

Chapter 1

From the CC CPSU to Russian Presidency: The Development of Semi-Presidentialism in Russia

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I. Introduction

Without any doubt, presidency plays a central role in most of the post-soviet states. In Russia, President Boris Yeltsin and President Vladimir Putin, and their administrations formulated the basic policy directions of the country. In many countries of Central Asia, the first president (has) served for a long time as head of state. Notwithstanding a tendency to delegate a good deal of power to parliament, which was what took place in Ukraine and Moldova, presidency is still playing an important role in these countries.

The presidential system that is adopted in most of the post-soviet states is not full or pure presidentialism, but a so-called semi-presidential regime, which features executive diarchy: a presidency that is the head of state and a government (Duverger 1980; Sartori 1997; Elgie 1999 and 2007). This diarchy is of particular interest in contemporary Russia. Dmitrii Medvedev assumed the new presidency and former president Putin became prime minister (head of government). Many discussions around the relations between the president and prime minister in the Yeltsin period, influenced by comparative political science literature of constitutional engineering (Linz 1996), concentrated on the stability or instability of semi-presidential diarchy, most of which, in the end, emphasize the instability or failure of democratic consolidation (Fish 2000;

Fish 2005: 193–245; Gel'man 2000; Kuvaldin 1998; Morgan-Jones and Schleiter 2004; Schleiter 2003; Sokolowski 2001 and 2003; White 1999). Argument of this kind may suggest that the Putin-Medvedev tandem is bound to fail due to constitutionally embedded instability. In fact, many recent works on the Russian political institution state that the tandem is a very risky mechanism. For example, Remington (2008: 985) states, “Russia has embarked on an unprecedented and risky institutional experiment.”

Analysis of the origins, development, and functions of executive diarchy in Russia, which has not been sufficiently conducted, may provide a different point of view on this issue.¹ What decided the constitutional form of Russia? What is the role of the Russian presidency? How does it work? By considering these issues, we will advance the following conclusion: The Russian presidency was developed from the CC CPSU (Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union). Thus, the roles of presidency and government are similar to those of the CC CPSU and the USSR Council of Ministers in the Soviet period. And the Medvedev-Putin tandem was a result of the stability of the executive relationship that had been achieved before Medvedev became a president, which implies that the tandem is not bound to fail.

II. Origins of the Post-Soviet and Russian Presidencies

What was the origin of the presidencies in post-soviet states including Russia? Their origin obviously came from a USSR presidency, which was established in March 1990. Although some proposals for a presidential system can be dated back to the Stalin era, the real foundations were materialized only by Mikhail Gorbachev. At that time the idea of setting up a USSR presidency was advanced as a response to the “power vacuum” that was created due in part to the reorganization of the CPSU apparat in the perestroika period. Thus, the USSR presidency was supposed to be a successor to the CPSU that had been the core of power.

¹ An established work that discusses issues similar to those of this chapter is Huskey (1995 and 1999). For postcommunist semi-presidentialism of other countries, see Matsuzato (2005 and 2006).

Several memorandums to Gorbachev by his aide Georgii Shakhnazarov, the designer of the USSR presidential system, clearly indicate that the USSR leadership considered that the USSR presidency was to work as the CC CPSU did.² For example, on 28 March 1990, immediately after the establishment of the USSR presidency, he argued that the presidential apparat, which he proposed to create, had to be a team that was to compensate for the functions that had been eliminated or restricted by the reduction of the CC Apparatus (The Gorbachev Foundation, hereafter, GF, document, hereafter, d. 18077). His memorandum dated 30 October 1990 states: “In the past we had the Politburo. [...] Now, practically, we do not have such a thing. The Presidential Council does not gather regularly and we do not have a plan of work (GF, d. 18127).” Moreover, in a memorandum dated 29 December 1990, Shakhnazarov, complaining of the chaotic situation of the presidential apparat, stated that “in organizational terms, the CC CPSU worked effectively as the brain and motor of the entire system of power and administration (GF, d. 18132).”

In personnel terms as well, a large part of the staff of the USSR presidential apparat, once it was created in late 1990, was recruited from former party officials, as discussed elsewhere in detail (Ogushi 2008: 63–65). Many party officials of the CC State and Law Department, the General Department, the Defense Department, and so forth were transferred to the presidential apparat. The USSR presidential apparat had fewer than 400 staff including support staff by August 1991. Notwithstanding the complaint of another aide of Gorbachev, Anatolii Cherniaev regarding the transfers from the young CC apparatchiki to the presidential Apparatus (GF, d. 8807), it seems a natural consequence given the designed functional continuity between the CC CPSU and the USSR presidency. Thus, executive diarchy (presidency and the government or the Council of Ministers) in the USSR was prepared by the diarchy of the CPSU and the government.

Many union republics at that time followed the USSR example. Because the USSR presidential system had already been introduced, establishment of a republican presidency was not problematic. In most

² In his memoirs, though, Shakhnazarov (1993: 137–138) states that he considered a presidential system of the American type to be better.

Table 1. Constitutional Drafts: Power of President

| | Constitution Drafts | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|--|---|--|---|
| | Draft of Constitutional Commission (12 November 1990) | | Draft of Constitutional Commission (21 February 1991) | Unpublished Draft of the Constitutional Commission (2 March 1992) | Draft of the Constitutional Commission (4 April 1992) | Constitution Draft of Russian Movement of Democratic Reform (Sobchak Draft) |
| Authority of President | a) | b) | | | | |
| President | Head of Executive (5.3.1A) | Head of the State (5.3.1(B)(1)) | Head of State(116) | Highest positional person of Russian Federation. Lead executive power (97 (1)) | Highest positional person of Russian Federation. Lead Executive power (95 (1)) | Head of State |
| Vice President | Exist (5.3.9(A)) | Exist (5.3.7 (B)) | Exist (123) | Exist (102) | Exist (100) | - |
| Prime Minister | - | Propose candidate of PM to Parliament (5.3.2(B)(4)) | Propose candidate of PM to Parliament (119 (4)) | Appoint PM by agreement with parliament; dismiss PM (98(g), (zh)) | Appoint PM by agreement with parliament; dismiss PM (96(1) (g), (zh)) | Propose PM candidate to Parliament; Propose PM dismissal to Parliament (43 (2)) |
| Ministers | Appoint ministers by agreement with parliament (5.3.6(A) (4)) | Parliament forms government | Appoint the government by agreement of PM and Parliament (119 (4)) | Appoint ministers by agreement with parliament; dismiss ministers (98(g), (zh)) | Appoint ministers by agreement with parliament; dismiss ministers (96(1)(zh)) | PM proposes ministers to Senate (55 (3)) |
| Veto to Laws | Return to Parliament (5.2.9 (A)) | Return to Parliament (5.3.3 (B) (2)) | Return to Parliament (119 (2)) | Return to Parliament (94 (5)) | Return to Parliament (92 (5)) | Return to Parliament (44 (2)) |
| Dissolution of Parliament | - | - | - | - | prohibited (96 (2)) | - |
| Referendum | By agreement with parliament (5.3.6(A)(15)) | By agreement with parliament (5.3.3.(B)(1)) | None. Only by parliament (127 (2)) | None. Only by parliament (90(b)) | None. Only by parliament (88 (1)(v)) | None. One million citizens, more than three subjects or, one of chambers can demand (54(7)) |

Source: 1990 draft, Rumiantsev, (2007): 597–663; February 1991, Rumiantsev (2008a): 63–115; March and April 1992, Rumiantsev (2008b): 80–120: 725–774; Sobchak draft, www.constitution.grant.ru/DOC_1203.htm; Shakhrai draft, www.constitution.garant.ru/DOC_1202; November 1992, *KV*, 13, November 1992: 25–115; April presidential draft, *KS*, 1, 1995: 12–68; May 1993, www.rumiantsev.ru/kv/4/; Communists’ draft, www.constitution.garant.ru/DOC_124.htm; June presidential draft, *KS*, 17, 1995: 361–412; November presidential draft, *KS*, 20, 1995: 546–587.

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| | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| Shakhrai's Constitution Draft (April 1992) | Constitution Draft of Constitutional Commission (11 November 1992) | Presidential Draft (presented to Constitutional Conference) (29 April 1993) | Draft of the Constitutional Commission (May 1993) | Constitution Draft of "Communists of Russia" (Rossiiskaia gazeta 24 June 1993) | Presidential Draft (presented to Constitutional Conference) (12 July 1993) | Presidential Draft (10 November 1993) (approved by referendum) |
| Lead executive power (74 (1)) | Highest positional person of Russian Federation. Lead Executive power (92 (1)) | Head of State (70) | Highest positional person of Russian Federation (92 (1)) | - | Head of State (80) | Head of State (80) |
| Exist (81) | Exist (97) | - | Exist (96) | - | - | - |
| - | Appoint PM by agreement with parliament; dismiss PM (93 (1)(b), (zh)) | Propose PM candidate to parliament (73) | Appoint PM by agreement with parliament; dismiss PM (93(1)(g), (zh)) | Elected by Supreme Soviet (88) | Propose PM candidate to parliament (83) | Appoint PM by agreement with Parliament (83) |
| Appoint ministers with advice of parliament (78(b)) | Appoint ministers by agreement with parliament; dismiss ministers (93(1)(zh)) | Appoint ministers by proposal of PM (after consultation with parliament) (73) | Appoint ministers by agreement with parliament; dismiss ministers (93(1)(g), (zh)) | Elected by Supreme Soviet (proposed by PM) (89) | Appoint and dismiss ministers by proposal of PM (83) | Appoint and dismiss ministers by proposal of PM (83(d)) |
| Return to Parliament (72 (5)) | Return to Parliament (89 (5)) | Return to Parliament (103) | Return to Parliament (89 (5)) | - | Return to Parliament (106) | Return to Parliament (107) |
| - | - | Exist (73) | - | - | Exist (84) | Exist (84(b)) |
| None. Only by parliament (60(1)(a)) | None. Only by parliament (85 (1)(g)) | President (73) | None. Only by Parliament (86 (1)(g)) | None. Only by Supreme Soviet (79(9)) | President (84) | President (84(v)) |

union republics, the republican first secretary became the chairman of the republican Supreme Soviet, and then the president after its foundation. We can therefore recognize a strong continuity between communist party leadership and presidential administration in terms of the function, personnel, and organization in these states.

In Russia, though, there were two serious differences in achieving such continuity. First, there had been no republican communist party structure in Russia until June 1990, and Russian governmental bureaucracy was very weak because the USSR governmental bureaucracy was well established. Second, a stormy clash took place between the presidency and the Supreme Soviet in 1993, which, some may argue, could have been a big juncture, had the soviet won the struggle.

The first difference was replaced by two events: the attempted August coup and the collapse of the Soviet Union. As consequences of these events, a Russian republic became a successor to the USSR. The most important issue in our context was Russia's takeover of the state bureaucracy from the USSR. With this attempt, the Russian presidency was bound to play the role of "integrating force" of the diverse sectoral interests of governmental ministries. The integrating role had been played by the CC CPSU before Gorbachev's reform, but after its establishment the USSR presidency was considered to perform this role as Shakhnazarov's memorandum mentioned above suggests. It stated that the presidential apparat had to be a team, which was lacking in the government and was necessary for coordinating the activities of administrative units of diverse levels and types (GF, d. 18077). When the Russian republic took over the USSR governmental organs, the Russian presidency had to contain centrifugal and conflicting state ministries.

Still, due to Gorbachev's reform, the Supreme Soviet could also claim supervisory power over the governmental bureaucracy, which led to the bloodshed of 1993, the second difference. Although there is a debate about the inevitability of the clash in 1993 (Mizoguchi 2005; Ueno 2001: 74–107), the important issue in our context is what kind of constitutional form was probable.³ Table 1 is a summary of the constitutional

³ For discussion on the constitutional drafts, see Moore (1995); Tsuda (2006).

proposals around 1990–93. Here, it is clear that most of the constitutional proposals suggest that any influential political actor considered neither a parliamentary nor a full-presidential system. Only a very early draft in 1990 and Sergei Shakhrai's draft in April 1992 proposed a full-presidential system, and the Communists' draft in June 1993 advanced the idea of some sort of a parliamentary system (more precisely, a parliamentary one dubbed the "soviet" system). Despite their large differences, all other drafts planned a dual executive system. The drafts of both the constitutional commission (that placed more importance on parliament) and the constitutional conference (that allowed the president a greater role) proposed a semi-presidential constitution, which suggests that almost all of the main political actors presupposed a division of labor between the presidency and the government as was similar between the CC CPSU and the government: decision making versus technical implementation.

Therefore, the struggle in 1993 was not about a large-scale constitutional choice (full-presidential, semi-presidential or parliamentary), but more about the problem of which organization, the presidency or the parliament, should have greater control over the governmental body. Certainly, if the Supreme Soviet had won the struggle, the constitutional form would not have been super-presidential. From this perspective, the conflict took place so that the presidency would deprive the Supreme Soviet of its supervisory power over the executive bodies that had been achieved in the perestroika period. Now, just as the CC CPSU had controlled the Supreme Soviet and the Council of Ministers in the past, after the 1993 event, the presidency successfully established a constitutional order in which parliament formally had weak jurisdiction. Although the Russian presidency was introduced under more complicated circumstances, it was, in the end, to have similar functions to those developed in other post-soviet states.

III. The Roles of the Presidential Administration in Russia

So, what kind of continuity between the CPSU and the Russian presidency can be concretely found? In personnel, economic, organizational, and functional terms, the presidential administration shows strong continuity. First, in personnel terms, the Russian presidency recruited

some staff from among former communist party officials. A representative figure is Vladimir Shevchenko, an advisor to the president. He worked in the sector of the Administration of Affairs of the CC CPSU from 1985 to 1990, and then in the USSR presidential administration in 1990–91. Since January 1992 he has worked in the Russian presidential administration.⁴ Veniamin Iakovlev, also an advisor to the president, worked in the USSR presidential administration in 1990–91, though he had not worked in the CC apparat (he had been a jurist before joining the USSR presidential apparat).⁵ In addition, Sergei Iastrzhembskii, a presidential press secretary until recently, worked in the CC International Department (Mukhin 2005: 62–64; Rigby 1999: 335).

Second, in economic terms, much of the party property was transferred to the Russian presidency. It is well known that the buildings of Staraiia Ploshchad', housing the party headquarters, is now owned by the presidency. According to Huskey (1999: 51–54), the presidential administration of affairs manages vast property that was taken over from the party.

Third, furthermore, the organizational development of the presidential administration has become increasingly similar to the CC departments as Table 2 shows. In general there seem to be three kinds of administrative branch: internal management bodies within the presidential administration, cadre management bodies, and policy formulation bodies. Its number of staff increased dramatically from 96 in 1991 to some 2,600 in 2002 (this later decreased somewhat to 2,100). This number, 2,000, is incidentally almost the same as the number of the staff of the CC CPSU (Ogushi 2008: 34).

Fourth, some of these similarities and continuities between the CC CPSU and the Russian presidency are due in part to the role that the presidency has to play: control over the governmental bureaucracy. As discussed above, a Russian republic took over the USSR government that consisted of very diverse, sectoral, and centrifugal interests. On

4 Website of the Russian president, http://president.kremlin.ru/state_subj/27824.shtml.

5 Website of the Russian president, http://president.kremlin.ru/state_subj/83295.shtml.

Table 2. The Development of the Presidential Administration

| Structure of the Presidential Administration | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| 14-Oct-91 | 22-Feb-93 | 29-Jan-96 | 2-Oct-96 | 3-Jun-00 | 25-Mar-04 |
| (Control Management of Presidential Administration) | Service of Counselors | Service of Counselors | Apparat of Counselors and Advisers | Advisers of President | Advisers of President |
| | Chancellery | Chancellery | Chancellery | Chancellery | Chancellery |
| | Press Service | Press Service | Press Service | Management of Press Service | Management of Press Service and Information |
| | Record Service of Presidential Administration | Record Management | Record Management | Record Management | Record and Organizational Management |
| | | Security Service | | | |
| | Apparat of Security Council | Apparat of Security Council | Apparat of Security Council | Apparat of Security Council | Apparat of Security Council |
| | Secretariat of Vice President | | Apparat of Defense Council | | |
| | Secretariat of Head of Presidential Administration and his Deputies | Secretariat of Head of Presidential Administration | Secretariat of Head of Presidential Administration | Secretariat of Head of Presidential Administration | Secretariat of Head of Presidential Administration |
| Inspection Service (Territorial Inspection, Department of State Auditing) | Management of the Work with Territory, Representatives of President, and Connection with the Supreme Soviet | | Territorial Management | Main Territorial Management | |
| | | | Department for Securing the Activity of the Commission on the Preparation of Treaty on Demarcation of Competence and Jurisdictions Between Federal State Organs and State Organs of Federal Subjects | | |
| Organizational-Analytic Service (Organizational Department, Department of Supervisory Information and Preparation of Draft Documents, Legal Department) | Analytic Centre on Social Economic Policy | Main Management on Issues of Domestic and Foreign Policy of the State | Apparat of Council on Foreign Policy | Management of Foreign Policy | Management of Foreign Policy |
| | Analytic Centre on General Policy | | | Main Management of Domestic Policy | Management of Domestic Policy |
| | | | | Economic Management | |
| | Supervisory Management | Main Supervisory Management | Main Supervisory Management | Main Supervisory Management | Supervisory Management |
| | State-Legal Management | Main State-Legal Management | Main State-Legal Management | Main State-Legal Management | State-Legal Management |

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|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| | Staff and Workers of Consultant and Deliberative Organs | | | | Apparat of Consultants |
| | Analytic Centre on Special Presidential Program | Main Programmatic and Analytic Management | Department on Programmatic-Technological Support | | |
| | Department on Citizen Issues | Main Management of on Issues of Constitutional Guarantee of Right of Citizens | Department for Securing the Activity of the Commission on the Issues of Citizen | Management of Issues of Citizens | Management of Securing Constitutional Human Right |
| | | | Department of Securing the Activity of the Commission on Human Right | | |
| | Department on Clemency Issues | | Management of Clemency Issues | Management of Clemency Issues | |
| | Department on State Prize | | Management of State Prize | Management of State Prize | Management of Cadre Issues and State Prize |
| | | | Department for Securing the Activity of the Commission on State Awards of Literature and Art | | |
| | Department on Issues of Rehabilitation of Victims of Political Repression | | Department for Securing the Activity of the Commission on Rehabilitation and Political Repression | | |
| | | | Main Management of Cossack Troops | Management of Issues of Cossacks | |
| | Management of Cadres | Main Management on Issues of State Service and Cadres | Management of Cadres | Management of Cadres | Management of State Service |
| | | | Management of Cadre Policy | | |
| | Management of Clerical Work | Management of Clerical Work | Management of Clerical Work | | |
| | Organizational Department | Organizational Department | Organizational Management | Organizational Management | |
| | Working Apparat of Expert Council under President | | | Expert Management | Expert Management |
| | Management of Planning and Realization of Special Program | Main Administration of Special Program of President | Centre of Presidential Program | | |
| | Main Social Production Management | | | | |
| | Centre of Strategic Information | | Department of Information Database | Management of Information and Document Support | Management of Information and Document Support |
| | Management of Information Resource | | | | |

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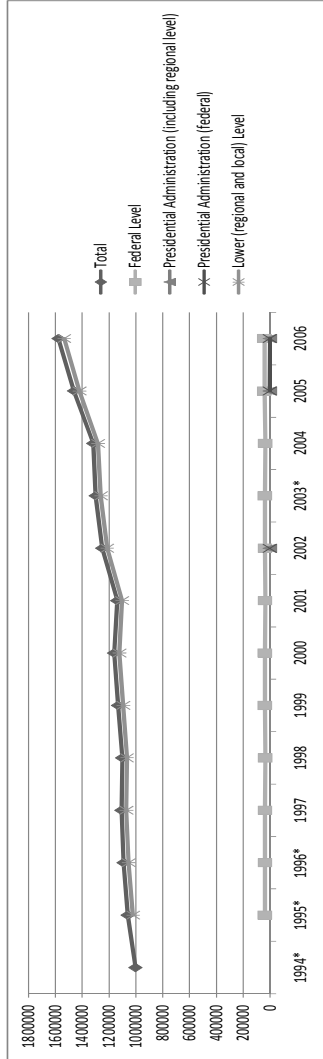
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|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| | Publisher "Iuridicheskaja literatura" | | | | |
| | Library | Library | Library | | |
| | Archive of President | Archive of President | Archive of President | | |
| | Department of Letters and Reception of Citizens | | Management of Work with Appeals of Citizens | Management of Work with Appeals of Citizens | Management of Work with Appeals of Citizens |
| | | Department of Secret Clerical Work of Administration | Department of Secret Clerical Work of Administration | | |
| Service of Representatives of President (Representative Office and Representatives of President to Regions) | | Plenipotentiaries of President and their Apparat | Management of Coordination of Activities of Plenipotentiaries to Federal Subjects | Apparat of Plenipotentiaries to Federal Districts | Apparat of Plenipotentiaries to Federal Districts |
| | | | Working Apparat of Plenipotentiary of President to the State Duma | | |
| | | | Working Apparat of Plenipotentiary of the Federation Council | | |
| | | | Working Apparat of Plenipotentiary of President to Constitutional Court | | |
| | | | Working Apparat (Secretariat) of the Judicial Court on Information Disputes | | |
| | | | Management of Issues of Interrelations with Political Parties, Public Associations, Fractions, and Deputies of the State Duma | | |
| | | | State Heraldry | | |
| | | | Department for Supporting the Council on Local Autonomy | | |
| | | | Administrative- Management | | |

Source: PI, 54-rp, 14 October 1991 (<http://document.kremlin.ru/doc.asp?ID=082222>); PD, 273, 22 February 1993 (<http://document.kremlin.ru/doc.asp?ID=081632>); *Sobranie aktov prezidenta i pravitel'stva Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, 9, art. 7, 1 March 1993; PD, 117, 29 January 1996; *Sobranie*, 6, 1996, art. 532; PD, 1412, 2 October 1996, *Sobranie*, 41, 1996, art. 4689, 7 October 1996; PD, 1013, 03 June 2000, (<http://document.kremlin.ru/doc.asp?ID=001999>); *Sobranie*, 23, art. 2387, 5 June 2000; PD, 400, 25 March 2004 (<http://document.kremlin.ru/doc.asp?ID=021702>); *Sobranie*, 13, art. 1188, 29 March 2004.

Table 3. Number of Civil Servants in Russia

| | 1994* | 1995* | 1996* | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003* | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|---|---------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Total | 1004300 | 1061800 | 1093000 | 1108916 | 1102790 | 1133651 | 1163343 | 1140633 | 1252320 | 1300500 | 1318592 | 1462045 | 1577215 |
| Federal Level | | 39700 (3.74%) | 37900 (3.47%) | 37487 (3.38%) | 35864 (3.25%) | 38677 (3.41%) | 38837 (3.34%) | 37239 (3.26%) | 37852 (3.02%) | 38600 (2.97%) | 35555 (2.70%) | 41127 (2.81%) | 42504 (2.69%) |
| Presidential Administration (including regional level) | | | | | | | | | 2627 | | | 2679 | 2196 |
| Presidential Administration (federal) | | | | | | | | | 1911 | | | 2037 | 1567 |
| Lower (regional and local) Level | | 1022100 (96.26%) | 1055100 (96.53%) | 1071429 (96.62%) | 1066926 (96.75%) | 1094974 (96.59%) | 1124506 (96.59%) | 1103394 (96.74%) | 1214468 (96.98%) | 1261800 (97.02%) | 1283037 (97.30%) | 1420918 (97.19%) | 1534711 (97.31%) |

Figure 1. Number of Civil Servants in Russia



Source: Federal'naia sluzhba gosudarstvennoi statistiki, (1998–2007); Gosudarstvennyi komitet Rossiiskoi Federatsii po statistike (2002): 173–175.

the other hand, it is no secret that basically all important officers of the presidential administration are political appointees. In this sense the officials of the presidential administration should be more cohesive than the governmental bureaucracy. Shevchenko (2005: 157) states that the staff of the presidential administration is “one big team, that is, this is a collective of like-minded persons.” In order to discuss the departmental and centrifugal nature of the government, it seems pertinent to shed some light on the Russian bureaucracy. From the numerical composition of the bureaucracy, it is possible to consider that the Russian state body can (potentially always) suffer from regionalism. Contrary to the public image of the Russian bureaucracy, its size is not that large. As Table 3 and Figure 1 show, some 1.6 million people are working in the state and local bureaucratic body. Although it has certainly rapidly increased in recent years, the size is not very large compared with those of developed countries (and, of course, the country is the largest in the world). In addition, this increase is due mostly to regional- and local-level bureaucracy. The bureaucracy in the strict centre (that is, excluding the officials in state ministry branches in federal subjects) is particularly small and has not shown an increase comparable to that of the lower level. This implies that various regional interests can penetrate a federal centre.

The institutional turf war of the ministries in the Soviet period has been well documented by many scholars (for example, Nove 1986: 49–53). Although the economic system has changed since the Soviet collapse, the departmentalism of the governmental bureaucracy seems not to have ceased. The very frequent attempts at structural change of the government by presidential decrees were at least in part to contain the sectoral conflicts of state ministries, while the governmental instability in Russia has been exclusively explained by president-parliament relations (For example, Morgan Jones and Schleiter 2004 and 2008). After approval of the federal constitutional law “On the Government” on 23 December 1997, the presidents have issued at least ten decrees for large-scale structural change (excluding so many minor reorganizations) of the government, namely “On the System and the Structure of the Federal Organs of Executive Power” and “Issues of Systems and Structure of the Federal Organs of Executive Power” (Presidential decree, hereafter, PD, 483, 30 April 1998; 651, 25 May 1999; 1062, 17 August 1999; 867,

17 May 2000; 1230, 16 October 2001; 314, 9 March 2004; 649, 20 May 2004; 1274, 24 September 2007; 724, 12 May 2008).⁶ Even in the Putin period, in which presidency-government relations were much more stable than those of the Yeltsin period, the president issued five such decrees. These decrees usually state the aim of “forming an effective system and structure” of executive power. While there is no evidence that the work of the government became more effective or efficient with these reorganizations, it is clear that governmental reorganizations were attempted by the presidency rather than internal governmental proposals.

Further attempts are being conducted through so-called administrative reform.⁷ The presidential decree “On Measures for Conducting Administrative Reform in 2003–04” demanded the elimination of duplication of the functions and jurisdictions of federal executive organs and the organization of functional demarcation between the federal executive organs and the executive organs in federal subjects. It then entrusted the government with creating a commission for administrative reform, which was to include the representative of the presidential administration, and leaders of federal executive organs, representative of the executive organs in federal subjects and local self-governments (PD, 824, 23 July 2003; *Sobranie*, 3, art. 3046, 28 July 2003). This reform has been prolonged. On 25 October 2005, the government issued the “Concept of Administrative Reform in the Russian Federation in 2006–08,” which planned to undertake several functional reforms aiming to, for example, stimulate entrepreneurship by restricting state intervention (Instruction of the government, hereafter IG, 1789-r, 25 October 2005).⁸ The result of these reforms has not yet been seen. Still, these attempts clearly show that the executive bodies have been suffering from departmentalism and regionalism.

6 All of these decrees are available from the website of the Russian president (<http://document.kremlin.ru>).

7 Although the term “administrative reform” frequently indicates both the functional reform of the executive bodies and the state-civil service reform that is discussed as follows, in legal documents “administrative reform” means only the former.

8 Website of the Russian government (<http://gov.consultant.ru/>).

Thus, the presidential administration was bound to play an integrating role just as did the apparatus of the CC CPSU. This is also evidenced by the fact that initiatives for civil service reform that aimed to “rationalize” the governmental bureaucracy have always come from the presidential administration. One of the big misfortunes of the early attempt at civil service reform around 1992–95 was that the organ responsible for the reform (Roskadry) was placed under the government formally but under the presidential administration de facto, which eventually led to the situation where Roskadry was torn between them (Zaitseva 2003: 57–60; *Russian Civil Service* 2003: 51–53). With the federal law in 1995 “On the Basis of the State Service of the Russian Federation,” the Kremlin tried to apply a competitive recruitment and promotion system and to stabilize the status of civil servants, though, it is reported, such a mechanism exists only on paper (*Sobranie*, 31, art. 2990, 31 July 1995; Zaitseva 2003: 227–230; *Russian Civil Service* 2003: 197–199; Huskey and Obolonsky 2003: 24–25).

Further attempts at the civil service reform have been conducted under Putin. In August 2001, he created a Commission on the Issue of the Reformation of the State Service of the Russian Federation and an interdepartmental working group to prepare a draft of the administrative reform, many members of which were officials of the presidential administration (Presidential Instruction, hereafter, PI, 436-rp, 15 August 2001; *Sobranie*, 34, art. 3502, 20 August 2001).⁹ Another presidential decree followed on 19 November 2002, which formulated the program of “Reformation of the State Service of the Russian Federation.” The decree entrusted the role of program coordinator to the presidential administration (art. 4). The program indicated several problems of Russian bureaucracy, including violations of the principle of unity of state service and its management at the federal and regional levels, that is, departmentalism and regionalism. It also proposed to establish an administration system for securing the unity of state service (PD, 1336, *Sobranie*, 47, art. 4664, 25, November 2002). In addition, the federal law “On the System of the State Service of the Russian Federation” was approved on 27 May 2003, which gave a definition of “state service” (arts. 1 and 2) and stated that

9 Website of the Russian President (<http://document.kremlin.ru>).

the list of the state service posts was to be established by presidential decree (art. 9, items 1 and 2) (*Sobranie*, 22, art. 2063, 2 June 2003).¹⁰ In addition, the new and detailed federal law “On the State Civil Service of the Russian Federation” was approved on 27 July 2004 replacing the old law of 1995. Compared with the old law, it more clearly defines the responsibility of civil servants towards citizens (arts. 18 and 19), posts for competitive recruitment and political appointment, the procedure for thirds-party checks of the competitive recruitment and promotion (art. 22), and others (*Sobranie*, 31, art. 3215, 2 August 2004). While it seems that the quality of state-civil service has not yet been improved, it is more important in our context that it aimed towards a *unified* civil service and that the presidential administration has taken greater initiative on this issue.

IV. Development of Presidential Power from Yeltsin to Putin and Medvedev: An Interpretation

Therefore, the Russian semi-presidential political order developed from the Communist executive diarchy. In addition, the similarity and difference between the two diarchies make it easier to understand the development of presidential power in Russia. Although Yeltsin, a constitutionally superior president, suffered from its weakness against the government and regions, Putin could become really super-presidential. What accounts for this change? Moreover, what does the Putin-Medvedev tandem mean? Both institutional changes that were attempted by the Putin administration and the political environment, in which the revolutionary period ended, enable explanation of these questions.

Key to considering the first question is the difference between the CC CPSU and the Russian presidency, that is, that the presidency lacks “vertical power.” While the CPSU had a huge hierarchical network from the centre (CC CPSU) to workplaces (primary party organizations) that

10 The list of state civil servants’ posts was issued in 31 December 2005 by presidential decree N 1574 “On the List of Posts of the Federal State Civil Service,” which covers all state posts at the federal level. The decree is available from the website of the Russian president (<http://document.kremlin.ru>).

drove the governmental bureaucratic machine and implemented central policies (Ogushi 2008: 37–48), the Russian presidency has never had such vertical power. Its power was usually limited to within the centre in the Yeltsin period. On the other hand, the governmental bureaucracy kept its hierarchy more or less intact. Thus, the presidency had to play an integrating role with very restricted resources, which led to weakness of presidential power.

Putin's policy to reestablish "vertical power" was, therefore, a natural response to such problems. After becoming president, Putin introduced centralizing measures: the creation of seven federal districts (PD 849, 13 May 2000; *Sobranie*, 20, art. 2112, 15 May 2000), the reform of the Federation Council (*Sobranie*, 32, art. 3336, 7 August 2000),¹¹ and the securing of the right to dismiss governors and dissolve regional legislatures (*Sobranie*, 31, art. 3205, 31 July 2000). After the tragedy in Beslan, the Putin administration applied a new measure: the direct appointment of regional governors with the regional legislative bodies' approval (*Sobranie*, 50, art. 4950, 13 December 2004).¹²

In addition, the development of United Russia can also be considered in this context. Even the recentralized power of the Putin administration can at most penetrate the regional level. Still, a political party, even a party of power that is invented from above, can take root in society at least theoretically. A relatively less-known fact is that United Russia hopes to develop a cadre system for state and lower executive bodies. A party official openly admitted this desire.¹³ A project document prepared for the VII party congress, in fact, stated "effective administration and cadre reserves" as one of the main tasks of the party. At the VII party congress of December 2006, in addition, Gryzlov reported in his speech that "we should take a clear step toward creating cadre reserves." This

11 With this law, the members of the Federation Council were to be representatives of regional legislative and executive bodies rather than chairmen of regional representative bodies and regional governors themselves.

12 Attempts at power centralization in general are discussed by Ross (2005).

13 Interview with Leonid Goriainov, head of information administration, Central Executive Committee of United Russia, 1 November 2006.

task was, according to him, indicated by then President Putin himself.¹⁴ Later, the party developed a project called “professional team of the country,” with which the party selected and trained some 7,500 cadres in the spheres of public administration, production, mass communication, education and so forth.¹⁵ Moreover, it is well known that the development of a ruling party can contribute to the stability of semi-presidentialism (Protsyk 2006). This is the case with Russia. Russian politics could be stabilized under Putin.

Still, the stability that the Putin administration achieved was not only the result of recentralization and party development, but also a reflection of the political environment. Let us remember the functional division of labor between the CC CPSU and the Council of Ministers: the party played an active role in some extraordinary situations such as wars, agricultural collectivization, and so forth. When the ruling activities became routine, the government played a greater part, and both the party and the government are closely interconnected. Just like this division of labor, the presidency had to work in a revolutionary situation after the Soviet collapse. Privatization, in particular, concerned the critical and massive interests of many political actors. Under Putin, this huge political agenda disappeared. Or, Putin managed many challenges pretty well, and now there is no such problem. Ruling activities became more or less a routine matter, and the presidency and the government are interrelated more closely than before. For example, the many policy-related presidential decrees that had been issued under Yeltsin bypassing the government and parliament decreased under Putin (Protsyk 2004: 644–47). Moreover, the composition of the elite became much more stable under Putin (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2005). Under these conditions, the Putin-Medvedev tandem became a reality. The stability caused the tandem, but not *vice versa*. Thus, it is not always the case that the tandem,

14 United Russia website, <http://www.edinros.ru/news.html?id=116973>, accessed on 4 December 2006.

15 United Russia website, <http://www.edinros.ru/news.html?id=121872>, accessed on 25 August 2007.

based upon the Russian semi-presidential form of executive power, is intrinsically unstable.¹⁶

V. Conclusion

We can reach the following conclusions. First, the executive diarchy of Russia developed from the communist diarchy. Thus, the constitutional choice in Russia was significantly constrained by the preceding political structure. It is highly mistaken to assume, as many political scientists do, that the constitutional choice can take place on a *tabula rasa*. Recent political science literature, using systematic data, also argues that the perils of presidentialism and the constitutional choice do not exist for most countries (Cheibub 2007).

Second, the Russian presidency is bound to play the role of integrating force of governmental bureaucracy, which suggests that we need to take the Russian bureaucracy more seriously. Although the government instability has been exclusively explained by president-parliament relations, the problem of the government bureaucracy itself cannot be underestimated. Compared with the CPSU apparatus or the presidential administration, there are relatively fewer studies on the government bureaucracy, which deserves more attention.¹⁷

Third, the stability under Putin and Medvedev so far implies that semi-presidentialism may not be unstable. The environment and several institutional developments like vertical power and political parties rather than the constitution itself may matter more to the stability of the regime.

16 The author, of course, does not deny the possibility of some extraordinary event that can cause the crisis of the tandem. However, he may argue that it is more probable that such an event will come from the outside (for example, a war, a global economic crisis and so forth) rather than from within.

17 Nonetheless, the study of the Russian bureaucracy is rapidly increasing for these years. See, for example, Matsuzato (1996); Olenik (2008a and 2008b); Brym and Gimpelson (2004).

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