

1-2017


# The Political Personality of Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin

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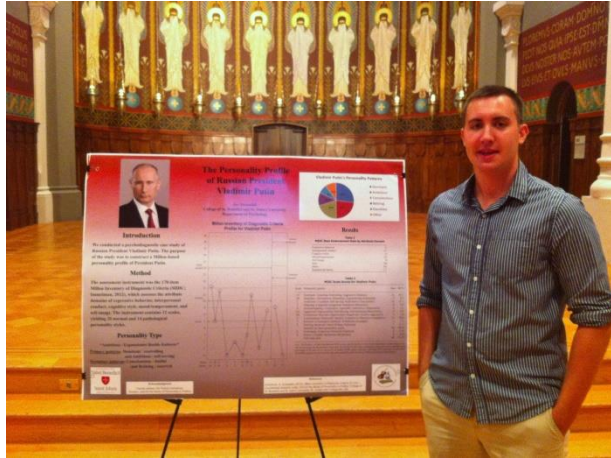
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## Recommended Citation

Immelman, A., & Trenzeluk, J. V. (2017, January). *The political personality of Russian Federation president Vladimir Putin* (Working Paper No. 1.1). Collegeville and St. Joseph, MN: St. John's University and the College of St. Benedict, Unit for the Study of Personality in Politics. Retrieved from Digital Commons website: [http://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/psychology\\_pubs/104/](http://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/psychology_pubs/104/) (doi: 10.13140/RG.2.2.25289.75369)



Joe Trenzeluk presents his research on "The Personality Profile of Russian President Vladimir Putin" at Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minn., Aug. 6, 2014.

## **THE POLITICAL PERSONALITY OF RUSSIAN FEDERATION PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN**

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Working Paper — Release 1.1  
Unit for the Study of Personality in Politics  
<http://personality-politics.org/>

January 2017

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*Acknowledgment.* Megan Machesky, Tim Baebenroth, Connor Piechota, Taylor Ramler, Anh Doan, Bayert Salverda, Rebecca Gudknecht, and Anne Kampa assisted with data collection in spring 2014. Joe Trenzeluk collected additional data in summer 2014.

## *Abstract*

# **The Political Personality of Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin**

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This paper presents the results of an indirect assessment of the personality of Vladimir Putin, president of the Russian Federation, from the conceptual perspective of personologist Theodore Millon.

Psychodiagnostically relevant data regarding President Putin was extracted from open-source intelligence and synthesized into a personality profile using the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria (MIDC), which yields 34 normal and maladaptive personality classifications congruent with Axis II of *DSM-IV*.

The personality profile yielded by the MIDC was analyzed on the basis of interpretive guidelines provided in the MIDC and Millon Index of Personality Styles manuals. Putin's primary personality patterns were found to be Dominant/controlling (a measure of aggression or hostility), Ambitious/self-serving (a measure of narcissism), and Conscientious/dutiful, with secondary Retiring/reserved (introverted) and Dauntless/adventurous (risk-taking) tendencies and lesser Distrusting/suspicious features. The blend of primary patterns in Putin's profile constitutes a composite personality type aptly described as an *expansionist hostile enforcer*.

*Dominant* individuals enjoy the power to direct others and to evoke obedience and respect; they are tough and unsentimental and often make effective leaders. This personality pattern defines the "hostile" component of Putin's personality composite.

*Ambitious* individuals are bold, competitive, and self-assured; they easily assume leadership roles, expect others to recognize their special qualities, and often act as though entitled. This personality pattern delineates the "expansionist" component of Putin's personality composite.

*Conscientious* individuals are dutiful and diligent, with a strong work ethic and careful attention to detail; they are adept at crafting public policy but often lack the retail political skills required to consummate their policy objectives and are more technocratic than visionary. This personality pattern fashions the "enforcer" component of Putin's personality composite.

*Retiring* (introverted) individuals tend not to develop strong ties to others, are somewhat deficient in the ability to recognize the needs or feelings of others, and may lack spontaneity and interpersonal vitality.

*Dauntless* individuals are adventurous, individualistic, daring personalities resistant to deterrence and inclined to take calculated risks.

Putin's major personality-based strengths in a political role are his commanding demeanor and confident assertiveness. His major personality-based shortcomings are his uncompromising intransigence, lack of empathy and congeniality, and cognitive inflexibility.

## Introduction

This working paper reports the results of psychodiagnostic case study of Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, president of the Russian Federation, conducted in 2014. Putin, a former KGB foreign intelligence officer, served as prime minister from 1999 to 2000 and 2008 to 2012, and as president from 2000 to 2008 and again from 2012 to the present.

The study was prompted (see Appendix) by Russia's seizure of Crimea from Ukraine in 2014 and assumed greater urgency following Russia's military intervention in the Syrian civil war and alleged Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, which rendered Putin's psychological profile highly pertinent from a national security perspective.

Conceptually, the study is informed by Theodore Millon's (1969, 1986a, 1986b, 1990, 1991, 1994, 1996, 2003; Millon & Davis, 2000; Millon & Everly, 1985) model of personality as adapted (Immelman, 1993, 1998, 2002, 2003, 2005) for the study of personality in politics.

We employ the terms *personality* and *politics* in Fred Greenstein's (1992) narrowly construed sense. Politics, by this definition, "refers to the politics most often studied by political scientists — that of civil government and of the extra-governmental processes that more or less directly impinge upon government, such as political parties" and campaigns. Personality, as narrowly construed in political psychology, "excludes political attitudes and opinions ... and applies only to nonpolitical personal differences" (p. 107).

Personality may be concisely defined as:

a complex pattern of deeply embedded psychological characteristics that are largely nonconscious and not easily altered, expressing themselves automatically in almost every facet of functioning. Intrinsic and pervasive, these traits emerge from a complicated matrix of biological dispositions and experiential learnings, and ultimately comprise the individual's distinctive pattern of perceiving, feeling, thinking, coping, and behaving. (Millon, 1996, p. 4)

Greenstein (1992) makes a compelling case for studying personality in government and politics: "Political institutions and processes operate through human agency. It would be remarkable if they were *not* influenced by the properties that distinguish one individual from another" (p. 124).

The methodology employed in this study involves the construction of a theoretically grounded personality profile derived from empirical analysis of biographical source materials (see Immelman, 2003, 2005, 2014).

A comprehensive review of Millon's personological model and its applicability to political personality has been provided elsewhere (e.g., Immelman, 1993, 2003, 2005). Briefly, Millon's model encompasses eight attribute domains: expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object representations, and morphologic organization (see Table 1).

**Table 1**  
*Millon's Eight Attribute Domains*

| Attribute                | Description  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Expressive behavior      | The individual's characteristic behavior; how the individual typically appears to others; what the individual knowingly or unknowingly reveals about him- or herself; what the individual wishes others to think or to know about him or her.  |
| Interpersonal conduct    | How the individual typically interacts with others; the attitudes that underlie, prompt, and give shape to these actions; the methods by which the individual engages others to meet his or her needs; how the individual copes with social tensions and conflicts.  |
| Cognitive style          | How the individual focuses and allocates attention, encodes and processes information, organizes thoughts, makes attributions, and communicates reactions and ideas to others.   |
| Mood/temperament         | How the individual typically displays emotion; the predominant character of an individual's affect and the intensity and frequency with which he or she expresses it.  |
| Self-image               | The individual's perception of self-as-object or the manner in which the individual overtly describes him- or herself.   |
| Regulatory mechanisms    | The individual's characteristic mechanisms of self-protection, need gratification, and conflict resolution.  |
| Object representations   | The inner imprint left by the individual's significant early experiences with others; the structural residue of significant past experiences, composed of memories, attitudes, and affects that underlie the individual's perceptions of and reactions to ongoing events and serves as a substrate of dispositions for perceiving and reacting to life's ongoing events. |
| Morphologic organization | The overall architecture that serves as a framework for the individual's psychic interior; the structural strength, interior congruity, and functional efficacy of the personality system (i.e., ego strength).  |

*Note.* From *Disorders of Personality: DSM-IV and Beyond* (pp. 141–146) by T. Millon, 1996, New York: Wiley; *Toward a New Personology: An Evolutionary Model* (chapter 5) by T. Millon, 1990, New York: Wiley; and *Personality and Its Disorders: A Biosocial Learning Approach* (p. 32) by T. Millon and G. S. Everly, Jr., 1985, New York: Wiley. Copyright © 1996, © 1990, © 1985 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Adapted by permission of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. and Theodore Millon.

## Method

### Materials

The materials consisted of open-source intelligence sources and the personality inventory employed to systematize and synthesize diagnostically relevant information collected from the literature on Vladimir Putin.

**Sources of data.** Diagnostic information pertaining to Putin was collected from a broad array of media reports that offered useful, diagnostically relevant psychobiographic information.

**Personality inventory.** The assessment instrument, the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria (MIDC; Immelman & Steinberg, 1999; Immelman, 2015), was compiled and adapted from Millon's (1969, 1986b; 1990, 1996; Millon & Everly, 1985) prototypal features and diagnostic criteria for normal personality styles and their pathological variants. Information concerning the construction, administration, scoring, and interpretation of the MIDC is provided in the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria manual (Immelman, 2014).<sup>1</sup> The 12-scale (see Table 2) instrument taps the first five "noninferential" (Millon, 1990, p. 157) attribute domains previously listed in Table 1.

The 12 MIDC scales correspond to major personality patterns posited by Millon (1994, 1996), which are congruent with the syndromes described on Axis II of the fourth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV)* of the American Psychiatric Association (APA; 1994) and coordinated with the normal personality styles in which these disorders are rooted, as described by Millon and Everly (1985), Millon (1994), Oldham and Morris (1995), and Strack (1997). Scales 1 through 8 (comprising 10 scales and subscales) have three gradations (a, b, c) yielding 30 personality variants, whereas Scales 9 and 0 have two gradations (d, e) yielding four variants, for a total of 34 personality designations, or types. Table 2 displays the full taxonomy.

## Diagnostic Procedure

The diagnostic procedure, termed *psychodiagnostic meta-analysis*, can be conceptualized as a three-part process: first, an *analysis* phase (data collection) during which source materials are reviewed and analyzed to extract and code diagnostically relevant content; second, a *synthesis* phase (scoring and interpretation) during which the unifying framework provided by the MIDC prototypal features, keyed for attribute domain and personality pattern, is employed to classify the diagnostically relevant information extracted in phase 1; and finally, an *evaluation* phase (inference) during which theoretically grounded descriptions, explanations, inferences, and predictions are extrapolated from Millon's theory of personality based on the personality profile constructed in phase 2 (see Immelman, 2003, 2005, 2014 for a more detailed account of the procedure).

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<sup>1</sup> Inventory and manual available upon request to qualified academic researchers.

**Table 2**  
***Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria: Scales and Gradations***

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|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Scale 1A: | Dominant pattern<br>a. Asserting<br>b. Controlling<br>c. Aggressive (Sadistic; <i>DSM-III-R</i> , Appendix A)            |
| Scale 1B: | Dauntless pattern<br>a. Adventurous<br>b. Dissenting<br>c. Aggrandizing (Antisocial; <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.7)              |
| Scale 2:  | Ambitious pattern<br>a. Confident<br>b. Self-serving<br>c. Exploitative (Narcissistic; <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.81)           |
| Scale 3:  | Outgoing pattern<br>a. Congenial<br>b. Gregarious<br>c. Impulsive (Histrionic; <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.50)                   |
| Scale 4:  | Accommodating pattern<br>a. Cooperative<br>b. Agreeable<br>c. Submissive (Dependent; <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.6)              |
| Scale 5A: | Aggrieved pattern<br>a. Unpresuming<br>b. Self-denying<br>c. Self-defeating ( <i>DSM-III-R</i> , Appendix A)             |
| Scale 5B: | Contentious pattern<br>a. Resolute<br>b. Oppositional<br>c. Negativistic (Passive-aggressive; <i>DSM-III-R</i> , 301.84) |
| Scale 6:  | Conscientious pattern<br>a. Respectful<br>b. Dutiful<br>c. Compulsive (Obsessive-compulsive; <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.4)      |
| Scale 7:  | Reticent pattern<br>a. Circumspect<br>b. Inhibited<br>c. Withdrawn (Avoidant; <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.82)                    |
| Scale 8:  | Retiring pattern<br>a. Reserved<br>b. Aloof<br>c. Solitary (Schizoid; <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.20)                            |
| Scale 9:  | Distrusting pattern<br>d. Suspicious<br>e. Paranoid ( <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.0)   |
| Scale 0:  | Erratic pattern<br>d. Unstable<br>e. Borderline ( <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.83)  |

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*Note.* Equivalent *DSM* terminology and codes are specified in parentheses.

## Results

The analysis of the data includes a summary of descriptive statistics yielded by the MIDC scoring procedure, the MIDC profile for Vladimir Putin, diagnostic classification of the subject, and the clinical interpretation of significant MIDC scale elevations derived from the diagnostic procedure.

Putin received 44 endorsements on the 170-item MIDC. Judging from endorsement-rate deviations from the mean (see Table 3), data on Putin's interpersonal conduct (11 endorsements) were most readily observed, whereas data on his cognitive style (6 endorsements) were most difficult to obtain and may be underrepresented in the data set.

Descriptive statistics for Putin's MIDC ratings are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3**  
*MIDC Item Endorsement Rate by Attribute Domain for Vladimir Putin*

| Attribute domain      | Items |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Expressive behavior   | 8     |
| Interpersonal conduct | 11    |
| Cognitive style       | 6     |
| Mood/temperament      | 10    |
| Self-image            | 9     |
| Sum                   | 44    |
| Mean                  | 8.8   |
| Standard deviation    | 1.7   |

Putin's MIDC scale scores are reported in Table 4. The same data are presented graphically in the profile depicted in Figure 1.

Putin's most elevated scale, with a score of 16, is Scale 1A (Dominant), closely followed by Scale 2 (Ambitious) and Scale 6 (Conscientious), respectively with scores of 14 and 12. All three of these primary elevations are in the *prominent* (10–23) range. Secondary elevations in the *present* (5–9) range occur on Scale 7 (Retiring) and Scale 1B (Dauntless), respectively with scores of 7 and 5. One additional MIDC scale merits note, namely, Scale 9 (Distrusting) with a modest elevation of 8, well below the threshold for diagnostic significance.



**Table 4**  
*MIDC Scale Scores for Vladimir Putin*

| Scale | Personality pattern  | Raw | RT%   |
|-------|--|-----|-------|
| 1A    | Dominant: Asserting–Controlling–Aggressive (Sadistic)                | 16  | 26.7  |
| 1B    | Dauntless: Adventurous–Dissenting–Aggrandizing (Antisocial)          | 5   | 8.3   |
| 2     | Ambitious: Confident–Self-serving–Exploitative (Narcissistic)        | 14  | 23.3  |
| 3     | Outgoing: Congenial–Gregarious–Impulsive (Histrionic)                | 0   | 0.0   |
| 4     | Accommodating: Cooperative–Agreeable–Submissive (Dependent)          | 2   | 3.3   |
| 5A    | Aggrieved: Unpresuming–Self-denying–Self-defeating (Masochistic)     | 0   | 0.0   |
| 5B    | Contentious: Resolute–Oppositional–Negativistic (Passive-aggressive) | 3   | 5.0   |
| 6     | Conscientious: Respectful–Dutiful–Compulsive (Obsessive-compulsive)  | 12  | 20.0  |
| 7     | Reticent: Circumspect–Inhibited–Withdrawn (Avoidant)                 | 1   | 1.7   |
| 8     | Retiring: Reserved–Aloof–Solitary (Schizoid)                         | 7   | 11.7  |
|       | Subtotal for basic personality scales                                | 60  | 100.0 |
| 9     | Distrusting: Suspicious–Paranoid (Paranoid)                          | 8   | 11.8  |
| 0     | Erratic: Unstable–Borderline (Borderline)                            | 0   | 0.0   |
|       | Full-scale total   | 68  | 111.8 |

*Note.* For Scales 1–8, ratio-transformed (RT%) scores are the scores for each scale expressed as a percentage of the sum of raw scores for the ten basic scales only. For Scales 9 and 0, ratio-transformed scores are scores expressed as a percentage of the sum of raw scores for all twelve MIDC scales (therefore, full-scale RT% totals can exceed 100). Personality patterns are enumerated with scale gradations and equivalent *DSM* terminology (in parentheses).

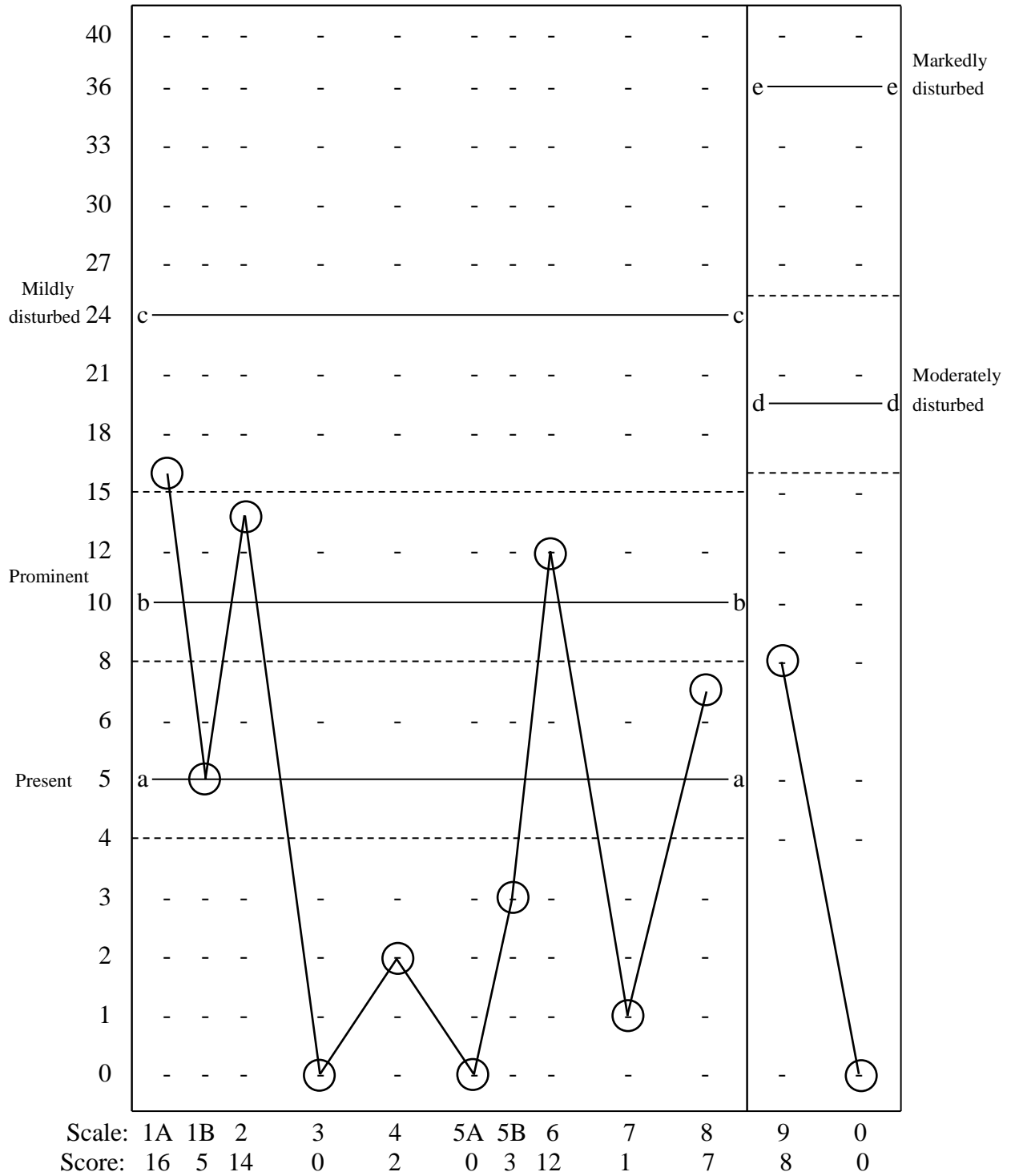
The MIDC profile yielded by Putin’s raw scores is displayed in Figure 1 on the next page.<sup>2</sup>

In terms of MIDC scale gradation (see Table 2 and Figure 1) criteria, supplemented by clinical judgment, Putin was classified as a composite of the Dominant/controlling (aggressive), Ambitious/self-serving (narcissistic), and Conscientious/dutiful (obsessive-compulsive) patterns with subsidiary Retiring/reserved (introverted) and Dauntless/Adventurous (risk-taking) tendencies and lesser Distrusting/suspicious features.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Solid horizontal lines on the profile form signify cut-off scores between adjacent scale gradations. For Scales 1–8, scores of 5 through 9 signify the *presence* (gradation *a*) of the personality pattern in question; scores of 10 through 23 indicate a *prominent* (gradation *b*) variant; and scores of 24 to 30 indicate an exaggerated, *mildly dysfunctional* (gradation *c*) variation of the pattern. For Scales 9 and 0, scores of 20 through 35 indicate a *moderately disturbed* syndrome and scores of 36 through 45 a *markedly disturbed* syndrome. See Table 2 for scale names.

<sup>3</sup> In each case the label preceding the slash signifies the categorical personality pattern, whereas the label following the slash indicates the specific scale gradation, or personality type, on the dimensional continuum; see Table 2. Terms in parentheses indicate equivalent descriptors from the personality psychology or psychiatric nomenclature.

**Figure 1. Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria: Profile for Vladimir Putin**



## Discussion

The discussion of the results examines Vladimir Putin's MIDC scale elevations from the perspective of Millon's (1994, 1996; Millon & Davis, 2000) model of personality, supplemented by the theoretically congruent portraits of Oldham and Morris (1995) and Strack (1997). The discussion concludes with a brief synthesis of the practical implications of Putin's personality profile.

Few people exhibit personality patterns in "pure" or prototypal form; more often, individual personalities represent a blend of two or more orientations. With his decidedly elevated scores on Scale 1A (Dominant), Scale 2 (Ambitious), and Scale 6 (Conscientious), Putin emerged from the assessment as a blend of the *controlling*, *self-serving*, and *dutiful* types — exaggerated, though adaptive, variants of the Dominant, Ambitious, and Conscientious patterns. The Millon Index of Personality Styles manual (Millon, 1994), employing the label *Controlling*, describes Dominant personalities as people who enjoy exercising power, directing and intimidating others, and evoking obedience and respect; they are tough, competitive, and unsentimental, and typically make effective leaders, though occasionally intransigent, stubborn, and coercive (p. 34). Ambitious personalities — labeled *Asserting* — are bold, competitive, self-assured individuals who easily assume leadership roles, possess strong persuasive powers, and act decisively; they expect others to recognize their special qualities but tend to lack reciprocity and often act as though entitled (p. 32). Conscientious personalities — labeled *Conforming* — are described as industrious, well organized, reliable individuals who are prudent and restrained, respectful of tradition and authority, and rather formal and inflexible in their interpersonal relationships (p. 33).

Interpreting Putin's profile also must account for subsidiary elevations on Scale 8 (Retiring), Scale 1B (Dauntless), and — to a lesser extent — Scale 9 (Distrusting). *Retiring* personalities tend to be aloof, do not develop strong ties to other people, rarely express their inner feelings or thoughts to others, come across as calm and untroubled, are most comfortable working by themselves, work in a quiet and methodical manner, are not easily distracted by what goes on around them, are somewhat deficient in the ability to recognize the needs or feelings of others, and may be viewed as insensitive and lacking in spontaneity (p. 33). Adventurous personalities — labeled *Dissenting* — are rugged individualists who live by their own internal code, act as they see fit without much concern for the effects of their actions on others and are willing to take the consequences for doing so, may shade the truth or flout the law and established social conventions, exhibit a strong need for autonomy and self-determination, and tend to be skeptical about the motives of others (p. 33). Distrusting personalities — labeled *Vigilant* by Oldham and Morris (1995) — have a penchant for scanning people and situations around them and are finely attuned to mixed messages, hidden motivations, evasions, and distortions of the truth (p. 157).

As will be explained later in this report, Putin's particular blend of personality orientations personality can be suitably characterized as an *expansionist hostile enforcer* with a foreign policy role orientation that can be described as *deliberative high-dominance introversion*.

## Scale 1A: The Dominant Pattern

Vladimir Putin's highest MIDC scale elevation, with a score of 16, occurred on Scale 1A. The Dominant pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive. At the well-adjusted pole are strong-willed, commanding, assertive personalities.<sup>4</sup> Slightly exaggerated Dominant features occur in forceful, intimidating, controlling personalities.<sup>5</sup> In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form, the Dominant pattern displays itself in domineering, belligerent, aggressive behavior patterns that may be consistent with a clinical diagnosis of sadistic personality disorder.<sup>6</sup>

Normal, adaptive variants of the Dominant pattern (i.e., asserting and controlling types) correspond to Oldham and Morris's (1995) *Aggressive* style, Strack's (1997) *forceful* style, Millon's (1994) *Controlling* pattern, and the *managerial* segment of Leary's (1957) managerial–autocratic continuum. Millon's Controlling pattern is positively correlated with the five-factor model's *Conscientiousness* factor, has a more modest positive correlation with its *Extraversion* factor, is negatively correlated with its *Agreeableness* and *Neuroticism* factors, and is uncorrelated with its *Openness to Experience* factor (see Millon, 1994, p. 82). Thus, these individuals — though controlling and somewhat disagreeable — tend to be emotionally stable and conscientious. In combination with an elevated Conscientious (Scale 6) pattern (as in the case of Putin), an elevated Dominant pattern points to Simonton's (1988) *deliberative* presidential style. According to Millon (1994), Controlling (i.e., Dominant) individuals

enjoy the power to direct and intimidate others, and to evoke obedience and respect from them. They tend to be tough and unsentimental, as well as gain satisfaction in actions that dictate and manipulate the lives of others. Although many sublimate their power-oriented tendencies in publicly approved roles and vocations, these inclinations become evident in occasional intransigence, stubbornness, and coercive behaviors. Despite these periodic negative expressions, controlling [Dominant] types typically make effective leaders, being talented in supervising and persuading others to work for the achievement of common goals. (p. 34)

Oldham and Morris (1995) supplement Millon's description with the following portrait of the normal (*Aggressive*) prototype of the Dominant pattern:

While others may aspire to leadership, Aggressive [Dominant] men and women move instinctively to the helm. They are born to assume command as surely as is the top dog in the pack. Theirs is a strong, forceful personality style, more inherently powerful than any of the others. They can undertake huge responsibilities without fear of failure. They wield power with ease. They never back away from a fight. They compete with the supreme confidence of champions. . . . When put to the service of the greater good, the Aggressive [Dominant] personality style can inspire a man or woman to great leadership, especially in times of crisis. (p. 345)

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<sup>4</sup> Relevant to Vladimir Putin.

<sup>5</sup> Relevant to Vladimir Putin.

<sup>6</sup> It is possible that some of these more disturbed features are present in Vladimir Putin; however, the results suggest that any such traits would be primarily situation-bound and not pervasive across the entire personality matrix.

Finally, Strack (1997) offers the following description of the normal (*forceful*) prototype of the Dominant pattern, based on Millon's theory, empirical findings from studies correlating his Personality Adjective Check List (PACL; 1991) scales with other measures, and clinical experience with the instrument:

Like confident [Ambitious] persons, forceful [Dominant] individuals can be identified by an inclination to turn toward the self as the primary source of gratification. However, instead of the confident [Ambitious] personality's internalized sense of self-importance, forceful [Dominant] people seem driven to prove their worthiness. They are characterized by an assertive, dominant, and tough-minded personal style. They tend to be strong-willed, ambitious, competitive, and self-determined. Feeling that the world is a harsh place where exploitiveness is needed to assure success, forceful [Dominant] individuals are frequently gruff and insensitive in dealing with others. In contrast to their preferred, outwardly powerful appearance, these individuals may feel inwardly insecure and be afraid of letting down their guard. In work settings, these personalities are often driven to excel. They work hard to achieve their goals, are competitive, and do well where they can take control or work independently. In supervisory or leadership positions, these persons usually take charge and see to it that a job gets done. (From Strack, 1997, p. 490, with minor modifications)

Millon's personality patterns have predictable, reliable, observable psychological indicators (expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object representations, and morphologic organization). Millon's (1996) attribute domains accentuate the maladaptive range of the personality patterns in his taxonomy — in the case of the Dominant pattern, the aggressive pole of the asserting–controlling–aggressive continuum. The diagnostic features of the Dominant pattern with respect to each of Millon's eight attribute domains are summarized below, along with “normalized” (i.e., de-pathologized; cf. Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 514–515) descriptions of the variants of this pattern. Nonetheless, some of the delineated traits may be less pronounced and more adaptive in the case of individuals for whom this pattern is less prominent.

**Expressive behavior.** The core diagnostic feature of the expressive acts of Dominant individuals is *assertiveness*; they are tough, strong-willed, outspoken, competitive, and unsentimental. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern are characteristically *forceful*; they are controlling, contentious, and at times overbearing, their power-oriented tendencies being evident in occasional intransigence, stubbornness, and coercive behaviors. When they feel strongly about something, these individuals can be quite blunt, brusque, and impatient, with sudden, abrupt outbursts of an unwarranted or precipitous nature. The most extreme variants of this pattern (minimally applicable to Putin) are *aggressive*; they are intimidating, domineering, argumentative, and precipitously belligerent. They derive pleasure from humiliating others and can be quite malicious. For this reason, people often shy away from these personalities, sensing them to be cold, callous, and insensitive to the feelings of others. All variants of this pattern tend to view tender emotions as a sign of weakness, avoid expressions of warmth and intimacy, and are suspicious of gentility, compassion, and kindness. Many insist on being seen as faultless; however, they invariably are inflexible and dogmatic, rarely conceding on any issue, even in the face of evidence negating the validity of their position. They have a low frustration threshold and are especially sensitive to reproach or deprecation. When pushed on personal matters, they can become furious and are likely to respond reflexively and often vindictively, especially when feeling humiliated or belittled. Thus, they are easily provoked to attack, their first inclination being to dominate and demean their adversaries. (Millon, 1996, pp. 483, 487)

**Interpersonal conduct.** The core diagnostic feature of the interpersonal conduct of Dominant individuals is their *commanding* presence; they are powerful, authoritative, directive, and persuasive. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern are characteristically *intimidating*; they tend to be abrasive, contentious, coercive, and combative, often dictate to others, and are willing and able to humiliate others to evoke compliance. Their strategy of assertion and dominance has an important instrumental purpose in interpersonal relations, as most people are intimidated by hostility, sarcasm, criticism, and threats. Thus, these personalities are adept at having their way by browbeating others into respect and submission. The most extreme variants of this pattern (minimally applicable to Putin) are *belligerent*; they reveal satisfaction in intimidating, coercing, and humiliating others. Individuals with all gradations of this pattern frequently find a successful niche for themselves in roles where hostile and belligerent behaviors are socially sanctioned or admired, thus providing an outlet for vengeful hostility cloaked in the guise of social responsibility. (Millon, 1996, p. 484; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 32)

**Cognitive style.** The core diagnostic feature of the cognitive style of Dominant individuals is its *opinionated* nature; they are outspoken, emphatic, and adamant, holding strong beliefs that they vigorously defend. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern tend to be *dogmatic*; they are inflexible and closed-minded, lacking objectivity and clinging obstinately to preconceived ideas, beliefs, and values. The most extreme variants of this pattern (minimally applicable to Putin) are narrow-mindedly *bigoted*; they are socially intolerant and inherently prejudiced, especially toward envied or derogated social groups. Some of these individuals have a crude, callous exterior and seem coarsely unperceptive. This notwithstanding, all variants of this pattern are finely attuned to the subtle elements of human interaction, keenly aware of the moods and feelings of others, and skilled at using others' foibles and sensitivities to manipulate them for their own purposes. The more extreme variants of this pattern, in particular, are quick to turn another's perceived weaknesses to their own advantage — often in an intentionally callous manner — by upsetting the other's equilibrium in their quest to dominate and control. (Millon, 1996, pp. 484–485)

**Mood/temperament.** The core diagnostic feature of the characteristic mood and temperament of Dominant individuals is *irritability*; they have an excitable temper that they may at times find difficult to control. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern tend to be *cold* and unfriendly; they are disinclined to experience and express tender feelings, and have a volatile temper that readily flares into contentious argument and physical belligerence. The most extreme variants of this pattern (minimally applicable to Putin) evince pervasive *hostility* and anger; they are fractious, mean-spirited, and malicious, with callous disregard for the rights of others. Their volcanic temper seems perpetually primed to erupt, sometimes into physical belligerence. More than any other personality type, people with this extreme variant of the Dominant pattern are willing to do harm and persecute others if necessary to have their way. All variants of this pattern are prone to anger and to a greater or lesser extent deficient in the capacity to share warm or tender feelings, to experience genuine affection and love for another, or to empathize with the needs of others. (Millon, 1996, p. 486; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 32)

**Self-image.** The core diagnostic feature of the self-image of Dominant individuals is that they view themselves as *assertive*; they perceive themselves as forthright, unsentimental, and bold. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern recognize their fundamentally *competitive* nature; they are strong-willed, energetic, and commanding, and may take pride in describing themselves as tough and realistically hardheaded. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern (minimally applicable to Putin) perceive themselves as *powerful*; they are combative, viewing themselves as self-reliant, unyielding, and strong — hard-boiled, perhaps, but unflinching, honest, and realistic. They seem proud to characterize themselves as competitive, vigorous, and militantly hardheaded, which is consistent of their “dog-eat-dog” view of the world. Though more extreme variants may enhance their sense of self by overvaluing aspects of themselves that present a pugnacious, domineering, and power-oriented image, it is rare for these personalities to acknowledge malicious or vindictive motives. Thus, hostile behavior on their part is typically framed in prosocial terms, which enhances their sense of self. (Millon, 1996, p. 485; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 32)

**Regulatory mechanisms.** The core diagnostic feature of the regulatory (i.e., ego-defense) mechanisms of highly Dominant individuals is *isolation*; they are able to detach themselves emotionally from the impact of their aggressive acts upon others. In some situations — politics being a case in point — these personalities may have learned that there are times when it is best to restrain and transmute their more aggressive thoughts and feelings. Thus, they may soften and redirect their hostility, typically by employing the mechanisms of *rationalization*, *sublimation*, and *projection*, all of which lend themselves in some fashion to finding plausible and socially acceptable excuses for less than admirable impulses and actions. Thus, blunt directness may be rationalized as signifying frankness and honesty, a lack of hypocrisy, and a willingness to face issues head on. On the longer term, socially sanctioned resolution (i.e., sublimation) of hostile urges is seen in the competitive occupations to which these aggressive personalities gravitate. Finally, these personalities may preempt the disapproval they anticipate from others by projecting their hostility onto them, thereby justifying their aggressive actions as mere counteraction to unjust persecution. Individuals with extreme, malignant variations of this pattern (not applicable to Putin) may engage in group scapegoating, viewing the objects of their violations impersonally as despised symbols of a devalued people, devoid of dignity and deserving degradation. (Millon, 1996, pp. 485–486)

**Object representations.** The core diagnostic feature of the internalized object representations of highly Dominant individuals is their *pernicious* nature. Characteristically, there is a marked paucity of tender and sentimental objects, and an underdevelopment of images that activate feelings of shame or guilt. For individuals with extreme, malignant variations of this pattern, the inner imprint of significant early experiences that serves as a substrate of dispositions (i.e., templates) for perceiving and reacting to current life events, are composed of aggressive feelings and memories, and images comprising harsh relationships and malicious attitudes. Consequently, their life experience is recast to reflect the expectancy of hostility and the need to preempt it. These dynamics undergird a “jungle philosophy” of life where the only perceived recourse is to act in a bold, critical, assertive, and ruthless manner. Of particular relevance to politics is the harsh, antihumanistic disposition of the more extreme variants of these personalities (not applicable to Putin). Some are adept at pointing out the hypocrisy and ineffectuality of so-called “do-gooders”; they rail against the devastating consequences of

international appeasement. Others justify their toughness and cunning by pointing to the hostile and exploitative behavior of others; to them, the only way to survive in this world is to dominate and control. (Millon, 1996, p. 485)

**Morphologic organization.** The core diagnostic feature of the morphologic organization of highly Dominant individuals is its *eruptiveness*; powerful energies are so forceful that they periodically overwhelm these personalities' otherwise adequate modulating controls, defense operations, and expressive channels, resulting in the harsh behavior commonly seen in these personalities. This tendency (minimally applicable to Putin) is exacerbated by the unrestrained expression of intense and explosive emotions stemming from early life experiences. Moreover, these personalities dread the thought of being vulnerable, of being deceived, and of being humiliated. Viewing people as basically ruthless, these personalities are driven to gain power over others, to dominate them and outmaneuver or outfox them at their own game. Personal feelings are regarded as a sign of weakness and dismissed as mere maudlin sentimentality. (Millon, 1996, p. 486)

## Scale 2: The Ambitious Pattern

Vladimir Putin's second-highest MIDC scale elevation, with a score of 14, occurred on Scale 2. The Ambitious pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive. At the well-adjusted pole are confident, socially poised, assertive personalities.<sup>7</sup> Slightly exaggerated Ambitious features occur in personalities that are sometimes perceived as self-promoting, overconfident, or arrogant.<sup>8</sup> In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form, the Ambitious pattern manifests itself in extreme self-absorption or exploitative behavior patterns that may be consistent with a clinical diagnosis of narcissistic personality disorder.<sup>9</sup>

Normal, adaptive variants of the Ambitious pattern (i.e., confident and self-serving types) correspond to Oldham and Morris's (1995) *Self-Confident* style, Strack's (1997) *confident* style, and Millon's (1994) *Asserting* pattern. Millon's *Asserting* pattern is positively correlated with the five-factor model's *Extraversion* and *Conscientiousness* factors and negatively correlated with its *Neuroticism* factor (Millon, 1994, p. 82). It is associated with "social composure, or poise, self-possession, equanimity, and stability" — a constellation of adaptive traits that in stronger doses shades into its dysfunctional variant, the narcissistic personality (Millon, 1994, p. 32).

Millon (1994) summarizes the *Asserting* (i.e., Ambitious) pattern as follows:

An interpersonal boldness, stemming from a belief in themselves and their talents, characterize[s] those high on the ... *Asserting* [Ambitious] scale. Competitive, ambitious, and self-assured, they naturally assume positions of leadership, act in a decisive and unwavering manner, and expect

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<sup>7</sup> Relevant to Vladimir Putin.

<sup>8</sup> Relevant to Vladimir Putin.

<sup>9</sup> Some of these more disturbed features may be marginally present in Vladimir Putin; however, the results suggest that any such traits would be primarily situation-bound and not pervasive across the entire personality matrix.



others to recognize their special qualities and cater to them. Beyond being self-confident, those with an ... [Ambitious] profile often are audacious, clever, and persuasive, having sufficient charm to win others over to their own causes and purposes. Problematic in this regard may be their lack of social reciprocity and their sense of entitlement — their assumption that what they wish for is their due. On the other hand, their ambitions often succeed, and they typically prove to be effective leaders. (p. 32)

Oldham and Morris (1995) offer the following portrait of the normal (*Self-Confident*) prototype of the Ambitious pattern:

Self-Confident [Ambitious] individuals stand out. They're the leaders, the shining lights, the attention-getters in their public or private spheres. There is a star quality born of self-regard, self-respect, self-certainty — all those *self* words that denote a faith in oneself and a commitment to one's self-styled purpose. Combined with the ambition that marks this style, that ... self-regard can transform idle dreams into real accomplishment. ... Self-Confident [Ambitious] men and women know what they want, and they get it. Many of them have the charisma to attract plenty of others to their goals. They are extroverted<sup>10</sup> and intensely political. They know how to work the crowd, how to motivate it, and how to lead it. (p. 85)

Strack (1997) provides the following description of the normal (*confident*) prototype of the Ambitious pattern, based on Millon's theory, empirical findings from studies correlating his Personality Adjective Check List (PACL; 1991) scales with other measures, and clinical experience with the instrument:

aloof, calm, and confident, these personalities tend to be egocentric and self-reliant. They may have a keen sense of their own importance, uniqueness, or entitlement. Confident [Ambitious] individuals enjoy others' attention and may be quite bold socially, although they are seldom garish. They can be self-centered to a fault and may become so preoccupied with themselves that they lack concern and empathy for others. These persons have a tendency to believe that others share, or should share, their sense of worth. As a result, they may expect others to submit to their wishes and desires, and to cater to them. ... When feeling exposed or undermined, these individuals are frequently disdainful, obstructive, or vindictive. In the workplace, confident [Ambitious] persons like to take charge in an emphatic manner, often doing so in a way that instills confidence in others. Their self-assurance, wit, and charm often win them supervisory and leadership positions. (Adapted from Strack, 1997, pp. 489–490, with minor modifications)

Millon's personality patterns have well-established diagnostic indicators associated with each of the eight attribute domains of expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object-representations, and morphologic organization. Millon's (1996) attribute domains accentuate the maladaptive range of the personality patterns in his taxonomy — in the case of the Ambitious pattern, the exploitative pole of the confident–self-serving–exploitative continuum. The major diagnostic features of the prototypal maladaptive variant of the Ambitious pattern are summarized below, along with “normalized” (i.e., de-pathologized; cf. Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 273–277) descriptions of the variants of this pattern. Nonetheless, some of the delineated traits may be less pronounced and more adaptive in the case of individuals for whom this pattern is less prominent.

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<sup>10</sup> Not the case with Vladimir Putin, who is an introvert.

**Expressive behavior.** The core diagnostic feature of the expressive acts of Ambitious individuals is their *confidence*; they are socially poised, self-assured, and self-confident, conveying an air of calm, untroubled self-assurance. More exaggerated variants of the Ambitious pattern tend to act in a *conceited* manner, their natural self-assurance shading into supreme self-confidence, hubris, immodesty, or presumptuousness. They are self-promoting and may display an inflated sense of self-importance. They typically have a superior, supercilious, imperious, haughty, disdainful manner. Characteristically, though usually unwittingly, they exploit others, take them for granted, and frequently act as though entitled. The most extreme variants of this pattern (minimally applicable to Putin) are *arrogant*; they are self-serving, reveal a self-important indifference to the rights of others, and are manipulative and lacking in integrity. They commonly flout conventional rules of shared social living, which they view as naive or inapplicable to themselves. All variants of this pattern are to some degree self-centered and lacking in generosity and social reciprocity. (Millon, 1996, p. 405; Millon & Everly, 1985, pp. 32, 39)

**Interpersonal conduct.** The core diagnostic feature of the interpersonal conduct of Ambitious individuals is their *assertiveness*; they stand their ground and are tough, competitive, persuasive, hardnosed, and shrewd. More exaggerated variants of the Ambitious pattern are *entitled*; they lack genuine empathy and expect favors without assuming reciprocal responsibilities. The most extreme variants of this pattern (minimally applicable to Putin) are *exploitative*; they shamelessly take others for granted and manipulate and use them to indulge their desires, enhance themselves, or advance their personal agenda, yet contributing little or nothing in return. Ironically, the sheer audacity of all variants of this pattern, rather than being clearly seen for what it is — impertinence, impudence, or sheer audacity — often conveys confidence and authority and evokes admiration and compliance from others. Indeed, these personalities are skilled at sizing up those around them and conditioning those so disposed to adulate, glorify, and serve them. (Millon, 1996, pp. 405–406; Millon & Everly, 1985, pp. 32, 39)

**Cognitive style.** The core diagnostic feature of the cognitive style of Ambitious individuals is their *imaginativeness*; they are inventive, innovative, and resourceful, ardently believing in their own efficacy. More exaggerated variants of the Ambitious pattern are cognitively *expansive*; they display extraordinary confidence in their own ideas and potential for success and redeem themselves by taking liberty with facts or distorting the truth. The most extreme variants of this pattern (minimally applicable to Putin) are cognitively *unconstrained*; they are preoccupied with self-glorifying fantasies of accomplishment or fame, are little constrained by objective reality or cautionary feedback, and deprecate competitors or detractors in their quest for glory. All variants of this pattern to some degree harbor fantasies of success or rationalize their failures; thus, they tend to exaggerate their achievements, transform failures into successes, construct lengthy and intricate justifications that inflate their self-worth, and quickly deprecate those who refuse to bend to or enhance their admirable sense of self. (Millon, 1996, p. 406; Millon & Everly, 1985, pp. 32, 39)

**Mood/temperament.** The core diagnostic feature of the characteristic mood and temperament of Ambitious individuals is their social *poise*; they are self-composed, serene, and optimistic, and are typically imperturbable, unruffled, and cool and levelheaded under pressure. More exaggerated variants of the Ambitious pattern are *insouciant*; they manifest a general air of

nonchalance, imperturbability, or feigned tranquility. They characteristically appear coolly unimpressible or buoyantly optimistic, except when their narcissistic confidence is shaken, at which time either rage, shame, or emptiness is briefly displayed. The most extreme variants of this pattern (minimally applicable to Putin) are *exuberant*; they experience a pervasive sense of emotional well-being in their everyday life — a buoyancy of spirit and an optimism of outlook — except when their sense of superiority is punctured. When emotionally deflated, their air of nonchalance and imperturbability quickly turns to edgy irritability and annoyance. Under more trying circumstances, sham serenity may turn to feelings of emptiness and humiliation, sometimes with vacillating episodes of rage, shame, and dejection. All variants of this pattern to some degree convey a self-satisfied smugness, yet are easily angered when criticized, obstructed, or crossed. (Millon, 1996, p. 408; Millon & Everly, 1985, pp. 32, 39)

**Self-image.** The core diagnostic feature of the self-perception of Ambitious individuals is their *certitude*; they have strong self-efficacy beliefs and considerable courage of conviction. More exaggerated variants of the Ambitious pattern have an *admirable* sense of self; they view themselves as extraordinarily meritorious and esteemed by others, and have a high degree of self-worth, though others may see them as egotistic, inconsiderate, cocksure, and arrogant. The most extreme variants of this pattern (minimally applicable to Putin) have a *superior* sense of self. They view themselves as having unique and special qualities, deserving of great admiration and entitled to unusual rights and privileges. Accordingly, they often act in a pompous or grandiose manner, often in the absence of commensurate achievements. In high-level leadership positions, some of these individuals may exhibit a messianic self-perception; those failing to pay proper respect or bend to their will typically are treated with scorn and contempt. (Millon, 1996, p. 406)

**Regulatory mechanisms.** The core diagnostic features of the unconscious regulatory (i.e., ego-defense) mechanisms of Ambitious individuals (minimally applicable to Putin) are *rationalization* and *fantasy*; when their subjectively admirable self-image is challenged or their confidence shaken, they maintain equilibrium with facile self-deceptions, devising plausible reasons to justify their self-centered and socially inconsiderate behaviors. They rationalize their difficulties, offering alibis to put themselves in a positive light despite evident shortcomings and failures. When rationalization fails, they turn to fantasy to assuage their feelings of dejection, shame, or emptiness, redeem themselves, and reassert their pride and status. (Millon, 1996, p. 407)

**Object representations.** The core diagnostic feature of the internalized object representations of Ambitious individuals (minimally applicable to Putin) is their *contrived* nature; the inner imprint of significant early experiences that serves as a substrate of dispositions (i.e., templates) for perceiving and reacting to current life events, consists of illusory and changing memories. Consequently, problematic experiences are refashioned to appear consonant with their high sense of self-worth, and unacceptable impulses and deprecatory evaluations are transmuted into more admirable images and percepts. (Millon, 1996, pp. 406–407)

**Morphologic organization.** The core diagnostic feature of the morphological organization of Ambitious individuals (minimally applicable to Putin) is its *spuriousness*; the interior design of the personality system, so to speak, is essentially counterfeit, or bogus. Owing to the

misleading nature of their early experiences — characterized by the ease with which good things came to them — these individuals may lack the inner skills necessary for regulating their impulses, channeling their needs, and resolving conflicts. Accordingly, commonplace demands may be viewed as annoying incursions and routine responsibilities as pedestrian or demeaning. Excuses and justifications are easily mustered and serve to perpetuate selfish behaviors and exploitative, duplicitous social conduct. (Millon, 1996, pp. 407–408)

## Scale 6: The Conscientious Pattern

Vladimir Putin’s third-highest MIDC scale elevation, with a score of 12, occurred on Scale 6. The Conscientious pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive. At the well-adjusted pole are earnest, polite, *respectful* personalities.<sup>11</sup> Exaggerated Conscientious features occur in *dutiful*, dependable, and principled but rigid personalities.<sup>12</sup> In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form, the Conscientious pattern displays itself in a moralistic, self-righteous, uncompromising, cognitively constricted, *compulsive* behavior pattern that may be consistent with a clinical diagnosis of obsessive-compulsive personality disorder.<sup>13</sup>

Normal, adaptive variants of the Conscientious pattern (i.e., respectful and dutiful types) correspond to Oldham and Morris’s (1995) *Conscientious* style, Millon’s (1994) *Conforming* pattern, Strack’s (1997) *respectful* style, and the *responsible* segment of Leary’s (1957) *responsible–hypernormal* interpersonal continuum. Millon’s Conforming pattern is correlated with the five-factor model’s *Conscientiousness* factor, has a modest positive correlation with its *Extraversion* factor, a modest negative correlation with its *Neuroticism* factor (signifying emotional stability), and is uncorrelated with its *Agreeableness* and *Openness to Experience* factors (see Millon, 1994, p. 82). Adaptive variants of the Conscientious pattern have “a well-disciplined and organized lifestyle that enables individuals to function efficiently and successfully in most of their endeavors,” in contrast to “the driven, tense, and rigid adherence to external demands and to a perfectionism that typifies the disordered [compulsive] state.” They “demonstrate an unusual degree of integrity, adhering as firmly as they can to society’s ethics and morals” (Millon, 1996, pp. 518–519).

As stated by Oldham and Morris (1995):

Conscientious-style people ... [have] strong moral principle[s] and absolute certainty, and they won’t rest until the job is done and done right. They are loyal to their families, their causes, and their superiors. Hard work is a hallmark of this personality style; Conscientious types *achieve*. ... Conscientious traits ... [include] hard work, prudence, [and] conventionality. (p. 62)

Millon (1994) summarizes the Conscientious pattern (which he labels *Conforming*) as follows:

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<sup>11</sup> Relevant to Vladimir Putin.

<sup>12</sup> Relevant to Vladimir Putin.

<sup>13</sup> Not applicable to Vladimir Putin.

[Conscientious individuals possess] traits not unlike Leary's [1957] responsible-hypernormal personality, with its ideal of proper, conventional, orderly, and perfectionistic behavior, as well as bearing a similarity to Factor III of the Big-Five, termed Conscientiousness. Conformers are notably respectful of tradition and authority, and act in a reasonable, proper, and conscientious way. They do their best to uphold conventional rules and standards, following given regulations closely, and tend to be judgmental of those who do not. Well-organized and reliable, prudent and restrained, they may appear to be overly self-controlled, formal and inflexible in their relationships, intolerant of deviance, and unbending in their adherence to social proprieties. Diligent about their responsibilities, they dislike having their work pile up, worry about finishing things, and come across to others as highly dependable and industrious. (p. 33)

Strack (1997) provides the following portrait of the normal (*respectful*) prototype of the Conscientious pattern, based on Millon's theory, empirical findings from studies correlating his Personality Adjective Check List (PACL; 1991) scales with other measures, and clinical experience with the instrument:

Responsible, industrious, and respectful of authority, these individuals tend to be conforming and work hard to uphold rules and regulations. They have a need for order and are typically conventional in their interests. These individuals can be rule abiding to a fault, however, and may be perfectionistic, inflexible, and judgmental. A formal interpersonal style and notable constriction of affect can make some respectful [Conscientious] persons seem cold, aloof, and withholding. Underneath their social propriety there is often a fear of disapproval and rejection, or a sense of guilt over perceived shortcomings. Indecisiveness and an inability to take charge may be evident in some of these persons due to a fear of being wrong. However, among co-workers and friends, respectful [Conscientious] personalities are best known for being well organized, reliable, and diligent. They have a strong sense of duty and loyalty, are cooperative in group efforts, show persistence even in difficult circumstances, and work well under supervision. (From Strack, 1997, p. 490, with minor modifications)

Being principled, scrupulous, and meticulous, conscientious individuals "tend to follow standards from which they hesitate to deviate, attempt to act in an objective and rational manner, and decide matters in terms of what they believe is right." They are often religious, and maintaining their integrity "ranks high among their goals" while "voicing moral values gives them a deep sense of satisfaction." The major limitations of this personality style are (a) its "superrationality," leading to a "devaluation of emotion [which] tends to preclude relativistic judgments and subjective preferences"; and (b) a predilection for "seeing complex matters in black and white, good and bad, or right or wrong terms" (Millon, 1996, p. 519).

Millon's personality patterns have predictable, reliable, observable psychological indicators (expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object-representations, and morphologic organization). Millon's (1996) attribute domains accentuate the maladaptive range of the personality patterns in his taxonomy — in the case of the Conscientious pattern, the compulsive pole of the respectful-dutiful-compulsive continuum. The major diagnostic features of the prototypal maladaptive variant of the Conscientious pattern are summarized below, along with "normalized" (i.e., de-pathologized; cf. Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 174–176) descriptions of the variants of this pattern. Nonetheless, some of the delineated traits may be less pronounced and more adaptive in the case of individuals for whom this pattern is less prominent.

**Expressive behavior.** The core diagnostic feature of the expressive acts of Conscientious individuals is a sense of *duty*; they do their best to uphold conventional rules and standards, follow regulations closely, and are typically responsible, reliable, proper, prudent, punctual, self-disciplined, well organized, and restrained. They are meticulous in fulfilling obligations, their conduct is generally beyond reproach, and they typically demonstrate an uncommon degree of integrity. More exaggerated variants of the Conscientious pattern tend to be *rigid*; they are typically overcontrolled, orderly, and perfectionistic. Though highly dependable and industrious, they have an air of austerity and serious-mindedness and may be stubborn, stingy, and possessive. They are typically scrupulous in matters of morality and ethics, but may strike others as prudish, moralistic, and condescending. They exhibit a certain postural tightness; their movements may be deliberate and dignified and they display a tendency to speak precisely, with clear diction and well-phrased sentences. Emotions are constrained by a regulated, highly structured, and carefully organized lifestyle. Clothing is characteristically formal or proper, and restrained in color and style. The most extreme variants of this pattern (not applicable to Putin) are highly *perfectionistic*; they are characteristically pedantic, painfully fastidious or fussy, and excessively devoted to work and productivity. (Millon, 1996, pp. 513–515)

**Interpersonal conduct.** The core diagnostic feature of the interpersonal conduct of Conscientious individuals is *politeness*; they are courteous, proper, and dignified. They strongly adhere to social conventions and proprieties and show a preference for polite, formal, and “correct” personal relationships. With their strong sense of duty, they feel that they must not let others down or engage in behaviors that might provoke their displeasure. They are loyal to their families, their causes, and their superiors. More exaggerated variants of the Conscientious pattern are *exacting*; they are scrupulous in matters of morality and ethics and unbending in their relations with subordinates, insisting that they adhere to personally established rules and methods. In marked contrast, they treat superiors with deference, are obsequious, and may ingratiate themselves, striving to impress authorities with their loyalty, efficiency, and serious-mindedness. The most extreme variants of this pattern (not applicable to Putin) are *uncompromising*; they are excessively punctilious, though supercilious and deprecatory behaviors may be cloaked behind a veil of legalities and regulations, and aggressive intent may be justified by recourse to rules, authorities, or imperatives higher than themselves. (Millon, 1996, pp. 514–515, 516; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 33)

**Cognitive style.** The core diagnostic feature of the cognitive style of Conscientious individuals is *circumspection*; they are cautious, prudent, deliberate, systematic, and attentive to detail. Wary of new or untested ideas, they are risk avoidant. More exaggerated variants of the Conscientious pattern are *unimaginative*; they are methodical, structured, pedestrian, uninspired, or routinized. Perfectionism may interfere with decision making and task completion, and they may have difficulty dealing with new ideas. The most extreme variants of this pattern (not applicable to Putin) are *constricted*; they are mechanical, inflexible, and rigid, constructing the world in terms of rules, regulations, schedules, and hierarchies. Their thinking may be constrained by stubborn adherence to conventional rules and personally formulated schemas, and their equilibrium is easily upset by unfamiliar situations or new ideas, making them excruciatingly indecisive at times. All variants of this pattern are concerned with matters of propriety and efficiency and tend to be rigid about regulations and procedures — though, ironically, all too often getting mired in minor or irrelevant details. They judge others by

“objective” standards and time-proven rules of an orderly society and are inclined to disdain frivolity and public displays of emotion, which they view as irresponsible or immature. Though industrious, tidy, meticulous, practical, realistic, and diligent, their thinking may be deficient in flexibility, creativity, and imagination, and lacking in vision. (Millon, 1996, pp. 515–516; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 33)

**Mood/temperament.** The core diagnostic feature of the characteristic mood and temperament of Conscientious individuals is *restraint*; they are serious, reasonable, and rarely display strong emotions. More exaggerated variants of the Conscientious pattern are characteristically *solemn*; they are emotionally controlled, tense, or unrelaxed. The most extreme variants of this pattern (not applicable to Putin) are *grave*; heavy and uptight, they are joyless, grim, and somber, keeping a tight rein on emotions — especially warm and affectionate feelings, though they may occasionally exhibit abrupt, explosive outbursts of anger aimed at subordinates. Because of their dignified, serious-minded, solemn demeanor, all variants of the Conscientious pattern may at times be viewed as grim and cheerless. This, however, is due to disdain for frivolity rather than humorlessness per se; thus, although these individuals often come across as reserved, even stiff, “wooden,” or “heavy,” they may exhibit a dry, self-effacing sense of humor. Few, however, have a lively or ebullient manner; most are rigidly controlled and tight, and their failure to release pent-up energies may predispose them to psychophysiological disorders. (Millon, 1996, p. 518; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 33)

**Self-image.** The core diagnostic feature of the self-perception of Conscientious individuals is *reliability*; they view themselves as dependable, disciplined, responsible, industrious, efficient, and trustworthy. More exaggerated variants of the Conscientious pattern accurately perceive themselves as highly *conscientious*, even to a fault; they view themselves as scrupulous, meticulous in fulfilling obligations, and loyal, despite often being viewed by others as highminded, overperfectionistic, and fastidious. The most extreme variants of this pattern (not applicable to Putin) view themselves as *righteous*; they overvalue aspects of themselves that exhibit virtue, moral rectitude, discipline, perfection, prudence, and loyalty, and are fearful of error or misjudgment. They are excessively devoted to work, with a corresponding tendency to minimize the importance of recreational or leisure activities. All variants of the Conscientious pattern value aspects of themselves that exhibit virtue, moral rectitude, self-discipline, prudence, and loyalty, and are wary of error or misjudgment. Given their strong sense of duty and their view of themselves as reliable, conscientious, or righteous, these individuals are particularly sensitive to charges of impropriety, which may be devastating to their sense of self. (Millon, 1996, p. 516)

**Regulatory mechanisms.** The core diagnostic feature of the unconscious regulatory (i.e., ego-defense) mechanisms of highly Conscientious individuals is *reaction formation*; they display reasonableness when faced with circumstances that would typically be expected to evoke irritation, anger, or dismay and may engage in public displays of socially commendable actions that may be diametrically opposed to their deeper impulses. (Millon, 1996, pp. 516–517)

**Object representations.** The core diagnostic feature of the internalized object representations of highly Conscientious individuals (minimally applicable to Putin) is *concealment*; there is a tendency for only those internalized representations that are socially

acceptable, with their corresponding inner affects, memories, and attitudes, to be permitted into conscious awareness or to be expressed. Thus, personal difficulties and social conflicts anchored to past experiences are defensively denied, kept from conscious awareness, and maintained under the most stringent of controls. These individuals devalue self-exploration, claiming that it is antithetical to efficient behavior and that introspection only intrudes on rational thinking and self-control. Consequently, highly Conscientious persons often have limited insight into their deeper motives and feelings. (Millon, 1996, p. 516)

**Morphologic organization.** The core diagnostic feature of the morphological organization of highly Conscientious individuals (minimally applicable to Putin) is *compartmentalization*; to keep contrary feelings and impulses from affecting one another, and to hold ambivalent images and contradictory attitudes from spilling forth into conscious awareness, the organization of their inner world tends to be compartmentalized in a tightly consolidated system that is clearly partitioned into numerous, distinct, and segregated constellations of drive, memory, and cognition, with few open channels to permit interplay among these components. Thus, a deliberate and well-poised surface quality may belie an inner turmoil. To prevent upsetting the balance they have so carefully wrought throughout their lives, highly Conscientious individuals strive to avoid risk and to operate with complete certainty. Their toughest challenge, however, is to control their emotions, which they do by extensive use of intrapsychic defenses. Because they typically have a family history of exposure to demanding, perfectionistic parents, a potent force behind their tightly structured world is their fear of disapproval. By the same token, their public facade of conformity and propriety may mask an undercurrent of repressed urges toward self-assertion and defiance. (Millon, 1996, pp. 517–518)

### **Formulation: The Dominant–Conscientious Composite Pattern**

Predominantly Dominant (aggressive, or sadistic) individuals who also possess prominent Conscientious (compulsive) features may be characterized as *hostile enforcers* (following Millon, 1996, pp. 490–491; Millon & Davis, 2000, p. 517, whose characterization of the “enforcing sadist” provides the basis for the following adaptation). Given that Vladimir Putin’s elevations on the two scales in question are not in the dysfunctional range, he is neither sadistic nor compulsive. Rather, he may display a more adaptive, nonpathological variant of the syndrome. Millon (1996) does not offer a description of the adaptive variant of the sadistic–compulsive personality composite, but a “de-pathologized” manifestation may be inferred from his description of the more maladaptive version of the syndrome:

Hostile enforcers are characterized by deep-seated hostility, permeated by a moralistic conscience. A stickler for rules and propriety, they are unrestrained in discharging their hostile impulses against the weak, the powerless, and the contemptible — ostensibly in the public interest. Not only do they act as though they have a monopoly on divining right and wrong; these personalities also believe they have a right and an obligation to control and punish violators, and that they are uniquely qualified to determine how punishment should be meted out.

Although hostile enforcers operate under the guise of socially endorsed roles to serve the public interest, the deeper motives that spur the aggressive enforcing actions of leaders with this personality style are of questionable legitimacy, given the extraordinary force with which they



mete out their condemnation and punishment. In the realm of public service, the trademark characteristic of hostile enforcers is first to search out rule-breakers and perpetrators of incidental infractions that fall within the purview of their socially sanctioned role, and then to exercise their legitimate powers to the fullest extent.

The *modus operandi* of the hostile enforcer invariably provokes opposition and resistance, which in turn incites and perpetuates ever-stronger countermeasures against real and perceived enemies. Their resulting “bunker mentality” may mimic a paranoid orientation, but more likely is simply a manifestation of hardball politics in the service of an obdurate, relentless, uncompromising, no-holds-barred striving to preserve and consolidate personal power and control.

In public life the fatal flaw of this personality type is that, in carrying out their duties, they cannot restrain the emotions that drive their vindictively hostile behaviors. Ultimately, dominating everything and everyone becomes their goal, at the expense of exercising their responsibilities in a fair and balanced manner. The essence of this personality pattern in its most extreme form is vividly captured in the following sketch by Millon (1996), who employs the label *enforcing sadist* for the maladaptive variant (minimally applicable or irrelevant to Putin) of the Dominant–Conscientious personality composite:

Some of these personalities swagger about as prideful enforcers of the law; the more they dominate and discharge their venom, the more pridefully they swagger, and the more they feel righteously empowered. The more they discharge their hostility and exercise their wills, the more they display their dominance and feed their sadistic urges, the more they feel justified in venting their anger. Power has gone to their heads. Many begin to dehumanize their victims, further enlarging the sphere and intensity of their aggressive destructiveness. . . . Beneath their ostensible good intentions may lie a growing deceptive viciousness, a malicious inclination that eventually produces the very destructiveness they have been authorized to control. (pp. 490–491)

Millon and Davis (2000) describe the enforcing sadist as follows:

Every society charges certain agents with the power to enforce its rules to protect the common good. At their best, such individuals recognize the weight of their mission and balance social and individual needs, consider extenuating circumstances, and dispassionately judge intentions and effects before rendering a final verdict. In contrast, the enforcing sadist is society’s sadistic superego, vested in punishment for its own sake, unable to be appeased. Military sergeants, certain cops, university deans, and the harsh judge, all feel that they have the right to control and punish others. Cloaked within socially sanctioned roles, they mete out condemnation in the name of justice with such extraordinary force that their deeper motives are clear. Ever seeking to make themselves seem important, these sticklers for rules search out those guilty of some minor trespass, make them cower before the power of their position, and then punish them with a righteous indignation that reeks of repressed anger and personal malice. Despite their responsibility to be fair and balanced, such individuals are unable to put limits on the emotions that drive their vicious behaviors. Though not as troublesome, many minor bureaucrats also possess such traits. The enforcing sadist represents a combination of the sadistic and compulsive personalities. (p. 517)

The label *enforcing sadist* — or even its nonpathological *hostile enforcer* variant — should be used with circumspection. It is not an apt characterization for leaders with moderately elevated Dominant and Conscientious scales. In less pronounced cases, consistent with the

principle of syndromal continuity (see Immelman, 2005), the above description at best serves as an informative caricature for contextualizing the “true believer” ideological zeal typically found in these personality composites. Nonetheless, Putin’s Scale 1A (Dominant) and Scale 6 (Conscientious) elevations are relatively high compared with world leaders and U.S. presidential candidates studied by the first author in the past three decades.

Finally, the prominence of Ambitious (narcissistic) features in Putin’s personality profile undoubtedly modulates Putin’s Dominant–Conscientious personality composite. Given the cognitive expansiveness of narcissistic-spectrum personality variants, all of which to some extent harbor self-glorifying fantasies of fame or greatness, it is proposed that the modifier *expansionist* be incorporated in the *hostile enforcer* label to encapsulate the full complexity of Putin’s political personality.

### Scale 8: The Retiring Pattern

Vladimir Putin’s fourth-highest MIDC scale elevation, with a score of 7, occurred on Scale 8. The Retiring pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive. At the well-adjusted pole are self-contained, unsociable, *reserved* personalities.<sup>14</sup> Exaggerated Retiring features occur in stolid, unobtrusive, *aloof* personalities.<sup>15</sup> In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form, the Retiring pattern displays itself in unanimated, asocial, *solitary* behavior patterns that may be consistent with a clinical diagnosis of schizoid personality disorder.<sup>16</sup> Due to the relatively modest elevation of Scale 8 in Putin’s personality configuration, the extreme *solitary* variant of the Retiring pattern is omitted from the discussion.

Normal, adaptive variants of the Retiring pattern (i.e., reserved and aloof types), characterized by low levels of sociability and companionability (Millon, 1994, p. 31), correspond to Oldham and Morris’s (1995) *Solitary* style, Strack’s (1997) *introversive* style, and Millon’s (1994) *Retiring* pattern. Millon’s Retiring pattern is negatively correlated with the five-factor model’s *Extraversion* factor, positively correlated with its *Neuroticism* factor, has modest negative correlations with its *Openness to Experience* and *Agreeableness* factors, and is uncorrelated with its *Conscientiousness* factor (see Millon, 1994, p. 82).

According to Oldham and Morris (1995), these “solitary-style” individuals are self-contained people without a need for external guidance, admiration, or emotional sustenance. They feel no need to share their experiences and draw their greatest strength and comfort from within. According to Oldham and Morris (1995),

Solitary men and women need no one but themselves. They are unmoved by the madding crowd, liberated from the drive to impress and to please. Solitary people are remarkably free of the emotions and involvements that distract so many others. What they may give up in terms of sentiment and intimacy, however, they may gain in clarity of vision. (p. 275)

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<sup>14</sup> Relevant to Vladimir Putin.

<sup>15</sup> Largely irrelevant to Vladimir Putin.

<sup>16</sup> Not applicable to Vladimir Putin.

Millon (1994) summarizes the Retiring pattern as follows:

[Retiring individuals] evince few social or group interests. ... Their needs to give and receive affection and to show feelings tend to be minimal. They are inclined to have few relationships and interpersonal involvements, and do not develop strong ties to other people. They may be seen by others as calm, placid, untroubled, easygoing, and possibly indifferent. Rarely expressing their inner feelings or thoughts to others, they seem most comfortable when left alone. They tend to work in a slow, quiet, and methodical manner, almost always remaining in the background in an undemanding and unobtrusive way. Comfortable working by themselves, they are not easily distracted or bothered by what goes on around them. Being somewhat deficient in the ability to recognize the needs or feelings of others, they may be seen as socially awkward, if not insensitive, as well as lacking in spontaneity and vitality. (p. 31)

Strack (1997) provides the following portrait of the normal (*introversive*) prototype of the Retiring pattern, based on Millon's theory, empirical findings from studies correlating his Personality Adjective Check List (PACL; 1991) scales with other measures, and clinical experience with the instrument:

Aloof, introverted, and solitary, these persons usually prefer distant or limited involvement with others and have little interest in social activities, which they find unrewarding. Appearing to others as complacent and untroubled, they are often judged to be easy-going, mild-mannered, quiet, and retiring. They frequently remain in the background of social life and work quietly and unobtrusively at a job. At school or in the workplace these people do well on their own, are typically dependable and reliable, are undemanding, and are seldom bothered by noise or commotion around them. They are often viewed as levelheaded and calm. However, these individuals may appear unaware of, or insensitive to, the feelings and thoughts of others. These characteristics are sometimes interpreted by others as signs of indifference or rejection, but reveal a sincere difficulty in being able to sense others' moods and needs. Introversive [Retiring] persons can be slow and methodical in demeanor, lack spontaneity and resonance, and be awkward or timid in social or group situations. They frequently view themselves as being simple and unsophisticated, and are usually modest in appraising their own skills and abilities. At the same time, their placid demeanor and ability to weather ups and downs without being ruffled are traits frequently prized by friends, family members, and co-workers. (From Strack, 1997, p. 488, with minor modifications)

Millon's personality patterns have predictable, reliable observable psychological indicators (expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object-representations, and morphologic organization). Millon's (1996) attribute domains accentuate the maladaptive range of the personality patterns in his taxonomy — in the case of the Retiring pattern, the solitary pole of the reserved–aloof–solitary continuum. The major diagnostic features of the prototypal maladaptive variant of the Retiring pattern are summarized below, along with “normalized” (i.e., de-pathologized; cf. Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 313–315) descriptions of the more adaptive variants of this pattern.

**Expressive behavior.** The core diagnostic feature of the expressive acts of Retiring individuals is their *reserved* nature; they are private, unsociable, introverted, undemonstrative, and undiplomatic. More exaggerated variants of the Retiring pattern (minimally applicable to Putin) are characteristically *solitary*; they seem indifferent, express a preference for being alone, and are phlegmatic, stolid, colorless, or bland, and deficient in expressiveness and spontaneity. (Millon, 1996, pp. 230–231)

**Interpersonal conduct.** The core diagnostic feature of the interpersonal conduct of Retiring individuals is *unobtrusiveness*; they are private, self-contained, prefer solitary activities, and often fade into the background or go unnoticed. More exaggerated variants of the Retiring pattern (minimally applicable to Putin) are socially *disengaged*; they are aloof and indifferent to others, neither desiring nor enjoying close relationships, and are socially remote and interpersonally detached. All variants of the Retiring pattern, where possible, avoid social activities or leadership roles. In mandatory (e.g., occupational) settings, their social communications are expressed in a perfunctory, formal, or impersonal manner. Their primary social motive is to remain interpersonally unattached. When pushed beyond their comfort zone in interpersonal relations, they tend to retreat or withdraw into themselves. (Millon, 1996, p. 231; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 33)

**Cognitive style.** The core diagnostic feature of the cognitive style of Retiring individuals is *vagueness*; their thoughts are often fuzzy or unclear and communication with others tends to be digressive or unfocused. More exaggerated variants of the Retiring pattern (minimally applicable to Putin) display considerable *impoverishment*; their ideas tend to be sparse, meager, or infertile and their thought processes obscure. Their communication often loses its purpose or intention, particularly in the social and personal spheres — a tendency that does not necessarily hold true for the intellectual domain. All variants of the Retiring pattern have a diminished capacity to convey articulate or relevant ideas in the realm of interpersonal phenomena. They may grasp grammatical, mathematical, or technical symbols with infallible precision yet falter in their comprehension of nonverbal communication, including facial expressions, gestures, and voice timbre — those affect-laden metacommunicative qualities that suffuse the formal structure of communication. A related cognitive trait is their difficulty in attending to, selecting, and regulating perceptions of the socioemotional environment, which may at times result in inaccurate person perception and imbue their interactions with a socially “tone-deaf” quality. (Millon, 1996, pp. 231–232; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 33)

**Mood/temperament.** The core diagnostic feature of the characteristic mood and temperament of Retiring individuals is *unexcitability*; they are unemotional and dispassionate, disinclined to express strong feelings and seem mildly agreeable yet somewhat bland. More exaggerated variants of the Retiring pattern (minimally applicable to Putin) are emotionally *flat*; they are temperamentally impassive, gloomy, or apathetic, rarely display warm or intense feelings, and seem unable to experience most affects — pleasure, sadness, or anger — in any depth. All variants of the Retiring pattern display a deficit in the range and subtlety of emotionally relevant words. Furthermore, they experience only mild or meager affective and erotic needs. (Millon, 1996, pp. 232–233; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 33)

**Self-image.** The core diagnostic feature of the self-perception of Retiring individuals is its *dispassionate* quality; they are placid and view themselves as uninvolved and unaffected. More exaggerated variants of the Retiring pattern (minimally applicable to Putin) are *complacent*; though recognizing themselves as somewhat unfeeling and socially unresponsive or insular, they view themselves as content and satisfied. They are little affected by others, and respond minimally to either praise or criticism. Their limited interest in the lives of others, in the interpersonal domain, is mirrored in the self-domain by low levels of self-awareness or introspection. Reluctant to engage in self-descriptions, they may be vague or superficial; if

pressed they may describe themselves as ordinary, reflective, uninteresting, or introverted. The apparent lack of candor in self-analysis displayed by most manifestations of the Retiring pattern is not indicative of elusiveness or protective denial, but merely reflects an inherent deficit in pondering social and emotional processes. When adequately formulated and accurately articulated, these personalities will perceive and report themselves as being socially reserved and emotionally distant, somewhat lacking in empathy. (Millon, 1996, p. 232; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 33)

**Regulatory mechanisms.** The core diagnostic feature of the unconscious regulatory (i.e., ego-defense) mechanisms of highly Retiring individuals is *intellectualization*. They describe the interpersonal and affective character of their social and emotional experiences and memories in a somewhat impersonal and mechanical manner. They tend to be abstract and perfunctory about their emotional and social lives, and when they do formulate a characterization, they pay primary attention to the more objective and formal aspects of their experiences rather than to the personal and emotional significance of these events. (Millon, 1996, p. 232)

**Object representations.** The core diagnostic feature of the internalized object representations of highly Retiring individuals (largely irrelevant to Putin) is their *meagerness*; the inner imprint of significant early experiences that serves as a substrate of dispositions (i.e., templates) for perceiving and reacting to current life events, appear to be few in number and diffusely articulated. (Millon, 1996, p. 232)

**Morphologic organization.** The core diagnostic feature of the morphological organization of highly Retiring individuals (largely irrelevant to Putin) is its *lack of differentiation*. The structural composition of their intrapsychic world is more diffuse and less dynamically active than that of most personality patterns. (Millon, 1996, p. 232)

### Scale 1B: The Dauntless Pattern

Vladimir Putin's fifth-highest MIDC scale elevation, with a score of 5, occurred on Scale 1B. The Dauntless pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive. At the well-adjusted pole<sup>17</sup> are individualistic, adventurous, daring personalities. Exaggerated Dauntless features<sup>18</sup> occur in unconscientious, risk-taking, dissenting personalities. In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form,<sup>19</sup> the Dauntless pattern displays itself in reckless, irresponsible, self-aggrandizing behavior patterns that may be consistent with a clinical diagnosis of antisocial personality disorder. Due to the modest elevation of Scale 1B in Putin's overall personality configuration, only the adaptive variant of the Dauntless pattern is addressed in the discussion.

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<sup>17</sup> Minimally relevant to Vladimir Putin.

<sup>18</sup> It is possible, but unlikely, that some of these slightly exaggerated features are present in Vladimir Putin; however, any such traits would be nonpervasive and will have been considerably attenuated since middle adulthood.

<sup>19</sup> Not applicable to Vladimir Putin.

Normal, adaptive variants of the Dauntless pattern (i.e., adventurous and dissenting types) correspond to Oldham and Morris's (1995) *Adventurous* style, Millon's (1994) *Dissenting* pattern, and the low pole of Simonton's (1988) *interpersonal* executive leadership style. Theoretically, the normal, adaptive variant of the Dauntless pattern incorporates facets of the five-factor model's *Extraversion* factor and the low pole of its *Agreeableness* factor; however, the Dissenting scale of the Millon Index of Personality Styles (Millon, 1994) is uncorrelated with the NEO Personality Inventory's (Costa & McCrae, 1985) Extraversion factor, though — as expected — this scale is negatively correlated with its *Agreeableness* factor. In addition, the Dissenting scale is moderately correlated with the NEO Personality Inventory's *Neuroticism* factor, has a small negative correlation with its *Conscientiousness* factor, and is uncorrelated with its *Openness to Experience* factor (see Millon, 1994, p. 82). The Dauntless pattern, as conceptualized in the MIDC, is congruent with the low poles of Simonton's (1988) *deliberative* and *interpersonal* leadership styles and incorporates elements of his *neurotic* and *charismatic* styles.

According to Oldham and Morris (1995, pp. 227–228), the following eight traits and behaviors are reliable clues to the presence of an Adventurous style:

1. *Nonconformity*. Live by their own internal code of values; not strongly influenced by the norms of society.
2. *Challenge*. Routinely engage in high-risk activities.
3. *Mutual independence*. Not overly concerned about others; expect each individual to be responsible for him- or herself.
4. *Persuasiveness*. “Silver-tongued” charmers talented in the art of social influence.
5. *Wanderlust*. Like to keep moving; live by their talents, skills, ingenuity, and wits.
6. *Wild oats*. History of childhood and adolescent mischief and hell-raising.
7. *True grit*. Courageous, physically bold, and tough.
8. *No regrets*. Live in the present; do not feel guilty about the past or anxious about the future.

Oldham and Morris (1995) provide the following description of the *Adventurous* style:

Throw caution to the winds — here comes the Adventurer. Who but Adventurers would have taken those long leaps for mankind — crossed the oceans, broken the sound barrier, walked the moon? The men and women with this personality style venture where most mortals fear to tread. They are not bound by the same terrors and worries that limit most of us. They live on the edge, challenging boundaries and restrictions, pitting themselves for better or for worse in a thrilling game against their own mortality. No risk, no reward, they say. Indeed, for people with the Adventurous personality style, the risk is the reward. (p. 227)

Ultimately, adventurous types “are fundamentally out for themselves” (Oldham & Morris, 1995, p. 228); they “do not need others to fuel their self-esteem or to provide purpose to their lives, and they don't make sacrifices for other people, at least not easily” (p. 229). Furthermore, they believe in themselves and do not require anyone's approval; they have “a definite sense of what is right or wrong for them, and if something is important to them, they'll do it no matter what anyone thinks” (p. 229). In spite of their self-centeredness, however, adventurous people are capable of advancing a cause incidentally in the service of their personal desires or ambition; but, fundamentally, what matters is the momentary excitement, emotional vitality, or sense of

aliveness that they experience, not love of person, country, or cause (p. 229). Technically, Oldham & Morris's Adventurous style appears to be a more adaptive variant of Millon's "risk-taking psychopath," a composite of his aggrandizing (antisocial) and gregarious (histrionic) personality patterns (see Millon, 1996, p. 452; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164). As such, one would expect the Dauntless pattern to be minimally present in Vladimir Putin's overall personality configuration, considering the total absence of any MIDC indicators on Scale 3 (Outgoing).

Millon (1994), who uses the term *Dissenting* as a label for the normal, adaptive variant of the aggrandizing, antisocial pattern, asserts that these individuals tend to "flout tradition," "act in a notably autonomous fashion," "are not social-minded," and "are not inclined to adhere to conventional standards, cultural mores, and organizational regulations" (p. 32). They are

unconventional persons who seek to do things their own way and are willing to take the consequences for doing so. They act as they see fit regardless of how others judge them. Inclined at times to elaborate on or shade the truth, as well as ride close to the edge of the law, they are not conscientious — that is, they do not assume customary responsibilities. ... They will do what they want or believe to be best without much concern for the effects of their actions on others. Being skeptical about the motives of most people, and refusing to be fettered or coerced, they exhibit a strong need for autonomy and self-determination. (p. 33)

Millon's personality patterns have predictable, reliable observable psychological indicators (expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object-representations, and morphologic organization). The diagnostic features of the first five (i.e., relatively directly observable) attribute domains of the adaptive variant of the Dauntless pattern are summarized below.

**Expressive behavior.** Dauntless personalities are typically adventurous, fearless, and daring, attracted by challenge and undeterred by personal risk. They do things their own way and are willing to take the consequences. (Millon, 1996, pp. 444–445, 449–450; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164)

**Interpersonal conduct.** Dauntless personalities are rugged individualists, not compromisers or conciliators. They take clear stands on the issues that matter, backed up by the self-confidence and personal skills and talents to prevail. (Millon, 1996, pp. 445–446, 449–450; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164)

**Cognitive style.** Dauntless personalities are original, independent-minded, and unconventional. (Millon, 1996, pp. 446–447, 449–450; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164)

**Mood/temperament.** Dauntless personalities are tough-minded and unsentimental; they are cool, calm, and collected under pressure. (Millon, 1996, pp. 448–449, 449–450; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164)

**Self-image.** Dauntless personalities are self-confident, with a corresponding view of themselves as self-sufficient and autonomous. They pride themselves on their independence, competence, strength, and their ability to prevail without social support, and they expect the same of others. (Millon, 1996, pp. 447, 449–450; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164)

## Scale 9: The Distrusting Pattern

Vladimir Putin obtained a modest MIDC scale elevation of 8 on Scale 9, which is below the threshold for clinical diagnostic significance, yet merits note because of potential political implications deriving from the unusual level of suspiciousness and hypervigilance associated with the Distrusting pattern.

Oldham and Morris (1995) offer the following portrait of the Vigilant (i.e., Distrusting) style:

Nothing escapes the notice of ... [people who have a] Vigilant [Distrusting] personality style. These individuals possess an exceptional awareness of their environment. ... Their sensory antennae, continuously scanning the people and situations around them, alert them immediately to what is awry, out of place, dissonant, or dangerous, especially in their dealings with other people. ... [Distrusting types] are immediately aware of mixed messages, the hidden motivations, the evasions, and the subtlest distortions of the truth that elude or delude less gifted observers. (p. 157)

## Inferring Vladimir Putin's Leadership Style

The present psychological assessment offers an empirically based framework for anticipating Vladimir Putin's political leadership style as chief executive.

### Renshon's Character-Based Modalities of Political Performance

There is utility in coordinating the present findings with alternative models of personality in politics. Stanley Renshon (1996), for example, developed a psychologically grounded theory of political performance, proposing "three distinct aspects" (p. 226) of political leadership shaped by character: *mobilization*, the ability to arouse, engage, and direct the public; *orchestration*, the organizational skill and ability to craft specific policies; and *consolidation*, implementing one's policy proposals (pp. 227, 411).

Putin's most serious personality-based political weakness is the ability to arouse, engage, and direct the public (i.e., mobilization), which is more commonly the preserve of highly outgoing, less conscientious leaders.

As chief executive, Putin's greatest strength (by dint of his high conscientiousness), is orchestration. Consequently, he is well equipped to bring to bear superlative organizational skill in conjunction with the sustained focus and attention to detail necessary to craft specific policies.

Regarding the third element of personality-driven political leadership, consolidation, the picture is more opaque. Although the ability to implement one's policy proposals is partially dependent on the same qualities that favor orchestration (Putin's strong suit), Vladimir Putin — to the extent that he is constrained by checks and balances in a democratic system — is hamstrung by a dearth of outgoing personality traits, with attendant deficits in the requisite retail political skills necessary for consummating policy objectives.



## Barber's Temperament-Based Model of Presidential Character

James David Barber (1972/1992), focusing more narrowly on presidential temperament, developed a simple model that has shown some utility in predicting successful (active-positive) and failed (active-negative) presidencies. Vladimir Putin bears greater similarity to active-negative U.S. presidents, such as Woodrow Wilson and Richard Nixon, who were rigid and highly driven, compulsively investing great effort in task performance yet deriving little inherent joy from the office of president, using power primarily as a means of self-realization.

## Simonton's Five-Factor Model of Presidential Styles

Dean Keith Simonton (1988) proposed five empirically derived presidential styles (charismatic, interpersonal, deliberative, neurotic, and creative) that offer a promising frame of reference for establishing links between personality and political leadership, given the fidelity with which they mirror the currently popular five-factor model, whose correlates with Millon's personality patterns have been empirically established (Millon, 1994, p. 82).

Vladimir Putin's elevated Conscientious pattern (which conceptually corresponds to the "Big Five" Conscientiousness factor), in conjunction with his highly elevated Dominant scale (which is positively correlated with the five-factor model's Conscientiousness factor and negatively correlated with its Agreeableness and Neuroticism factors; see Millon, 1994, p. 82), points to concordance with the *deliberative* leadership style in Simonton's conceptual model. According to Simonton (1988), the deliberative leader

commonly "understands [the] implications of his decisions; exhibits depth of comprehension" ..., is "able to visualize alternatives and weigh long term consequences" ..., "keeps himself thoroughly informed; reads briefings [and] background reports" ..., is "cautious, conservative in action" ..., [and only] infrequently "indulges in emotional outbursts." (p. 931)

In addition, Putin's low MIDC Scale 4 (Accommodating) score, in conjunction with his elevation on the Dominant scale (which is negatively correlated with the five-factor model's Agreeableness factor), suggests that Putin's leadership style would be concordant with the low pole of Simonton's *interpersonal* style. According to Simonton (1988), a *low* interpersonal leader

"accepts recommendations of others only under protest" ..., "believes he knows what is best for the people" ..., "is emphatic in asserting his judgments" ..., is "suspicious of reformers" ..., is "impatient, abrupt in conference" ..., "bases decisions on willfulness ... and egotism" ..., "tends to force decisions to be made prematurely" ..., and "rarely permits himself to be outflanked." (p. 931)

Furthermore, a leader low on interpersonality typically will *not*

"[encourage] the exercise of independent judgment by aides" ..., "[give] credit to others for work done" ..., "[endear himself] to staff through his courtesy and consideration" ..., "[be] flexible" ..., "[emphasize] teamwork" ..., "[be frequently] in contact with his advisers" ..., "[maintain] close relationships with a wide circle of associates" ..., [be] "willing to make compromises" ..., "[rely] on working in a staff system, deciding among options formulated by advisers" ..., "[and keep] members of his staff informed." (Simonton, 1988, pp. 929, 931)

## Etheredge's Two-Dimensional Interpersonal Generalization Foreign Policy Theory

Lloyd Etheredge (1978) and Margaret Hermann (1987) developed personality-based models of foreign policy leadership orientation that can be employed rationally and intuitively to enhance and complement the predictive utility of Millon's model with respect to leadership performance in the arena of international relations.

In terms of Etheredge's (1978) fourfold typology of personality-based foreign policy role orientations, which locates policymakers on the dimensions of dominance–submission and introversion–extraversion, Vladimir Putin's Scale 1A (Dominant) elevation suggests that he is highly dominant in orientation. His elevation on Scale 8 (Retiring), in conjunction with a flat Scale 3 (Outgoing), offers convincing evidence of introversion. Thus, Putin is best classified as a *high-dominance introvert* in Etheredge's (1978) typology of personality-based foreign policy role orientations. According to Etheredge, high-dominance introverts tend

to divide the world, in their thought, between the moral values they think it ought to exhibit and the forces opposed to this vision. They tend to have a strong, almost Manichean, moral component to their views. They tend to be described as stubborn and tenacious. They seek to reshape the world in accordance with their personal vision, and their ... policies are often characterized by the tenaciousness with which they advance one central idea. ... [They] seem relatively preoccupied with themes of *exclusion*, the establishment of institutions or principles to keep potentially disruptive forces in check. (p. 449; italics in original)

## Hermann's Foreign Policy Role Orientation Model

Etheredge's high-dominance introvert appears to be quite similar in character to Hermann's (1987) *expansionist* orientation to foreign affairs. These leaders have a view of the world as being “divided into ‘us’ and ‘them’,” based on a belief system in which conflict is viewed as inherent in the international system. This world view prompts a personal political style characterized by a “wariness of others’ motives” and a “directive,” controlling interpersonal orientation, prompting a foreign policy “focused on issues of security and status,” favoring “low-commitment actions” and espousing “short-term, immediate change in the international arena.” Expansionist leaders “are not averse to using the ‘enemy’ as a scapegoat” and their rhetoric often may be “hostile in tone” (pp. 168–169). In essence, Hermann conceptualizes the expansionist orientation in terms of political motivation to acquire “control over more territory, resources, or people” (p. 168).

## Conclusion

In closing, the major practical implication of the study is that it offers an empirically based personological framework for anticipating Vladimir Putin's political behavior as president of the Russian Federation. In short, Putin's particular blend of personality patterns suggests a personality-based leadership style aptly circumscribed as that of an *expansionist hostile enforcer*, with a foreign policy role orientation best described as that of a *deliberative high-dominance introvert*.

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## APPENDIX

We conclude this research report with a newspaper opinion column on which the present authors collaborated at the conclusion of the data collection phase of the study in August 2014.

### Profile Hints at Putin Mindset



Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks Friday, Aug. 1, 2014 at the opening ceremony of the monument to the Heroes of World War I, behind him, on the day of the 100th anniversary of its beginning in Victory Park on Poklonnaya Hill in Moscow, Russia. (Photo credit: AP)

By Joe Trenzeluk

St. Cloud Times

August 3, 2014

On July 17, 298 innocent victims were killed when Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 was shot down over Ukraine. As attempts to investigate the incident continue, international pressure has been placed on Russian President Vladimir Putin because it is believed the Russian military supplied Ukrainian pro-Russia separatists with the Buk surface-to-air missiles that downed the airliner.

Putin issued a statement that Russia will do “everything in its power” to assist with the investigation and offered his condolences to people who lost loved ones in the tragedy.

If Putin's role in the current crisis in Ukraine, his relations with the Syrian regime and pro-Assad Iran, and ongoing reports of human rights violations in Russia are not enough to call into question Putin's character and leadership qualities, the downing of Flight MH17 certainly has.

Empirical analysis of Putin's personality at the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University's Unit for the Study of Personality in Politics reveals that Putin is a highly dominant, narcissistic leader with secondary features of high conscientiousness and substantial introversion.

In a nutshell, leaders of this kind may be labeled "ambitious (or expansionist) hostile enforcers."

Identifying the personality configuration of political leaders matters because personality points to stable, enduring patterns in a person's motives, thoughts, and actions over time and across situations. Thus, accurate personality assessment allows us to anticipate a leader's response to a broad range of contingencies.

### **Expansionist leader**

In terms of foreign policy role orientation, the "high-dominance introvert" facet of Putin's personality parallels what political psychologist Margaret Hermann has labeled an *expansionist* leader. Expansionists, like Adolf Hitler or Saddam Hussein, see the world as being "divided into 'us' and 'them,'" based on a belief system in which conflict is viewed as inherent in the international system.

This worldview prompts a personal political style characterized by a "wariness of others' motives" and a directive, controlling interpersonal orientation, resulting in a foreign policy "focused on issues of security and status," favoring "low-commitment actions" and espousing "short-term, immediate change in the international arena."

Expansionist leaders, according to Hermann, "are not averse to using the 'enemy' as a scapegoat," and their rhetoric often may be "hostile in tone."

Other common characteristics of expansionists include a high degree of power motivation, strong nationalism, an unwavering belief in one's ability to control events, supreme self-confidence, distrust of others, and a very goal-directed level of task orientation — all of which are evident to varying degrees in Putin's personality profile.

### **Putin is Russia**

Putin believes the world is divided between his Russia and the West, often using “the West” or “democracy” as a scapegoat for his problems. Rising through the KGB and Russia's political elite, he entwined himself with the history of Russia. Typical of narcissistic leaders with exalted self-concept and dreams of glory, he views his destiny and that of the Russian state as one and the same. Putin is Russia; Russia is Putin.

Although Putin shows no discernible signs of contemplating genocide or waging conventional war — sensation-seeking adventurousness ranks relatively low in his overall personality profile — he displays a desire for control and deeply entrenched feelings of resentment toward the West.

His world is a zero-sum game in which any gains by the West or by domestic opponents are considered moral threats to his power.

*This is the opinion of Joe Trenzeluk, Inver Grove Heights, a junior psychology major at the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University, where he is a summer research fellow in the Unit for the Study of Personality in Politics, directed by Aubrey Immelman.*