

PUTIN AND VIRTÚ: HISTORICIZING MACHIAVELLI  
IN TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY RUSSIAN POLITICS

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **PUTIN AND VIRTÚ: HISTORICIZING MACHIAVELLI IN TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY RUSSIAN POLITICS**

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This study investigates how seemingly archaic political concepts may still be usefully applied in the analysis of current or recent politics. By identifying the importance of historicism in the history of political thought, this thesis examines the work and concepts of the Renaissance Florentine political thinker Niccolo Machiavelli. Focusing on his concept of virtú, and the related concept of fortuna, this thesis explains their use by Machiavelli and then elaborates these concepts against recent Russian politics, with a particular emphasis on the career and leadership of Vladimir Putin. The

concept of virtú is examined with special reference to three areas of Russian politics, namely, energy politics, the politics of the new oligarchs, and the conflict in Chechnya.

The objective of the thesis is to test the applicability of Machiavelli's early sixteenth century concept in relation to a wholly new and recent politics. This study finds that Machiavelli's concepts, particularly virtú, when suitably historicised continues to be useful for current political analysis.

Keywords: Machiavelli, Virtú, Putin, Political Concept, Historicism

## ÖZ

### PUTİN VE VİRTÚ: YİRMİ BİRİNCİ YÜZYIL RUS POLİTİKASINDA MACHİAVELLİ'NİN TARİHSELLEŞTİRİLMESİ

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Bu çalışma arkaik siyasi kavramların görünüşte hâlâ ne kadar mevcut olduğunu veya son siyaset analizinde ne kadar uygulanabilir olduğunu araştırmaktadır. Bu tez, siyasal düşünce tarihinin tarihsel önemini tanımlayarak Rönesans Floransa siyasi düşünürü Niccolo Machiavelli'nin çalışma kavramlarını incelemektedir. Ayrıca bu tez, onun virtú kavramı ve fortuna ile ilgili kavramı üzerine yoğunlaşırken, Machiavelli tarafından kullanımını açıklar ve daha sonra son Rus siyasetine karşı bu kavramların ayrıntılarına özel bir vurgu ile Vladimir Putin'in kariyeri ve liderliği açıklar.

Virtû kavramı özel referans ile üç Rus politikasını, yani, enerji politikası, yeni oligarkların politikası ve Çeçenistan'daki çatışma alanlarını incelemektedir.

Tezin amacı tamamen yeni ve son politikası ile ilgili olarak Machiavelli'nin erken on altıncı yüzyıl kavramının uygulanabilirliğini test etmektir. Bu çalışma uygun tarihselleştirilmiş mevcut siyasi analiz için faydalı olmaya devam ederken Machiavelli'nin kavramlarını, özellikle virtû kavramını ortaya çıkarıyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Machiavelli, Virtú, Putin, Siyasal Kavram, Tarihselcilik

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## INTRODUCTION

This study aims to examine the effects of analyzing the politics of the present with concepts from the distant past. As made clear in the title, the purpose is to examine the relationship and possible applicability of Machiavelli's concept of *virtú* to Putin's recent politics in Russia. Having read Machiavelli's "The Prince" during two graduate courses, it provoked interest in the topic of leadership and political rule, namely on what qualities rulers ought to have for the maintenance of the state and the well-being of its citizens. Machiavelli contributed significantly to the history of political thought, mainly in his works titled "The Prince" and "The Discourses on Livy." Machiavelli's purpose in these works was to examine and recommend to the various rulers of renaissance Italy to follow the ways that would have brought political order to their country, and that could have brought the previous (classical Roman) strength back to the region. As Machiavelli maintained, history was a great storehouse of relevant precedents, since he conceived of history to have consisted of mechanically recurring cycles (Wight, 2005: 6).

Nonetheless, what motivated to relate *virtú* with Russian politics is, actually, familiarity with this country due to several visits to Moscow, and additionally knowing its language, and so the comparator of Vladimir Putin was chosen as a focus of this research, because Putin's unusual biography and the manner of his becoming president has some superficial similarities to Machiavelli's 'Prince'. During his earlier presidential career he was called a 'strongman' that attracted popular support, though in more recent times he

began to experience a much more unfavorable popular response in Russia. The discontent of Russian people in recent times drew attention as we read or watched the news and left with the need to re-think again Machiavelli's concept of *virtú*, whether *virtú* could play a paramount role by "travelling" from sixteenth century to the twenty-first century. So the aim of the study concerned to analyze the above ideas during Putin's presidency through applying the concept of *virtú*.

The analysis will later show that basically when to speak of Machiavelli's *virtú*, it basically concerns with the effectiveness of political actions. That means that it is not about moral or immoral actions. Instead, the means that are used by a virtuoso ruler who acts as the guarantor of his state is to achieve the basic principles, like security, independence and well-being. In other words, whatever the ruler's actions are, if they work for constructive purposes of his state, then there is no threat even he incurs the reputation for cruelty.

Furthermore, the analysis will show that basically when the concept of *virtú* is described, it goes hand in hand with external forces, which Machiavelli termed as *fortuna*. Because as *fortuna* controls half of man's actions, it leaves the control for the other half for *virtú*. In this sense, to exercise *virtú* is to control *fortuna*, i.e. as the opportunities or circumstances urge the action of a ruler. For this purpose, ruler's *virtú* achieve effectiveness when his style of behavior matches with circumstances.

Though the comparison of the times and regimes differ – one turn of the sixteenth century and the other twenty-first century – by explaining the need for conceptual or theoretical 'historicism' and 'historicizing' and then

actually historicizing certain concepts we hope to show how to use and extract certain meaning from the past and to travel into the present context. To historicize is to take a certain meaning from the past, grasped as a certain meaning in relation to a specific context and translating it to a different time and context. By doing so, we understand what is specific to that meaning and thereby helps to make a correlation with certain moment. In the same way, the necessary qualities described in Machiavelli's virtú help us to understand essential aspects of conducting effective rule of a country. With this sense in mind, whether Putin will be able to maintain his regime and re-gain people's support for future periods, is the focus of this thesis. So through historicizing Machiavelli's concept of virtú we can investigate and evaluate what kind of qualities Putin has, and what kind of qualities he lacks for the maintenance of his rule and leadership.

This study includes a range of social scientific discussions including methodological, theoretical, conceptual discussions as well as a case study analysis. Thus, in order to embrace the topic we will go through the notions of what historicism and the act of historicizing are. So, it will cover what is virtú in Machiavelli's view by studying in this sense Machiavelli's period and biography and his work "The Prince" and "Discourses on Livy". Because, *The Prince* and the *Discourses* are connected altogether with the political debate and struggle surrounding Florence at that time (Bock, Skinner and Viroli, 1993: 29). Additionally, in order to explain Machiavelli's virtú we are going to use Quentin Skinner, Russell Price, Gramsci and Popov's ideas on Machiavelli in order to also elaborate the meaning of historicism of concepts. The case study embraces essentially what were the deeds of Mr. Putin

during Yeltsin's administration; how Putin reacted to Yeltsin's politics; what was the aim or goal of Putin towards Russian society; what interested him the most in the post-Soviet fate; whether and what Russian people knew anything about Mr. Putin; and if yes, how he was welcomed by people. In this respect, by completing the above-mentioned analyses, the purpose of the study will be separately to analyze virtú with respect to Vladimir Putin.

Thus, following the analyses in this structure, the primary research question is going to be: Can the concept of virtú be usefully historicized? If so, how might it be usefully applied in the analysis of Putin's rule? The secondary research questions include: What is Machiavelli's concept of virtú? What does historicism entail? How has Putin come to power and how has he maintained power in Russia? In other words, having first elaborated the secondary questions we will then use them as instruments or data in order to be able to address the main objective of this thesis, primary research questions. As the secondary questions will address the notion of historicism and historicizing followed by historicizing Machiavelli's virtú by looking at history on the one hand, the primary question will speak to bringing together and analyzing the compatibility of virtú with Vladimir Putin's politics. The careful study of Putin's biography will in the end help also if the concept of virtú is not capable of helping to explicate in certain cases, what kind of benefit might be extracted from virtú concept to make overall argument. Basically, the thesis is constructed on the theme of a triangle, where first and second chapter are combined in the third chapter to constitute the primary objective of this research.

Thus, the above-mentioned ideas are going to cover overall three chapters. The first chapter helps us to look and concentrate essentially on Machiavelli's work with the help of identifying what historicism and the act of historicizing are. In this respect, it helps to investigate the significance of Machiavelli's writings "The Prince" and "Discourses on Livy" from his own period and for the modern world, i.e. twenty-first century politics. Basically, it will seek to answer how the concept of virtú began to shape Machiavelli's ideas. For this purpose, we will examine Machiavelli's biography. Identifying the history or origin of virtú, we are able to identify that this is the history that reflected to Machiavelli's thinking of virtú, as he himself gave significant importance on history. To do so, we will also go through several essential intellectuals who have contributed to the understanding of political thought of Renaissance period. So, this is the next step is to go further and answer how the concept of virtú may apply to the twenty-first century political context. It is, thus, in this way that by historicizing the concept of virtú, we are establishing the fundament of the thesis, that is to say, if the argument is going to be made on twenty-first century politics, upon which doctrine we are relying.

The initial part of the second chapter will basically review post-Soviet Russian politics from the period of collapse of the Soviet Union until Putin's service as the current president of Russian Federation. This second part will embrace the essential deeds of Mr. Putin during Yeltsin's administration, how Putin reacted to Yeltsin's politics, what was the aim or goal of Putin towards Russia, what interested him the most in the post-Soviet fate, whether Russian people knew anything about Mr. Putin, and if yes, how he was welcomed by people. These are the most important aspects to look at before

Vladimir Putin becoming the constitutional president of Russia. These are just secondary keys in the thesis to look at. They are also important, to introduce generally Putin's path to power and rule. Nevertheless, the main part of this second chapter consists in setting out Putin's doctrine and rule. These sections will help to elaborate his principles or approach. These analyses will also include the arguments from personal experience in relation to visiting of Russia many times.

Lastly, as we have already investigated the first two chapters, this will lead to analyze separately the combination of these chapters by looking at the relation between Machiavelli's *virtú* with Putin's politics. The focus of the third chapter is to show whether there is any *virtú* in Putin himself, to what extent it is accurate and helpful to use the concept of *virtú* in the analysis of Putin's politics. In this respect, it will be helpful to conceive the limitations of historicizing. Thus, this concept will also help whether there can be titled specific *virtú* for twenty-first century that is not covered by Machiavelli.

In the end, such a match will maintain not only the important role of *virtú* in the thesis, but also how experience drawn from visiting Russia coincides and makes the application of the concept more strong and relevant. But most importantly, a new notion "KGB *virtú*" will conclude the aim of the thesis, i.e. the conclusion of the thesis will show how "KGB *virtú*" is distinct from Machiavelli's original *virtú* and how it helps to fill the gap – the limitations of historicism.

In conclusion, with these analyses this research is going to show not only what can we learn from the past, but what can be specific to today's politics to apply and develop. As our era is ultimately different from

Machiavelli's era, that is the point to share the experiences and learn from them. The world instantly changes, but we cannot grasp the details behind them. So it is essential and crucial point to concentrate on one example and try to learn and analyze them. In this respect, by looking to Vladimir Putin's politics and using past experiences, namely Machiavelli's virtù and grasping their methodologies and analyses will be helpful to expound certain moments. By doing so, it will not only help us to what extent we could apply sixteenth century work to the present context, but also the extent of the importance of Machiavelli's writings and his influence.

In addition, as the study goes through the investigation of methodology, conceptualization, and theorization, this is also one way of reflecting of how other prominent people's ideas could contribute to our present thinking or circumstances, because this study could serve as a model for other studies. This is one way of gaining of self-knowledge as Collingwood mentioned (1994: 10). In other words, in this controversial world, in the world of the struggle of powers it is important for a man to be capable of profiting from the past experience of his predecessor in order to make the affairs in the world be in constant progress (Carr, 2001: 111).

## CHAPTER 1

### HISTORICIZING THE CONCEPT OF VIRTÚ

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce and explain the meaning of historicism and the activity of historicizing. Then, by historicizing Machiavelli's sixteenth century concept of virtú will help to relate the applicability of historicizing to early twenty-first century politics. In a broad sense, the focus of this chapter is based on the following questions: How do historians historicize the past; what is historicism; does the Cambridge school tradition help to make the idea of historicism clear; and, finally, how will it help to historicize the past concept of 'virtú' into twenty-first century Russian politics? Addressing these kinds of question requires a thorough analysis of history and its discourses that will help to clarify the issue of historicism. This enquiry will be undertaken by looking at several authors, as well as the contribution of the members by the Cambridge school tradition, like Pocock and Skinner. By doing so, their views and methods of interpreting will make the research of the thesis more apprehensible and comprehensive.

The term "historicism" appears to have been established both in the vocabulary of history and philosophy (Lee and Beck, 1954: 568). Its meaning varied greatly and has often been obscure, where there is a continuing controversy over the theoretical and philosophical aspects of historiography (1954: 568). In other words, the concept of historicism is a "struggle-concept, attacked, asserted, discarded, befogged in the tumult of countless



discussions and polemics of the recent past” (1954: 570). According to Beard and Vagts (1954: 569-570), historicism is contrasted with the conception prevalent in the Age of Enlightenment, that regarded time as ever the same in its essence to the degree of interchangeableness.

The controversy over the notion of historicism was because of that, for example, on the one hand, it considered the approach of history through philosophy or, on the other hand, the proposal was purely empirical research to the exclusion of metaphysics (Lee and Beck, 1954: 570). In other words, Guirio de Ruggiero mentioned that the study of the problems of the mind marked the beginning of historicism (1954: 569). The term of ‘historicism’, according to Miller (1991: 209), dates back a century or so, i.e. the original German term, *Historismus*, was created at the end of the nineteenth century to embrace numerous challenges within such disciplines as economics, law, aesthetics, political studies and sociology. The purpose was to contribute knowledge in specific matters in the human sciences and which were debated within the study of human history (Miller, 1991: 209).

Closely related to philosophical meaning is Morris R. Cohen’s usage of historicism when he wrote of it as “a faith that history is the main road to wisdom in human affairs”, i.e. historicism has to do with explanation by means of history and with the belief that historical knowledge is in some sense important in human affairs (1954: 569). Thus, according to Collingwood, when human history is studied, historians pay attention to the evidence provided for a specific period, that is to say since the fundamental purpose of history is self-knowledge, then that is obtained by studying problems, rather than periods (Collingwood, 1994: 9-10; Lee and Beck, 1954:

573). In other words, Collingwood's use of historicism concerned that history always deals with thought, or meanings, which must be understood (Iggers, 1995: 131). On the other hand, historicism may be looked upon as the action or theory of "historicizing" or of "historicization", which is a method of evaluating a body of knowledge (1954: 576).

Prior to historicism there was no science of history, therefore historicism laid the foundations for a scientific treatment of history. Thus, historicism "is part of a comprehensive process of modernization" or it is also a process of scientification, which recognizes "the uniqueness of the past as distinct from the present" and at the same time "the overarching connectedness of different epochs". Or, to go back to the idea Collingwood (1994: 10) expressed, like "the value of history teaches us what man has done and thus what man is", he meant that when man knowing himself means knowing not his merely personal peculiarities, but the things that distinguish him from other men. In the end, historical thinking becomes "scientific when it follows definitive rules which guarantee the possibility of testing its statements about the past, thus its objectivity, and assure a continuous growth in knowledge about the past, in other words a progress of knowledge" (Iggers, 1995: 146).

Based on these arguments, where the attempt is made to clarify the notion of "historicism", it leads to the purpose in relation to the concept of *virtú*, to the reflection of the meaning that Machiavelli meant in his writings. Relating it to previous arguments on "historicism", when the meaning is reflected in the concept of *virtú*, this will show to what extent the concept of the sixteenth century is unique and limited to the sixteenth century (or not)

and in through these discussions we shall see how it will help later in the chapter to make it applicable for other contexts or moments.

To do this, we shall turn for help in identifying the key aspects of Cambridge school tradition, because this school will help to historicize the concept of *virtú*. First of all, what made to choose Cambridge tradition as the supporting key to the above-mentioned arguments on the one hand, and helping to historicize the concept of “*virtu*” on the other that will be supported later by Quentin Skinner and Russell Price, is because the members of Cambridge school contributed significant analyses in studying Machiavelli’s writings. As Pocock (2009: 140) mentions, most of the work produced in Cambridge has been concerned with history in the early-modern period, between fifteenth century and the eighteenth, and with a history of political thought mostly anglophone. In a broad sense, members of the Cambridge school like John Dunn, Quentin Skinner, Pocock and others, insisted that studying certain moment of politics has to “be perceived as a history of activity and be conducted within the discipline of history” (2009: 129). Here, the statement of ‘history of activity’ refers to historicizing. That is to say, e.g. asking questions what it is to speak of actions and intentions, meanings and contexts in a philosophical context (Pocock, 2009: 130).

What became the ‘Cambridge’ tradition’s focus on the analysis of eighteenth century political thought has been followed by the ‘Sussex school’ of historians who carried the discourses between the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century (Pocock, 2009: 141). For the Cambridge tradition, as Pocock (2009: 114) argues, history is made when texts outliving their authors have readers, because those readers will read and respond to

those texts. Thereby, why these texts make history is because they reflect certain events in particular time (2009: 114). But, in addition, how these texts are reflected, is by means of using political language by the author, since for historians it is the examination of language that throws light on the political problems that is important (Pocock, 1989: 104). For example, according to Skinner (2009: 129), in the text it is essential to make it clear what the author had meant and what he had succeeded in doing so. Here Skinner means while studying the author's text is important, the studying of what kind of language he used and intended to achieve is central.

All in all, the reflection of the Cambridge school's methods or approach lies at the heart of studying history. The last two paragraphs showed that while the examination of human actions in certain circumstances is useful way to understand the meaning of 'historicism' on the one hand, what comprises the overall contribution from author and historian's side is the idea of 'history', on the other. So, to make the case clear, how the Cambridge school's arguments are useful it is worth looking at what Pocock argues. He stated that if we wish to trace some aspect of historical meaning of given utterance by making statements of our own, then we have to isolate the context in which we say this piece of history took place (1989: 29). That is to say, the level of meaning should be located in the contemporary context, which reflects the interpretation we are conducting (Pocock, 1989: 29). For instance, if Quentin Skinner and Russell Price later in the thesis will interpret the meaning what Machiavelli intended to express, then that means that the paradigm-structure or interpretation of the meaning of certain context had passed in a sufficiently stable manner over the following centuries (1989: 30).

Quite interestingly, how the acts are received and understood will reflect the arguments mentioned in the previous paragraphs by means of the Cambridge school's approach to studying history, like by Quentin Skinner, Russell Price, and, additionally, by Gramsci's focus on *virtú*, which is for historicizing the concept of *virtú*. According to Pocock (2009: 128), apart from Hobbes and other political thinkers, Machiavelli has remained central in Skinner's constructions of the history of politics. Also, Pocock (2009: 140) mentioned about the distinction between historiography and historicism, where the former are events and processes that can be narrated and interpreted by historians, whereas the latter denotes a condition in which processes go on and which may be discussed independently of the narrative of what these processes have been, i.e. the preserve of philosophers of history. In the end, by looking to Machiavelli's concept of *virtú*, we can answer that in order to deal with the past in a proper way, one should not love or emancipate oneself from the past, but to grasp and understand it as a key to the understanding of the present, because it is an unending interaction or dialogue between the present and the past (Carr, 2001: 20, 24).

Furthermore, we are going to look at specifically Machiavelli's biography, specifically on how the concept of *virtú* has been formed in the movement of the changes happening at that time in Italy, which came to be central in his arguments in the writings both in "The Prince" and "Discourses on Livy". In other words, as Adams (1992: 154) mentions, the ceaseless movement of history was a reflection of what Machiavelli had seen happening in Italy and all over Europe which became central to his analysis and writings, because Machiavelli's political proposals were aimed at

answering questions raised by specific problems of the Florentine city-states (Adams, 1992: 154). At the same time, by considering the formation of virtú with the help of studying Machiavelli's biography, it will be followed with the explanation why virtú concept plays key role in this research, compared with Machiavelli's use of other concepts both in "The Prince" and the *Discourses*.

By briefly outlining Machiavelli's life, important attention may be paid to the aspect of elaborating characteristic features that have influenced him to formulate political language he used, like the concepts of "fortuna", "virtú", "grandezza", "stato" and others.

Niccolo di Bernardo was born in Florence in 1469 of an old citizen family (his father was a lawyer of little note and about his mother, no source being found) (Soviet Historical Encyclopedia, 1965: 933; Machiavelli, 1988: ix; Machiavelli, 1970; Coleman, 2000: 241). It would be reasonable to divide Machiavelli's life into three main periods: 1) 1469-1498; 2) 1498-1512; 3) 1512-1527 (Miller, 1991: 303). The first two periods will be described as the years of gaining experience, but the last period will be shown as how his experience was merged with his intention of giving important focus on the idea of history. The first period is basically describes his early years in Florence of his education, of his youth. He spent his youth in the Florence of Lorenzo the Magnificent (Wilde, 1928: 215). His early education he began to receive in November 1481 from a well-known teacher of Latin, Paolo da Ronciglione (1988: ix, xxv).

There is no evident information on his later education. It is considered that, he may have attended the University of Florence at late 1480s, who possibly attended lectures by Marcello Adriani (1988: ix, xxv). Though almost

nothing is known about Machiavelli until 1498, this gap of time is 'compensated' with the information that it was the period of Lorenzo de' Medici's ascendancy and, then his son Piero de' Medici's expulsion in 1494 (1988: ix; Miller, 1991: 303). The remaining four years, until 1498, were the 'turbulent years of republican government by the Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola' (Miller, 1991: 303). So in spite of the lack of information on his educational background, lack of knowledge of his parents and their role in Machiavelli's life limits the importance of analyzing his path to career life, or his experience, perhaps the period in which he lived (that of the Medicis and G. Savonarola) may give some clues of experiencing the political nature of Italy at that time. And perhaps, his knowledge of Latin language also influenced later in his literary life to choose the concepts that have a classical (i.e. Roman) Latin origin.

The second period covers Machiavelli's career life, when he served the Florentine republic for over fourteen years (1498-1512) (Machiavelli, 1988: ix, xxv-xxvi). These years were ones of active involvement of him in politics, elected as head of the second chancellor of the Florentine republic in June 1498, followed in the next month (in July) – as secretary to the magistracy of Ten of War (it was being in the charge of military and foreign affairs) (Machiavelli, 1988: xxv; Miller, 1991: 303; World History, 1958: 115). Machiavelli also became as the trusted friend of the new permanent head of state after 1502, Piero Soderini (Miller, 1991: 303). During his service to the Florentine republic, Machiavelli participated on a number of diplomatic missions on behalf of the council of the Ten (Machiavelli, 1988: ix). He took on "some thirty-five missions, including four to France (1500-11) and Siena

(1501-10), two to Cesare Borgia (1502) and to the Papal Court (1503 and 1506), and one to the emperor in Germany (1507-8)" (Miller, 1991: 303).

In the course of these embassies as mentioned above by writing a large body of official reports, Machiavelli had the opportunity to come into direct contact with many of the political leaders, like within Florentine territories, elsewhere in Italy, to the papal court in Rome under Pope Alexander VI and Pope Julius II, and to Pope Alexander's son Cesare Borgia, abroad to the king of Louis XII of France, and the Roman Emperor Maximilian, who came to know their characters and ambitions quite well (Machiavelli, 1988: ix, xxv-xxvi, 119; Coleman, 2000: 243). These years were the productive times in Machiavelli's life. By the end of his career he had a wealth of experiences. He was a negotiator, a diplomat, and an adviser (Coleman, 2000: 243). From the time that he was elected as the chancellor, the productive years of Machiavelli were merged in the course of luck and ability. Because he was lucky to meet the rulers on a special case, and he had the ability to study their characteristics, politics, enemies and other reasons that he reported back then, because later it served as the base for Machiavelli's writings, even though he might not predict the fate of the end of his career by 1512.

And finally, the third period is about the loss of his office and brief imprisonment (he was accused of taking part in conspiracy against the Medici) on the restoration of the Medici, and the beginning of his literary career (upon his release from prison he retired in April to his farm at Sant' Andrea in Percussina, seven miles south of Florence) which influenced him to merge his experience and historical outlook that served as an impulse to



devote his experience to writing about virtú where he directed the Medicis to encourage them to save and restore Italy (Miller, 1991: 303; Machiavelli, 1988; Coleman, 2000: 243; Jacobus, 2006: 35). But at the same time he was interested in gaining the favor of the Medicis in order to continue his previous work (Miller, 1991: 303). All this happened when the change occurred in August 1512 when the Spanish troops attacked Florentine territory and sacked Prato which followed in September by the surrender of Florence, with the death of the republic and return of the Medici to power who were in exile since 1494 (Machiavelli, 1988: ix, xxvi).

Living in his estate he dedicated the remainder of his life to literary activities. It was difficult for him to pass from a busy life into the life of emptiness. As he exclaimed he could not continue to live in that way, because it undermined his existence which he could not bear (Alekseyev, 1880: 109). However, later his writings “The Prince” (written in 1513), “Discourses on Livy” (written between 1513 and 1519) apart from letters, poems and comedies were of great importance to him (Weinstein, 1964: 277). After some period of time he put up with his fate and decided to dedicate his remaining life by writing books in order to save his homeland from enemies and other disasters. So, Machiavelli did correspond with his friends, spent his time with people around him and in the evenings he started his literary work (Alekseyev, 1880: 110-111). Here is how he described his leisure time in his letter in December 1513 to his close friend Francesco Vettori (Machiavelli, 1970: 70):

I rise in the morning with the sun, and go off to a wood of mine which I am having cut down... Leaving the wood I got to a spring...[I] have a book with me, Dante or Petrarch or one of the minor poets, Tibullus, Ovid...[T]hen I go on to the road and into the tavern. I talk to the passers-by, I ask what news of

their villages, I hear all sorts of things, and observe the various tastes and ideas of men...

As shown from the citation, Machiavelli in his retirement still was interested and was observing as he did in his career life about the news going on before commencing into work of writing. In fact, all these come to prove of the formation of his political language he used. And then, he is describing his focus on his literary work. Here is how he continues in his letter to Francesco Vettori (Machiavelli, 1988: 93):

When evening comes, I return home and enter my study...[I] enter the ancient courts of the men of old...[T]here I do not hesitate to converse with them, and ask them why they acted as they did...[F]or four hours I experience no boredom, I forget all my troubles and my fear of poverty, and death holds no more terrors for me: I am completely absorbed in them.

In this last citation, he tries to show how he was absorbed in questioning his experience with the past. Machiavelli reported in this letter to Vettori also that thinking about the lessons to be obtained from long years of government service and studying ancient history made him bearable (Machiavelli, 1988: x). Perhaps, in this letter to Vettori does not mention that he gave strong importance on history. But, later in his writings he made quite clear his purpose that history is important to learn and know, without it failure is abrupt and destructive. Thus, when he starts his work on writing he mentions the essential aspect of the role the history plays. For instance, in "Discourses on Livy" in the preface, as Machiavelli (1994: 82) argued, he explains the purpose of his writing in the following words:

Think of the respect in which we hold antiquity. Often, to take just one example, a single fragment of an antique statue will be purchased at enormous expense by someone who wants to look at it every day...

Therefore, Machiavelli sees having the knowledge of history as the “rescuer” for his country, to bring the unity and well-being among its citizens. He (World History, 1958: 115) concludes: “Here what kept and keeps Italy in the condition of disunity and weakness.<sup>1</sup>” Machiavelli’s main concern was to allow the young generation derive advantages from what he had written in his “Discourses on Livy” and to learn the true meaning of history to develop their virtú whose role was important for society and the state as a whole (Alekseyev, 1880: 112-113). Machiavelli considered that due to not being able to read Latin texts, it led rulers to lack the knowledge of their own history (Coleman, 2000: 241).

Moreover, he considered the republic as the best form of government, but due to problems (like enemy intervention, corruption within society and lack of virtú of rulers) he proposed that for the save of Italy and the defense of its independence it is necessary to have strong government of the Prince (Soviet Historical Encyclopedia, 1965: 933-934). In this respect he considered the papacy as the chief obstacle to the lack of virtú of his homeland (Wilde, 1928: 215). Here is how Machiavelli (1994: 118-119) condemns the church in his Discourses in the chapter 12 of Book one:

They have made us irreligious and wicked...[t]he Church has been and still is responsible for keeping Italy divided...[T]his is the reason why Italy has never been united under one ruler, but has been divided among numerous princes and rulers...[t]hat she has been reduced to being the victim, not only of powerful foreign states, but of anyone who cares to attack her.

After his death in 1527 his writings were banned and the name “Machiavelli” formed a negative meaning. In 1559 the picture of Machiavelli

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<sup>1</sup> Original text in Russian: «Вот что держало и держит Италию в состоянии разъединения и слабости.»

was burned and his works were banned and placed on the Index of Prohibited Books followed by the harsh criticisms especially of his book “The Prince” (Weinstein, 1964: 285-286; Coleman, 2000: 272). Even later William Shakespeare, who lived one century after Machiavelli, referred to him in his work as the “murderous Machiavel” (Coleman, 2000: 272).

Nevertheless, Machiavelli’s works have reached us wherein he described the duties and responsibilities of the envoy or diplomat (Alekseyev, 1880: 125). These are documents in which Machiavelli offered advice to his friend Raffaello Girolami, who was going to Spain as Ambassador to the Emperor Charles V (Adams, 1992: 180). As Alekseyev (1880: 125) states, in the instruction of the document we read:

That man fulfills the given mission to him, who becomes familiar with the nature of the prince and those that rule him. In the first place, you must study the character of the Emperor: whether he himself governs or allows the governance the others, whether is mean or generous....<sup>2</sup>

And in this way, the “endless” list continues as we read in the “The Prince”, where Machiavelli analyzes the ruler’s virtú, where he concentrates on the specific characteristics with their opposites. Also, one important point is worth mentioning, which again Alekseyev (1880: 136, 138) points out that in 1503 Machiavelli wrote a small treatise about the revolt in Arezzo that was titled as “Del modo di trattare I Popoli della Valdichiana ribellati” which became the second edition of the chapter 23 of Book one of *The Discourses*. This was an event that he witnessed and as the observer was describing in the written form the causes and results of that revolt (1880: 138). In addition,

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid. «Тот хорошо исполняет данное ему поручение, кто знакомится с природою князя и тех, которые руководят им. Прежде всего вы должны изучить характер Императора: сам ли он управляет, или предоставляет управление другим, скуп ли он или щедр....»

according to Alekseyev (1880: 150) one of the earliest of his letters to reach us today was from when Machiavelli had not yet commenced his career life, and is about the Dominican friar Savonarola, who was cunning politician who influenced people around him (1880: 150-151). In 1494 Savonarola after the departure of Piero de' Medici became the most influential man in Florence which lasted until 1498 (Machiavelli, 1988: ix, 134). Machiavelli seeing Savonarola's technique to win over people led him to summarize for the Florentine ambassador in Rome by saying that this Dominican friar was digressing and changing with the times by telling lies to people (Coleman, 2000: 245).

The purpose of mentioning those mentioned letters is to describe the context Machiavelli lived and how he carefully observed the cases going around him. Because, reading his books we could see how these small pieces were reflected as the historical examples that proved the method that Machiavelli used. Thus, the crisis which had been shaking the Italian states since 1494 with the invasion of enemies to Italy reflected the reason given by Machiavelli's writings on "The Prince" and "*Discorsi*" (Adams, 1992: 154; Bock, Skinner and Viroli, 1993: 81). "It was natural for Machiavelli to draw the conclusion that the dimension in which politics worked was history and that every political action had to be fitted into the context of historical change" (Adams, 1992: 154).

Therefore, his observation of events and examples drawn from history were to be reflected in his ideas of virtú (Edwards, 2002: 21). And perhaps, many unknown writings that did not reach our days did serve as assistants in his literary career. Machiavelli claimed to have one fundamental purpose – to

discover how to establish and maintain an independent state in corrupt Renaissance Italy (Edward, 2002: 21). Thus, in order to provide useful advice, he was concerned to establish from historical example and factual evidence the kinds of qualities rulers must have and the actions they must take to achieve political success (Edward, 2002: 22). In conclusion, paying close attention to the bits and pieces of those three periods, help us understand the purpose of writing those works.

To re-state our purpose: One of the tasks of this research is to clarify the meaning of Machiavelli's several concepts that were mentioned in his writings, like "fortuna", "virtú", "grandezza", "stato", but among them in the thesis the concept of "virtú" has its key role of mentioning. So, the purpose here is to explain why this concept of virtú has been chosen as the main key of the sense of the whole research. In this respect, it will be worth examining again Machiavelli's "The Prince" and "Discourses on Livy". If to read carefully his writings, we will see that he based his arguments in the circle of virtú by making secondary references to other concepts, like fortuna, grandezza and others. For instance, if you do not possess virtú, then you will not be able to achieve the greatness of one's country, and by not timely responding to the features of fortuna, accidenti you will be doomed to failure. Therefore, the concept of virtú is central to Machiavelli's analysis to elaborate his intended ideas.

First of all, to elaborate the meaning of this concept, according to Wight (2005: 21), *virtú* is derived from the Latin *virtus*, the character becoming to a *vir*. This has the sense of having the character of courage, strength and the similar expressions which are used accordingly to the

contexts or situations in the co-edited work by Skinner and Price on “The Prince”. It is the quality that human beings possess, and it is closely related with human actions whether in the political, cultural or other spheres of life. Just to make reference for the prevalent use of the concept of “virtú” in his writings, for example, it is most comprehensive in meaning depending on the context or situation that “virtú” is used, like ‘ability’, ‘skill’, ‘energy’, ‘determination’, ‘strength’, ‘spiritedness’, ‘courage’, or ‘prowess’ (Machiavelli, 1988: 103). But all these meanings that were translated later into English language are included in one category of the Italian expression – “virtú”.

Throughout the book on “The Prince” by referring, for instance to military success, or winning people’s favour, and other key points, “virtú” has been translated into English and used accordingly to the contexts as Machiavelli described, like for instance, for military success the English word “prowess” or “courage” is best described (Machiavelli, 1988: 103). Another example could be when Machiavelli mentions in chapter 6 of “The Prince” about the skilful archers who know the virtú of their bows (1988: 104). In this respect, in chapter 6 virtú is used in the sense of “efficacy” (1988: 104). However, though virtú is translated in different ways according to contexts, usually the use of the word of “ability” is used since it is most comprehensive in meaning (1988: 103).

Referring to the basic difference in analyses of “The Prince” and “Discourses on Livy” what Machiavelli meant by virtú, in this respect Quentin Skinner helpfully elaborates the term virtú. He states that the basic difference between these works is that if “The Prince” was concerned with the qualities required for successful leadership, “Discourses on Livy” was concerned not

merely with the virtú of individuals, but the citizen body as a whole (Skinner, 1998: 176). But, as a conclusion, the idea of virtú is simply equated with whatever qualities or abilities, are in practice needed 'to save the life and preserve the freedom of one's country' (Skinner, 1998: 184).

In a broad sense, the assessment made upon the above-mentioned argument is that 'when the safety of one's country wholly depends on the decision to be taken, no attention should be paid either to justice or to injustice, to kindness or cruelty, or to its being praiseworthy or ignominious', because it is the effect or intended ends which need to be assessed (Skinner, 1998: 183). And to refer to the idea of responding to 'necessity', which was already mentioned earlier, Machiavelli does refer to the notion of 'fortuna'. As Skinner and Price (1988: 104) expressed the idea of fortuna, they defined as conditions, circumstances, and favor or luck. "Fortuna" intervenes in human affairs (1988: 105). In a broad sense, Machiavelli argues that "fortuna" is the arbiter of half of people's actions and it leaves them to control roughly the other half (1988: 85). Even, Machiavelli matches fortuna with woman. In the chapter 25 of "The Prince", he (1988: 87) mentions:

[S]ince circumstances vary and men when acting lack flexibility, they are successful if their methods match the circumstances and unsuccessful if they do not. I certainly think that it is better to be impetuous than cautious, because fortune is a woman, and if you want to control her, it is necessary to treat her roughly.

Thus, when it interferes, "virtú" is taken as the solution to react or respond to it. Otherwise, the man will come to failure, if he does not possess any ability or "virtú" at all. Fortuna might be described as natural forces, or circumstances (Machiavelli, 1988: 105). It was argued that men come to be successful only when their characters and methods suit the times and



circumstances (1988: 106). Moreover, 'men of outstanding virtú', as Machiavelli pointed out, 'are able to recognize opportunities and exploit them' (1988: 107). Here, the example of Cesare Borgia best suits the argument of opportunity and luck. For this Machiavelli honored him above all others in "The Prince" (Greene, 2000: 202). Cesare Borgia was supposed to be skillful at catching the opportunities for responding timely to his enemies. But in the aspect of luck, he was lucky thanks to his father (Pope Alexander VI), who helped his son to set himself up as the ruler (1988: 23, 106). But at the same time, if Cesare Borgia was unsuccessful in the end of his career life, it depended on the bad luck (illness), which Machiavelli insisted on the idea of not blaming him for that purpose (1988: 23, 106).

Thus, the concept of fortuna, also as the case of virtú showed, is difficult to translate with exact meaning, because as the above-mentioned arguments show, it is translated according to the context, i.e. in one situation it is called as the bad luck as the example of Cesare Borgia says that, in other cases as opportunities or luck. In contrasting virtú to fortuna, Machiavelli believed that the chance of controlling external events is offered to man only in brief, fleeting moments (Adams, 1992: 152). Therefore, man must make use of a singular situation in which there must be a meeting of circumstances and individuality (1992: 152). That also meant that sudden action can bring about the assistance of fortuna in the dynamism of a constantly changing scene (1992: 152). Thus, what Machiavelli expresses is closely related to quote of Bismarck (Wight and Porter, 2005: 23): "Man cannot create the current of events. He can only float with it and steer."

Additionally, fortuna might be described as accidental, which is termed in Machiavelli's *Discourses on Livy* as *accidenti*. "According to McCormick (1993: 891), generally *accidenti* was rarely used by Machiavelli in his *Discourses* and "The Prince". The term of *accidenti* is unexpected and difficult to foresee in relation to *virtú* (1993: 889). And Machiavelli as a solution proposed the response of *virtú* to these accidents by examining past things where the ancients used 'remedies' to foresee future things (1993: 889). For instance in chapter 3 of "The Prince", he suggests that the responder should do it in time in order not to wait until *accidenti* comes close, otherwise failure is abrupt (Machiavelli, 1988: 10-11; McCormick, 1993: 890). The example of the Romans quite reasonably reflected the idea of how they acted in time. The Romans seeing that war is unavoidable and that postponing might only bring advantages to the other side, they decided to make war in Greece, in order to avoid making in Italy (Machiavelli, 1988: 10-11; McCormick, 1993: 890). When referring to *accidenti*, it might bring good as well as ill, depending on how it was reacted (1993: 892).

Furthermore, Machiavelli promotes the institution of the dictator for a temporary period as a means of dealing with *accidenti* for preserving the republic (McCormick, 1993: 897). He explained the matter in the following way: republics should take refuge either in the dictator or similar authorities, because due to accidental circumstances it might bring ruin to the state (1993: 897). And when it was reacted either by the dictator or similar authorities, the constitution could be suspended without making any amendments to it (1993: 897). In short, having looked through several cases, we could see that *virtú* is taken as the initiator in responding. In fact, *virtú*'s

relation to opportunity, accident, and luck might be expressed in the concept of fortuna. The ideas mentioned in the previous paragraphs details the notion of fortuna. Therefore, going back again to means and ends statement, we can see that if political effectiveness is achieved, the means could be cruelty, generosity, goodness, cunning, resorting to use of force, or acting as the dictator. All these may work for effective rule if the time and circumstance requires.

Moreover, when Machiavelli chose the concept of virtú he basically was concerned of the *effectiveness* of ruling, whether it served at its best for one's own country or not. In other words, the concept of virtú is the means for princes to bring back to health people and ultimately the state in a dysfunctional society (Coleman, 2000: 266). So, if In Machiavelli's writings virtú is the prudence, ability and the strong rule of a single man, that does not refer to rulers acting in a morally good way all the time (Coleman, 2000). Instead, as Greene (2000: xxiii) mentions:

Any man who tries to be good all the time is bound to come to ruin among the great number who are not good. Hence a prince who wants to keep his authority must learn how not to be good, and use that knowledge, or refrain from using it, as necessity requires.

So, the arguments revolve around the idea of the means and achieving given ends in politics. The means should not be good all the time, because when the means the ruler used is successful in politics, and then his actions will be excused (Miller, 1991: 304). In this sense, one 'never do good unless driven by necessity' and 'proceed as the force of nature compels them' (Miller, 1991: 305). For instance, Machiavelli mentioned in the *Discourses* about Romulus, the founder of the city of Rome, and he

described his actions as justifiable, who deserved to be excused for the cruel actions (killing his brother and his colleague), because he made it for the safety of the city (Skinner, 1998: 184). Here, the sense of the argument is if the effect is good, then the means taken for that purpose is justifiable. So, in the case of Romulus, he did take cruel actions by killing even his brother.

Thereby, Machiavelli introduces the idea for princes to use the method of half man and half beast, and in the case of the beast to use the cunning of fox and the strength of lion, cruel or parsimonious as necessity requires (Miller, 1991: 304). Here is how Machiavelli in chapter 18 of "The Prince" mentions:

[A] ruler...[m]ust know how to act like a beast, he should imitate both the fox and the lion, for the lion is liable to be trapped, whereas the fox cannot ward off wolves. One needs, then, to be a fox to recognize traps, and a lion to frighten away wolves. Those who rely merely upon a lion's strength do not understand matters.

In addition, Machiavelli states, necessity is what impels men to take action, and once the necessity is gone, only rot and decay are left (Greene, 2000: 349). Moreover, as for the concept of *stato*, the meaning is constantly changed accordingly to contexts that it was used in Machiavelli's writings. For example, Machiavelli in his letter to Vettori writes that for fifteen years he has been engaged in studying *stato*, i.e. "statecraft" (Machiavelli, 1988: 102). In other cases, *stato* was translated as "government", "power", like for example "oligarchical government" (1988: 102). But, generally *stato* usually translated as "state" (1988: 102). On the other hand, *grandezza* is translated as "greatness", "grandeur", "perfection" which can be used in different contexts. For examples, in the *Discourses* Machiavelli mentions about how the civic greatness is achieved (Bock, Skinner and Viroli, 1993: 140). He highlights

that unless each citizen behaves with virtú, the goal of civic grandezza can never be attained (1993: 138). Or another instance might be, in the *Discourses* Machiavelli basically focuses on the techniques of warfare of the Romans, about their achievement of greatness in comparison to other Italian city-states (1993: 138). Also to quote from “The Prince” from the chapter 26 (Machiavelli, 1988: 89):

Nothing brings so much honor to a new ruler as new laws and new practices that he has devised. Such things, if they are solidly based and conduce to achieving greatness, will make him revered and admired...

As mentioned in the previous paragraphs the concept of virtú quite reasonably touches the nature or characteristics of human actions in political sphere. For Machiavelli, during his career life from his observation of the ability of human actions, his main analyses of the problems his homeland faced touched in the most important sense. Consequently, he was concerned with the weaknesses that Italy demonstrated whether in internal or external affairs in comparison with other countries, like France, Germany, and Spain. In this sense, we can conclude that Machiavelli before commencing into his retired life, his main concern was revolved around the characteristics, or abilities of Italian princes, armies, and states, which came to be described by the concept of virtú. These characteristics or experiences came to formulate Machiavelli’s use of political language that he used in “The Prince” and “Discourses on Livy”.

Therefore, from the above-mentioned statement in accordance with his concern for the weaknesses of the rulers’ political actions (e.g. untimely respond to the enemies, hiring mercenaries which were unreliable for Italy, not being able to know their history), illustrates this concept’s prevalent use in

Machiavelli's political writings. Consequently, getting the overall picture by means of investigating the circumstances that affected the development of the idea of virtú, and how the idea of virtú is central in this thesis in comparison to other concepts, leads us to begin examining on how other thinkers explained and used the concept of virtú. In this sense, the purpose of the thesis is not to find out how the critics assessed Machiavelli, but rather how some intellectuals tried to grasp the **meaning** behind Machiavelli's concept of virtú.

Looking to Skinner', Price' and Gramsci's interpretations will also help to show how their statements coincide with each other, but in their case of analyses the specificities of approaching the concept of virtú are focused upon.

Already mentioned in discussing Skinner's differentiation of the concept of virtú, Skinner used a comparative analysis of the *Discourses* where he was basically concerned to differentiate Machiavelli from pre-humanist writers, e.g. Romulus, Cicero. Following Skinner, this will also help to understand or historicize the concept of virtú. There he clarified Machiavelli's analysis in order to make it clear that his aim of the discussion was on how the state could achieve *grandezza*<sup>3</sup>. Thus, in his *Discourses*, he remains in close intellectual contact with the assumptions of pre-humanist writers that Quentin Skinner has proposed (1993: 135). But at the same time, we find some differences or divergences of Machiavelli's ideas with the pre-humanist writers. According to Skinner, for Machiavelli the effect of political actions is important, so it is judged not by their intrinsic rightness but by their

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<sup>3</sup> Greatness.

effects (1993: 136). So Machiavelli's claims are that if the promotion of the common good is the goal, then the abandonment of justice is an obligatory action, though the pre-humanist writers claimed that justice should be in accordance with the principles of Roman law. (1993: 131, 136).

Therefore, when the *effect of an action* is good, this will always serve to excuse however it was done (1993: 136). Skinner also describes that Machiavelli was also against corruption, private or factional forces, because it led to the fall of the Roman Republic (1993: 138). In addition, for Machiavelli the common good is achieved with a free way of life in the republican form of government (1993: 139-140). For example, "it is most marvelous to consider the greatness to which Rome rose after she had liberated herself from her kings" (1993: 140). So, respectively princely or monarchical rule is neglected (1993: 140). In the end, what is specific for Skinner's analysis in this part of the argument is that he is more focused on making comparative assessments. Or in another case, for example, Skinner relates the meaning of *virtú* used in the *Discourses* to the idea of 'public spirit' – the phrase used by Henry Nevile in his translation of *virtú* in the seventeenth-century edition of *The Works of the Famous Nicolas Machiavel* (Skinner, 1998: 176). Therefore, the method used by Skinner to throw light on certain argument is more comparative. In fact, this contrast helps and proposes a different way to historicize the concept of *virtú*.

On the other hand, Russell Price, like Skinner, part of the Cambridge school, has quite a different technique. Quite important to consider, though there might be a slight differentiations between Cambridge school members in explicating certain context, however their attempts to study human history

remains its fundamental purpose. It will be useful to draw attention on one of his articles where his arguments concern the analysis of “The Prince” and “*Discorsi*” of Machiavelli. Price wrote that his purpose on the account given is not critical, instead it has been constructive (Price, 1977: 627). Price mentions that the most common meanings of *virtú* in Machiavelli’s writings are ability, skill, energy, determination, or courage, in politics or war (Price, 1977: 606). Moreover, Price (1977: 611) refers that *virtú* according to Machiavelli is not to kill one’s fellow citizens or betray one’s friends.

Or to give, another instance, he states that even the use of force is not condemned, rather its purpose is whether it responds for constructive purposes (1977: 615). Machiavelli says in Florentine history that ‘order arises from disorder or ruin, *virtú* from order, and from *virtú* results gloria and success’ (1977: 606). That is the way of maintaining the state and its citizens secure and prosperous in the time of war or revolution, and, especially, Italy’s health was central to Machiavelli’s ideas. Price (1977: 608-609) also describes Machiavelli’s time of Renaissance Italy where he refers to the earlier Italians who were very active, so they were victorious and glorious, but later they became passive and their rulers lost their states in a shameful way due to not displaying any *virtú* at all. For example, Italian city-states gained glory before XV Century, because they did not use mercenaries, instead they did reforms, gained the favor of people (1977: 593, 597, 609). Furthermore, Price considers, it is not only that *virtú* alone leads to success, instead circumstances or times also speak to success (1977: 607). That is to say, *virtú* and circumstances go hand in hand to achieve the intended aim for political success.



If on the one hand, Price believes that Machiavelli has composed a consistent doctrine, on the other he refers in the article to some ambiguities or obscurities (Price, 1977: 628). For example, in the Chapter 25 of “The Prince”, Price claims that Machiavelli’s statement that ‘men aim at glory and riches’ is obscure (1977: 618). Because the obscurity rises whether Machiavelli meant that all men seek both, that some men seek both, or that some seek glory while others seek riches (1977: 618). In other words, it will seem hardly plausible to support the idea of fame as being the impulse for a Florentine artisan, a Venetian merchant, or Roman peasant, as most men do not leave any mark in history, yet to speak of an attempt of doing so (1977: 618). In conclusion, in comparison to Skinner’s technique of explicating Machiavelli’s idea, Price uses the technique of ‘submerging’ into the thoughts of the Renaissance thinker by means of questioning and assessing. Both Skinner and Price did conceptual, theoretical analyses, but the way they approach the issue differs.

Lastly, we will sketch out Gramsci’s arguments where he claimed that Machiavelli was an “early Jacobin”, because “Machiavelli did not merely abstractly desire the national unification of Italy; he had a programme, and it was one which revealed his “precocious Jacobinism” ” (Hoare and Smith, 1999: 313-314). In Gramsci’s “Prison Notebooks” he argued about the political party in its relations with the classes and the State (1999: 314). This was the party that sought to found the State. Therefore, Gramsci (1999: 314) attached to his claims such importance to Machiavelli, “because Machiavelli was the representative in Italy of the recognition that the Renaissance could not be a real one without the foundation of a national State”. Gramsci’s

claims were based on the idea that Italian history was characterized by the fact of always missing an effective *Jacobin force* (1999: 313). This is how Gramsci reflects his ideas on identifying the 'Modern Prince' in accordance with grasping Machiavelli's work on *virtú* on how to maintain and restore a State and the society.

Further, Gramsci claimed that Machiavelli did not have recourse to long or dull arguments. Instead he represented the process in terms of the qualities, characteristics, duties of a concrete individual or *virtú* (1999: 316). Furthermore, Gramsci claimed that "The Prince" is a kind of "political manifesto"; it is the style of a man of action, of a man urging action (1999: 319, 332). That is Machiavelli's leader in the "The Prince" who knew what he wanted and how to obtain the necessity for the purpose of maintaining the stabilized state (1999: 334). Thus, from Gramsci's arguments we can see that he uses quite different technique to get the idea of *virtú*. As the proponent of Marxism, Gramsci describes or relates the notion of *virtú* to Jacobin force (as this force refers to political actors during French Revolution) and therefore associates this with the leadership task of the Communist Party, particularly of a Leninist party. This is quite a remarkable comparison and use of Machiavelli's *virtú*. Therefore, adding Gramsci's arguments in this thesis is to show what kind of style or method has been used for explaining the concept of *virtú*. In spite of using different language, his arguments quite reasonably overlaps with what Machiavelli intended to explain.

In conclusion, going through all these three different intellectuals in explicating *virtú*, shows in what respect Machiavelli's writings were important.

As shown from the arguments, Skinner, Price and Gramsci, they overlap with the meaning that Machiavelli intended to say. In this sense, through historicizing the concept of virtú, it helps to clarify the meaning of the concept in all its contexts (e.g. comparison with other writers).

In keeping with the English literature on Machiavelli, Russian literature also gives the same arguments made by Skinner, Price and Gramsci in the use of the concept of virtú of the Renaissance thinker. From Russian literature, e.g. the Soviet historian – Osip Lvovich Weinstein or Viktor Ivanovich Popov who is an honored scientist from Russia and worked quite long in diplomatic service, are helpful in understanding Machiavelli's virtú. For example, Weinstein (1964) mentioned that in order to obtain virtú, one should realize and conceive the past examples which necessarily help to foresee the political consequences. The weakness of Italy resulted from the lack of historical knowledge and the lack of experience or as Machiavelli insisted in his writings – lack of virtú (Weinstein, 1964). Thus, the knowledge of historical experience or virtú would have brought benefit for the state – for the ruler and the citizens. And the main reason that contributed to the weakness and conflicts of Italian states was the catholic church, that distorted the formation of virtú in the rulers and people, and led to the replacement of its' own armies with mercenaries, frequent attacks of foreigners to Italian lands (Weinstein, 1964).

On the one hand, Weinstein's analysis of Machiavelli's interpretation of historicism gives an explanation of why Machiavelli was concerned with the problems of Italy, and, on the other, this leads us to historicize of the formation of the concept of virtú. To use the other example, in the case of

Popov, as mentioned earlier, who through his diplomatic service in his last years dedicated his life to express his ideas by writing books, where in his book “Modern diplomacy: Theory and Practice”, he resorted to explain his intended arguments by referring to Machiavelli’s idea of the lion and fox. Popov reflected Machiavelli’s idea on the issue of how the diplomat ought to be. Popov (2004: 24) wrote:

Machiavelli advised in diplomacy not only to use the method of human-being, but also of beast; but among the beasts to choose lion and fox – strength and cunning...But Machiavelli himself pronounce sentence on this advice: to follow them is harmful, because to look as a person possessing these qualities helpful, but ‘to display them is ought to be only if it is found necessary’<sup>4</sup>.

As can be seen, from Popov’s arguments, he used Machiavelli’s idea of lion and fox in relation to what kind of qualities a diplomat ought to have. So, going back to Machiavelli’s virtú, the ruler who has virtú, is acting actually as a diplomat, who should try to serve the interests of his country, like stability, independence, well-being of its citizens. Therefore, historicizing the concept of virtú into twenty-first century Russian politics, will be helpful to examine the effectiveness of political actions in relation to whatever means might be used, like cruelty, cunning, use of force, goodness, generosity which ought to be the ‘weapon’ of the ruler as the necessity requires. In the next chapter, Putin’s short biography will be covered where it will concern basically certain important moments of his life. In addition to his short biography, the analyses will illuminate what he considered as the priorities of Russian politics which is the central part of the second chapter. This is

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<sup>4</sup> Original text in Russian: «Макиавелли советовал в дипломатии пользоваться приёмами не только человека, но и зверя, а из числа зверей выбрать льва и лису – силу и хитрость...Но сам Макиавелли выносит этим советам суровый приговор: следовать им вредно, так как выглядеть человеком, обладающим этими качествами, полезно, но “проявлять их нужно, только если это окажется необходимым”.»

important to look through, because these analyses will give the general picture of Putin's affairs in relation to his country's policies. These policies will concern country's both internal and external politics.

At the same time, the difference between Machiavelli and Putin will also be measured in accordance to political beliefs. This will be important later in demonstrating the applicability of the concept of virtú. Moreover, why it is important to draw that difference in the second chapter rather in this first one, is because by illuminating Putin's beliefs and politics through reference to his biography, will be more relevant and comprehensive to understand Putin as the ruler of Russia. In this way, in order to apply the concept of virtú, in the first place it is important to introduce who Mr. Putin is. Studying those peculiarities will form the essential characteristics that he, as a ruler, possesses.

## CHAPTER 2

### POST-SOVIET RUSSIAN POLITICS: WHO IS MR. PUTIN?

The purpose of this chapter is to set out, through the available biographical information, the history and character of Vladimir Putin's political achievements. In a broad sense, certain important information of the scheme of his political priorities will be illuminated in tracing his rise to power as those political priorities constituted Putin's main goals in policy. Before describing his political beliefs, his biography or curriculum vitae will be presented to understand Putin as a political actor not only in Russian Federation, but also his role in world affairs, i.e. the aspects of his earlier life which led him to his current political life.

Consequently, the following questions are secondary and are going to be elaborated: Was there any impact on Putin in his interest into politics from his early years? What was the aim of young Putin's interest in working at KGB? Whether Putin reacted to Yeltsin's administration during his career life? Did Russian people know anything about Mr. Putin before his commencement into presidential career? And, lastly, the main part of this chapter is to reflect his priorities which will cover the state's control over energy resources, resolving Chechnya problem and displacing some oligarchs from political picture of Russia. So, basically it will cover the following questions: What were the priorities of Putin's politics for Russia, and how was his approach distinctive. However, all these questions will be useful

to examine in order to prepare the ground for an analysis of the applicability and usefulness of Machiavelli's concept of *virtú* to Putin's politics, a matter to be taken up explicitly in chapter three.

The post-Soviet transformation of Russian foreign policy in the 1990s was characterized by the recognition of national weakness caused by the collapse of communism and the disintegration of the unitary state into fifteen new states (Nikitin, 2008: 9). Therefore, Russia was preoccupied for a certain period with the internal problems: domestic stabilization and economic survival (2008: 9). At the same time there were also pressures from outside political players, e.g. the USA, NATO's growing presence, the regional influence of China and Iran, Turkey's influence in post-Soviet region, and even the European Union's willingness to play a mediatory role in Georgia or Nagorno-Karabakh (2008: 15).

The developments under Yeltsin's administration were characterized by 'partial reform equilibrium', i.e. "with regional bosses and oligarchs taking advantage of an economy stuck midway between the plan and the market" (Sakwa, 2008: 240). In other words, both the regime and the constitutional state failed to resist to pressures exerted by powerful interests in society, like oligarchs, which had been spawned by the regime itself (2008: 137). There was a tendency on Yeltsin's part to put off making hard decisions (Herspring, 2005: 261). Therefore, as "the oligarchs became the part of power system", it led to describe them as Yeltsin's milieu (2008: 249). Such cases led to corruption, despite of several unsystematic plans to halt the uncontrolled force (2008: 165).

Furthermore, this corruptive effect came to influence not only on the development of a national market, or economic competitiveness, but also on the emergence of an effective political system (Sakwa, 2008: 241). For example, during Yeltsin's administration, the government was unable to collect taxes to cover its expenditure as the budget deficit rose to about 8 percent of GDP; inflation was in triple digits as the economy shrank each year (2008: 241). This also says about Yeltsin's lack of geopolitical perspective or political planning, for example, ignoring problems like Yugoslavia, postponing decision on Kosovo issue (Herspring, 2005: 261). Nevertheless, Moscow was lacking authority over many of the country's eighty-nine regions, because they passed whatever local laws they preferred, even if those laws were contrary to the Russian constitution (Herspring, 2005: 6). In addition to Yeltsin's acceptance of corruption and his fear of competitors, his health and alcoholism also undermined his effective conduct of state's affairs (Herspring, 2005: 6).

The above-mentioned examples showed that Yeltsin lacked systemic planning or responding to the moments either in internal or external policies. But Putin in comparison to Yeltsin proposed his conduct of policy based on the emphasis of responding to *moments*. So, when Vladimir Putin came to power after Yeltsin, it signaled the onset of yet another period of rapid changes (Sakwa, 2008: viii). And these changes were illuminated especially in Putin's politics to which he gave priority, namely strengthening state authority in controlling energy assets together with the displacement of oligarchs from political picture and dealing with Chechnya issue, which are going to be the primary focus of this chapter. To do that the following



paragraphs present answers to the questions that are mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, which in this sense Putin's biographical information will be useful to examine.

Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin was born on 7<sup>th</sup> October 1952 in Leningrad (St Petersburg) (Sakwa, 2008: 2-3; Herspring, 2005: 2). He was the last child and came from a family of workers (2008: 2). Putin's family suffered a lot, because they lived in the times of Second World War, deprivations (2008: 2-3). Therefore, Putin as their third and surviving child was considered as a gift later for their earlier sufferings (2008: 2). In relation to Putin's education life, his learning horizon was broad. For instance, starting his school education in 1960, he started in 1964 to learn German language in after-school classes, later he showed his interest in music, history, literature as well as sport – judo – that led him to become the champion in 1976 (2008: 3-4). Putin was interested in reading the spy thrillers that were published in 1960s which were concerned with saving his motherland against various enemies (2008: 6). So later when the matter of joining the KGB, he explained that this idea 'came from romantic spy stories', and this goal was formed in his school years and was to be achieved later in his life (2008: 8; 2005: 2). It is considered that from an early age Putin had a strong political awareness, where he enjoyed political debates with reaction to defending Russians and Russia (Sakwa, 2008: 5).

In relation to how he was characterized by his classmates, one of his classmates remembered Putin as 'Soft and modest, even shy, but with a character of steel' (2008: 4). While in high school Putin, in 1968, had visited without the knowledge of his parents the KGB to find out about the procedure

for taking volunteers. Putin was told that a law degree was required (Sakwa, 2008: 7; 2005: 2). Therefore his decision was to enter the law faculty of Leningrad State University, though the competition at that time was very high (2008: 7). Putin succeeded in his aim when in 1970 he entered that university, and later he was able to join training in the KGB in 1975 due to possessing strong language skills, before starting his formal career life in 1984 working in Leningrad (2008: 7-9). After he graduated in 1975 with a degree in law, with his defense of the diploma dissertation on the topic 'Principles of Successful Nations in the International Sphere', he had worked also in other countries, such as in the KGB office in Dresden in the German Democratic Republic (2008: 7-10; Herspring, 2005: 2).

Later with his return to Leningrad in 1989, he had become head of the Foreign Section at Leningrad State University, where "he served as an assistant for international affairs to his former law professor, Anatoly Sobchak, who was the university's rector" (2008: 10; 2005: 2). In addition, to state one important aspect was that his professor Sobchak who became a major force in Leningrad's politics later had supported Putin in his career path (2008: 7, 10; 2005: 2). Therefore, from these arguments, all these experiences came to form Putin's character. At the same time, he had experienced the Soviet education and lived through the Brezhnev and Gorbachev's era. All those experiences had contributed to his interest in politics.

That is how his path to power had started with being accepted to KGB, i.e. by reading spy stories. In other words, as Putin himself put it later in his book of interviews stated that he "was a pure and utterly successful product

of Soviet patriotic education” (2008: 5). And a person with steel character would be ultimately accepted by KGB. However, Putin in his aim to join the KGB had obliged to pass quite certain difficult paths. Certain people influenced Putin’s future, like his professor Sobchak, who, for instance, during first mayoral elections which were held at the same date as presidential elections, on 12 June 1991, when Yeltsin became first president of Russian Federation, Sobchak was elected as a mayor and had appointed Putin the chairman of city committee for foreign relations with responsibility for attracting foreign investment and he had taken Putin with him as an adviser or as Sobchak’s assistant (2008: 10, 15; Herspring, 2005: 2).

Moreover, as it was mentioned earlier about his diploma dissertation when he studied the law faculty, his ‘next task’ or goal was to enter the St Petersburg Mining Institute to complete his 218-page candidate dissertation on the topic of ‘The Strategic Planning of Regional Resources during the Formation of a Market Economy’ (Sakwa, 2008: 12). And this principle will later show how it serve as one of Putin’s political priorities in his presidential career, namely to centralize the Kremlin’s energy authority (Klare, 2008: 92). While serving as an official in the St. Petersburg municipal administration in the mid-1990s, Putin had managed to complete his doctorate at the St. Petersburg Mining Institute (Klare, 2008: 92). Successfully defending the thesis in 1997, he had become a Candidate<sup>5</sup> of Economic Sciences (Sakwa, 2008: 12). It was in this period where Putin had developed his belief in the crucial role of the state in the management of the country’s natural resource

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<sup>5</sup> Equivalent to Ph.D. degree.

endowment in order to bring Russia back to the strong position not only in internal politics, but also in world affairs (Klare, 2008: 92).

Yet, with this the satisfaction of Putin was not over, for the upcoming years he still worked on publishing his thesis. Thus, in 1999 Putin published in a journal a summary of his dissertation on the topic of mineral raw materials as mentioned (Klare, 2008: 92). His beliefs were based upon that the development of raw materials which would form strong industrial base that would positively affect the needs of both industry and agriculture as it stayed the basic source of foreign currency contributing to the country's rise of income (2008: 93). In this summary the argument had revolved around the idea that controlling resources will guarantee not only economic development, but also its security and the country's international position with world affairs (2008: 93). Here is how Putin expressed the above idea (2008: 93):

The stable development of the Russian economy in the coming years needs to be based on the planned growth of its component parts, including in first place, the potential of its mineral resources...which will serve as a guarantee of the country's economic security...

In the summary of his dissertation, Putin also had concentrated on the fact of controlling private interests with foreign investors altogether acting on behalf of the collective interests of the Russian people as a whole (Klare, 2008: 93). Because his main goal was to find out how far a foreign investor might contribute to the economy of his motherland whilst at the same time serving the people's well-beings. So, the dissertation he had written followed by successful defense in 1997, led to publishing two years later in the Institute's journal (Sakwa, 2008: 12). Though in this dissertation there was

not any response to Yeltsin's contrary politics, i.e. privatization of energy resources, Putin in his presidential career would implement what he had strived for. Later going through the analyses of Putin's administration, we will see that energy politics stayed and stays as the primary goal of Putin's project. It is the instrument used by him to carry Russia's power and developmental procedures as later in this chapter it will present energy specter as one of the important priorities. In addition, before commencing into prime-minister's position in August 1999 and later as a president, in 1998 he had returned working in KGB (Sakwa, 2008: 14-15).

Thus, before starting to work with Yeltsin, he would have the wealth of administrative skills, because he had had good command of English and German languages, had served for a decade as a security official, lived for five years abroad, he was familiar with the regions as he travelled across his country as a member of his sports team, especially judo (Sakwa, 2008: 15). Later, in his autobiography, he shows that experiences influenced him in a positive way. For instance, he did confirm that judo had played an important role in his life, because as he expressed that "it dragged him off the streets" (Herspring, 2005: 2).

Now, turning on finding the answer to the next question whether Russian people did know anything about Mr. Putin before he became the president of Russian Federation, the following paragraphs show that ordinary people had barely heard of Putin, not to mention, that certain state officials did not know him.

Boris Yeltsin came to know about Vladimir Putin, followed by Yeltsin's advisor, Anatoly Chubais, who had heard of Putin's reputation, offered him a

job, and, consequently, Putin had accepted the offer. (Herspring, 2005: 2). It was at this moment that Yeltsin took notice of him and thereby appointed Putin in 1998 as deputy head of the presidential administration in charge of relations with the regions, and later as the head of the Federal Security Service (the successor to the KGB) (2005: 2). It is generally known that as long ago as 1993 Russia's first president, Boris Yeltsin, had confessed to agonizing over his choice of successor (Nicholson, 2001: 867). And this question came to dominate Yeltsin's second term from 1996, particularly following the crash of 1998 due to the threat of criminal prosecution for alleged corruption hanging over his family and his surroundings (Nicholson, 2001: 867). In this way when the luck struck on the way to Yeltsin it had led him to take advantage of it and leave his presidential term earlier, where he officially declared Putin as his successor. In relation to it Putin had satisfied the requirement, because he guaranteed Yeltsin and his family immunity from prosecution at the first opportunity (Nicholson, 2001: 868).

Of course, people would barely know anything about a person working at FSB, and if anyone knew about Putin, they were especially high-ranking people, whose job associated with one another. There is a documentary film of 2000 called "The Unknown Putin" (original title "Neizvestniy Putin") when Putin was first inaugurated as a president of Russian Federation. This film actually was formulated by Russian journalist Andrei Karaulov, who tried to capture certain critical moments in Russia, i.e. the struggle for oil and power, situations concerned the oligarchs who were causing the weakness within Russia, and about unknown Putin with KGB background who was being interviewed in certain circumstances (Miroshnichenko, "The Unknown Putin",

2000). Yet, the world newspapers from journalists' side also were reacting with questioning "Who is Putin?", e.g. at his first major press-conference as president, on 18 July 2001, Putin was asked 'Who is Mr. Putin', which he replied shortly with answer 'Look at the record' (Nicholson, 2001: 882).

Yeltsin not only appointed Putin deputy head of presidential administration, later as the head of FSB, but also in August 9, 1999 Putin was appointed as prime-minister (Herspring, 2005: 3). Later on the same year, on December 31, Yeltsin by resigning his post, made Putin Russia's acting president before officially being elected (2005: 3). Putin's first term as a president started on March 26 2000, with an official 53 percent of the vote (Nicholson, 2001: 869). Putin's first year in office was dominated by the attempt to restore the authority of the state (Nicholson, 2001: 874). However, restoring state authority was shaped by several principal contours he had prepared in his mind. Among them he had sketched resuming economic reform, especially in the sphere of controlling energy assets by the state; the principal issues being in Chechnya; and, lastly, curbing the 'oligarchs' (Nicholson, 2001: 874; Herspring, 2005: 15).

This last part comprises the core of the idea, i.e. studying carefully Putin's politics in details in these core directions will help in the successive third chapter analyze these priorities by means of virtú. Thus, analyzing those essential priorities will illuminate the last question that was pointed out in the beginning of this chapter: Why these ambitions came to be a priority and the political directions starting from Vladimir Putin's first presidential term which still continue in his current [third] presidential term as important principles. By describing these characteristics, it will help not only to study Russia's internal

politics, but also to focus on its external links. On the other hand, as we will see in the following paragraphs Putin in comparison to Yeltsin did have quite different direction of implementing the state's affairs. Though Yeltsin officially declared Putin as his successor, this did not mean to last and continue the previous predecessor's politics. Instead, Putin did have his own understanding of politics and aims as the examination of his priorities will show that later in this chapter. As Nicholson (2001: 867) mentions, Putin guaranteeing continuity and at the same time appearing as a complete change from an increasingly unpopular Yeltsin was a challenge which meant that he was more prone to consider *moments*.

Though Putin's politics is described as a complete change from Yeltsin's era, yet there are some overlapping beliefs that both Yeltsin and Putin shared. Like for example, both Yeltsin and Putin were against revolution, as they clearly were declaring that publicly. For instance, Putin said in 2002 (Sakwa, 2008: 47): "I would like to remind you that I am a lawyer and I think that one's actions should be based on law, and not revolutionary expediency." Further, it will be useful to point one important aspect of the thesis which actually shows the basic difference between Machiavelli and Putin's biography. In this sense, the relation of them towards history will be identified. That is to say, what differentiated Putin from Machiavelli in relation to history or experience.

On the one hand, though Putin himself accepted that he was the "the product of Soviet period", nevertheless in comparison to Machiavelli who paid more attention to past experiences or historical examples for expressing the necessities required to restore Italy's power, Putin was more inclined to pay



attentions to the moments. In a broad sense, Putin was using his experience in practice alongside with moments. For example, after the collapse of Soviet Union, Putin did experience in his motherland the wars provoked in Chechnya. In this respect, these problems were catching one's eyes in that period which Putin "writing down in his mind" in order to "use or respond to them when the fortune will be on the way". For these kind of reasons he thought were shaking the stability and integrity of Russian Federation, which resulted in decreasing economic and political power and other spheres of life and resulted in killing people, causing damage with bombing. Therefore, these catching moments quite significantly interested Putin as he was living through those times.

Thus, having quite remarkable experience, Putin did know that when the energy wealth is diffused in certain hands after the collapse of Soviet Union, certain oligarchs or investors are making chaos in search of power in Russia. Therefore, he did argue in his dissertation and its publications that state control of energy resources should be the main aspect of importance for Russian politics, thus preventing the diffused or uncontrollable interests, like e.g. causing the spread of corruption. Vladimir Putin during his career life seeing all these undesirable consequences set his own beliefs not intentionally, i.e. he did not know that he will be chosen as the president of Russian Federation and implement them into practice. Therefore, as a president he did displace them either by imprisonment, or making them to be in 'exile' for quite long time from homeland. These moments come to constitute his conduct of politics in Russian Federation. The priorities or principles that constitute Putin's politics came to reflect certain aspects of

Russia's life: the reassertion of Moscow's power over Russia's regions; the creation of a legal framework to regulate Russia's social and economic life. (Nicholson, 2001: 874).

First of all, focusing on the first principle – the state's control over energy assets, and trying to get the overall issue concerning its internal, as well as external politics alongside how oligarchs were the primary actors in the energy politics will be useful to look at, because we will see how Putin started to eliminate those oligarchs from political picture within energy sector included. To have a quick glance on how Russia rich with energy resources, we will see that due to geographical conditions and its location, it is rich with raw materials. According to Klare (2008: 89) the Russian Federation encompassing 6.5 million square miles and stretching across eleven time zones, possesses some of the world's largest reserves of oil, gas, coal, uranium, and other vital materials. On the one hand, having these opportunities closely in hand, and aiming for state control scheme on the other hand, made the project quite matching. As several literatures show, Russia's power rose with Putin's careful concentration on the energy issue. For instance, as Klare (2008: 88) claims, in the altered power relationships of the new international energy order the emergence of Russia as an energy superpower is quite significant, capable of using its extraordinary resource abundance into immense geopolitical influence.

Further, Klare (2008: 88) continues his claims that “not so very long ago the battered forlorn loser of the Cold War, with seemingly scant prospects of renewal”, Russia starting from 2000 enjoys a booming economy and a prominent role in world affairs – especially as a supplier of oil and

natural gas to energy-starved nations in Europe and Asia. This was a reversal of fortune, because since the demise of the USSR in 1991, Russia was experiencing economic decline (Klare, 2008: 88). And this reversal of fortune began with Putin succession since Boris Yeltsin was controlling the systemic privatization of the country's energy assets (Klare, 2008: 91). On the other hand, Putin reversed Yeltsin's process radically by concentrating on the strong control of Russia's vast and profitable energy infrastructure (Klare, 2008: 91). In this way, Russia's power began to recover. For this purpose, the decisive role of Vladimir Putin cannot be underscored (Klare, 2008: 91).

Thus, "in this sense, geo-economics is to have priority over geopolitics, at least to the extent that such an economic focus does not conflict with core national interests, such as the territorial integrity of Russia and the preservation of a space of influence in Russia's immediate neighborhood" (Dannreuther, 2012: 550). But the question stood in this way: How should he start to implement energy politics? The answers elaborated in the following paragraphs about Putin's energy strategy explicate what ultimately led Russia to have such a strong position in energy politics.

Therefore, as president, Putin founding it necessary, to implement his beliefs into reality, he projected on the first line to establish firm foundation domestically. And among the projects, he, of course, found it necessary to eliminate certain oligarchs. The oligarchs basically expanded their scope towards gaining control over companies since the privatization process launched in 1992 (Herspring, 2005: 163). The rise of the oligarchs was unexpected as the reforms of Gorbachev gave more opportunity, as journalists noted, to the appearance of young entrepreneurs (Herspring,

2005: 161). During Yeltsin's era, they were taking advantage of the gap that constituted Yeltsin's weakness in politics, that is to say there was a trend towards privatization and it served exactly the interests of oligarchs.

During those days, they were earning money with machinations. They were taking this ill-gotten money out of Russia to spend them in foreign banks. Oligarchs were increasing their capital by making deals between each other that lead to dominate over market place. They were making deals not only within country, but also between countries. The above ideas are also mentioned by an article of Guriev and Rachinsky (2005: 131):

[T]he oligarchs have weakened Russia's economy by stripping assets from Russian firms and sending money abroad...[o]ligarchs typically hold majority and supermajority shares of both control and cash flow rights."

In this sense, they were increasing also their powers that were in fact were Yeltsin's milieu. For example, they began to impact on the election campaigns in order to serve their own interests. In this respect, they were increasing their sphere of influence and these consequences were the results of affect to the course of events. Putin was observing this course of events and seeing that oligarchs were not bringing profit for Russia, instead these capitals of Russia were taken abroad, he immediately reacted when he get the opportunity to govern Russian Federation.

Therefore, Putin was concerned to break the power of the oligarchs whose influence made to acquire energy assets in the chaos and led to corruption that had accompanied the USSR's collapse in 1991 (Klare, 2008: 94). Here is how Putin condemned the oligarchs' politics towards Russia in his response to Spanish reporters in his second presidential term in 2006 (Sakwa, 2008: 44):

Look at the situation of the mid-1990s – oligarchical groups substitute themselves for the state, take control over parliament, promote laws that are bad for society but needed for specific financial-industrial groups, and then influence their implementation through their representatives in governmental structures...

Furthermore, Putin argued that what he meant by speaking of strengthening the role of state is not to develop repressive apparatus (Sakwa, 2008: 44). Instead, he stated that it is to demonstrate the ability of the Russian state to adopt laws required by society and the people and the ability of the state to implement laws into life (2008: 44). In response to oligarchs, Putin started to conduct the policy of tax charges for oligarchs. Those who evaded the payment of tax became the main target of displacement by Putin. Among oligarchs who wanted to achieve state control in their hands, control energy assets for one's own interests and evaded those tax payments were Khodorkovsky, Berezovsky and Abramovich. According to Klare (2008: 94), as his first target among oligarchs, he chose a formidable adversary indeed – Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the wealthiest man in Russia at that time and the CEO of Yukos, then one of Russia's leading oil producers. Because, Mikhail Khodorkovsky wanted not only to finance parliamentary candidates against Putin's state-centric energy policies, but also was negotiating with American oil companies about the possibility of acquiring a stake in the company (Klare, 2008: 95). Putin seeing it as the impending threat to his energy strategy responded immediately.

Khodorkovsky was arrested by Russian security agents on multiple tax-evasions in 2003 (Klare, 2008: 95). By 2005 Khodorkovsky was found guilty and sentenced to nine years of imprisonment for failure to pay \$3.4 billion in back taxes (Klare, 2008: 95). In this way Putin's energy strategy was

implemented. On the other hand, the fate of Boris Berezovsky and his ally Roman Abramovich also faced similar moves. For example, Berezovsky accused Putin of conducting authoritarian tendencies and later established an opposition party called “Liberal Russia” (Sakwa, 2008: 92). Berezovsky is described as a person interested more in politics combining of financial, media and political power (Sakwa, 2008: 145). In the end, as the interests between Putin and Berezovsky were not overlapping in politics, this oligarch in 2000 left Russia for London, while continuing his financial support for oppositions, media to overthrow the president Putin (Sakwa, 2008: 146). For instance, *Kommersant* newspaper, owned by Berezovsky from 1999 to 2006, gradually lost its importance (Sakwa, 2008: 153). Therefore, in one of press-conferences in 2001 Putin mentioned Berezovsky sarcastically, in the sense of humour, like “Boris Berezovsky – who is that?” (Sakwa, 2008: 92).

Therefore, it was in this context that Putin started to pursue the policy of warnings of not allowing the unmonitored financing of political activity (Sakwa, 2008: 174). Yet, Putin has relied on the Security Council for some policy initiatives, such as e.g. developing “information security doctrine” to secure the interests in the sphere of the media and telecommunications (Herspring, 2005: 48). Moreover, in relation to oil and aluminium oligarch, Roman Abramovich, his Sibneft was also subject to tax inspections (Herspring, 2005: 168, 175). Abramovich’s Sibneft in 2001 declined, because he had retreated to the post of governor of distant Chukotka (2005: 172). Or another case happened with Platon Lebedev, the co-owner of Yukos, who was arrested and accused of tax evasions and malfeasance in the privatization of a fertilizer company (Herspring, 2005: 177; Sakwa, 2008:

147). Therefore, gradually oligarchs were destroyed from political life by Putin (Sakwa, 2008: 72). Until now, we still see that these figures are either in prison, in exile or court cases. As recent news show, Berezovsky died in exile in March 2013.

All those oligarchs were the Yeltsin's milieu. Thus, oligarchs could survive as long as they stayed out of politics. Additionally, in this section the aim is to show also while Putin was facing certain problems happening in Russia which were critical to those days, by focusing on oligarchs with their struggle with president's administration, is to measure to what extent oligarchs influenced these problems and how Putin was able to respond to them. In a broad sense, as we read from the news we can see that corruption is critical, Russian intelligentsia's is fading, let alone the oppositions happened in recent time are particular chaos within Russian territory. For instance, according to Michael Stott (Stott, 2012), in the case of the fading Russian intelligentsia, he mentions that for Russians the most favored destinations were Europe, the United States, Australia and New Zealand. To reflect these issues, it will be useful to examine by the sources of news, articles than literature, because later in the third chapter of the thesis we will see that the extent of oligarch's influence will be presented as the reaction of Putin's virtú in relation to fortuna.

Since the dissolution of Soviet Union, oligarchs were not only the active participant in energy politics, but they were affecting their influence also in the political sphere – affecting not only business, but also media, political parties, committing crimes. For instance, from Khodorkovsky's letters, it found that he wrote "Russia is a territory for hunting" which is talked

about in Part 1 of the film “The Unknown Putin” (PravdaTV, “The Unknown Putin [Part 1]”, 2010). It is shown that Khodorkovsky killed people, where some people are vanished, where the bodies have not been found (PravdaTV, “The Unknown Putin [Part 1]”, 2010). But severe problems came to be critical in Putin’s third presidential term. As it is clear, Putin’s third term started in May 2012. Comparing with his two presidential terms from 2000 until 2008, his third term came to be more critical in terms of problems he was facing, like e.g. during his inauguration thousands of protesters opposed to him, that were clashed with police (BBC News, 2012). Among the opposition activists the prominent ones were Alexei Navalny, Sergey Udaltsov and Boris Nemtsov (BBC News, “Vladimir Putin inaugurated as Russian president”, 2012). Apart from them, former senior Russian government officials – Aleksei Kudrin, Mikhail Kasyanov – are in opposition to the current Russian leadership (Radio Free Europe Liberty, “Gazprom Exports Record Amount Of Gas In March”, 2013).

Therefore, regarding the opposition groups or political parties the influence of oligarchs cannot be underscored. It is argued that Russia had almost 100,000 dollar millionaires, and several dozen dollar billionaires (Sakwa, 2008: 166). In fact, oligarchs apart from being close with each other, they also had close ties with these oppositional members, like e.g. Roman Abramovich had close ties with Mikhail Kasyanov, let alone with Berezovsky (Herspring, 2005: 176). These oligarchs were financing media and opposition parties. According to Herspring (2005: 18-19), in this sense the country’s parties lack stable following. Yet, they were controlling media, e.g. an oligarch, Vladimir Potanin, bought from the print media called *Izvestiya* and



*Komsomol'skaya pravda* (Herspring, 2005: 80). Since 2003 Boris Nemtsov had moved into resolute opposition to Putin criticizing his governance, though in the beginning of Putin's administration he was supporting Putin (Sakwa, 2008: 115, 180).

In relation to corruption one example could be concerning internal affairs. Putin recently, in April 2013, issued a decree which is aimed at reducing the corruption. In this decree Putin required all Russian officials and heads of state companies within two months to deprive themselves from all foreign accounts and company shares (Radio Free Europe Liberty, "Putin Gives Officials Two Months To Give Up Foreign Assets", 2013). Another example of Putin's response could be concerning both Russia's internal and external affairs. Recently in March 2013, Putin has raided NGOs to ensure that they comply with a law to limit foreign interference in politics in order to prevent foreign funding of political activities (Deutsche Welle, "Putin says Russia's raids on rights groups are routine", 2013). In addition, Putin signed the amendment to law on political parties on December 3, 2012, which concerned the increase of financing for them if the candidates receive at least three percent of votes in federal electoral districts in State Duma elections (President of Russia, "Amendments to law on political parties", 2012). Though the current situation in Russia is still critical, these are the policies which are continued by Putin.

The following paragraphs are associated how Gazprom, Rosneft was being subjected to tax inspections, became later as Russia's state-controlled giant energy companies, the former as natural gas and the latter as oil giant. That is to say, what kind of reasons made them to have important positions

they are possessing today. The details of those reasons will be sketched out which will be important later in the third chapter of thesis for the applicability of the concept of *virtú*. In this way, by demonstrating these details, the argument presented in the third chapter of the thesis will be much clearer, i.e. it will show how the concept of *virtú* is important by historicizing it into twenty-first century Russian politics.

Rem Vyakhirev was the CEO of the giant natural gas company Gazprom since 1992 (Herspring, 2005: 132). But since Putin's come to power Vyakhirev was replaced by Aleksei Miller (served six months as deputy energy minister), the young economist from Petersburg, who was the loyalist of Putin (2005: 132, 171). So, returning to the previous argument, what happened to the possessions of oligarchs when they are displaced from the political picture of Putin's Russia, like Abramovich's Sibneft, Khodorkovsky's Yukos, and the list continues. Generally speaking, Putin's aim was to transform Gazprom and Rosneft into national energy champions, which will be able to compete with such international giants as BP, Exxon Mobil, Chevron and others (Sakwa, 2008: 258). Therefore, for example, what happened to Abramovich's Sibneft, the 73% of it was bought in 2005 by Gazprom for \$13.1 billion (Sakwa, 2008: 258). Or another example, the takeover of Yukos's main production asset, Yuganskneftegaz, that was controlled by Khodorkovsky, in 2004 allowed Rosneft to emerge as a global actor, which meant that the operation was now in the hands of Putin and his associates (Sakwa, 2008: 257, Klare, 2008: 96).

In this way, as these Russian oil and gas giants took certain position, it did not only increase its power, but also change the country's image in

international affairs. On the other hand, oligarchs' position faded away, like e.g. Berezovsky known by some as "Russian Rockefeller" (Sakwa, 2008: 58). Putin in parallel to having all these "monsters" in his hand expanded the "territories" of Gazprom, Rosneft reaching more and more countries, especially among them were European countries. All these resulted by dealing bilateral and multilateral agreements, constructing major gas or oil pipelines that had shaped Russia's major power. But, of course, these companies also had formed alliances either with gas or oil firms in order to advance foreign policy objectives and combine their power towards Western giants (Klare, 2008: 19). In addition, comparing Russia with its past, with its post-Soviet decline, the first year of Putin's presidency was identified as one of the significant rise in overall economic growth (Klare, 2008: 89). For instance, Russia's GDP began to climb in 2006 by approximately 6.7 percent since Putin's election in 2000 – more than that of any other member of the G-8 club of major industrialized nations (Klare, 2008: 89). The country's per capita GDP quadrupled to nearly \$7,000 annually (Klare, 2008: 89).

Thus, the state-controlled giant natural gas company Gazprom and oil company Rosneft and even one of Russia's largest privately owned oil companies – Lukoil played an important role in world affairs (Klare, 2008: 89). As we have seen from the above-mentioned arguments Putin influenced to gain the energy power by means of conducting policies on the first line inside the country and later expanding that power above its borders. In this sense, it is important to mention about Gazprom in more comprehensive way as its role in the world affairs is more essentially affecting international politics. It is generally known, that Gazprom claims ownership of 16% of the

world's natural gas reserves, more than possessed by all the countries in North and South America, and Asia combined, which controls the world's largest pipeline projects that extends from gas-producing fields in Siberia and Central Asia to markets of Western and Southern Europe (Klare, 2008: 96). Thus, according to Klare (2008: 19), Gazprom was taking the lead by establishing joint ventures with European firms in order to sale natural gas to European consumers. Therefore, the analysis concern how such leading giant Gazprom apart from reaching its lead in internal politics, improved its leading role also in external politics.

To answer how Gazprom was gaining that dominance, is not only because of displacing the oligarchs, diversifying its holdings into the petroleum sector – buying Sibneft and other firms, but also displacing the foreign companies from his homeland. For instance, in the case of Sakhalin-2 consortium Putin made the foreign owners to sell off a majority stake of their venture (Klare, 2008: 98). Another case was in 2007 when Kremlin forced British oil giant BP to cede its holdings in the Kovykta natural gas field to Gazprom (Klare, 2008: 101). Yet, Putin was using this threat not only in internal politics, but also on the international level. There were cases when Ukraine in January 2006, Georgia in 2001 and in January 2007 were threatened with a gas cut-off in the middle of winter due to the demand of paying high prices or displeasure over certain policies in relation to Gazprom (Klare, 2008: 104, 109; Klare, 2005: 154). In the case of Ukraine it was one of the events threatening not only Ukraine, but also European customers on reliance on Gazprom. In this way, Putin was decreasing dependency of Russia on oil or gas exports (Nikitin, 2008: 28).

Furthermore, Gazprom's multilateral relations mainly reflected in the Europe region. Since 1970s Western and Eastern Europe were connected to Russia's natural gas in Western Siberia being the world's largest network of pipelines (Klare, 2008: 91). Gazprom, being the lead in controlling the major pipelines, provide with 80% a significant share of Europe's natural gas consumption, like 96% for Greece, 70% for Austria, 47% for Poland, 43% for Germany, 30% for Italy, and 26% for France (Klare, 2008: 91; Dannreuther, 2012: 553). At the same time on a bilateral level the Kremlin signed agreements with China to cooperate with Chinese National Petroleum Corporation, with British BP, supplying Turkey with gas export line called Blue Stream started from 2003 and other major companies (Klare, 2008: 77, 105; Dannreuther, 2012: 551-552). Yet, Putin projected the "Nord Stream" natural gas pipeline under the Baltic Sea to Germany and beyond (Klare, 2008: 111). Later in 2008 signed an agreement with Bulgarian officials to construct the "South Stream" gas pipeline from Russia under the Black Sea to Bulgaria, Greece, and Italy (Klare, 2008: 113). Until recently, it was reported by the CEO of Gazprom, Aleksei Miller, about the 34% jump in natural-gas exports for March 2013 (Radio Free Europe Liberty, "Gazprom Exports Record Amount Of Gas In March", 2013).

Therefore, Putin was responsible for transforming the state-controlled natural gas 'monster' Gazprom into one of the largest, richest, and most powerful energy firms (Klare, 2008: 23). But looking to some examples inside the Russia's politics in relation to Russia's inflow of capital it will be worth considering and identify people's satisfactory level in relation to this wealth. Because as mentioned earlier in beginning of the thesis the aim is also to find

what are the reasons that Russian people are discontent in recent times. By looking to these examples, it will help to illuminate whether there is the idea of well-being in relation to energy boom.

As the following paragraphs are basically focused on some of the problems of the idea of well-being in Russian Federation, it will not only show what kind of problems people are facing, but also these arguments will be followed by how this wealth is distributed if there is such a clash between wealth and the dissatisfaction of the Russian citizens. These details will open an opportunity to diagnose how Putin's virtú was attentive to bringing the happiness to the people in the following chapter. Thus, it will help further in chapter three of the thesis, by having such match – Putin's focus (capable to bring energy's wealth to the state treasury) in relation to the well-being of the Russians – to investigate by means of Machiavelli's virtú, as both of Machiavelli's writings are referring to this question.

In this respect, it is essential to look at the examples that embrace social and economic life in Russia. In these spheres there are still problems which are not stabilized and basically do not serve the demands of Russian people. For this purpose Russian media are more helpful to look at which concerns Russian internal processes, because there are political scientists who critically analyze these consequences in a more detailed way.

First of all, concerning social problems within Russia, the following examples are provided. On the one hand, the salary of ordinary people stays still as the crucial issue. Recently, one of Russian political scientists, Sergey Sibiriyakov, mentioned that if the wage in the regions is 15 thousand rubles and the cost of one flight is 23 thousand rubles, how Russians might afford

that (Sibiryakov and Grigoriy, “Why Russian Federation has such huge costs for air tickets in comparison with the USA and Canada: Opinions”, 2013). Further, in this news also mentioned that there is no correlation between internal and external flights, because the external ones cost cheaper than the flights inside the country (Sibiryakov and Grigoriy, “Why Russian Federation has such huge costs for air tickets in comparison with the USA and Canada: Opinions”, 2013).

Moreover, among Russian citizens, as experts consider, teachers are suffering from low wage, they are receiving less than expected (IA REX, “Teaching problems: Why salary is not being raised for teachers?”, 2013). Apart from that in universities even if money supplied to certain regions for salary, the distribution for teacher’s wage is not fulfilled which leads to corruption (IA REX, “Instructors of Russian State Humanitarian University (RSHU) require investigating the corruption facts at university”, 2013). In addition, the pension sphere of the Russian people is also in the situation of dissatisfaction. For instance, Valeriy Rashkin, the deputy of State Duma of Federal Assembly of Russian Federation, on 12<sup>th</sup> of March 2013 in the course of the press-conference on the topic “The rise of communal payments and corruption in the sphere of housing and communal services (HCS) as the cause for protests and social tension”, stated that pensioners are surviving thanks to their children and grandchildren<sup>6</sup> (IA REX, “Russian pensioners begin to ‘survive’?”, 2013). Valeriy Rashkin critically called the social sphere as the total “communal terror”, as the prices rise not only for housing but also

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<sup>6</sup> Original text in Russian: «Об этом заявил депутат Государственной думы ФС РФ...[В]алерий Рашкин 12 Марта в Москве в ходе пресс-конференции на тему «Рост коммунальных платежей и коррупция в сфере ЖКХ как повод для протестов и социального напряжения»...[р]оссийские пенсионеры выживают, благодаря детям и внукам.»

for communal services for 50%, and in these services the bribery is the big problem (IA REX, "Russian pensioners begin to 'survive'?", 2013).

Further, he continued that it is important to pay attention to how and where pensioners are able to obtain money if the medium pension is 12-13 thousand rubles and communal flat costs 3 thousand rubles, let alone that Dmitry Medvedev announced about the rise of the price for 12% in the second half of 2013 year (IA REX, "Russian pensioners begin to 'survive'?", 2013). In addition, the deputy also mentioned about the unemployment, as the production level stays very low in association with what the dissatisfaction of people are the result of protests (IA REX, "Russian pensioners begin to 'survive'?", 2013). Valeriy Rashkin's arguments are quite significant, because what if pensioners do not have grandchildren or children. Then the question stands in the following way: pensioners ought to survive thanks to whom? And the answer will be, of course, the state's support.

Actually, the deputy's current concern over the social problems in Russia could be related to personal experience. Visiting Russia, Moscow, several times since 2003, the living standards of people remained and remains lower as related to the above-mentioned points, i.e. salary, pension. As for the knowledge about the pension of people, it was about \$150 in 2003. Nevertheless, we would say that these numbers are very low in comparison to Moscow city which is one of the most expensive places for living. Now after ten years has passed, to compare these numbers with present, 2013 year, which is in medium 12-13 thousand (\$400) rubles the sphere of satisfying the needs of pensioners still made little progress.



Yet, to add to listed problems that Valeriy Rashkin have already described, is about the young generations who are not provided with good opportunities either in student life, career prospect and others aspects that constitute the future of Russia, i.e. there are the problems of drunkenness, divorces of young families. If to add about health services, it is also in the same situation. Recently, NGOs also were subjected to control, as some of them were closed due to suspicion that some of them are working for foreign countries as there is a huge financing inflow to these NGOs from abroad. In the case of NGOs it is a right way to close if they are really the agents of any foreign country. However, Putin is following something different from this proposed idea. He is limiting generally the power of NGOs, leaving the special control to the Russian state, e.g. by financing them.

Moreover, Russian people who are expressing their dissatisfaction in certain cases in protests are resulted in limiting their rights. Putin started to conduct against them the policy of arrest. Also he passed a bill that concerned (political) meetings that was directed against the activists or protesters who were obliged to pay fines if they are involved in illegal protests. It was the protests that accompanied the Vladimir Putin inauguration and followed by immediate reaction of Putin's United Russia party who passed that bill which meant that from that time any illegal protest might result up from 50,000 rubles to 1.5m rubles or \$48,000 (BBC News, "Russian protesters risk huge fines under new bill", 2012). Therefore, as International non-governmental organization called Human Rights Watch mentioned, the sphere of human rights in Russia has inclined to the position of regress in comparison with 2011 (IA REX, "Human Rights Watch called

2012 as the worst year for the human rights in Russia”, 2013; Human Rights Watch, “Russia: Worst Crackdown Since Soviet Era”, 2013).

Second, the economic situation is also worth to look at. Russia possessed such a vast territory has the opportunity to eliminate some of these dissatisfactions. If she will also have significant focus not only in energy politics, but also in agriculture, industry, Russia might have become more powerful than one can expect as these opportunities might guarantee. But instead having only one-dimensional focus, and leaving the other spheres aside, is like “making something unfinished in shape”. Because, the economy should be multi-sectoral, rather than depending and focusing on one opportunity. Of course, it should not be neglected that comparing Russia with its chaotic period and Putin has been catching the energy opportunity of Russia as being the rescuer to eliminate certain processes inside the country is quite a significant progress. However, to see this one-dimensional policy in politics, the guarantee of winning the favor of people will be under question.

So, for asserting why Russia’s economy is one-dimensional is important to list some examples. Generally speaking, prices are rising in every year for foodstuffs, oil and other spheres of life. One example is how recently the rise of the cost for fuel caused a critical reaction by auto drivers who protested against the rise of oil cost (IA REX, “The rise of costs for fuel will be ‘gradual and coordinated’: experts”, 2012). Furthermore, analysts asserted that there is a dramatic decline of harvest in 2012 (IA REX, “Analysts: Russia expects the deficit of grain?”, 2012). Again to re-assert the previous argument that if Russia developed parallel to energy sector, the agriculture, industry, there have not been the rises of costs within Russia, let

alone to speak about the costs of oil or gas which are above the international level of costs. This proposed argument means that Russia is highly depends on energy sector, and if not those high costs, Russia will not survive, as the energy sector is the only rescuer. Therefore, all these listed problems reflect the dissatisfaction of Russian people that result in protests that we see presently.

In the end, to come to the final point, after having the above-mentioned analyses, it is important to explicate where Putin concentrates the wealth of energy if people are suffering in poverty, unemployment, low salary. To find an answer to this question, it is worth to look at the state's budget. In fact, the great part of money is concentrated in strengthening the military. As the Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat) (Russia Beyond the Headlines, "Russia posts \$ 9 billion consolidated budget surplus in January – Federal State Statistics Service", 2013) reports:

Russia had a consolidated budget surplus of 288.4 billion rubles in January 2013, compared with a surplus of 413.5 billion rubles in the same period of last year...[C]onsolidated budget expenditures in January 2013 included 727 billion rubles on social and cultural programs; 107.4 billion rubles on the national economy; 226 billion rubles on national defense; 98.2 billion rubles on national security and law enforcement; 89.6 billion rubles on general government needs; 21.1 billion rubles on the housing and public utilities sector and 33.1 billion rubles on government and municipal debt servicing.

In addition, according to the Guardian news in 2011 Russia spent nearly \$72bn on arms, thus overtaking Britain and France to take third place in the world league table (Norton-Taylor, "Russia overtakes UK and France in global arms spending league table", 2012). But what about the other spheres? They will be financed with little percentages? In December 2012 Putin required that for the maintenance of armed forces 30% should be

financed, but for their equipment and development – 70% (IA REX, “Putin requires optimizing the expenses for armed forces”, 2012). In January of the same year, for instance, Putin mentioned in one of the conferences that the ship buying for the navy by 2020 year will be appropriated with 4 billion rubles (IA REX, “Putin: 4 billion rubles will be appropriated for the renewal of Russia’s Navy”, 2013).

Later, in February, Putin during a holiday concert again insisted on the issue that until 2020 year the expenditure for renewal of arms should be increased by 70% (IA REX, “The main types of arms will be renewed by 2020 in Russia for 70%: Putin”, 2013). Moreover, he continued by stating that if to postpone this goal, it means to threaten the safety of the state (IA REX, “The main types of arms will be renewed by 2020 in Russia for 70%: Putin”, 2013). Moreover, in March 2013 in the conference Putin mentioned that for the re-equipment of combat aviation in Novosibirsk, it will be appropriated with 5 billion rubles (IA REX, “Putin: 5 billion rubles will be appropriated for the re-equipment of combat aviation”, 2013). Yet, on the military issue the discussion could be continued on how Russia extends its military base by means of alliances with neighboring countries and selling arms to foreign countries, e.g. recent agreement on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2013 was ratified on extending Russia’s military base on Kyrgyzstan’s territory and on the same date Putin ratified to have armed forces in Tajikistan (President of Russia, 2013).

In conclusion, comparing this internal position of Russia with its external one, we can say that in international affairs Russia gained much progress in quite a short time, e.g. having such a giant natural gas company

Gazprom. Generally, energy constitutes the major player of income in the economics of Russia in comparison with agriculture, industry and other alternatives which barely have serious concentration. Having these means, Russia's certain problems in social life is subjected to failure which requires organization in law specter in order to meet certain requirements of the Russian people who are finding themselves in protests. Therefore, having such concentration on energy politics, country comes to depend more on energy's profit. However, it is essential to consider that energy prospect might not guarantee the everlasting profit. Thus attention to other spheres is important to make a counterbalance for the development of economy. Thereby, on the one hand, the development of social sphere of the country stays very problematic, and on the other – economic sphere is one-sectoral or one-sided. That is what is already mentioned earlier, in the examples listed either in social or economic life, there is no correlation, or that results in a failure.

Thus, the above-mentioned details are to reflect in the third chapter Putin's virtú by means of Machiavelli's "The Prince" and "Discourses on Livy". Turning to the second priority, the Chechnya problem, which is still present as an essential problem, will basically focus on certain measures that Putin responded. By 1999 the peace that had been negotiated in August 1996 was no longer holding, that is lawlessness in Chechnya had led not only to a spate of kidnapping, but also to increasing insecurity on the republic's borders with the neighboring regions of the Russian Federation (Nicholson, 2001: 868). Following an attack "by Chechen warlords into Dagestan in August 1999 and the deaths of some 300 people in violent explosions in

Moscow a month later, Putin assumed the mantle of the leader who would restore order to Chechnya and morale to the Russian people” (Nicholson, 2001: 868). Thus, Chechnya was the only issue on which Putin as presidential candidate decided a personal commitment (Nicholson, 2001: 874). In relation to how was his attitude towards this issue, as he said, the resolution of the North Caucasus problems was his ‘historic mission’ (Nicholson, 2001: 874).

In this sense, the core defining feature of his leadership had been the determination of the resolution of the Chechen issue in order to bring stability to the North Caucasus and to reduce the threat of Islamist radicalization in Russia (Dannreuther, 2012: 546). Here is how Putin (Nicholson, 2001: 874) demonstrated his attitude towards the rule of law in Russia as a whole:

All we had to do was to grapple directly with the bandits, destroy them, and a real step was taken towards the supremacy of justice, towards the dictatorship of a law that is equal for all.

As Putin differently approached, with critical commitment, the ongoing crisis in the Chechen Republic provided the context in which to present Putin as a quite different leader from Yeltsin (Nicholson, 2001: 868). As Machiavelli (1988: 85) related fortuna to one of those dangerous rivers that, when they become enraged, flood the plains, destroy trees and buildings, Putin also saw the Chechnya conflict as the fortune endangering the stability of Russia. Therefore, he approached this issue very critically. In this claim it will be useful to look at the measures Putin had taken as far as it was critical point to settle the conflict.

But first of all, it is also important to look briefly to the reasons why this conflict became critical and continues to be the matter of international

reaction. Chechen people are generally characterized as being courageous and fearless nation, because as North Caucasus is a mountainous place and its people are generally accepted to having these characteristics. For instance, one Chechen man might kill before him four or five Russians, due to possessing those features. In this respect, when the Chechen-Russian relations started to form by the end of sixteenth century, they were in the need of help of these Highlanders (the original expression in Russian language is «Горцы») for waging successful war against Iran and Turkey at that time (The Official portal of The Head and Government of Chechen Republic, “Chechen Republic: General Information”, [Accessed 18/04/2013]). It provided a good opportunity for Russians to take advantage of them.

Later, when Caucasian war followed between Chechnya and Russia (as Russia claimed Caucasus region for the empire), it took attention of many nineteenth century Russian writers from Lermontov to Tolstoy, because it is described for Russian forces as the source of difficulty to overcome which resulted as the long and bloody campaign (BBC News, “Chechnya profile”, 2012). In 1859 Chechen Republic was completely annexed to Russia (The Official portal of The Head and Government of Chechen Republic, “Chechen Republic: General Information”, [Accessed 16/04/2013]). In fact, in North Caucasus Chechnya differs in terms of these characteristics more than other North Caucasians – Dagestan, Ingushetia. In this sense, though Chechnya constitutes not a large range of territory and population as Russians, and following the unequal battle between Russians and Chechens (as Russians possess any kind of weaponry, which Chechnya lacks), Chechen people are continuing their struggle for independence starting from times of tsars of

Russia (The Official portal of The Head and Government of Chechen Republic, "Chechen Republic: General Information", [Accessed 17/04/2013]).

Thus, it became as a call for national self-determination and revival of Islam in order to redefine itself after seven decades of communism (Herspring, 2005: 207). Therefore, the achievement towards this resolution was not on peaceful means, rather it was obvious clash between the interested participants. Therefore, their courage and fighting spirit do not allow them to give up for their goal, despite of lots of damage was caused because of this conflict, not only economically, politically, but also socially, e.g. civil people (women, children, and the elderly people) became the sacrifice of this war. To give one example, since the election of Putin as the president of Russian Federation, as he conducted, to say in Machiavelli's sense, along with the use of the force also morally good actions, Akhmed Kadyrov followed then by Ramzan Kadyrov for the rule of Chechnya came to constitute Russia's main political aim, in the sense that these rulers were in fact pro-Russian. That is why Ramzan Kadyrov's father, Akhmed Kadyrov was killed in the stadium from the bomb. Thus, Chechen leaders not only pursued to struggle with Russians but also to kill one's own people who were pro-Russian. The Chechen leaders never surrendered to Russian troops.

It started when Chechnya seeing the opportunity of collapsing Soviet Union, in November 1990 held a conference in Grozny to declare the independence and sovereignty of Chechnya and its secession from the Soviet Union which resulted by the end of that month with the dissolve of the soviet Chechen-Ingush Republic and declaration of Chechen's independence and sovereignty (2005: 213). General Major Dzhokar Dudayev was elected



by Chechens as the leader of the self-proclaimed Chechen government (2005: 213). In addition, Yeltsin's political weakness also led to reaffirm the Chechen's struggle to recapture Grozny (2005: 208).

Therefore, it led to war – the first Chechen war that happened in 1994-96, led the Chechen's call for self-determination in 1996 for the president to accept a cease-fire and the withdrawal of Russian forces from Chechnya (Herspring, 2005: 208, 213). In this first war it was the initial success of the Chechens to defend Grozny (2005: 216). Therefore, the Russians failing to impose their will or find a viable Chechen faction that would serve as agent to Moscow, left with one choice – to begin negotiations to end the conflict (2005: 216). However, this negotiation started when President Dzhokar Dudayev was killed by Russian intelligence with the help of locating and tracking his phone call by means of the satellite and launching two laser-guided missiles (2005: 217; BBC News, "Dual' attack killed president", 1999). This event followed by electing Aslan Maskhadov in 1997 as the president of Chechnya, but his power was quite limited (2005: 207, 218).

Though the cease-fire ended the fighting, it left the ultimate status of Chechnya unresolved and at the same time territorial integrity of Russian Federation was also under question (Herspring, 2005: 218-219). Thus it led to the second Chechen war that started in 1999 (2005: 219). In this second war, actually, Putin comes to be the active political player to resolve the Chechen issue. By March 2000 a well-prepared assault by Russia after fighting took Grozny thanks to air, artillery, and rocket strikes (2005: 221). It was in this war that Shamil Basayev, the famous Chechen leader, was wounded (2005: 221). However, the re-capture of Grozny by Russia did not

mean that the war ended. For Moscow it was difficult to find reliable Chechen leaders to serve their agents, though later Akhmed and Ramzan Kadyrov started to satisfy Russian interests. Nevertheless, the result is that the uneven war after these wars continued and still continues.

In this sense, “Kamikazes” or attacks were operated under the direction of Shamil Basayev, e.g. the attack to metro station, to the school in North Ossetia and other several operations (Herspring, 2005: 206, Sakwa, 2008: 89). There were also kidnappings, extortion and of the other crisis was the seizure of hundreds of hostages in a Moscow theater by Chechen fighters in October 2002 (Herspring, 2005: 20, 218). So the list continues if to check and follow these events that were happening one after another. In the place where lawlessness and order was strong, the source of chaos was strong (2005: 218-219). Ordinary citizens were becoming the sacrifice of these unwelcomed wars or conflicts. Being under Russian control for a long time, with the collapse of Soviet Regime Chechens wanted to get the advantage of it and in the result it cost them more of what they expected. Therefore, when Putin rose to power, he had long been describing the war in Chechnya as a campaign against bandits and terrorists (Herspring, 2005: 205). In Machiavelli’s sense it can be called that Putin was about to strengthen his position, even though the action taken or described was vicious (Machiavelli, 1988: 55).

Identifying from the above-mentioned arguments the key reasons of this conflict leads to question what kind of measures taken by Kremlin under Putin’s administration. On the one hand, Putin resorted to using the force. The initial use of force against the Chechen fighters making raids on nearby

Dagestan in 1999 was justified (Herspring, 2005: 22). For example, Kremlin's response to this chaos was different – full-scale reoccupation, bombardment by heavy weaponry, oppressive patrols and “filtration camps” for segregating and interrogating suspects (Herspring, 2005: 22). At the same time, Kremlin evicting the OSCE from Chechnya, cancelling agreement with the U.S. Peace Corps concerning the Chechen issue (Herspring, 2005: 23). Yet, Federal forces in response to this crisis were increasing in Chechen territory day-by-day. They constituted the core of Putin's measurements.

In addition, the events of 9/11 were an opportunity that transformed Putin's relation towards the Chechen issue as being against terrorism which he declared, i.e. it gave Russia a chance to legitimize its actions (2005: 223, 272). This led Putin call the opposing forces as terrorists. The Middle East, which was viewed, whether justifiably or not, as having supported the Chechen cause, was the first step of Putin's administration to reduce or eliminate the presence of Middle East and Muslim charities and organizations in the territory (Dannreuther, 2012: 546). Even certain foreign-funded schools and lyceums found themselves under increasing pressure and were either closed down or their activities were dramatically reduced (Dannreuther, 2012: 546). At the same time, Putin was conducting the policy towards the figures who were supporting and directing forces in accordance to the attacks, 'kamikazes'. One example could be given of killing Shamil Basayev in 2006 (Sakwa, 2008: 238).

In addition to the above-mentioned, it is difficult to find information on giving the evidence of how FSB (Federal Security Service), as being the best ally of Putin, being the *shadow* of the Chechen-Russian conflict, killed

several leaders of Chechnya that are organizing their target against Russians. If to read news, we will find that FSB security services are the active participant of Chechen issue, however when the story comes to who killed Shamil Basayev, Aslan Maskhadov and other famous leaders of Chechnya, they are kept secret whether FSB security forces were the real murderers of them, as well as when it comes to Kremlin, he in relation to that is found not having the knowledge of whether the FSB security forces have killed. The following news in this sense shows that.

For example, from BBC News in 2005 it reports that upon the death of Aslan Maskhadov there is not clear information and when Chechnya's Moscow appointed Deputy Prime Minister, Ramzan Kadyrov told Interfax news agency he just reported that the intention was to take Mr. Maskhadov alive, but he had been killed as a result of his bodyguard's carelessness in handling their weapons (BBC News, "Chechen leader Maskhadov killed", 2005). And how Putin reacted to this event, he ordered Russia's FSB security chief that those who are involved in the operation should receive grant state awards (BBC News, "Chechen leader Maskhadov killed", 2005). In fact, before the death of Aslan Maskhadov, Kremlin has already been declaring about the reward, which amounted to \$10 million that has offered for anyone for the capture of Aslan Maskhadov and the Chechen warlord Shamil Basayev (BBC News, "Obituary: Aslan Maskhadov", 2005). Yet, if the death of A. Maskhadov is provided with this information, the death of Shamil Basayev is barely reflected from the news.

On the other hand, another measurement of this problem used by Putin was responding with morally good actions. For instance, Putin

supported the Chechenisation option, which in his October 2002 session mentioned that the reins of power should be handed unquestionably to the Chechen people but, of course, on a legal basis – constitution – in order to elect parliament members and a president which also will guarantee economic and social security (Sakwa, 2005: 235). Kremlin turned towards conducting constitutional reform, economic recovery, the election of local officials and a Chechen president (Herspring, 2005: 207). And later in May Putin praised the result with his address that the Chechen people legitimately regarded themselves as an inseparable part of a unified Russian multinational people where above 90% approved the constitution, the presidential and parliamentary election law which later followed by electing Akhmed Kadyrov the president in 2003 (2008: 236). In the constitution that Chechens voted, proclaimed (Herspring, 2005: 207): “The territory of Chechen Republic shall be united and indivisible and shall be an inalienable part of the territory of the Russian Federation.”

Thus, in early October 2003, facing almost no opposition thanks to the Kremlin’s interventions, Akhmed Kadyrov was elected as the president of Chechnya (Herspring, 2005: 207). However, his presidency did not last longer and on May 9, 2004 Kadyrov was assassinated during Victory Day celebrations when a bomb exploded at a Grozny stadium (Herspring, 2005: 207). After the death of Akhmed Kadyrov, his son, Ramzan Kadyrov, was elected as the president in 2007 (Sakwa, 2008: 201). Moreover, Putin seeing some success in this issue, he made federal forces to be withdrawn from Chechnya, falling from 80,000 in early 2005 to about 37,000 a year later,

which he earlier gave full support to this military campaign (Sakwa, 2008: 238; Nicholson, 2001: 874).

On the other hand, Putin's goal was also concentrated on the emphasis of protecting Russia's multiethnic composition, the presence of a significant Muslim minority (Dannreuter, 2012: 548). In the economic sphere Chechnya has limited oil production, but the pipeline system that carries oil from Baku, stretching to the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiysk is located in Chechnya, which gives the region a role in the politics (Herspring, 2005: 209). In the end, all these measures taken were the efforts to preserve the territorial integrity of Russia (2012: 544). But, nevertheless, the Chechens are searching for their identity and independence, though Kremlin stance towards it is not changing.

In conclusion, having looked to all these priorities, all these three will be worth analyzing by making the application of the concept of *virtú* in the third chapter of the thesis. In the next chapter, we will find to what extent *virtú* is able to explicate certain politics of Vladimir Putin. But, of course, this method of analysis in this thesis will also explicate whether Putin was able to make his policies effective in relation to *fortuna* and *accidenti*, comprising not only his first and second presidential term, but also a possible third term. In the end, it will show also whether Putin possesses any *virtú* at all or whether there is a need to some specific reference to describe not only him as a ruler, but also the idea of the effectiveness of his policies. In a broad sense, what is the importance of Machiavelli's theory for twenty-first century as a whole or is there anything that is not in the capacity of the concept of *virtú* to analyze the

effectiveness of Kremlin's politics. Thus, the next chapter of the thesis is more comprehensive to illuminate the importance of the above ideas.

## CHAPTER 3

### VIRTÚ AND PUTIN

By identifying the importance of historicism and historicizing, explicating and historicizing Machiavelli's virtú, with the help of using other resources, including the intellectual historians from Cambridge school and Gramsci, and additional resources from Russian literature, like Popov and Weinstein the objective of the third chapter is to test the applicability of Machiavelli's concept of virtú into Russian politics. By combining the instruments and concepts developed in that first chapter with the historical review of Putin's ascent to power in the second chapter, it will show in what sense the use of specific concept – virtú – might be elaborated in recent Russian politics. In other words, it will touch the necessary aspects of how a past concept, and related with it the concepts fortuna and accidenti may be usefully applied to present circumstances.

As this chapter is dedicated to investigate and identify the extent of applicability of Machiavelli's virtú to Putin's politics, in the end it will help identify not only what we can learn from Machiavelli's doctrine of sixteenth century, but also what is specific to twenty-first century that is not in this doctrine's competence to help to describe clearly Putin's politics. Through the examination of virtú, and the related concept fortuna, the sense of ***KGB virtú*** will be discovered which will constitute as a hint to understand Putin's



policies, which in this sense the **conclusion** of the thesis will help to understand the specificity of this new notion.

Already mentioned in the earlier chapter, Putin's primary aim was directed at energy politics, the politics of the new oligarchs and the conflict in Chechnya, which are still current concern of his. In this respect, to consider that there is the "extent" matter in the concept of virtú, because comparing the time parameters we can say from the first sight that energy politics was not so dominant politics or developed in sixteenth century. Or another example could be the term 'oligarchs' was not used or merely mentioned at that period. In spite of all of these examples the means used in politics stays stable: cruelty, generosity and love and fear. In this sense, Machiavelli does not neglect also the use of force. He just claims that the problem is not the use of force, but the problem concerns how force is used, whether for constructive or destructive purposes (Price, 1977: 615).

Thus, we shall now focus on the analysis of Putin's politics by means of virtú. But apart from that one important explanation is dedicated to Vladimir Putin's leadership, through the perspective of the concept of virtú, for the purpose of describing how Putin's career path to power was achieved. Because, it will be essential to identify how Putin came to possess presidential power or rank – by ability, through the power of others or luck.

In this respect, chapter 7 of *The Prince* might help on the idea of identifying Vladimir Putin. In this chapter of *The Prince* Machiavelli draws attention to the principalities that were acquired through the power of others or favor (luck) (Machiavelli, 1988: 22). His biography quite clearly showed that Yeltsin played an important role on passing the power to Vladimir Putin.

Quite importantly, Vladimir Putin possessed the abilities for implementing goals he was aiming at, but never thought or thrived for being in the future as the president of Russia. Instead, he was more inclined to do investigations in certain fields, in reading spy thrillers and upon this influence he later aimed at working at KGB.

So, going back to the history when the USSR collapsed, the Russian Federation's first president, Boris Yeltsin, at the time of changes and chaos started to think of his successor which at the last point his choice was that of Putin. Eventually, the leader was found, but "not from among politicians either of Yeltsin's own or of the next generation, but from among young officials from the security services" (Nicholson, 2001: 867). Thus, on 9 August 1999 when Yeltsin had declared Putin his successor on appointing and speaking of him as Prime Minister of future (Sakwa, 2008: 18-19). On 31 December on the day of his resigning, when Yeltsin left his duty to Putin, by giving him his pen with which he had signed so many decrees and laws his last saying to Putin was 'Take care of Russia' (Sakwa, 2008: 26). Thus, Putin's path to power could be described as both through the power of Yeltsin and the good luck (Machiavelli, 1988: 23).

Having identified the history of Putin's path to power as Russia's president, it will be worth to turning to policies of Russia, which were the primary goals in Putin's politics. Turning to the first priority, energy politics alongside dealing with oligarchs, how Putin influenced Russia to emerge as the energy superpower, it is important to explicate those means in this politics with the help of Machiavelli's virtú. For example, he used cruelty or severity like the examples used in the second chapter of the thesis: charged

the oligarchs with taxes, displacement of their power in media and political parties, conducting the change of the positions of some of them by appointing them to other jobs, the arrest of the oligarch of Khodorkovsky, Gusinsky and others. In this way, exercising his virtú certain oligarchs were eliminated during first and successive years of his administration.

On the other hand, apart from state-controlled oil company Rosneft and private oil company 'Lukoil', on the emergence of state-controlled natural gas company Gazprom as the 'monster' in international politics Putin used. The means he used in this sphere we could say that he used the method of lion and fox or severity, cruelty as Machiavelli proposed in "The Prince". The examples are: he changed the CEO of Gazprom, made Gazprom buy Abramovich's 73% of Sibneft, concluded bilateral and multilateral agreements which led to constructing gas pipelines, formed alliances with gas or oil firms within Russian territory to diversify its holdings, subjected to tax inspections, displaced foreign companies by forcing to sell off a majority of stake, and used the threat with a gas cut-off in the case of Ukraine or Georgia. By means of these methods he decreased not only the dependence of giant natural gas Gazprom from the world competing companies, like British Petroleum, or from American companies as Chevron, but also influenced the role of Gazprom promising it as the true supplier of natural gas to world political players.

Identifying these key differences in Putin's politics, it helps to go back to Machiavelli's virtú to demonstrate the extent of applicability of the concept. As the times have changed energy politics have emerged as the counterbalance to military expansion. In comparison to the twenty-first

century where Putin, apart from strengthening the army, used energy politics as the means to improve the power of Russia, Machiavelli argued more about having one's own army, which by strengthening it for the purpose of having the positive consequences that will benefit the state and its citizens. However, having made those distinctions between Machiavelli and Putin, it will help to identify whether this policy was effective both for the state of Russia and its citizens, which could help in this respect to use Machiavelli's virtú.

Putin in energy politics played and plays a very active role and therefore he influenced Russia to appear as the powerful, being able to compete with the world's leading companies. In this respect, Putin had virtú to act decisively in certain moments which brought strength to his state, GDP quadrupled in such a short period. In spite of that it brought such power to the state's position, it will be worth to look at whether such inflow of capital from abroad satisfied Russian people's requirements from the point of view of virtú. After all, to use Machiavelli's term, state is strengthened parallel with bringing the well-being to people. Energy politics became as different means of gaining state's strong position. In comparison to military strength, energy power has become as the diplomatic factor of making pressure over certain cases in international politics.

Therefore, it is crucial and relevant to look at the points that were proposed in the second chapter (but not in the third chapter), as it touches not only the analyses of Putin's politics, but opens an opportunity to investigate through Machiavelli's concept of virtú, because having

comprehensive outlook to the politics was the main purpose of Machiavelli's doctrine.

The details are given in the second chapter about the problems of social and economic spheres, though Machiavelli did not touch in detail in his writings the social problems (either economic issues) within society, e.g. how ruler's *virtú* should regulate the social life, e.g. pension, health insurance. However, whether a ruler is able to gain the favor of his citizens, like whether it is important to gain the favor of people, to what extent people should possess freedom was central to Machiavelli's writings. In fact, referring to the question of "gaining the favor of people", Machiavelli in this respect did not approach one-sidedly. So, the main point was that people's well-being is achieved parallel to gaining the stability within a state. Machiavelli did not refer to bring the state back to health one-sidedly at all. Instead, a virtuoso ruler should gain the support of the people, otherwise his state will be subject to failure.

As we have seen in the examples presented in chapter second, that wealth is distributed especially strengthening the military, but in the case of its relation to people's satisfaction it remains problematic. It is actually good to strengthen the armed forces, because Machiavelli did not neglect it. Instead Machiavelli saw one main thing for state's capability to strengthen one's own army in order to defend against enemies or attacks. Strengthening one's army is praiseworthy, or as Machiavelli (1988: 64) put it in "The Prince":

For rulers should have two main worries: one is internal, and concerns his subjects; the other is external, and concerns foreign powers. Against the latter threat, good troops and reliable allies are an effective defense; and possessing good armies always results in having allies who are reliable. If external relations are solidly based, internal affairs will give no trouble unless they have already been disturbed by conspiracy.

Based on these arguments, we come to question in relation to these arguments – why there is such a strong difference on the path to improvement between internal and external affairs. Questions stand like these: it is because of Putin is continuing his normal planned politics, or Putin is more focused on international affairs rather than internal, Putin lacks virtú or Putin's virtú has failed to respond to fortuna, as Machiavelli argued in his writings. Turning to the important aspect of the relation of virtuoso ruler to his people is worth to look at in order to see what Machiavelli suggested in his doctrine in accordance to the concept of virtú. Thus, both in "The Prince" and the "Discourses" Machiavelli proposed some his suggestions that concerned of gaining the favor of people, which he considered as important as other components of virtuoso ruler to bring the country back to health. So, Machiavelli considered a ruler as virtuoso if he has the ability to win the support of people, and the thing that cannot be called virtú, he argued, was if a ruler killed one's fellow-citizens (Machiavelli, 1988: 31). That case means for the ruler to gain power, but not the glory or favor (1988: 31).

Thus, if a ruler gains the favor of his fellow-citizens, he should not worry about whether he took cruel, dictatorial, generous and other means (Machiavelli, 1988; Machiavelli, 1994). In other words, political effectiveness is the most important consideration, which means whether the ruler achieved the favor of his people, or strengthened his army and other examples. Putin, as shown from the above-mentioned arguments, has experienced quite a critical decline in his gain of favor of the people. One example could be that he caused certain hatred among citizens that they not only express their complaint not only protesting within Russian territory, but also abroad. That

means that people are losing gradually their loyalty to the ruler. Recent example best described it, when Putin visited Germany to participate the trade fair with Angela Merkel, he was faced with some protester who appeared with disapproving slogans written on their topless body (Deutsche Welle, "Topless protesters assail Putin at Hanover Trade Fair", 2013).

Therefore, to link this occasion with *virtú*, Machiavelli argued that a wise ruler ought to satisfy the people and keep them contented, which is one of the important things for a ruler to do in order for the virtuoso ruler not to incur the hatred or despise of people who might be used by plotters as an advantage to undertake a conspiracy (Machiavelli, 1988: 63-66, 76). So, this example of the visit to Germany is a bad consequence for Putin being the ruler of such a vast territory, and faces these protests. Even Putin afterwards in the conference mentioned that he did not see anything terrible in these protests (Deutsche Welle, "Topless protesters assail Putin at Hanover Trade Fair", 2013). Machiavelli (1988: 35), by drawing a line between people and nobles, in the chapter 9 of "The Prince" mentioned:

[A] ruler can never protect himself from a hostile people, because there are many of them...[w]hereas he is not obliged to have the same nobles, since he is well able to make and unmake them at any time, advancing them or reducing their power, as he wishes.

In this sense, if hatred is incurred, then the loyalty of people gradually is fading away. In this sense by quoting Machiavelli's (1988: 58) chapter 17 of "The Prince", it suggested:

[I]f a ruler can keep his subjects united and loyal, he should not worry about incurring a reputation for cruelty; for by punishing a very few he will really be more merciful than those who over-indulgently permit disorders to develop...[F]or the latter usually harm a whole community, whereas the executions ordered by a ruler harm only specific individuals. And a new ruler,

in particular, cannot avoid being considered harsh, since new states are full of dangers.

Therefore, a shrewd ruler “must try to ensure that his citizens, whatever the situation may be, will always be dependent on the government and on him; and then they will always be loyal to him” (Machiavelli, 1988: 37). To go back to some of earlier examples mentioned in the social spheres of life, instructors of certain universities come to require the investigation against corruption in education (IA REX, “Instructors of Russian State Humanitarian University (RSHU) require investigating the corruption facts at university”, 2013). As in “Discourses on Livy” Machiavelli (1994: 94) added about civic virtú, he touched the matter of having good education in the chapter 4 of Book one in the following way:

Nor can there be any good grounds for calling a republic disorderly when it contains so many examples of individual excellence [virtú], for good individuals cannot exist without good education, and good education cannot exist without good laws.

In Russia, as it is clear, corruption is the big problem. And when corruption in society develops, the work of laws is distorted. Thereby, these problems also affect of fading away of Russian intelligentsia as Stott mentioned in previous chapter (Stott, 2012). In relation to corruption in the *Discourses* Machiavelli proposed that ordinary measures or reforms in republics are insufficient, so it requires extraordinary measures from the very beginning which is of course very difficult to achieve, especially if one does not have around him some wise man proposing change (Machiavelli, 1994: 128-129).



Therefore, Putin's virtú ought not to have turned a "blind eye" to these problems. Instead, he should have reacted as he did to the problems surrounding Russia during Yeltsin's time, Chechnya issue, state-controlled energy development. Furthermore, as Machiavelli argued in "The Prince" the ruler should encourage not only the citizens to follow quietly their ordinary occupations, either in trade or agriculture, but also honor those who are talented (1988, 79). Therefore, the ruler should offer rewards to anyone who seeks in any way to improve his city or country, and also, since every city is divided into family groups or organizations, he should pay attention to these groups (1988: 79). However, as the examples listed in the social or economic spheres do not prove Putin's virtú to do that. Putin's especially third term facing this clash, is saying in the sense of the concept of virtú that his ability is lacking to respond to time and place or fortuna.

Thereby, the failures gradually are accumulated and burst suddenly with protests. As questioned earlier whether it is because of Putin is continuing his normal planned politics, or Putin is more focused on international affairs rather than internal, the outcome is whatever his planned project was for 15 or 20 years, either his project is to fulfill his policies like in outside-inside trend, the result is sometimes his virtú should consider the *fortuna, accidenti* as they might hit on the way unexpectedly. Thus, perhaps in a later time Putin's virtú will do changes by reforming, strengthening the laws and gradually gaining the support of people, however, looking to these examples showed that there is a gap in his response to either fortuna or accidenti that constitute especially his third term. In addition to the above-mentioned, dealing with oligarchs will more appropriately touch Putin's virtú

in relation to fortuna or accidenti, i.e. whether he was able to respond duly to time and place.

How far Putin's virtú was able to deal with oligarchs, is to illuminate how far his policies were effective in the sense that they were directed either to fortuna, either to accidenti, or to the requirement of the necessity. In other words, the main purpose is to find whether there is suitability with time and place of the certain context. Machiavelli (1994: 197), in his *Discourses* claimed:

Those who do not fit in with their times, either because they make the wrong decisions or because their temperaments are unsuited, usually live unhappy lives, and everything they try to do comes out badly.

Actually, Machiavelli has little said about oligarchs, so in this sense it would not be appropriate to relate oligarchs to Putin's virtú. However, oligarchs played an important role in Russia's politics, as they controlled the main spheres of political life of Russia, that is to say they had their hands in mass media, in oil and gas politics, economy, politics or even Chechen issue. When speaking of oligarchs there are not one or two, there are several of them who are billionaires.

Thus, that course of events that was in the above-mentioned spheres came to constitute the process of time and place that Putin was experiencing himself which are consequently helpful to apply Machiavelli's approach for the relationship of virtú and fortuna, virtú and accidenti in accordance to Putin's politics. As earlier mentioned in the second chapter of the thesis, Putin is more prone to react or respond to moments. First of all, Putin's virtú effectively dealt with the consequences of oligarchs, which might affect Putin's role in ruling Russia, as he pursued different trajectory in comparison

to Yeltsin's one. Putin's careful analysis of them led him to use Tax organ, Customs organ as an instrument to persecute the causers of these consequences. Therefore, that also led to have a dominant political party called "United Russia".

By doing so, he insured himself to lessen the impact of fortuna or accidenti. In other words, to say that in Machiavelli's words, as they were destroyed or some of them were neutralized, they will be either slower to injure him or be glad to benefit him (Machiavelli, 1988). Even in 2013 we heard the death of Berezovsky in London, i.e. who knows, maybe Putin's best ally, FSB forces, killed him. Therefore, this fortuna or accidenti constitutes apart from nature's impact, the impact of human beings. However, one mistake was missed when Putin knew and later faced with "its blow" is the impact of corruption problem which in this respect it would be relevant to call it as the accidenti of this current period. The corruption problem even worsened in comparison with his 2000-2008 years of term of his career.

Because of that, it also reflected that the society is corrupted. The moment he started to deal with the impacts of oligarchs, he could parallel to that has to conduct the policy of anti-corruption in time and place. This was a necessity that required also careful analysis. But because his style of behavior did not suit the time and place, Putin now starts from the very beginning to "construct untainted society" when he faced this fortuna or accidenti as it was unexpected during his election to the third term. Even though he does reforms in current moment, still he is not as strongly devoted

as he devoted himself to Chechen or other issues. Machiavelli (1994: 152) proposed in the chapter 55 of Book one in the *Discourses*:

Where the individuals are so corrupt that the laws alone will not restrain them, then you need to establish alongside the laws a force greater than theirs...[t]o put a halt to the unlimited ambition and corruption of the elite.

Machiavelli argued in these situations one's virtú has to establish censors together with all those laws, which is a barrier to the ambition and the insolence of men (1994: 191). Machiavelli (1994: 142) in the *Discourses* in the chapter 49 of Book one, using the example of Romans clearly reflects the idea in the previous sentence:

[T]he censors were one of the innovations that helped keep Rome free, for a while at least. The censors had authority over the manners and morals of the Romans, and this was an important factor slowing down the progress of their corruption.

Thus, though he timely reacted either lawfully or extralegally to Chechen issue (which is presented later in the paragraphs), oligarchs oil and energy politics, in the end, fortuna or accidenti came to be impetuous, to say in Machiavelli's sense, than Putin's virtú. In other words, this also relates to Machiavelli's argument in "The Prince" that a wise ruler should rely on what is under his own control (Machiavelli, 1988: 61). At the same time, Machiavelli added that a ruler who does not recognize evils in the very early stages cannot be considered wise though virtú is given only to a few (1988: 51). However, though Putin relied on his own power, his virtú misunderstood fortuna or accidenti. But, if it were possible to change one's character to suit the times and circumstances, one would always be successful (1988: 86). This relates to the previous arguments that ruler's virtú should keep his

subjects united and loyal. Using again the example of the Romans in the chapter 58 of Book one in the *Discourses*, Machiavelli (1994: 155) wrote:

[T]he Roman populace who, for as long as the republic survived uncorrupted, never humbly obeyed and never arrogantly domineered; instead, they maintained their proper status honorably, respecting their institutions and obeying their governors.

In fact, in line with the above-mentioned, where his methods did not match the circumstances, could also be the reason when Putin also faced with fortuna unexpectedly, where it concerned his health. Some news were reporting and supposing that he had injured his spine. But, in fact, the real details about his health are kept secret. For this reason certain planned trips were delayed for certain period. According to Heritage (2012), Belarus president, Alexander Lukashenko told Reuters in an interview that Putin loves judo, and the spine problem stems from that sport. Kremlin also acknowledged that Putin had suffered a sports-related injury but gave no details (Heritage, 2012). Putin has held regular meetings with officials but has not travelled throughout November (Heritage, 2012). That delay of course, also may affect the planned political outcomes.

Thus, fortuna in relation to Putin's injure also shows its power where no force is able to resist it. This impact might be considered as the non-human force which is often beyond one's control (Machiavelli, 1988: 104-105). However this does not mean that this effect has affected Putin in character or qualities. In addition, Machiavelli also argued that good fortuna or opportunity might be faced by ruler's virtú, which in this sense might match the character or ability of the ruler. So, though we do not know what will

happen later with Putin's politics, whether he will be able to restore the well-being of the Russian people will depend on the course of events.

Turning to the next argument, this is based on the second priority – from internal policies of Russia on the use of power potential in the North Caucasus, Chechnya issue. In Chechnya issue Putin's virtù used both force and morally good actions, as the examples in chapter second presented that. It is argued that though the situation in the North Caucasus remains extremely difficult to resolve which requires measures of military security, there is also room for the use of 'generosity', to call it in Machiavelli's terms (Tsygankov, 2006: 1096). On the one hand, it is argued that Kremlin introduced measures of political reconstruction in Chechnya, like, for example, holding new parliamentary elections in Chechnya which was introduced by Putin (2006: 1095, 1097). According to a survey conducted in August 2003, the majority of residents of Chechnya supported membership in the Russian Federation (2006: 1091). These means were used to preserve and strengthen the territorial integrity and stability of Federal Russia, which led to certain contribution of millions or billions rubles.

Because, to carry-out all his planned operations that were aimed against the bandits or terrorists, whichever Putin called, have required big 'contributions' for the fulfillment of it. For example, Russia had paid \$20m to those who provided the special forces with information that led to Mr. Maskhadov's killing (BBC News, "Russia buries Maskhadov in secret", 2005). And of course, this is the other side of how the wealth is distributed in Russia. In fact, there are secret numerous operations of FSB security forces that required such contributions, let alone how Russian army was supplied with all

sorts of equipment. Actually, this notice also helps to understand and link it with the argument in the previous priority, which says that apart from strengthening the Russian army, Putin spent from that energy wealth to undertake the operations on Chechnya issue, but were those operations effective?

Chechnya was under control for quite a long time, i.e. starting from the rule of tsars of Russia, followed by Soviet period ending with its collapse and until now. In spite of that Chechnya has long been under the Russian control, the Chechen people still are preserving their own culture, language and religion, e.g. women wear headscarves. In this sense, it is hardly applicable that Russia involves her own legitimate territory in case of Chechnya (Tsygankov, 2006: 1095).

On the other hand, as chapter second presented quite a long time has passed since its annexation in 1859 by Russia, so it is not a new story (that it had happened yesterday), the time has its own say. Furthermore, the source of state authority is considered to be the multiethnic people that consisted of the citizens of Russian Federation living in the territory of Chechen Republic (The Official portal of The Head and Government of Chechen Republic, "Symbol: Constitution of Chechen Republic" [Accessed 19/04/2013]). So, Putin finding himself in a new Russia (after nine years of the collapse of Soviet Union), whether his measures are effective in Chechen issue, will depend on the following analyses based on the suggestions of some focused chapters of Machiavelli's writings of how much ability he possesses. Machiavelli's argument is basically concerns how a ruler's virtú ought to respond to any foreign territory, if it is annexed (Machiavelli, 1988: 7-9). Quite

importantly, Machiavelli touches in his analysis how to respond to a territory which differs in language, customs and institutions (1988: 8). Here is how Machiavelli (1988: 28-29) expresses the idea of virtú in relation to a principality in “The Prince” in chapter 7 in the following way:

[A]nyone who considers it necessary in his new principality to deal effectively with his enemies, to gain allies, to conquer (whether by force or by cunning), to inspire both devotion and respectful fear in the people, to be obeyed and respectfully feared by troops, to neutralize or destroy those who can or must be expected to injure you, to replace old institutions with new ones, to be both severe and kind...that they will either be glad to benefit you or be slow to injure you: for all these, no better examples can be cited than the actions of this man.

Machiavelli (1988: 9) proposes about mixed principalities in chapter 3 of “The Prince”:

[A]nyone who rules a foreign country should take the initiative in becoming a protector of the neighboring minor powers and contrive to weaken those who are powerful within the country itself.

Thus, to elaborate the chapter 7 of “The Prince”, Chechnya being the part of Russian Federation and Putin through using force in Chechnya to bring stability and resorting to the use of morally good actions in other times as earlier examples showed makes in the view of virtú, that Putin is neutralizing the case – either they will be glad to benefit him or be slow in injuring him. To capture the suggestions of chapter 7 of *The Prince*, it is important to go through the listed ideas that Machiavelli proposed. Putin’s main ally was and stays and will be the FSB, because whatever agreements were signed between Russia and certain countries are just to expand relations, as Russia’s main goal is to decrease its external dependency. Moreover, those Chechen bandits, to call them in Putin’s way, were the enemies (their leaders as being the target of Russia) that could injure Russia,



were destroyed by the operations of FSB security forces. This actually elucidates how Putin's virtù was dealing with enemies.

In relation to how he introduced new institutions, he conducted the policy of influencing for the fulfillment of presidential and parliamentary elections according to the constitution that was accepted in a referendum in 2003. In the case, to be both severe and kind or to inspire both devotion and fear in the people will barely be acceptable to Putin's virtù in the Chechen issue. To explicate the above-mentioned in a more broad sense, there is not any supporting evidence that says Putin has devoted himself to bring stability or organization for Chechen people. Instead, we read from books, journals, articles that Putin has devoted himself to resolve Chechnya issue or towards dealing with the bandits. Because, as the evidence shows from the Chechen-Russian conflict, thousands of civilians have died of this unwelcomed consequence.

Thus, who was responsible for the politics, including use of force, done to the Chechen people? Isn't Chechen society a part of Russian Federation according to constitution? Or to refer to the quote above of the chapter 3 of "The Prince": Did Putin really protected neighboring minor powers? In this respect, Machiavelli (1988: 38) in chapter 10 of "The Prince" says:

[A] ruler is capable of defending his state if he can put together an army that is good enough to fight a battle against any power that attacks it (either because he has many soldiers of his own or because he has sufficient money).

In this sense, Russia has good army with all kinds of equipments supplied. However, in chapter 12 Machiavelli (1988: 42-43) further continues by saying:

The main foundations of all states (whether they are new, old or mixed) are good laws and good armies. Since it is impossible to have good laws if good arms are lacking, and if there are good arms there must also be good laws.

But, Russia in the sphere of law is still vulnerable or they are not obeyed, and the corruption is the main cause of its vulnerability. On the one hand, corruption affects, of course, to the strength of armed forces as it spreads not one-dimensionally in a state. Corruption is also critical in the sphere of military, as the recent news says about the sack of the armed forces chief (BBC News, "Russia sacks armed forces chief amid corruption scandal", 2012). On the other hand, this effect will be reflected also in the resolution of the Chechen issue, i.e. the resolution of the issue with the above problems mentioned is likely unrealizable. Thus, the establishment of the law is important. Apart from "The Prince", also in the "Discourses" Machiavelli concentrated on the idea of establishing laws which are essential for the invention of justice (Machiavelli, 1994: 89). It will lay down punishments for those who broke them (1994: 89). In the "Discourses" Rome is described as the best example, where their laws ensured them more admirable qualities [virtú], so that the extensive territory of Rome for over the course of many centuries could not be corrupted (1994: 87). This argument has a match with Russian territory who has extended its territory by means of conquering in previous centuries.

In the end, clashes are still continuing in the war-torn republic of Chechnya (Deutsche Welle, "Russian forces take few prisoners in security sweep", 2012). Putin stated that FSB leadership would bring "the use of different means and forces" (Herspring, 2005: 224). However, this different emphasis did not bring about an end to Chechen resistance (2005: 224).

Based on these arguments, with the help of Machiavelli's virtú analysis, the main reasons are for not being able to solve the problem is both the weakness of law and not having the devotion towards Chechen civilians, who might supported Putin's main goal. Nevertheless, Machiavelli supported a ruler to resort to lawless actions, but not permanently, i.e. when the necessity requires. That is to say, if the ruler stops to act lawlessly towards certain conflict, the laws are stopped for certain period. The laws cannot be changed during this period. But if to trace Chechen conflict since Putin's first term of presidency, Putin continues with the same tactics, which is not temporary.

## CONCLUSION

This study found that certain doctrine, in this case Machiavelli's concept of *virtú*, through the process of considering them carefully, like by historicizing, might give either a positive or negative answer. Machiavelli's concept of *virtú* gave this thesis a distinctive form of technique in the sense that it involved not only how to approach rule and the conduct of policy, but also gave some hint to discover a new *virtú*, i.e. KGB *virtú*. That is to say, *discovering the KGB virtú tells about the limitations of historicizing, i.e. about the extent of the applicability of Machiavelli's original concept of virtú.*

First of all, historicizing Machiavelli's doctrine, namely the concept of *virtú*, and applying it to Putin's politics showed that still Machiavelli's concept will continue to be useful for current political analysis. Therefore, though Machiavelli's writings are written in sixteenth century, these ideas – the specificity of Machiavelli's concept of *virtú* concerning the effectiveness of ruling with the effective use of qualities and in this respect, analysis on the effectiveness of political affairs being as an important aspect – still are present in today's politics.

Moreover, by historicizing the concept of *virtú* and adding also from personal experience, it made the application both stronger and more comprehensive to the main emphasis of Vladimir Putin's career and leadership. In this sense, focusing on the concept of *virtú* by relating it to *fortuna* helped to create a new or additional idea (KGB *virtú*), which is to say to fill the "gap" where *Machiavelli's original virtú* was not in the capacity to

explicate certain moment. The original concept of *virtú* helped to present Machiavelli's suggestions in Putin's politics on the work of laws, corruption problem, military sphere, education, but when it came to find the answer of the reason of happening clashes between ruler's *virtú* in relation to ordinary citizens, it reflected the purpose of thesis – *the extent of applicability* of Machiavelli's original concept. Thus, to discover the KGB *virtú* is to explain its effectiveness for Putin's politics and the specificity for that term that is different from original concept.

Therefore, Putin's KGB *virtú* also says something in terms of understanding his conduct of policies. Such a reference is helpful in the sense that though Putin is the ruler of vast Russian Federation, this does not mean that KGB *virtú* is alienated from him. Instead, it is the main motive that plays an important role in his country's affairs. In other words, KGB man stays as a KGB man (Renz, 2006: 919). Thus, it contributes to understand Putin's conduct of policies in those certain priorities.

Generally speaking, former KGB workers are known as *chekisty*, and today contemporary security officials in the FSB are using this label (Sakwa, 2008: 74). Moreover, the notion of *siloviki* (force agency officials) is called when considered together with other elements of the military and the security part of the state (2008: 74). When Putin came to power, the appointment of security officials (*siloviki*) to political and administrative posts had increased (Sakwa, 2008: 74; Renz, 2006: 903). This group was one of Putin's main sources of personnel from Petersburg, whom Putin had known during his career years (2008: 74). Putin, with himself at their head, influenced his policies (2008: 76). Instead of using the courts, Putin relied on strong-arm

tactics to conduct his aimed priorities which led not only by the MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs) and the prosecutor general, but also by the FSB (Sakwa, 2008: 149). This mechanism – the appointment of KGB workers – speaks to strengthening the KGB tactics in state's affairs.

KGB has its own mechanisms of forces. That is to say, KGB (current FSB) has organs (services) which itself have subdivisions which together constitute the position and power of KGB (Federal Security Service of Russian Federation, "Structure", [Accessed 12/06/2013]). For instance, the structure of FSB composed of FSB of Russia, frontier organs, security organs in armies and territorial security organs, where each of these organs has its own subdivisions (Federal Security Service of Russian Federation, "Structure", [Accessed 12/06/2013]). Putin using these mechanisms most of the time in his presidential career leads to the clash between government and the ordinary people. Like, for example, if protests were taken place, he starts to impose fines by means of KGB's mechanisms. He knows how certain mechanisms of KGB work in certain situations. In this sense, it tells us about his KGB virtú.

Therefore, Putin is more prone to have KGB virtú. In a broad sense, a virtuoso KGB is a person, who is prone to be secret, more devoted to "extra-legal" goals whilst ruling the country. These characteristics are already describing what KGB tactics are. For instance, the persecution and killing of the Chechen leaders by KGB, which are kept secret, even the burial of them are kept secret as the bodies are not returned to families. Thus, Putin having KGB virtú follows KGB tactics as long as he had long been working in a security service. Certainly, this long experience has impacted on his personal

character quite enough that he demonstrates it even in his presidential career.

However, according to the constitution of Russian Federation, “Russia is a democratic, federative, law-governed with republican form of government”<sup>7</sup> (The Official portal of The Head and Government of Chechen Republic, “Symbol: Constitution of Russian Federation”, [Accessed 25/04/2013]). In this respect, Russia being democratic, but fulfilling KGB tactics clashes certain interests, views between those two positions. Therefore, rather than blaming that Putin misunderstood fortuna totally, it would be right to say that, KGB’s tactics does not match with fortuna in certain cases. In this respect, it distorts the idea of effectiveness in Machiavelli’s original term, in his gaining the favor of ordinary people. Thus, his presidential career with his ties with KGB stayed and stays strong enough, i.e. this proves even when we watch the documentary “The Unknown Putin”. In this film when Putin was asked by journalist what are his documents on the table for, Putin begins to give information about them, but when it comes to explain the one that concerned KGB, he refuses to give any details about it (Miroshnichenko, “The Unknown Putin”, 2000).

KGB (or as is now called FSB) being an agency, protects the state’s interests, where the defense of the country and its citizens against enemies is considered as the most important principle. For example, here is how Putin expressed his idea of KGB on 20 December 2003 at a ceremony in honor of the Day of Secret Service Workers (Sakwa, 2008: 74):

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<sup>7</sup> Original text in Russian: «...[P]оссия есть демократическое федеративное правовое государство с республиканской формой правления.»

[P]olitical views changed, but security of the fatherland, protection of its sovereign interests and, the main thing, the security of our citizens have always remained the principal objectives...

Therefore, to speak of KGB virtú (or its tactics) is to speak about agency's main principle – defense issue. If the agency's principle is more focused on defense issue, people's defense might be guaranteed by them, but people's own interests are coming as secondary to defense issue. In this respect, analysis showed that as Putin is continuing his KGB virtú, there will be clashes between ruler's and ordinary people's interests. However, these clashes might have been prevented if he made apart from defense issue like by means of conducting energy or military strategies, to fulfill ordinary people's satisfactions. Thus, he is obliged in present moment from the very beginning to conduct reforms on the problems (especially the influence of corruption on social spheres), which are already mentioned in this thesis, in order to bring the state back to normal health.

Moreover, when those clashes are happening that does not mean that Russia's president is a dictator, as some news refer to the idea that there is repression of the people. Even if to make an exact analysis between a dictator and KGB agent, we will see that there are significant differences between them. In fact, Machiavelli did not neglect the use of the word 'dictator'. Instead, even the dictator might be admired if he brings the stability and well-being for his state. In this sense, Machiavelli gives example of Camillus in the chapter 30 of Book one of the *Discourses*:

Everyone was familiar with the reports of his extraordinary abilities. He had been dictator three times, and each time he had used his office to benefit the public, not to advance his own interests, with the result that no one feared being harmed if power was concentrated in his hands. Because



Camillius was so admired and so important no one thought it shameful to take orders from him.

Thus, Vladimir Putin is just a very strong man with strong KGB experience and influence and in his rule of the country he still continues the KGB tactics. But if his virtú resolves those mentioned problems, then Russia, will gain more power than expected. Or to say in Machiavelli's (1994: 138) terms where he mentioned in the chapter 34 of Book one of the *Discourses*:

No republic can claim to be perfect if its laws do not make provision for any possible eventuality, if they do not lay down correct procedures for dealing with unforeseen events.

After all, Machiavelli (1994: 94) wrote in the *Discourses* that good laws are the result of the conflicts. In this sense, to go back to previous arguments, that apart from that his virtú might not match some circumstances or fortuna, Putin's misunderstanding is partly because of fortuna, but at the same time his 'misunderstanding' might be influenced as possessing KGB virtú, because he implements in his policies KGB tactics. Machiavelli, in both of his writings, referring either to prince, dictator, he never alienates from his suggestions the idea of gaining the favor of people.

It might be considered that in future his politics good fortuna might also coincide with his KGB virtú and in the end it may positively result not only for state's health, but also his general rule, but only if his virtú speaks to those moments. In addition, the idea of KGB virtú is offering to current political affairs that whether virtú of an agent worker might play an important and effective role in state's affairs by ruling the country. In this way, it proposes us a new topic or research. However, as this thesis's limit does not allow

focusing on this issue, it leaves to conduct a separate analysis on the role of KGB virtù in ruling the country.

In this way, such an examination of Machiavelli's sixteenth century virtù promises how an apparent archaic political concept may usefully applied to recent political affairs, yet, introducing a new political notion. In politics forming the conceptual analysis makes the horizon more thorough. In this sense, having the concept of virtù on the one hand, and relating to it fortuna, accidenti, on the other, are some kind of formula that is described by the Renaissance Florentine political thinker Niccolo Machiavelli, which made the use of the concrete formula for concrete context of the study more focused. This formula, proved the study to have a promising result, with its exceptions in certain cases that speaks to the *limitations of historicizing*.

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