors. This concern had been addressed in practice earlier in 2012 with a law requiring NGOs that are financed from abroad to register as "foreign agents" (RIANovosti 2012c): "People who receive money from abroad for their political activities – most likely serving foreign national interests – cannot be politicians in the Russian Federation" declared Putin.

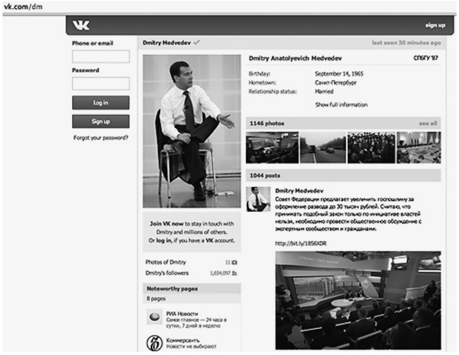
The task of preventing such interferences online partly falls under the responsibilities of the Federal Security Service, commonly known by its Russian abbreviation FSB. Subsequently the President urged the organization to "continue to act systematically and aggressively. Including areas such as counter-intelligence, protection of strategic infrastructure, the fight against crimes in economy and cyberspace" in late 2012. "Protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens, countering terrorism and extremism, crime, and corruption" are the first and foremost priorities of law enforcement and intelligence agencies, he said according to RIANovosti (2012d).

Although Putin encourages the administration and his supporters to master the Internet and the social media, he shows reluctance in using these tools himself. According to Howard (2012) "Putin is media savvy, but his skills are in broadcast media. The Kremlin knows how to manage broadcast media". Ever since his first presidency, Putin has been able to keep big PR catastrophes at a minimum and to retain a heroic image of himself. He has played with tigers, trained martial arts, flown military jets, and participated in firefighting efforts. However, the latest polls show a growing dissatisfaction with Putin's public relations campaign reports Osipov (2012). Suddenly president Putin is "waking up to the fact that Russia's media landscape is not the one he inherited in 2000" (Weaver 2012). Social media cannot be managed applying the principles that have proven themselves successful in traditional media and thus poses a challenge for Putin and his PR team.

With so much recognition for the importance of social media it is almost surprising that Putin is not a social media user himself: "And I won't hide: I don't use it. Honestly. I don't have the time to sit and poke in there, read, reply, write. It is pointless to entrust someone else with the task. The result would be formalized and not very interesting; you'd get it soon. And then they'll say: see, it's not he himself who's posting", as quoted by RIANovosti, (2012e). Nonetheless, he keeps the option open to take the step into the world of social media: "However, I will assume that this is your kind comment, suggestion, which would improve the situation to some extent, I will consider it", he said replying to whether he is going to register a personal account in social media. At the time of writing there are two pairs of Twitter accounts associated with the President - accounts in Russian are accompanied by mirror-accounts in English. The content consists for the most part of links to news posted on www.kremlin.ru. However, there is also room for Putin to communicate himself: the tag #ВП (#VP), as it says in the Twitter profile of PutinRF (PutinRF_Eng), would identify his personal Tweets. To date the hashtag has not been used.

Narratives of Dmitry Medvedev

Prime Minister Medvedev has a different relationship with social media than Presi-



Dmitry Medvedev ✓ last seen 30 minutes ago

Dmitry Anatolyevich Medvedev СПбГУ '87

Birthday:	September 14, 1965
Hometown:	Санкт-Петербург
Relationship status:	Married

Show full information

1146 photos

1044 posts

Dmitry Medvedev
Совет Федерации предлагает увеличить госпошлину за оформление развода до 30 тысяч рублей. Считаю, что принимать подобный закон только по инициативе властей нельзя, необходимо провести общественное обсуждение с экспертным сообществом и гражданами.

http://bit.ly/18S6XDR

Join VK now to stay in touch with Dmitry and millions of others. Or log in, if you have a VK account.

Photos of Dmitry	11
Dmitry's followers	1,654,097

Noteworthy pages
8 pages

РИА Новости
Самое главное — 24 часа в сутки, 7 дней в неделю

Коммерсантъ
Новости не выбирают

Dmitry Medvedev's profile on VKontakte.

dent Putin. Medvedev became known as the "blogging president", who inspired Russians to use Internet and social media. Medvedev is active on the most popular social media platforms including Vkontakte, Facebook, and Twitter. It is disputable whether Medvedev was the first Russian politician to use social media, however he is the only Russian top-level politician with a well-organized personal online presence. During his presidency Medvedev maintained two presidential and two personal Twitter accounts. The presidential accounts were handed over to Putin as he was inaugurated for his third term as a president (dp.ru 2012), the personal accounts, however, are still in use. Medvedev also has accounts in Facebook and Vkontakte. He disclosed having an account on Odnoklassniki.ru, adding that it is difficult to find him there because of the about 600 other accounts using the same name. Some of those people "seem very similar to myself, almost like twins", Medvedev (2008) said.

Medvedev also maintains several regular and video blogs and a well-used account on Instagram. Here he regularly posts pictures taken during his travels. Since the new posts on his social media presences seem to be very coordinated, redundant and do not necessarily have a "personal feel" to them, the use of privately taken pictures seems to add "personality". Furthermore the prime minister sometimes loosely engages in discussions that arise in relation to his posts and according to Natalia Moen-Larsen (2012) amendments in legislation show weak signs of a two-way communication.

Medvedev's social media accounts and networks appear to be moderated with regard to profanities. VKontakte posts have lots of likes but do not have any comments at all. On Facebook, on the other hand, most posts are "liked" and commented. Some of the comments are of critical nature.

All in all Medvedev is a versed social media user and he is proud of it: "I have some 700,000 likes on Facebook or close to it" he said during a meeting with his Finnish counterpart Jyrki Katainen. "I am always ready to share with friends, " he added after the comparison to Katainen's moderate popularity in social media (Medvedev 2012a).

When the government office analyzed citizens' complaints that were submitted to the White House in Moscow, they found that a lot of citizens' complaints, many of them regarding municipal problems, were directed at Medvedev personally (MKRU 2013). Of course the perception of Medvedev as a politician, who is close to people and genuinely concerned with their grief, cannot be totally contributed to his activity in social media. However, it is certainly a contributing factor, a picture Medvedev endorses in interviews: "I personally read such requests [...] via Facebook, Twitter and other social networks or through my website - at least 50 a day. And on substantial matters I issue orders directly, and sometimes I, before leaving to work, go online myself, see something utterly important, something extremely difficult for the country, I push the printer button, print the relevant document and give orders right on it [same document]".

Medvedev (2011) also urges his peers to do the same: "I believe that the government, of course, without experiencing a pressure as a whole, has to respond to what is happening in this sphere, has to be up to date and take into account the opinions that are expressed, including (those) on the Internet. It is an obligatory requirement for any politician at any level in today's life". "If a politician can't master these tools, he has no future", he told the British newspaper Times (2012b). Being social media-savvy is indispensable in modern politics, he said: "We together are in the business of modernizing this country, therefore we have to use all possible technologies. I think that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs already has to be using all the techniques and skills that have been successfully used by our partners and our colleagues in the international arena, I mean the new communication tools, including that same "Twitter" and other social networks that enable you to communicate with your audience online."

Picking up on Russian's avid political discourse in the social media Medvedev passionately advocates the Open Government (formerly Big Government) initiative (RIANovosti 2011). The initiative is not only a web portal for state and government-related information but is also meant to add a crowdsourcing element to legislative work (Adomanis 2012).

"The new information environment" is according to Medvedev (2012a) "the best guarantee, the best inoculation against totalitarianism and the return to the [our] sad past". Government critics are nothing that state leadership should be overly concerned about, he said: "What can I say? Let them criticize both President Putin and Prime Minister Medvedev. I think this is what democracy is all about. This is absolutely normal and will continue to be in social media. I believe my colleague and other officials are also being criticized in social media in Finland. This is nothing special. This is normal" Medvedev (2012b) said during the earlier mentioned meeting with Katainen.

However, Medvedev differs between criticizing the government and engaging in dissemination of humiliating false information, which he equates to spreading child pornography and advocating terrorism: "I think that today, no one has any doubt that the online publication of false information that discredits and humiliates personal dignity or discredits professional reputation, dissemination of child pornography, promoting terrorism, ethnic or religious hatred - must be severely punished". Nevertheless, "This is not, and never will be about any kind of Internet censorship", he said, quoted by BBC (2012). "It is impossible, I have talked about this many times. It is simply senseless." Creating meaningful regulations on the Internet is not a simple process, according to Medvedev (2012c) "the Internet has to be managed with a set of rules that the humanity yet has to develop. This is the most difficult process because everything must not be regulated, on the other hand everything can't be left outside the legal field".

Practices of the FSB

The intelligence services, particularly the Federal Security Service (FSB), are naturally more concerned with security aspects of the Internet rather than its potential for strengthening democracy. Therefore it is not surprising that key figures within the FSB focus on defining the threats within social media.

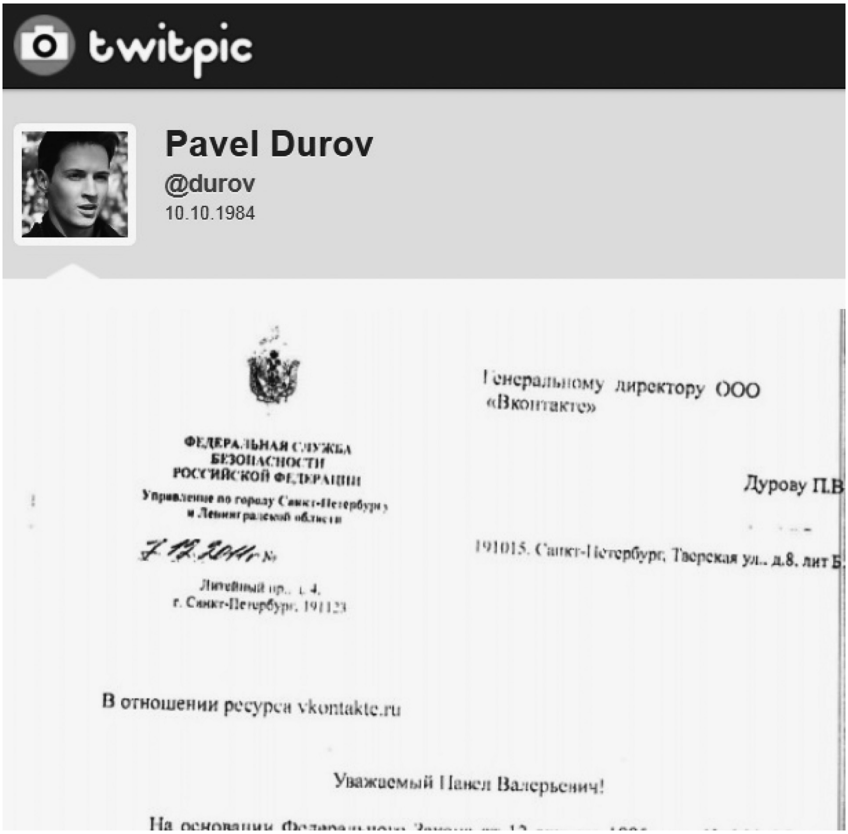
"The current practice of combating terrorism suggests that ideology of religious and political extremism plays an important role in the spread of terrorist threats," said the head of the Federal Security Service, Aleksandr Bortnikov at a session of National Anti-Terrorism Committee, reported ITAR-TASS (2013). "Parts of the Internet have become a distinct source of extremist ideas. Closed groups are being created in the social media, in which purposeful indoctrination of users is conducted, large-scale efforts are being launched to attract new supporters," added Bortnikov, stating that there is room for improvement of countering activities, namely "strengthening the authority of the official clergy and domestic religious education, the activation of targeted outreach and prevention, especially amongst the youth."

But hostile non-state actors are not the only threat in the cyberspace according to the FSB. "Within the framework of cybersecurity we need to protect our society from the activities of Western intelligence and security services, who wish to do us some kind of damage" stated the first deputy director of the FSB, Smirnov in March 2012. According to SecurityLab (2012), he deems the threat is imminent: "We know that Western intelligence agencies have set up special units for researching this problem, for creation of a base in countries where they want to be active in this matter." The deputy director also reminded his audience of the events during Arab Spring: "The objective is serious - downright to overthrowing the political regime that exists and has existed in these countries". Smirnov also pointed out that the situation during the elections have shown "which possibilities open up in terms of blogosphere" and said that the threat is already well known: "We already know people who are involved in this problem, we know what goals they pursue, and most importantly - we know by what [financial] means they exist." He added that the society must protect itself and clean the space from the enemy's "dirty technologies" (SecurityLab, 2012).

A year earlier, in spring 2011, various news sources claimed that FSB identified foreign Internet services, such as Google, Hotmail, and Skype as a threat to national security. According to Head of the Center for Information Security and Special Communications, Aleksandr Andreechkin (BBC, 2011), "the problem of using cryptographic encryption in public communications networks - primarily of foreign production - has become a growing concern of the FSB. A variety of software tools to encrypt traffic are spreading. This concerns, in particular, services such as Gmail, Hotmail and Skype." Thereafter the prime minister's office was quick to call this assessment "quite reasonable" while according to other sources in Kremlin, the point of view of one of the heads of the FSB, "does not reflect the policy of Russia," reported Interfax (2011). According to official statements a working group was to submit suggestions to government on how the cryptography issue should be handled until October 2011. The then-Deputy Head of the Ministry of Communications stated that the working group probably will not advocate blockage of foreign services: "The position of the Ministry of Communications is that nothing should be prohibited to citizens, particularly not on the Internet. You can offer alternatives for encryption, but they should be free."

In spring of 2013, the newspaper Vedomosti reported, referring to statements made by information security experts, that Russian special services now would have the possibility to monitor conversations in Skype (Sergina, Nikolskiy, Silonov, 2013). Microsoft later denied this claim: the company "does not provide any direct or full access to SkyDrive, Outlook.com, Skype or any other products to state structures," a spokesman said according to RIANovosti (2013).

Surveillance of networks is nothing new for the FSB - SORM, System for Operative Investigative Activities, has been established in its first version, for telephone communication in 1996, and its successor SORM-2, for online monitoring, was legislated in



ФЕДЕРАЛЬНАЯ СЛУЖБА
БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ
РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ
Управление по городу Санкт-Петербургу
и Ленинградской области

7.12.2011г. №

Литейный пр., д. 4,
г. Санкт-Петербург, 191123

Генеральному директору ООО
«Вконтакте»

Дурову П.В

191015, Санкт-Петербург, Тверская ул., д.8, лит Б

В отношении ресурса vkontakte.ru

Уважаемый Павел Валерьевич!

На основании Федерального Закона от 12

VKontakte-founder claims to have been contacted by the FSB.

2000. FSB, MVD, border control and customs along with the tax authorities gained access without notifying telecommunication and network providers about the target prior to activity.

In late August 2012 the newspaper Kommersant (2012) reported that the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service had issued a classified invitation to tenders for creation of methods for monitoring of the blogosphere. The aim of tenders called "Storm-12", "Dispute", and "Monitor-3" was specified as "mass dissemination of informative messages in given social networks, using existing user accounts, with the goal of forming the public opinion". The system "Dispute" would take over the task of "researching the processes of forming of communities' internet-centers of dissemination of information in social media". The results would be analyzed by "Monitor-3" in order to "develop methods of covert management in the Internet". "Storm-12" would then disseminate the necessary information in social media. Kommersant also reported that the company Iteranet won all three of the tenders. Subsequently RIANovosti (2012) reported that Iteranet denied working on such project.

In early 2013, President Putin had commissioned the Federal Security Service to "create a national system for detection and prevention of as well as responding to cyber attacks on information resources of the Russian Federation - information systems, and information and telecommunications network in the territory of the Russian Federation," reported Sergey Smirnov (2013). Notably, the publicly available excerpt of the instructions lacks specification for the extent of the system in regard to commercially or privately owned resources. Undoubtedly, the Federal Security Service is a strong governmental actor in the cyberspace. This position would fatherly manifest if the legislative proposal presented in August 2013, that suggests putting the FSB in sole charge of investigating hacking attacks in the Russian Federation, were passed into law (Rubinkovich 2013).

CONCLUSIONS

The Russian information policies, as well as the attitudes voiced by state officials reveal the wish to apply the idea of sovereignty to encompass the cyberspace. "Digital sovereignty" would apply in cyberspace like conventional sovereignty applies on land, sea and in the air.

The desire to control events within the own physical domain is natural for authorities, but the global virtual domain does not follow the same rules, if a connection to the outer world is to be maintained. The Internet, not even Runet, ends at the geographical border of the Russian Federation, notably challenging the strong focus on sovereignty. What can be interpreted as awkwardness in policy documents bears witness to this challenge and the difficulty to distinct between the cyberspace as a network of computing devices and as a network of information. Policies and strategic documents refer to the information systems that are subject of the Russian Federation, however the extent of these systems is often only loosely defined and discussed in the context of a global information network. This also results in a blurred line between information as digital data and information as a message that can be exploited by humans. Overall the documents seem to aim at defining an own segment of the Internet that would be an absolute subject of the Russian Federation.

Information in the sense of a message is an important to Russia and its leaders. President Putin often speaks about spiritual ties that are essential for the wellbeing and development of the nation. Aside from the probably relevant notion of a "spiritual vacuum" that had emerged in Russia after the fall of the Soviet Union, there are more tangible challenges to a unified, and thus strong and prosperous, according to Putin, Russia, particularly in the northern Caucasus. The concern with social media as an ideological tool seems to have gained momentum after 2011, noticeable in legislation as well as in interviews and statements. Partly this can be ascribed to the high level of political activity within Runet in response to legislative and presidential elections of 2011/2012. It is also likely that the online events of the Arab Spring, and the foreign involvement therein, have raised concerns.

This sheds light on another, recurring aspect of Russian policies: The requested development of domestic communication platforms may have a purpose beyond independence from foreign information systems products. While under the premise of "digital sovereignty" the Russian government could legislate any restrictions and apply any surveillance it sees fit, the foreign systems are less likely to yield under pressure of Russian ruling elites. Thus, Russian preference for Russian language systems and products plays well into the aims defined in Russian information policies. Continuous support for domestic communication systems development might very well succeed at keeping the Russians on social media platforms made in Russia.

Despite the desire to promote the principle of "digital sovereignty" and seeming unwillingness to adapt to the fact that the cyberspace as a domain of information is not easily dividable in "domestic" and "foreign", Russian leaders and strategists appear to be well aware of the internationality of the Internet. English-language translations for strategic documents and news posted in governmental media, as well as English-language mirror accounts in social media, suggest that the leadership realizes that messages directed at the internal audience also reach the international community. The differences in communication style between Russia and the outer world, however, pose a significant challenge, not so much for translation but for interpretation of messages. Thus, messages can be taken out of context and perceived for what they are not. However, it is questionable whether Russian attempts to bridge this discrepancy between the different styles of communication is of any success.

Russian information policies follow a distinct line of thought and focus, namely sovereignty and independence in every possible aspect including the maintenance of Russian core values under regard of the Constitution of the Russian Federation. Any foreign influence is regarded to be an intrusion into Russia's business. The traditional concept of sovereignty is vital in the set of cultural values, the glue of the Russian society, the foundation for progress, as

President Putin expresses it.

At the same time in practice different opinions and ways to handle the social media can be identified amongst the political elite. There is a share of ambiguity in Putin's personal relationship with the Internet and social media: Although urging others to use and master these tools he himself remains offline. As a reporter confronted the President with rumors about poor health during a large press conference in December 2012, "because there is a lot of information about it on the internet", he jokingly replied: "Don't look at it (the internet) too much, they will teach you bad things". Even though this was a joke, President Putin's narratives make clear that he, personally, is not a social media man.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev on the other hand is almost omnipresent in the social media, creating an image of himself as open, modern, working to create a strong relationship with the population. For the now-prime minister, the Internet is a tool for politicians to improve the situation in the country, and for the people to participate in politics. Although Medvedev leaves room for online regulation, in his words it is rather about game rules than prohibition. The belief that Internet should be largely free prevails in his statements.

Medvedev's positivity towards the Internet and social media seems visionary if not naïve in contrast to the Federal Security Service's warnings about social media as a source of threats to security of the state and its citizens. There also seems to be a contradiction between Putin's advocacy for the new media and the recent commissions to Secret Services to assume a stronger role in the cyberspace. But "Russia is a museum of contradictory truths" as Remy de Gourmont once wrote. Contradiction is part of the life and narratives in Russia that is fighting to recreate itself in a new, connected world.

The official Russian information activities and attempts of regulation become very understandable in Russia, if viewed with regard to Russia's history and political tradition - the state has always had a strong role, not least in defining Russia as a country and a society. The policies bear witness of strong ideological ties between national security as such and strength, cohesion, integrity, and a united Russia (Luukkanen 2008:85.). Similarly, distrust in foreign influences is likely inherited from past experiences that did not always have a favorable effect for the Russian population, and certainly had a negative impact on the then-ruling elites.

"All progress will happen only with power" - Leo Tolstoy wrote in his masterpiece Anna Karenina. A concept that Russian leaders seem to comply with: Strengthening the population and creating opportunities for the "honest man" through aggressive action against those who wish to do harm is what the state leadership seems to be communicating in regard to social media. Internet and social media can be a tool of empowerment and a tool or control, the ultimate question is who is empowered and who is in control.

References:

Adomanis, M. (2012) “Open Government a la Russe: How the Russian Government is Trying to Modernize”, [online], *Forbes*, 12nd November, accessed 1st February 2013, http://www.forbes.com/sites/markadomanis/2012/11/12/open-government-a-la-russe-how-the-russian-government-is-trying-to-modernize/.

Alexa (2013). Top Sites in Russia. Statistics on 28th Aug 2013, http://www.alexa.com/topsites/countries/RU.

Andreechkin, A. (2011), “ФСБ предлагает запретить Skype и Gmail“, FSB suggests ban of Skype and Gmail, [online] BBC, 08th April 2013, accessed 30th August 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/russian/russia/2011/04/110408_skype_ban_fsb.shtml

Asmolov (2010) ”Russia: New Military Doctrine and Information Security” [online], *Global Voices* 23rd February 2010 2:58 GMT, accessed 30th August 2013 http://globalvoicesonline.org/2010/02/23/russian-military-doctrine/.

BBC (2012) “Медведев: цензура в интернете нереальна и бессмысленна”, Medvedev: censorship on the Internet is unrealistic and meaningless, [online], BBC *Russkaya Sluzhba*, 18th April 2012, accessed 1st February 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/russian/mobile/russia/2012/04/120418_internet_cenzura_medvedev.shtml.

Blagoveshensky, A. (2012) “Google заблокировали по ошибке”, Google blocked by mistake, [online], *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 26th November, accessed 1st February 2013, http://www.rg.ru/2012/11/26/google-site.html.

Bortnikov, (2013) “Глава ФСБ: Интернет остается источником идей экстремизма”, Head of FSB: Internet remains the source of extremist ideas, [online], *ITAR-TASS*, 11th June 2013, accessed 30th August 2013, http://www.itar-tass.com/c1/767465.html.

Butenko ,V. and Hraybe, F. (2012) “Рунет вырос, но не повзрослел”, Runet has grown, but not matured, [online], *Forbes*. 18th April, accessed 1st February 2013, http://www.forbes.ru/sobytiya-column/rynki/81236-runet-vyros-no-ne-povzroslel.

Chernenko, Elena (2013), “Мир домену твоему”, Peace to your domain, [online], *Kommersant*, 01st August 2013, accessed 30th August 2013, http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2245463.

ComScore (2011) Social Networking Leads as Top Online Activity Globally, [online], *ComScore, n.d.*, accessed 1st February 2013, http://www.comscore.com/Insights/Press_Releases/2011/12/Social_Networking_Leads_as_Top_Online_Activity_Globally.

Conflict Studies Research Centre and Institute of Information Security Issues (2012) “Russia’s ‘Draft Convention on International Information Security.’”, *Moscow State University*, [pdf] April 2012, accessed 30th August 2013, http://www.conflictstudies.org.uk/files/20120426_CSRC_IISI_Commentary.pdf

Council on development of the Russian information society (2008), “Стратегия развития информационного общества в Российской Федерации от 7 февраля 2008 г. N Пр-212”, Information Society Development Strategy of the Russian Federation of 7 February 2008 # Pr-212, [online] *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 16 February 2008, accessed 30 August 2013, http://www.rg.ru/2008/02/16/informacia-strategia-dok.html

Daveluy, A (2012) “The landscape of digital technologies in Russia”, [online], *Digital Tech, The review of creative industries and media*, 24th October, accessed 1 February 2013, http://www.inaglobal.fr/en/digital-tech/article/landscape-digital-technologies-russia

Demin, A. (2012), “В Казани оценили заявление Познера о недоверии федеральным телеканалам”, Pozner’s statement on mistrust in federal channels appreciated in Kazan, [online], *Regnum*, accessed 30 August 2013, http://www.regnum.ru/news/polit/1599485.html#ixzz2EeDuUDzm dp.ru (2012) “Дмитрий Медведев поменяет адрес своего сайта, но аккаунты в соцсетях сохранит”, Dmitriy Medvedev to change the adress to his website, but to keep the social media accounts, [online], *dp.ru*, 5th May, accessed 1st February 2013, http://www.dp.ru/a/2012/05/05/Dmitrij_Medvedev_pomenjaet/.

Durov, P. 2011a, Twitter post 08th December 2011 05:47, accessed 30th August 2013, https://twitter.com/durov/status/144775176742113281

Durov, P. 2011b, Twitter post 06th December 2011 12:39, accessed 30th August 2013, https://twitter.com/durov/status/144154054522716160

Durov, P. 2013, VKontakt post 29th June 2013 23:35, http://vk.com/durov

Federal law of Russian Federation no. 139-FZ (2012) “О внесении изменений в Федеральный закон ”О защите детей от информации, причиняющей вред их здоровью и развитию” и отдельные законодательные акты Российской Федерации”, On amending the law “On protection of children from information harmful to their health and development” and separate legislative documents of the Russian Federation”, [online] *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, accessesed 31st August 2013, http://rg.ru/2012/07/30/zakon-dok.html

Forbes (2012) “IP-адрес Google заблокирован по требованию ФСКН”, Google’s IP-address blocked upon request of FSKH, [online], *Forbes, 26th November 2012, accsessed 30th August 2013*, http://www.forbes.ru/news/222403-servis-google-vnov-popal-v-spisok-zapreshchennyh-saitov

Forbes (2013), “Первый иск по «антипиратскому» закону подали на «ВКонтакте»”, First legal request following “antipiracy” law against “VKontakte”, [online], *Forbes*, 01st August 2013, accessed 30th August 2013, http://www.forbes.ru/news/242933-pervyi-isk-po-antipiratskomu-zakonu-podali-na-vkontakte

Gudkov (2013). Speech at the US-EU- panel. [online video] *Foreign Politics Initiative and Freedom House*, accessed 30th August 2013, http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=cWJ83vTlM1w

Howard, P. (2012) “Social media and the new Cold War”, [online] Reuters, 1st August 2012, accessed 1st February 2013, http://blogs.reuters.com/great-debate/2012/08/01/social-media-and-the-new-cold-war/.

Interfax (2011), “Skype, Gmail и Hotmail. ФСБ они не нравятся”, Skype, Gmail and Hotmail. FSB does not like them, [online], Interfax, 08th April 2013, accessed 30th August 2013, http://www.interfax.ru/russia/txt.asp?id=184857

ITAR-TASS (2013), “Senator Gattarov initiates check in Twitter over personal data protection”, [online], ITAR-TASS, 29 August 2013, http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/856762.html.

Ivanov, M. (2012), “Совет федерации занялся цифровым суверенитетом”, Federal council approaches the subject of digital sovereignty, [online], *Kommersant*, 6th November 2012, accessed 30th August 2013, http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2060832/print

Jaitner, M. (2013) “The Power of Social Media”, in Rantapelkonen, J. and Salminen M. (eds),The Fog of Cyber Defence, Series 2: Article Collection No 10, National Defence University, Helsinki, Finland.

Kononov, N. (2012), “Код Дурова. Реальная история ‘ВКонтакте” и ее создателя.’ “ Durov’s code. The real story of “VKontakte” and her creator., Mann, Ivanov i Ferber, ISBN 978-5-91657-546-0

Lonkila, M. (2012) *Russian Protest On- and Offline:The role of social media in the Moscow opposition demonstrations in December 2011*, 16th February. The Finnish Institute of International Affairs

Manilov, V. (n.d.) *National Security of Russia*, Occasional Paper, Strengthening Democratic Institutions Project, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, Cambridge, Mass..

Medvedev, D. (2008) Медведев про Одноклассников, Medvedev on Odnoklassniki, [online video], 3rd April, accessed 1st February 2013, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUm905_8D0E.

Medvedev (2009), "Начало заседания Совета Безопасности по вопросу «О Стратегии национальной безопасности Российской Федерации до 2020 года и комплексе мер по её реализации: Совещания, заседания, рабочие встречи", Beginning of the Security Council session on "The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020 and the complex of measures for its implementation: Meetings, session, workshops, [online], *Presidency of the Russian Federation/Kremlin*, 29th Mars 2009, accessed 30th August 2013, http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2009/03/24/1541_type63378type82634_214272.shtml

Medvedev, D. (2011) in an interview with tv-stations "Pervy", "Rossyia" and NTV, [online] *Presidency of the Russian Federation/Kremlin*, 30th September, accessed 1st February 2013, http://kremlin.ru/transcripts/12880.

Medvedev, D. (2012a) in a joint conference with Katainen, as recorded on government.ru, [online], *government.ru*, 14th November, accessed 1st February 2013, http://government.ru/eng/docs/21472/.

Medvedev, D. (2012b) in an interview with The Times. [online], *government.ru*, 30th July, accessed 1st February 2013, http://government.ru/docs/19842/.

Medvedev, D. (2012c) Сеть должна быть свободной, но в ней должны соблюдаться элементарные права людей, The network has to be free, but people's basic rights have to be observed, [online video], *Livejournal, Blog of Dmitry Medvedev*, 12nd July, accessed 1st February 2013, http://blog-medvedev.livejournal.com/89944.html.

Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, (2011), "Концептуальные взгляды на деятельность Вооруженных Сил Российской Федерации в информационном пространстве", The conceptual views on the activities of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation in the information space [online], *Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation*, 2011, accessed 30th August 2013, http://ens.mil.ru/science/publications/more.htm?id=10845074@cmsArticle#1

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (2000) "INFORMATION SECURITY DOCTRINE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION" Approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on September 9th 2000, [online] Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 28 December 2008, accesses 30th August 2013, http://www.mid.ru/bdomp/ns-osndoc.nsf/1e5f0de28fe77fdcc32575d900298676/2deaa9ee15ddd24bc32575d9002c442b!OpenDocument

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, (2011), "Draft Convention on International Information Security" [online], *Ministery of Foreign affairs of the Russian Federation*, 22nd September 2011, accessed 30th August 2013, Federationhttp://www.mid.ru/bdomp/ns-osndoc.nsf/1e5f0de28fe77fdcc32575d900298676/7b17ead7244e2064c3257925003bcbcc

Moen-Larsen, N. (2012), "Communicating with the Nation: Russian Politicians Online", [pdf] *Russian Analytical Digest*, 21st February 2013, accessed 30th August 2013, http://www.css.ethz.ch/publications/pdfs/RAD-123-10-12.pdf

MRKU (2013) What grief Russians shared with Medvedev, О чем россияне плакались Медведеву, [online], *MKRU*, 7th January, accessed 1st February 2013, http://www.mk.ru/economics/article/2013/01/07/795058-o-chem-rossiyane-plakalis-medvedevu.html.

Novye Izvestiya (2007) Путин: Поиск национальной идеи – старинная русская забава. Putin: The search for the national idea - an old Russian passtime. [online] *Novye Izvestiya*, 26th April, accessed 1st February 2013, http://www.newizv.ru/lenta/2007-04-26/68681-putin-poisk-nacionalnoj-idei-starinnaja-russkaja-zabava.html.

Oates. Sarah (2013). Revolution Stalled. The Political Limits of the Internet in the Post-Soviet Sphere. New York, Oxford University Press.

Osipov, I. (2012) Россияне устали от пиара Путина, Russians tired of Putin's PR, [online], *Forbes*, 24th October, accessed 1st February 2013, http://www.forbes.ru/sobytiya/vlast/178751-rossiyane-ustali-ot-piara-putina.

Patrushev, N (2009), "Начало заседания Совета Безопасности по вопросу «О Стратегии национальной безопасности Российской Федерации до 2020 года и комплексе мер по её реализации: Совещания, заседания, рабочие встречи", Beginning of the Security Council session on "The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020 and the complex of measures for its implementation: Meetings, session, workshops, [online], *Presidency of the Russian Federation/Kremlin*, 29th Mars 2009, accessed 30th August 2013, http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2009/03/24/1541_type63378type82634_214272.shtml

President of Russian Federation, (2010) "Военная доктрина Российской Федерации", Military doctrine of the Russian Federation, [online], *Presidency of the Russian Federation/Kremlin*, 5th February 2010, accessed 30th Augusti 2013, http://news.kremlin.ru/ref_notes/461

Putin V. (2000) Послание Федеральному Собранию Российской Федерации, State of nation, [online], *Kremlin*, 8th July, accessed 1st February 2013, http://archive.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2000/07/28782.shtml.

Putin, V. (2012a) Послание Президента Федеральному Собранию, State of Nation, [online audio], *Kremlin*, 12nd December, accessed 1st February 2013, http://kremlin.ru/audio/792.

Putin, V. (2012b) Россия и меняющийся мир, Russia and the changing world, [online], *Moskovskye Novosti*, 27th February, accessed 1st February 2013, http://www.mn.ru/politics/20120227/312306749.html.

Putin, V. (2012c) Being Strong, [online], *Foreign Policy*, 21st February, accessed 1st February 2013, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/02/21/being_strong.

Putin (2013a), "Соцсети не будут раскачивать лодку", Social networks will not rock the boat, [online], *Gazeta.ru*, 14th February 2013, accessed 30thAugust 2013, http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2013/02/14_a_4966865.shtml

Putin (2013b), "Direct Line with Vladimir Putin", [online], *Presidency of the Russian Federation/Kremlin*, 25th April 2013, accessed 30th August 2013, http://eng.kremlin.ru/news/5328

RIANovosti (2011) Медведев пообещал "приглядывать" за сайтом большого правительства, Medvedev promised to "keep an eye" on the big government webpage, [online], *RIANovosti*, 9th November, http://ria.ru/society/20111109/484771261.html

RIANovosti (2012a) Путин предложил учредить фонд для финансирования интернет-проектов, Putin suggested a fund for financing of Internet-projects, [online] *RIANovosti*, 22nd November, accessed 1st February 2013, http://ria.ru/economy/20121122/911755293.html

RIANovosti (2012b) Путин призывает своих сторонников быть более креативными в интернете, Putin urges his supporters to be more creative on Internet [online], *RIANovosti*, 1st February 2012, accessed 1st February 2013, http://ria.ru/politics/20120201/553931560.html.

RIANovosti (2012c) NGO 'Foreign Agents' Law Comes into Force in Russia, [online], *RIANovosti*, 20th November 2012, accessed 1st February 2013, http://en.rian.ru/russia/20121120/177597400.html.

RIANovosti (2012d) Путин призвал ФСБ активнее действовать в киберпространстве, Putin urges FSB to be more active in cyberspace, [online], *RIANovosti*, 28th December 2012, accessed 1st February 2013, http://ria.ru/politics/20121228/916628274.html.

RIANovosti (2012e) Владимир Путин против социальных сетей, Vladimir Putin against social networks [online], *RIANovosti*, 2nd February, accessed 1st February 2013, http://ria.ru/society/20120201/553968947.html

RIANovosti (2013), “Microsoft отрицает передачу властям доступа к Outlook и Skype”, Microsoft denies allowing authorities access to Outlook and Skype, [online], *RIANovosti*, 12 July 2013, accessed 30 August 2013, http://rian.com.ua/world_news/20130712/337964511.html

Rubinkovich, O.(2013), “ФСБ заполняет киберпространство”, XXX, [online], *Kommersant.ru*, 14th August 2013, accessed 30th August 2013, http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2254874

Security Council of the Russian Federation (2000), “Доктрина информационной безопасности Российской Федерации“, Information Security Doctrine of the Russian Federation, [online], Security Council of the Russian Federation, n. D. accessed 30th August 2013, http://www.scrf.gov.ru/documents/6/5.html.

Security Council of the Russian Federation (2009) , “Стратегия национальной безопасности Российской Федерации до 2020 года”, National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020, *Security Council of the Russian Federation*, 12th May 2009, accessed 30th August 2013, http://www.scrf.gov.ru/documents/99.html

SecurityLab (2012) Роскомнадзор заблокировал и разблокировал доступ к YouTube, Roskomnadzor blocked and unblocked access to YouTube, [online], *SecurityLab*, 23rd November, accessed 1st February 2013, http://www.securitylab.ru/news/432738.php

Sergina, E., Nikolskiy, A., Silonov, A. (2013), “Российским спецслужбам дали возможность прослушивать Skype”, Russian secret services were allowed to monitor Skype, [online], *Vedomosti*, 14 March 2013, accessed 30th August 2013, http://www.vedomosti.ru/politics/news/10030771/skype_proslushivayut

Smirnov, S. (2013), “ФСБ займётся кибератаками“, FSB to handle cyberattacks, [online], *Gazeta.ru*, 21st January 2013, accessed 30th August 2013, http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2013/01/21_a_4935189.shtml

Weaver, C. (2012) Social networks pose challenge to Putin, [online] *The Financial Times*, 27th February 2012, accessed 1st February 2013, http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/f21f59d0-5d51-11e1-889d-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2IazQQMxi

Zaharov /NTV.RU (2013), “Роскомнадзор включил «Яндекс» и Google в белый список”, Roskomnadzor included Yandeks and Google into no-block list, [online], *ntv.ru*, 30th November 2012, accessed 30th August 2013, http://www.ntv.ru/novosti/376038/