Boris Berezovsky (businessman) by Wikipedia

Part 1 of 2

Boris Berezovsky (businessman)
by Wikipedia
Accessed: 8/3/18

NOTICE: THIS WORK MAY BE PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT

YOU ARE REQUIRED TO READ THE COPYRIGHT NOTICE AT THIS LINK BEFORE YOU READ THE FOLLOWING WORK, THAT IS AVAILABLE SOLELY FOR PRIVATE STUDY, SCHOLARSHIP OR RESEARCH PURSUANT TO 17 U.S.C. SECTION 107 AND 108. IN THE EVENT THAT THE LIBRARY DETERMINES THAT UNLAWFUL COPYING OF THIS WORK HAS OCCURRED, THE LIBRARY HAS THE RIGHT TO BLOCK THE I.P. ADDRESS AT WHICH THE UNLAWFUL COPYING APPEARED TO HAVE OCCURRED. THANK YOU FOR RESPECTING THE RIGHTS OF COPYRIGHT OWNERS.

This name uses Eastern Slavic naming customs; the patronymic is Abramovich and the family name is Berezovsky.

Boris Berezovsky
Historical photo of Boris Berezovsky
Born Boris Abramovich Berezovsky
23 January 1946
Moscow, Russian SFSR, Soviet Union
Died 23 March 2013 (aged 67)
Sunninghill, Berkshire, United Kingdom
Cause of death Open verdict
Resting place Brookwood Cemetery, Brookwood, Surrey, United Kingdom[1]
51.299574°N 0.625846°W
Other names Platon Elenin[2]
Citizenship Russian / British[2]
Occupation Businessman, engineer, mathematician, government official
Spouse(s) Nina Korotkova (1970–1991; divorced)[3]
Partner(s) Yelena Gorbunova (1996–2012; separated)[5][6]

Boris Abramovich Berezovsky (Russian: БорисAbramovich Березовский), 23 January 1946 – 23 March 2013,[7][8] aka Platon Elenin,[2] was a Russian business oligarch, government official, engineer and mathematician. He was a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Berezovsky was politically opposed to the President of Russia Vladimir Putin since Putin’s election in 2000 and remained a vocal critic of Putin for the rest of his life.[9] In late 2000, after the Russian Deputy Prosecutor General demanded that Berezovsky appear for questioning, he did not return from abroad and moved to the UK, which granted him political asylum in 2003.[10] In Russia, he was later convicted in absentia of fraud and embezzlement. The first charges were brought during Primakov’s government in 1999.[11] Despite an Interpol Red Notice for Berezovsky’s arrest, Russia repeatedly failed to obtain the extradition of Berezovsky from Britain, which became a major point of diplomatic tension between the two countries.[12][13][14]

Berezovsky made his fortune in Russia in the 1990s, when the country went through privatization of
He profited from gaining control over various assets, including the country’s main television channel, Channel One. In 1997, Forbes estimated Berezovsky’s wealth at US$3 billion.[16] He was at the height of his power in the later Yeltsin years, when he was deputy secretary of Russia’s security council, a friend of Boris Yeltsin’s influential daughter Tatyana, and a member of the Yeltsin “family” (inner circle).[17] Berezovsky helped fund Unity – the political party, which politically Vladimir Putin’s parliamentary base.[18] and was elected to the Duma on Putin’s slate.[19] However, following the Russian presidential election in March 2000, Berezovsky went into opposition and resigned from the Duma.[20] After he moved to Britain, the government took over his television assets,[21] and he divested from other Russian holdings.

In 2012, Berezovsky lost a London High Court case he brought over the ownership of the major oil producer Sibneft, against Roman Abramovich, in which he sought over £3 billion in damages.[22] The court concluded that Berezovsky had never been a co-owner of Sibneft.[23]

Berezovsky was found dead at his home, Titness Park, at Sunninghill, near Ascot in Berkshire, on 23 March 2013.[24][25] A post-mortem examination found that his death was consistent with hanging and that there were no signs of a violent struggle.[26] However, the coroner at the inquest into Berezovsky’s death later recorded an open verdict.[27]

Early life, scientific research and engineering experience

Boris Abramovich Berezovsky was born in 1946, in Moscow, to Abram Markovich Berezovsky (1911–1979),[28] a Jewish civil engineer in construction works,[29](30] and his wife, Anna Aleksandrovna Gelman (22 November 1923 – 3 September 2013).[31] Berezovsky always stressed his Jewish heritage, although by Orthodox Jewish law he was not Jewish, as his maternal grandmother was not Jewish.[32] He studied applied mathematics, receiving his doctorate in 1983.[33][34] After graduating from the Moscow Forestry Engineering Institute in 1968, Berezovsky worked as an engineer from 1969 till 1987, serving as assistant research officer, research officer and finally the head of a department in the Institute of Control Sciences of the USSR Academy of Sciences.[35] Berezovsky conducted research on optimization and control theory, publishing 16 books and articles between 1975 and 1989.

Political and business career in Russia

Accumulation of wealth

In 1989, Berezovsky took advantage of the opportunities presented by perestroika to found LogoVAZ with Badri Patarkatsishvili and senior managers from Russian automobile manufacturer AvtoVAZ. LogoVAZ developed software for AvtoVAZ, sold Soviet-made cars and serviced foreign cars.[36] The dealership profited from hyperinflation by taking cars on consignment and paying the producer at a later date when the money lost much of its value.[37]

One of Berezovsky’s early endeavors was All-Russia Automobile Alliance (AVVA), a venture fund he formed in 1993 with Alexander Voloshin (Boris Yeltsin’s future Chief of Staff) and AvtoVAZ Chairman Vladimir Kadannikov.[37] Berezovsky controlled about 30% of the company, which raised nearly US$50 million from small investors through a bonded loan to build a plant producing a “people’s car”. The project did not collect sufficient funds for the plant and the funds were instead invested into AvtoVAZ production, while the debt to investors was swapped for equity.[38][39] By 2000, AVVA held about one-third of AvtoVAZ.[40]

In 1994, Berezovsky was the target of the car bombing incident, but survived the assassination attempt, in which his driver was killed and he was injured.[41] Alexander Litvinenko led the FSB investigation into the incident and linked the crime to the resistance of the Soviet-era AvtoVaz management to Berezovsky’s growing influence in the Russian automobile market.[42]

Berezovsky’s involvement in the Russian media began in December 1994, when he gained control over ORT Television (see Channel One (Russia)) to replace the failing Soviet Channel 1.[43] He appointed the popular anchorman and producer Vladislav Listyev as CEO of ORT. Three months later Listyev was assassinated amid a fierce struggle for control of advertising sales.[44] Berezovsky was questioned in the police investigation, among many others, but the killers were never found.[45] Under Berezovsky’s stewardship, ORT became a major asset of the reformist camp as they prepared to face Communists and nationalists in the upcoming presidential elections.[46]

From 1995 to 1997, through the controversial loans-for-shares privatisation auctions[47] and (see Privatisation in Russia), Berezovsky and Patarkatsishvili assisted Roman Abramovich in acquiring control of Sibneft, the sixth-largest Russian oil company, which constituted the bulk of his wealth.[49][50] In an article in The Washington Post in 2000, Berezovsky revealed that the American financier George Soros declined an invitation to participate in the acquisition.[51]

In 1995, he played a key role in a management reshuffle at Aeroflot and participated in its corporatization.[36] with his close associate Nikolai Glushkov becoming Aeroflot’s CFO. In January 1998, it was announced that Sibneft would merge with Mikhail Khodorkovsky’s Yukos to create the third-largest oil company in the world.[52] The merger was abandoned five months later amid falling oil prices.[53]

Role in Yeltsin’s reelection in 1996

Berezovsky entered the Kremlin’s inner circle in 1993 through arranging for the publication of Yeltsin’s memoirs and befriended Valentin Yumashev, the President’s ghost-writer.[54][55][56]
In January 1996, at the World Economic Forum at Davos, Berezovsky liaised with fellow oligarchs to form an alliance – which later became known as the “Davos Pact”[57] – to bankroll Boris Yeltsin’s campaign in the upcoming presidential elections.[58] On his return to Moscow, Berezovsky met and befriended Tatyana Dyachenko, Yeltsin’s daughter.[56] According to a later profile by The Guardian, “Berezovsky masterminded the 1996 re-election of Boris Yeltsin... He and his billionaire friends coughed up £140 million for Yeltsin’s campaign”.[59]

In the summer of 1996, Berezovsky had emerged as a key advisor to Yeltsin, allied with Anatoly Chubais, opposing a group of hardliners led by General Alexander Korzhakov.[60] One night in June, in the drawing room of Club Logovaz, Berezovsky, Chubais and others plotted the ouster of Korzhakov and other hardliners.[56] On 20 June 1996, Yeltsin fired Korzhakov and two other hawks, leaving the reformers’ team in full control of the TV networks controlled by Gusinsky and Berezovsky (NTV and ORT) and the money from the business elite.[63] The New York Times called Berezovsky the “public spokesman and chief lobbyist for this new elite, which moved from the shadows to respectability in a few short years”.[56]

Assassination requests by Berezovsky

In 1999, Alexander Korzhakov repeated allegations that when he was the head of the Kremlin’s security service, Boris Berezovsky tried to convince him to murder Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov, popular crooner and Duma deputy Iosif Kobzon, a Luzhkov ally, and media tycoon Vladimir Gusinsky, the founder of Russian TV channel NTV.[64][65]

In 1996, major Russian newspaper Izvestia published a series of articles critical of Berezovsky. According to Yuri Shefler, he was approached by Boris Berezovsky that time with a request to kill editor-in-chief of Izvestia Igor Golembiovsky. Shefler refused to do that, and instead arranged a friendship between Berezovsky and Golembiovsky.[66]

Role in Chechen conflict

On 17 October 1996, Yeltsin dismissed General Alexander Lebed from the position of National Security Advisor amid allegations that he was plotting a coup and secretly mustering a private army.[67] Lebed promptly accused Berezovsky and Gusinsky of engineering his ouster, and formed a coalition with the disgraced General Alexander Korzhakov.[68] The dismissal of Lebed, the architect of the Khasavyurt peace accord, left Yeltsin’s Chechen policy in limbo. On 30 October 1996, in a political bombshell, Yeltsin named Ivan Rybkin as his new National Security Advisor and appointed Berezovsky Deputy Secretary in charge of Chechnya[69] with a mandate to oversee the implementation of the Khasavyurt Accord: that is, the withdrawal of Russian forces, the negotiation of a peace treaty, and the preparation of a general election. On 19 December 1996, Berezovsky made headlines by negotiating the release of 21 Russian policemen held hostage by the warlord Salman Raduev amid efforts by radicals from both sides to torpedo peace negotiations.[70]

On 12 May 1997, Yeltsin and Maskhadov signed the Russian–Chechen Peace Treaty in the Kremlin. Speaking at a press conference in Moscow, Berezovsky outlined his priorities for the economic reconstruction of Chechnya, particularly the construction of a pipeline for transporting Azerbaijani oil. He called upon the Russian business community to contribute to the rebuilding of the republic, revealing his own donation of US$1 million (some sources mention US$2 million) for a cement factory in Grozny.[71] This payment would come to haunt him years later, when he was accused of funding Chechen terrorists.[72]

After his dismissal from the Security Council, Berezovsky vowed to continue his activities in Chechnya as a private individual[73] and maintained contact with Chechen warlords. He was instrumental in the release of 69 hostages, including two Britons, Jon James and Camilla Carr, whom he flew in his private jet to RAF Brize Norton in September 1998.[74][75] In an interview with Thomas de Waal in 2005, he revealed the involvement of the British Ambassador to Russia, Sir Andrew Wood, and explained that his former negotiations counterpart, the Islamic militant leader Movladi Udugov, helped arrange the Britons’ release.[76]

Berezovsky had a phone conversation with Movladi Udugov in the spring of 1999, six months before the beginning of fighting in Dagestan. A transcript of that conversation was leaked to a Moscow tabloid on 10 September 1999 and appeared to mention the would-be militants’ invasion. It has been the subject of much speculation ever since. As Berezovsky explained later in interviews to de Waal[76] and Goldfarb,[42] Udugov proposed to coordinate the Islamists’ incursion into Dagestan, so that a limited Russian response would topple the Chechen president Aslan Maskhadov and establish a new Islamic republic, which would be anti-American but friendly to Russia. Berezovsky said that he disliked the idea but reported Udugov’s overture to prime-minister Stepashin. “Udugov and Basayev,” he asserted, “conspired with Stepashin and Putin to provoke a war to topple Maskhadov ... but the agreement was for the Russian army to stop at the Terek River. However, Putin double-crossed the Chechens and started an all-out war.”[42]
Battle with "Young Reformers"

In March 1997, Berezovsky and Tatyana Dyachenko flew to Nizhniy Novgorod to persuade the city's governor, Boris Nemtsov, to join Chubais' economic team,[56] which became known as the government of Young Reformers. This was the last concerted political action of the "Davos Pact" (see above). Four months later the group split into two cliques fiercely competing for Yeltsin's favour.[77] The clash was precipitated by the privatization auction of the communication utility Svyazinvest, in which Onexim bank of Chubais' loyalist Vladimir Potanin, backed by George Soros, competed with Gusinsky, allied with Spanish Telefónica. An initially commercial dispute swiftly developed into a contest of political wills between Chubais and Berezovsky.[77]

Potanin's victory unleashed a bitter media war, in which ORT and NTV accused the Chubais group of fixing the auction in favor of Potanin, whereas Chubais charged Berezovsky with abusing his government position to advance his business interests.[78] Both sides appealed to Yeltsin, who had proclaimed a new era of "fair" privatization "based on strict legislative rules and allowing no deviations".[79] In the end, both sides lost. Berezovsky's media revealed a corrupt scheme whereby a publishing house owned by Onexim Bank paid Chubais and his group hefty advances for a book that was never written. The scandal led to a purge of Chubais' loyalists from the government.[80] Chubais retaliated by persuading Yeltsin to dismiss Boris Berezovsky from the national security council. Berezovsky's service on the Security Council ended on 5 November 1997.[81] Soros called the Berezovsky-Chubais clash a "historical event, in the reality of which I would have never believed, if I had not watched it myself. I saw a fight of the people in the boat floating towards the edge of a waterfall". He argued that the reformist camp never recovered from the wounds sustained in this struggle, setting the political stage for conservative nationalists, and eventually Vladimir Putin.[78]

Philanthropy

Berezovsky was reportedly the only person who, after the Karmadon Gorge tragedy when an avalanche buried the film crew of the Russian director Sergei Bodrov, immediately allocated a large sum of money for the search for survivors.

In 1991, Berezovsky founded the "Triumph" award, bestowed upon outstanding Russian poets, musicians, artists, directors and ballet dancers.[82]

It is reported in the documentary series Captive that Boris Berezovsky, in 1998, was effective in the release of two English aid workers whom had been held hostage for ransom in Chechnya for 14 months.

The Kremlin Family and Putin's rise to power

In the Spring of 1998, Berezovsky made an unexpected political comeback, starting with his appointment, in April 1998, to the position of executive secretary of the Commonwealth of Independent States.[83] He emerged in the centre of a new informal power group – the "Family", a close-knit circle of advisers around Yeltsin, which included Yeltsin's daughter Tatiana and his chief of staff, Yumashev. It was rumoured that no important government appointment could happen without the Family's support.[84] By 1999, the Family also included two of Berezovsky's associates, his former AVVA partner Alexander Voloshin, who replaced Yumashev as Yeltsin's chief of staff, and Roman Abramovich.[85]

The principal concern of the Family was finding an "electable" successor to Yeltsin to counter the presidential aspirations of the then prime minister, Yevgeny Primakov, who was leaning to more statist positions. Political battles between the Family and Primakov's camp dominated the two last years of Yeltsin's presidency.[86]

In November 1998, in a televised press conference, five officers of the FSB, led by Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Litvinenko, revealed an alleged plot by their superiors to assassinate Berezovsky.[87]

In April 1999, Russia's Prosecutor General, Yury Skuratov, opened an investigation into embezzlement at Aeroflot and issued an arrest warrant for Berezovsky, who called the investigation politically motivated and orchestrated by Primakov. [88] Nikolai Glushkov, Aeroflot's former General Director, later revealed that conflict with Primakov arose from the irritation that Berezovsky's management team caused in the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service, which Primakov headed before becoming prime minister, over firing of thousands of spies, who used Aeroflot as a front organization in Soviet times.[89][90][91] The arrest warrant was dropped a week later, after Berezovsky submitted to questioning by the prosecutors. No charges were brought. [92] Yeltsin sacked Primakov's government shortly thereafter and replaced him with Sergey Stepashin as new prime-minister.[93]
Berezovsky's acquaintance with Putin dated back to the early 1990s, when the latter, as Deputy Mayor of St. Petersburg, helped Logovaz establish a car dealership.[97] They enjoyed friendly relations; on occasion, Berezovsky took Putin skiing with him in Switzerland.[94]

In February 1999, when Berezovsky's political standing looked uncertain because of his clash with Primakov over Aeroflot, Putin, then Director of the FSB, made a bold gesture of friendship by showing up at a birthday party for Berezovsky's wife. "I absolutely do not care what Primakov thinks of me" Putin told Berezovsky on that night. That was the beginning of their political alliance.[97] According to the Times, Spanish police discovered that on up to five different occasions in 1999, Putin had secretly visited a villa in Spain belonging to Berezovsky.[98]

In mid-July 1999, the Family dispatched Berezovsky to Biarritz, where Putin was vacationing, to persuade him to accept the position of prime minister and the role of heir apparent.[97][99] On 9 August, Yeltsin sacked the government of Sergei Stepashin and appointed Putin prime minister, amid reports that Berezovsky had masterminded the reshuffle.[100]

Putin's principal opponents were the former Prime Minister Evgeny Primakov and the Mayor of Moscow Yuri Luzhkov, backed by the Fatherland-All Russia alliance. To counter this group in the Duma elections of 1999, Berezovsky was instrumental in the creation, within the space of a few months, of the Unity party, with no ideology other than its support for Putin.[101][102] Later, he disclosed that the source of Unity's funding, with Putin's knowledge and consent, was Aeroflot.[103] In the 1999 election, Berezovsky campaigned as a Putin loyalist and won a seat in the Duma, representing the North Caucasian republic of Karachaevo-Cherkessia.[102]

During the Duma election campaign Berezovsky's ORT TV served as an extremely effective propaganda machine for the Putin campaign, using aggressive attack reporting and programming to denigrate and ridicule Putin's rivals, Primakov and Luzhkov, tactics strongly criticized as undue interference with the media.[104] But Unity got a surprisingly high score in the elections, paving the way for Putin's election victory in spring 2000.[86]

Conflict with Putin and emigration

Berezovsky's disagreements with Putin became public three weeks into Putin's presidency. On 8 May 2000, Berezovsky and Abramovich were spotted together at Putin's invitation-only inauguration ball in Moscow.[105] However, on 31 May, Berezovsky sharply attacked the constitutional reform proposed by the president, which would give the Kremlin the right to dismiss elected governors. In an open letter to Putin published in Kommersant, Berezovsky, then a Duma deputy, said that he would be obliged to vote against the president's legislative project, which was "directed toward changing the state's structure" and represented a "threat to Russia's territorial integrity and democracy."[106] On 17 July 2000, Berezovsky resigned from the Duma, saying he "did not want to be involved in the country's ruin and the restoration of an authoritarian regime".[107] In August, Berezovsky's media attacked Putin for the way he handled the sinking of the Kursk submarine, blaming the death of 118 sailors on the Kremlin's reluctance to accept foreign help.[108] In September, Berezovsky alleged that the Kremlin had attempted to expropriate his shares in ORT and announced that he would put his stake into a trust to be controlled by prominent intellectuals.[109]

In an article in The Washington Post in 2000, Berezovsky argued that in the absence of a strong civil society and middle class it may sometimes be necessary for capitalists "to interfere directly in the political process" of Russia as a counterweight to ex-Communists "who hate democracy and dream of regaining lost positions."[110] Berezovsky took legal action against the journalist Paul Klebnikov, who accused him of various crimes. In October, in an interview in Le Figaro, Putin announced that he would no longer tolerate criticism of the government by media controlled by the oligarchs. "If necessary we will destroy those instruments that allow this blackmail", he declared.[111] Responding to a question about Berezovsky, he warned that he had a "cudgel" in store for him. "The state has a cudgel in its hands that you use to hit just once, but on the head. We haven't used this cudgel yet. We've just brandished it...[But] the day we get really angry, we won't hesitate to use it."[111]

In the same month, Russian prosecutors revived the Aeroflot fraud investigation and Berezovsky was questioned as a witness.[112] On 7 November 2000, Berezovsky, who was travelling abroad, failed to appear for further questioning and announced that he would not return to Russia because of what he described as "constantly intensifying pressure on me by the authorities and President Putin personally. Essentially," he said, "I'm being forced to choose whether to become a political prisoner or a political emigre." Berezovsky claimed that Putin had made him a suspect in the Aeroflot case simply because ORT had "spoken the truth" about the sinking of the submarine Kursk.[113] In early December his associate Nikolai Glushkov was arrested in Moscow and Berezovsky dropped the proposal to put ORT stake in trust.[114]

Divestment from Russian holdings

2001 was the year of systematic takeover by the government of privately owned television networks, in the course of which Berezovsky, Gusinski and Patarkatsishvili lost most of their media holdings,[21] prompting one of them to warn of Russia "turning into a banana republic" in a letter to The New York Times.[115] In February, Berezovsky and Patarkatsishvili sold their stake in ORT to Roman Abramovich, who promptly ceded editorial control to the Kremlin.[116] Berezovsky later claimed that there was a secret understanding that Nikolai Glushkov would be released from prison as...
In 2001, Berezovsky and Patarkatsishvili ended their involvement in Sibneft for a US$1.3 billion fee from Roman Abramovich.[50] This transaction was the subject of a later dispute in the UK commercial courts, with Berezovsky alleging that he had been put under pressure to sell his stake to Abramovich at a fraction of the true value.[124] an allegation that the court rejected.[50]

In 2006, Berezovsky sold the Kommersant ("The Businessman") newspaper and his remaining Russian assets.[125]

Exile in Britain

From his new home in the UK, Stanley House, where he and associates including Akhmed Zakayev, Alexander Litvinenko and Alex Goldfarb became known as "the London Circle" of Russian exiles, Berezovsky publicly stated that he was on a mission to bring down Putin "by force" or by bloodless revolution.[17][94] He established the International Foundation for Civil Liberties, to "support the abused and the vulnerable in society – prisoners, national minorities and business people" in Russia and criticized Putin's record in the West.[126]

Berezovsky launched a concerted campaign to expose alleged misdeeds of Vladimir Putin, from suppressing freedom of speech[127] to committing war crimes in Chechnya.[128] He also accused Russia's FSB security service of staging the Moscow apartment bombings of 1999 in order to help Putin win the presidency.[129] Many of these activities were funded through the New York-based International Foundation for Civil Liberties directed by Berezovsky's friend Alex Goldfarb.

Berezovsky bought a Belgravia flat and a house on Surrey's Wentworth Estate, and for a while owned the 172-acre Hascombe Court estate in Godalming.[130] In 2012, he sold his Wentworth Estate house.[23]

Political asylum and extradition proceedings

On 9 September 2003, Berezovsky was granted refugee status and political asylum by the British Home Office. Alex Goldfarb, the head of the New York-based Foundation for Civil Liberties, which was funded by Berezovsky, said he was delighted by the news.[131]

On 12 September 2003, judge Timothy Workman of Bow Street Magistrates' Court in central London dropped extradition proceedings against Berezovsky, ruling that it would be pointless to pursue the case as the granting of asylum status to Berezovsky made the proceedings redundant.[132]

However, when Berezovsky told Reuters in early February 2006 that he was working on plans to overthrow Russian President Vladimir Putin, British Foreign Minister Jack Straw warned the London-based Russian tycoon not to plot against the Russian President while living in Britain. His refugee status could be reviewed if he continued to make such remarks.[133]

Convictions in absentia and investigations abroad

After Berezovsky gained political asylum in Britain, the Russian authorities vigorously pursued various criminal charges against him. This culminated in two trials in absentia. A Moscow trial in November 2007 found him guilty of embezzling nearly 215m roubles (£4.3m) from Aeroflot. The court said that in the 1990s Berezovsky was a member of an "organised criminal group" that stole the airline's foreign currency earnings. From London, Berezovsky called the trial, which sentenced him to six years in prison, 'a farce'.[11] In June 2009, the Krasnogorsk City Court near Moscow sentenced Berezovsky to thirteen years imprisonment for defrauding AvtoVAZ for 58 million rubles (US$1.9 million) in the 1990s. Berezovsky was represented by a court-appointed lawyer.[134]

In spite of Berezovsky's successes in Britain in fighting off extradition requests and exposing Russian court convictions as politically motivated (see below), some other jurisdictions cooperated with Russian authorities in seizing his property and targeting his financial transactions as money laundering. Berezovsky succeeded in overturning some of these actions. In July 2007, Brazilian prosecutors issued an arrest warrant for Berezovsky in connection with his investment in the Brazilian football club Corinthians.[135] However, a year later the Brazilian Supreme Court cancelled the order and stopped the investigation.[136] On Russian requests, French authorities raided his villa in Nice in search of documents,[137] and seized his two yachts parked on the French Riviera.[138] However, some months later, the boats were released by a French court.[139] Swiss prosecutors have been assisting their Russian colleagues for over a decade in investigating Berezovsky's finances.[140]

Accusations and libel suits in the UK

Berezovsky's meteoric enrichment and involvement in power struggles have been accompanied by allegations of various crimes from his opponents. After his falling out with Putin and exile to London, these allegations became the recurrent theme of official state-controlled media, earning him comparisons with Leon Trotsky[141] and the Nineteen Eighty-Four character Emmanuel Goldstein.[142]
In 1996, Forbes, an American business magazine, published an article by Paul Klebnikov entitled 'Godfather of the Kremlin?' with the kicker 'Power. Politics. Murder. Boris Berezovsky could teach the guys in Sicily a thing or two.'[143] The article linked Berezovsky to corruption in the car industry, to the Chechen mafia and to the murder of Vladislav Listiev. In 2000, the House of Lords gave Berezovsky and Nikolai Glushkov permission to sue for libel in the UK courts. Given that only 2,000 of the 785,000 copies sold worldwide were sold in the United Kingdom, this led numerous scholars to cite the case as an example of libel tourism.[144][145][146][147][148] The case slowly proceeded until the claimants opted to settle when Forbes offered a partial retraction.[148] The following statement appended to the article on the Forbes website summarises: 'On 6 March 2003, the resolution of the case was announced in the High Court in London. Forbes stated in open court that (1) it was not the magazine's intention to state that Berezovsky was responsible for the murder of Listiev, only that he had been included in an inconclusive police investigation of the crime; (2) there is no evidence that Berezovsky was responsible for this or any other murder; (3) in light of the English court's ruling, it was wrong to characterize Berezovsky as a mafia boss; and (4) the magazine erred in stating that Glouchkov had been convicted for theft of state property in 1982.[149] Klebnikov elaborated his allegations in his 2000 book Godfather of the Kremlin: Boris Berezovsky and the looting of Russia (the 2001 edition was titled Godfather of the Kremlin: The Decline of Russia in the Age of Gangster Capitalism).[150][151][152]

In 2006, a UK court awarded Berezovsky £50,000 in libel damages against the Russian private bank Alfa-Bank and its Chairman, Mikhail Fridman. Fridman had claimed on a Russian television programme that could be watched in the UK that Berezovsky had threatened him when the two men were competitors for control of the Kommersant publishing house, and that making threats was Berezovsky's usual way of conducting business. The jury rejected the defendants' claim that Fridman's allegations were true.[153]

In June 2006, The Guardian apologised to Berezovsky over an article published in 2005 about the Russia's attempt to have him extradited to face fraud charges in Russia. The article described Berezovsky as a "wanted defrauders of the Russian region of Samara". In a statement read out in open court, The Guardian accepted that granting him political asylum in 2003 meant that the British government had concluded that there were no "serious reasons for considering that he has committed a serious non-political crime" in Russia. The Guardian accepted that its description of Berezovsky was unjustified and apologised for its error. Berezovsky accepted the apology and withdrew his libel suit.[154]

In March 2010, Berezovsky, represented by Desmond Browne QC, won a libel case and was awarded £150,000 damages by the High Court in London over allegations that he had been behind the murder of Alexander Litvinenko.[155] The allegations had been broadcast by the Russian state channel RTR Planeta in April 2007 on its programme Vesti Nedeli, which could be viewed from the UK. In his judgement judge David Eady stated: "I can say unequivocally that there is no evidence before me that Mr Berezovsky had any part in the murder of Mr Litvinenko. Nor, for that matter, do I see any basis for reasonable grounds to suspect him of it." Berezovsky had sued both the channel and a man called Vladimir Terluk, whom Mr Justice Eady agreed was the man who had been interviewed in silhouette by the programme under the pseudonym 'Pyotr'. Terluk had claimed that to further his UK asylum application Berezovsky had approached him to fabricate a murder plot against himself, and that Litvinenko knew of this. Mr Justice Eady accepted that Terluk had not himself alleged Berezovsky's involvement in the murder of Litvinenko, but considered that his own allegations were themselves serious and that there was no truth in any of them. As RTR did not participate in the proceedings, Terluk was left to defend the case himself, receiving significant assistance (as the judge noted) from the Russian prosecutor's office.[147]

The Guardian described the 2010 libel case as 'almost anarchy at times as officials from the Russian prosecutors' office repeatedly intervened despite not being party to proceedings. So obvious was their intention that when one of their mobile phones went off in court one day, Desmond Browne quipped: "That must be Mr Putin on the line."[147] The defendants appealed to the Court of Appeal but the appeal was dismissed, Lord Justice Laws giving a judgment with which the Chancellor of the High Court and Lady Justice Rafferty agreed. The Lord Justice described a witness statement of Andrei Lugovoi, newly adduced by the defendants, as "not sensibly capable of belief".[156]

High Court case against Abramovich

In 2011, Berezovsky brought a civil case against Roman Abramovich in the High Court of Justice in London, accusing Abramovich of blackmail, breach of trust and breach of contract, and seeking over £3 billion in damages.[22] This became the largest civil court case in British legal history.[157]

Berezovsky's claimed past ownership of Sibneft – which constituted the bulk of his fortune – was put into question by Abramovich, who in a statement to the High Court in London asserted that Berezovsky had never owned shares in Sibneft, and that US$1.3 billion paid in 2001 ostensibly for his stake in the company was actually in recognition of Berezovsky's "political assistance and protection" during the creation of Sibneft in 1995.[158] The hearings, which started on 3 October 2011, examined Berezovsky's US$5.5 billion claim against Abramovich for damages arising from the sale of his assets under alleged "threats and intimidation".[159] The Daily Mail reported that Berezovsky only succeeded in serving a writ on Abramovich when both men happened to be shopping on Sloane Street, with Berezovsky dashing from Dolce and Gabbana to confront Abramovich in Hermès.[160]

On 31 August 2012, the High Court found for Abramovich.[161] The High Court judge stated that because of the nature of the evidence, the case hinged on whether to believe Berezovsky or Abramovich's evidence. In her ruling, the judge observed: "On my analysis of the entirety of the evidence, I found Mr Berezovsky an unimpressive, and inherently unreliable, witness, who regarded truth as a transitory, flexible concept, which could not be moulded to suit his current purposes. ... I regret to say that the bottom line of my analysis of Mr. Berezovsky's credibility is that he would have said almost anything to support his case."[22][162][161]:16–18 She ruled that the monies paid represented a final payment in discharge of all obligations.[161][50]
Berezovsky conducted business with Neil Bush, the younger brother of the US President George W. Bush. Berezovsky was an investor in Bush's Ignite! Learning, an educational software corporation, since at least 2003. In 2005, Neil Bush met with Berezovsky in Latvia, causing tension with Russia due to Berezovsky's fugitive status.[163] Neil Bush was also seen with Berezovsky's box at an Arsenal F.C. match at the Emirates Stadium in London. [164] There had been speculation that the relationship might have become a cause of tension in Russo-American bilateral relations.[165]

Berezovsky gave £320,000 to a company run by Prince Michael of Kent's private secretary between 2002 and 2008. The prince's spokesman said the money funded 'cultural and charitable activities'.[166]

It had been speculated that Berezovsky's wealth may have been depleted with the onset of the late 2000s recession. According to the Sunday Times Rich List, in 2011 his net worth was about US$900 million.[167]

Appeals for regime change

In September 2005, Berezovsky said in an interview with the BBC: "I'm sure that Putin doesn't have the chance to survive, even to the next election in 2008. I am doing everything in my power to limit his time frame, and I am really thinking of returning to Russia after Putin collapses, which he will."[94][168] In January 2006, Berezovsky stated in an interview to a Moscow-based radio station that he was working on overthrowing the administration of Vladimir Putin by force.[169] Berezovsky also publicly accused Putin of being "a gangster" [170] and the "terrorist number one".[171]

On 13 April 2007, in an interview with The Guardian, Berezovsky declared that he was plotting the violent overthrow of President Putin by financing and encouraging coup plotters in Moscow: "We need to use force to change this regime. It isn’t possible to change this regime through democratic means. There can be no change without force, pressure." [15] He also admitted that during the last six years he had struggled hard to "destroy the positive image of Putin" and said that "Putin has created an authoritarian regime against the Russian constitution. ... I don’t know how it will happen, but authoritarian regimes only collapse by force."[172] Berezovsky said he had dedicated much of the last six years to "trying to destroy the positive image of Putin" held by many in the West by portraying him whenever possible as a dangerously anti-democratic figure.[15]

A teenager carries a sign reading "Berezovsky, we are with you!" during a police attack on a 2007 Dissenters March in Saint Petersburg; The Other Russia organizers said that this slogan was a provocation carried out by pro-government youth groups[173]

Soon after Berezovsky's 2007 statement, Garry Kasparov, a significant figure in the opposition movement The Other Russia and leader of the United Civil Front, wrote the following on his website: "Berezovsky has lived in emigration for many years and no longer has significant influence upon the political processes which take place in Russian society. His extravagant proclamations are simply a method of attracting attention. Furthermore, for the overwhelming majority of Russian people he was a political symbol of the 90s, one of the "bad blokes" enriching themselves behind the back of president Yeltsin. The informational noise around Berezovsky was specifically beneficial for the Kremlin, which was trying to compromise Russia's real opposition. Berezovsky has not had and does not have any relation to Other Russia or the United Civil Front.[174] Berezovsky responded in June 2007 by saying that "there is not one significant politician in Russia whom he has not financed" and that this included members of Other Russia. The managing director of the United Civil Front, in turn, said that the organization would consider suing Berezovsky over these allegations,[175] but the lawsuit has never been brought before the court.

The Russian Prosecutor General’s Office had launched a criminal investigation against Berezovsky to determine whether his comments could be considered a "seizure of power by force", as outlined in the Russian Criminal Code. If convicted, an offender faces up to twenty years imprisonment, however Berezovsky is now deceased. The British Foreign Office denounced Berezovsky's statements, warning him that his status of a political refugee might be reconsidered, should he continue to make similar remarks. Furthermore, Scotland Yard had announced that it would investigate whether Berezovsky's statements violated the law.[176][177] However, in the following July, the Crown Prosecution Service
announced that Berezovsky would not face charges in the UK for his comments. Kremlin officials called it a “disturbing moment” in Anglo-Russian relations.[178]

Involvement in the 2004 Ukraine presidential election

In September 2005, the former president of Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk, accused Berezovsky of having financed Viktor Yushchenko’s 2004 Ukrainian presidential election campaign, and provided copies of documents showing money transfers from companies he claimed were controlled by Berezovsky to companies controlled by Yuschenko’s official backers.[179] Berezovsky confirmed that he met Yushchenko’s representatives in London before the election, and that the money was transferred from his companies, but he refused to confirm or deny that the companies that received the money were used in Yushchenko’s campaign. Financing of election campaigns by foreign citizens is illegal in Ukraine.[180] In November 2005, Berezovsky also claimed he had heavily financed Ukraine’s Orange Revolution (that had followed the presidential election).[181] In September 2007, Berezovsky launched lawsuits against two Ukrainian politicians, Oleksandr Tretiyakov, a former presidential aid, and David Zhvaniya, a former emergencies minister.[182] Berezovsky was suing the men for nearly US$23 million, accusing them of misusing the money he had allocated in 2004 to fund the Orange Revolution.[182] Yuschenko has denied Berezovsky financed his election campaign.[179]

Berezovsky called on Ukrainian business to support Yushchenko in the 2010 presidential election of January 2010 as a guarantor of debarment of property redistribution after the election.[183] On 10 December 2009, the Ukrainian minister of interior affairs Yuriy Lutsenko stated that if the Russian interior ministry requested it, Berezovsky would be detained upon arriving in Ukraine.[183]

Persona non grata in Latvia since October 2005

In October 2005, Latvian Prime Minister Aigars Kalvitis signed a decree placing Boris Berezovsky on the list of persona non grata. The exact reasons for blacklisting Berezovsky were not disclosed. Kalvitis called Berezovsky a “threat” to national security. Previously, the National Security Council of Latvia took the decision to recommend that exiled Russian billionaire Boris Berezovsky be barred from traveling to Latvia. The decision to bar the one-time Russian oligarch came swiftly after Berezovsky’s trip to Riga in September 2005.[184] Berezovsky was in Riga along with Neil Bush, the brother of the U.S. president, to discuss a project with Latvian businessmen.[185]

The Baltic News Service quoted the former Russian oligarch as saying that he believes Latvia’s decision to declare him persona non grata was the result of intense pressure by Russia and structures linked with George Soros, the U.S. business magnate who has had acrimonious relations with Berezovsky. Kalvitis however denied the theory that the banning came on pressure from the Kremlin or the White House.[186]

Goldfarb was among the first political emigres to return to the USSR after Gorbachev launched his reforms. Impressions of his first visit in October 1987 were published as a cover story in The New York Times magazine under the title “Testing Glasnost. An Exile Visits his Homeland”. The story caught the attention of US philanthropist George Soros, leading to a decade-long association between the two. According to Soros’ biographer Robert Slater, Goldfarb was among the first group of Russian exiles in New York whom Soros invited to brainstorm his potential Foundation in Russia. In 1991 Goldfarb persuaded Soros to donate $100 million to help former Soviet scientists survive the hardships of the economic shock therapy adopted by the Yeltsin government.

From 1992 to 1995, Goldfarb was Director of Operations at Soros’ International Science Foundation, which helped sustain tens of thousands of scientists and scholars in the former Soviet Union during the harshest
Death of Badri Patarkatsishvili in February 2008

"'Berezovsky killed my son', Litvinenko's dad tells Scotland Yard" as of May 2012.

"I trust the conclusions of the British investigators that the trail leads to the Russian state-funded media continue to report the claims e.g. (see above), following which he commented, "I trust the conclusions of the British investigators that the trail leads to the Russian government and discrediting it on the global stage – has been aired by officials of the US Department of State, as well as by Alexander Litvinenko, one of Berezovsky's closest associates, was murdered in London in November 2006 with a rare radioactive poison, Polonium 210. The British authorities charged a former FSB officer and head of security at ORT, Andrey Lugovoy, with the murder and requested his extradition, which Russia refused. Several Russian diplomats were expelled from UK over the case. The timing of the story has also been seen as suspicious, coming in the middle of a row over Britain's attempts to charge a Russian businessman and former security agent, Andrei Lugovoi, with Litvinenko's murder.

Berezovsky said he was told the assassin would be someone he knew, who would shoot him in the head and then surrender to the police. He again accused Vladimir Putin of being behind a plot to assassinate him. The Kremlin has denied similar claims in the past. Accordin...
In the evening of Tuesday, 12 February 2008, Georgia’s richest man, billionaire Arkady “Badri” Patarkatsishvili, a close friend and long-time business partner of Berezovsky, collapsed and died in his bedroom after a family dinner at Downside Manor, his mansion in Leatherhead, Surrey, England, at the age of 52.[205]

Patarkatsishvili, who as a presidential candidate had also been campaigning to oust Georgia’s President Mikhail Saakashvili, spent his last day in the City of London office of international law firm Debevoise and Plimpton, preparing along with his lawyer Lord Goldsmith QC and fellow exiles, the Russians Nikolai Glushkov and Yuli Dubov, his defence against allegations from the Georgian government that he had plotted a coup against Saakashvili. These allegations included plans to murder a government official and commit terrorist acts. At 4pm, the group was joined by Patarkatsishvili’s public relations adviser Lord Tim Bell and by his close friend Boris Berezovsky. The talks went on for an hour, during which Patarkatsishvili complained of feeling unwell.[206][207][208] Patarkatsishvili then left the City at 5pm and travelled to the office building on Down Street in Mayfair he shared with Berezovsky. Two hours later, at about 7pm, he set out on the 16-mile journey to Leatherhead in his chauffeur-driven Maybach.[206] Shortly after dining at Downside Manor, Patarkatsishvili told his family he felt unwell and went upstairs to his bedroom where he was found unconscious after a heart attack.[209] Resuscitation attempts were unsuccessful.[210] As in any other case of unexpected death, Surrey police treated the case as “suspicious” and launched an official investigation.[211] Preliminary reports indicated a heart attack as the cause of death.

Berezovsky described the death of his closest friend as “a terrible tragedy”. [206]

On 23 March 2013, Berezovsky was found dead at his home, Titness Park, at Sunninghill, near Ascot in Berkshire.[25] His body was found by a bodyguard in a locked bathroom, with a ligature around his neck.[212] His death was announced in a post on Facebook by his son-in-law, Alexander Dobrovinsky, a lawyer who had represented Berezovsky, wrote that he may have committed suicide,[215] adding that Berezovsky had fallen into debt after losing the lawsuit against Abramovich, and had spent the final few months of his life selling his possessions to cover his court costs.[216] Berezovsky was also said to have recently been depressed and to have isolated himself from friends.[217][218] He reportedly suffered from depression and was taking antidepressant drugs; a day prior to his death he told a reporter in London that he had nothing left to live for. [219]

When Berezovsky’s death became known, there was speculation by mainstream British news media that the Russian government may have been involved.[220] The Thames Valley Police classified his death as “unexplained” and launched a formal investigation into the circumstances behind it. Specialists in chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials were deployed to Berezovsky’s home as a “precaution”. These specialists later “found nothing of concern”. [222] A post-mortem examination carried out by the Home Office pathologist found the cause of death was consistent with hanging and there was nothing pointing to a violent struggle.[26][222] At the March 2014 inquest into the death, however, Berezovsky’s daughter Elizaveta introduced a report by German pathologist Bern Brinkmann, whom she had shared the autopsy photos with, noting that the ligature mark on her father’s neck was circular rather than V-shaped as is commonly the case with hanging victims, and called the coroner’s attention to a statement by one of the responding paramedics who found it strange that Berezovsky’s face was purple, rather than pale as hanging victims usually are. The body also had a fresh wound on the back of the head and a fractured rib (injuries police believed Berezovsky could have suffered in the process of falling as he hanged himself). Elsewhere in the house, an unidentified fingerprint was found on the shower, and one paramedic’s radiation alarm sounded as he entered.[223]

Following the inquest the coroner, Peter Bedford, recorded an open verdict commenting, “I am not saying Mr Berezovsky took his own life, I am not saying Mr Berezovsky was unlawfully killed. What I am saying is that the burden of proof sets such a high standard it is impossible for me to say.” He specifically cited the Brinkmann report as casting reasonable
Berezovsky was buried on 8 May 2013 in a private ceremony at Brookwood Cemetery in Surrey. The burial timing had been changed on several occasions to try to avoid interest from the Russian media.[1]

Apology to Putin

After Berezovsky's death, a spokesman for President Putin reported that he had sent a letter to the Russian president, asking for permission to return to Russia and asking "forgiveness for his mistakes."[244][225] Some of Berezovsky's associates doubted the letter's existence, claiming that it was out of character. However, his girlfriend at the time, Katerina Sabirova, later confirmed in an interview that he did in fact send the letter:[226]

"I said that they will publish it and you will look bad. And that it won't help. He answered that it was all the same to him, that in any case all sins were blamed on him and that this was his only chance."

It was claimed by anonymous sources that rival Roman Abramovich delivered the letter to Putin personally, having received an apology from Berezovsky himself. Both Putin's chief of staff, Sergei Ivanov, and Abramovich's spokesman alluded to the letter being passed by a "certain person", but did not go into details due to the personal nature of the issue. [227]

Publications by Berezovsky

Berezovsky was a doctor of technical sciences and author of many academic papers and studies such as "Binary relations in multi-criteria optimizations" and "Multi-criteria optimization: mathematical aspects". In the mathematical review index MathSciNet, B.A. Berezovskiĭ is credited with 16 publications from 1975 to 1989 on operations research and mathematical programming, earning 9 citations in other publications. Most cited is the book The Problem of Optimal Choice with A.V. Gnedin (Nauka, Moscow 1984), devoted to secretary problems.[228]

Aside from his academic publications, Berezovsky frequently authored articles and gave interviews; these are collected in The Art of the Impossible (3 vols.). He continued to contribute articles while in exile, taking a highly critical view of Russia's political leaders.[15][229][230][231]

Works about Berezovsky

In 1996 the Russian-American journalist Paul Klebnikov wrote a highly critical article entitled "Godfather of the Kremlin?"[232] on Berezovsky and the state of Russia more generally, in response to which Berezovsky sued Forbes in the UK[233] (see above); in 2001 he expanded his article into a book entitled Godfather of the Kremlin, alternatively subtitled The Decline of Russia in the Age of Gangster Capitalism and Boris Berezovsky and the looting of Russia.[151][152][234] On 9 July 2004, while leaving the Forbes office in Moscow, unknown assailants fired at Klebnikov from a slowly moving car. He was shot four times and died later in hospital. Klebnikov's body was barely cold when Boris Berezovsky, in the words of investigative journalist Richard Behar, "whipped out his tongue from its holster and publicly called the 41-year-old editor of Forbes Russia 'a dishonest reporter'."[235] Secret Diary of a Russian Oligarch and How to get rid of Oligarch or Who Beat Berezovsky by Sasha Nerozina (friend of Berezovsky family and a spokeswoman of Berezovsky's wife Galina) were published in Russia and other former Soviet states in 2013 and 2014 by Olma Media Publishing House.

Yuly Dubov, a close business associate of Berezovsky, wrote a novel based on Berezovsky's life which provided the basis for the 2002 film Tycoon. Like Berezovsky, he fled to London and successfully fought extradition to Russia.[236][237] Judge Timothy Workman of Bow Street Magistrates' Court in central London dropped extradition proceedings against Yuly Dubov in October 2003.[238]

Alex Goldfarb, a microbiologist and activist who became acquainted with Berezovsky in the 1990s and later worked for him, provides snapshots of Berezovsky at crucial moments as background to his 2007 account of the Litvinenko murder case, co-written with Marina Litvinenko, Death of a Dissident: The Poisoning of Alexander Litvinenko and the Return of the KGB.[42] David E. Hoffman of The Washington Post wrote The Oligarchs: Wealth and Power in the New Russia, which provides a comparative treatment of Berezovsky and several of his fellow so-called business oligarchs.[239] Ben Mezrich wrote Once Upon a Time in Russia: The Rise of the Oligarchs—A True Story of Ambition, Wealth, Betrayal, and Murder, which provides a comparative narrative of Berezovsky and Roman Abramovich through their careers, friendship, and ultimate rivalry.[240]

In 2017, the Russian book "Time of Berezovsky" was published by Corpus (an imprint of AST), in which Petr Aven — a friend of Berezovsky — interviewed various people who were close to Berezovsky at different times, including Leonid Boguslavsky, Yuli Dubov, Galina Besharova, Yelena Gorbunova, Yuri Shefler, Anatoly Chubais, Mikhail Fridman, Valentin Yumashev, Sergey Dorenko, Eugene Shvidler, Vladimir Posner, Alexander Goldfarb, Alexander Voloshin, Stanislav Belkovsky and Yuri Felshinitsky.[241][242]

A documentary about Berezovsky's efforts to undermine Putin from his exile in UK was shown on the BBC in December 2005.[243]

Berezovsky features in a painting by the popular Russian artist Ilya Glazunov, displayed in Moscow's Ilya Glazunov Gallery. According to the Rough Guide, "The Market of Our Democracy shows Yeltsin waving a conductor's baton as two
lesbians kiss and the oligarch Berezovsky flaunts a sign reading "I will buy Russia", while charlatans rob a crowd of refugees and starving children.”[244]

See also

• Biography portal
• Business and economics portal
• Russia portal
• United Kingdom portal
• List of unsolved deaths
• Russian oligarchs
• Semibankirschina

References

3. Березовский и Абрамович. Олигархи с большой дороги Archived 28 May 2016 at the Wayback Machine., Aleksandr Khinshtein
16. "Boris Abramovich Berezovsky" Profile on GlobalSecurity.org
28. "Berezovskiy Abram Markovich".
32. Prominent Russians: Boris Berezovsky Russia Today, Written by Maria Finoshina, RT correspondent
35. Intelligence Squared[dead link]
143. *Godfather of the Kremlin?* Forbes 30 December 1996
149. "Berezovsky Vs. Forbes" Forbes 31 March 2003
155. "Boris Berezovsky wins Litvinenko poison spy libel case" BBC News 10 March 2010
159. "Battle of the Oligarchs: Russian Exile Seeks Billions from Former Business Partner" Time, 3 October 2011
160. "Battle of the oligarchs... the amazing showdown between Roman Abramovich and his arch rival" Daily Mail (London) 6 October 2007
166. Greenhill, Sam (13 May 2012), "So why did a controversial Russian oligarch give Queen's cousin Prince Michael of Kent £320,000 through offshore companies?". Daily Mail. London.
169. (in Russian) Борис Березовский в течение последних 1,5 лет готовит силовой захват власти в России. Опальный олигарх считает, что все перемены будет осуществлять активное меньшинство, Ekho Moskvy, 25 January 2006
171. "Putin Is Terrorist Number One. Russian Troops Should Withdraw from Chechnya, and Putin Should Negotiate with Aslan Maskhadov" European Viewpoint, 14 September 2004
172. Kremlin foe calls for Putin’s Ouster, Associated Press, 13 April 2007
173. (in Russian) Новые подробности по Маршу несогласных.
174. (in Russian) Неудобные вопросы, Kasparov.ru, 18 April 2007
175. Russia's United Civic Front may sue Berezovsky over funding claims, RIA Novosti, 28/06/2007
177. Police probe exile's claims about Russian 'revolution', The Guardian (London), 14 April 2007
179. DID BEREZOVSKY FINANCE UKRAINE'S ORANGE REVOLUTION?, The Jamestown Foundation (19 September 2005)
180. (in Russian) 25 January 2006 Пан Березовский вершит историю Украины, Lenta.Ru, 15 September 2005
182. Two Our Ukraine lawmakers summoned to court upon Berezovsky’s lawsuit, UNIAN, 3 September 2007
184. Jekabsons resigns after key national security meeting, by Aaron Eglitis, baltictimes.com, 26 October 2005
186. Berezovsky official banned from entering Latvia, baltictimes.com, 26 October 2005
188. House of Commons Hansard Written Answers for 13 January 2004 (pt 8), House of Commons of the United Kingdom, 13 January 2004
189. Security services 'foil plot to kill Berezovsky at the London Hilton', The Times, 18 July 2007
190. Man questioned over tycoon 'plot, BBC News, 18 July 2007
193. (in Polish) Rosjanie: To nie my zabiliśmy Litwinienką, Polska Agencja Prasowa, 8 July 2008
244. Retrieved 3 September 2015.
240. 2011.
237. Forbes, 24 March 2013
236. 
235. 
234. 
233. 
232. 
229. 
228. 
227. 
226. 
222. 
221. 
220. 
219. 
218. 
217. 
216. 
215. 
214. 
213. 
212. 
211. 
210. 
209. 
208. 
207. Guardian.
206. 
205. 
204. 
203. 
202. 
198. 
197. 
196. 
195. 9 July 2008
193. "Russia vows to retaliate as diplomats are expelled over Litvinenko murder" The Times (London), 17 July 2007
192. "Litvinenko killing 'had state involvement'" BBC News 7 July 2008
201. "Moscow points the finger of blame at billionaire exile Boris Berezovsky" The Times, 29 November 2006
202. "Lugovoy says he’s been framed for Litvinenko murder" Russia Today, 30 August 2007
205. The Widow and the Oligarchs, Vanity Fair, 30 September 2009
208. Badri Patarkatsishvili: exiled oligarch who lived in the shadow of death
209. Badri Patarkatsishvili, a Death Too Strange & Sudden - Kommersant Moscow
212. "Boris Berezovsky 'found with ligature around his neck'". BBC News. 28 March 2013.
223. Duffin, Claire (28 March 2014). "Billionaire critic of Putin may have been murdered, rules coroner". The Telegraph.
228. retrieved Mar 2018, https://mathscinet.mrcit/individual.htm ... hid=220635
233. EDITOR'S NOTE BEREZOVSKY VERSUS FORBES, forbes.com, 30 December 1996
237. "Britain Grants Political Asylum To Russian Fugitive Yuli Dubov | 2567877". Gettyimages.co.uk. 7 October 2003.
242. Stunning Viral, Just a dirty game: the chapter from the book of Peter Aven "Time of Berezovsky"
A GROUP of House Republicans in the United States has assailed the Clinton administration for supporting Russia's former president, Boris Yeltsin, whom they accuse of fostering corruption and allowing undue influence to big business during his time in office. Similar views are expressed by some reviewers of Yeltsin's memoirs, just published.

Unfortunately, these people neglect the context of Russian history. As a participant in a major business privatization deal of that period - for which I have been labeled an "oligarch" - I would like to put what happened in Russia in historical perspective.

When the Bolsheviks abolished private property in 1917, they put all expropriated wealth under the management of two organizations that were to become pillars of Soviet totalitarianism: the Communist Party and the secret police (eventually known as the KGB). To accomplish this end, the new managers physically eliminated the previous owners - tens of millions of them.

Three-quarters of a century later, in just a few years, Yeltsin carried out the reverse of the Bolshevik Revolution - and he did so bloodlessly and efficiently. By 1998, 75 percent of the property had been transferred to private hands.

Critics say that privatization was unfair - that the "oligarchs" got major assets for a fraction of their real value. To put this claim in context, I recall the events of the pivotal year 1996, which began with Communists having a majority in the State Duma and Yeltsin's popularity slipping below 3 percent while that of his Communist rival, Gennady Zyuganov, rose to nearly 30 percent.

It was at that time that Yeltsin and Anatoly Chubais decided to sell off a great many state assets quickly so that it would be difficult for the Communists to renationalize private property after Zyuganov's expected victory in the race for president. This was the background for my decision to bid for the oil company Sibneft.

For the auction, my partners and I needed at least $100 million but had only $60 million on hand. So we invited foreign investors - in the United States, Western Europe and Japan - to participate in our bid. No one gave us a penny, and George Soros, who always understood Russia better than others, told me: "The risk is too high. The Communists will take everything back. Russia is slipping into a black hole, Boris. Don't be a fool, take your family and get out, before it's too late."

But we did not run away. I found the money in Russia, and we won the auction. And we helped Yeltsin defeat the Communists at the polls, using privately owned TV stations.

A week after the election I got a Western offer for my stake in Sibneft - $1 billion. Thus, the statement that we paid an unfair price is false - anyone who was seriously interested could have participated, but few were prepared to take the risk.

As for undue influence, our critics should not forget that a strong civil society and the middle class that serve to protect democratic liberties in the West do not exist in Russia. What we have are communists - still too powerful - and ex-KGB people who hate democracy and dream of regaining lost positions. The only counterbalance to them is the new class of capitalists, who, under extraordinary circumstances, find it acceptable - indeed, necessary - to interfere directly in the political process.

In 1996 this happened twice: during the elections and later when we helped purge from the Kremlin a would-be KGB junta. To those who find our methods unacceptable, I say: In order to punish a small-time nationalist dictator, the United States has justified the destruction - from a safe distance - of the infrastructure of a whole country, including its TV stations. Is it not a double standard to accuse people of undue political influence for putting their and their families' lives on the line to prevent a much harsher dictatorship in their own country?

After their defeat in 1996 the Communists and the KGB started a concerted smear campaign against the new Russian capitalist class. False accusations of corruption, money laundering and links with organized crime became common tools in the arsenal of disinformation waged by reemployed practitioners of the Cold War KGB. In
1999 they nearly succeeded in impeaching Yeltsin in the Duma on false corruption charges. Today the KGB again has gained prominence in the Kremlin while the influence of big business has been reduced to zero. The results are clear: *The system of democratic checks and balances has been dismantled by President Vladimir Putin's laws.* Private owners of independent media are blackmailed by a government that is unhappy with news coverage. And fear of authorities is creeping back into the hearts and minds of millions of Russians.

There is a real danger of restoration of an authoritarian regime. This time it would be nationalist rather than communist, but the underlying goal would be the same: for the state bureaucracy to control all power and wealth.

And again, as in 1996, the only group that dares to stand up for democracy is Russian capitalists - the creatures of President Yeltsin.

The next U.S. administration will have to choose sides. I hope it will have the wisdom of President Bill Clinton and make the right choice. Otherwise, in the 21st century the world will have to deal with embittered, fiercely nationalist, authoritarian Russia.

---

Boris Berezovsky, an oil and media tycoon, served as deputy secretary of the Kremlin Security Council in Yeltsin's administration. He contributed this comment to *The Washington Post.*

---

**Re: Boris Berezovsky (businessman), by Wikipedia**

Godfather of the Kremlin? The Decline of Russia in the Age of Gangster Capitalism and Boris Berezovsky and the looting of Russia.  
by Paul Klebnikov  
Dec 30, 1996, 12:00am  
Forbes.com  
Posted 6 March 2003

**NOTICE: THIS WORK MAY BE PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT**

> YOU ARE REQUIRED TO READ [THE COPYRIGHT NOTICE AT THIS LINK](https://www.fedcourt.gov.uk/notice.htm) BEFORE YOU READ THE FOLLOWING WORK, THAT IS AVAILABLE SOLELY FOR PRIVATE STUDY, SCHOLARSHIP OR RESEARCH PURSUANT TO 17 U.S.C. SECTION 107 AND 108. IN THE EVENT THAT THE LIBRARY DETERMINES THAT UNLAWFUL COPYING OF THIS WORK HAS OCCURRED, THE LIBRARY HAS THE RIGHT TO BLOCK THE I.P. ADDRESS AT WHICH THE UNLAWFUL COPYING APPEARED TO HAVE OCCURRED. THANK YOU FOR RESPECTING THE RIGHTS OF COPYRIGHT OWNERS.

Power. Politics. Murder. Boris Berezovsky could teach the guys in Sicily a thing or two.

LAST NOVEMBER Ronald Lauder, billionaire heir to the Estée Lauder cosmetics fortune, traveled to Moscow to celebrate the opening of a posh boutique on Red Square. That evening Russian and American business leaders, U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering and President Boris Yeltsin's wife attended a party in Lauder's honor.

The host of the lavish affair? A wealthy Russian car dealer named **Boris Berezovsky.**

Ronald Lauder probably did not know that his host is a powerful gangland boss and the prime suspect in Russia's most famous murder investigation. Explains Lauder: "The invitations went out in President Yeltsin's name."

That Berezovsky can thus play cozy with Russia's president explains a lot of what is happening in Russia these days. Russia is a bubbling cauldron of criminal organizations--Sicily on a giant scale. Last year some 40,000 people were murdered in Russia and 70,000 disappeared--probably never to be heard of again. The murder rate in Russia is three or four times higher than in New York City.

Assassination is a tool of business competition. Scores of business leaders and media personalities have been killed. Ivan Kivelidi, a banker and founder of the Russian Business Roundtable, was murdered last year by poison (an obscure nerve toxin) applied to the rim of his coffee cup. Neither this nor any other of Russia's most famous contract killings has been solved.

In this violent world Boris Berezovsky looms like a giant shadow. Berezovsky recently claimed that he and six other top businessmen control 50% of the Russian economy. He is certainly one of the country's first dollar billionaires. His base is Logovaz, Russia's largest car dealership, but this is only the most visible tip of a golden iceberg.

In a recent interview with *FORBES* Berezovsky said: "Russia is undergoing a redistribution of property on a scale unprecedented in history. No one is satisfied--neither those who got nothing, nor those who got something, since even they feel they did not get enough."
Berezovsky is clearly one of those who never feels he has enough.

This summer FORBES reporters traveled 700 miles east of Moscow, to the place where Boris Berezovsky made his first millions: the Volga River town of Togliatti. This is home to Avtovaz, Russia's largest automobile manufacturer. There, eight years ago, Berezovsky founded Logovaz, taking the giant automaker as partner and reinforcing the relationship with cross-shareholding and numerous joint ventures.

What's his role today in the giant auto company? When FORBES asked Avtovaz President Alexei Nikolaev about his ties to Boris Berezovsky, the industrial manager and his aides exchanged worried looks. "We no longer have direct links with Logovaz," Nikolaev mumbled.

Mumbling—or—silence is a normal response when someone brings up the name Berezovsky.

What is undeniable is that in addition to his auto dealership Berezovsky controls Russia's biggest national TV network. His control was solidified shortly after the first chairman of the network was assassinated gangland-style. Berezovsky was immediately fingered by the police as a key suspect, but the murder remains unsolved two years later.

Why did the police fail to follow up? Possibly because they were afraid of where the trail would lead if they looked too closely. In Russia today gangsters thumb their noses at the police because they have protection from the very top.

And the gangsters, in turn, are often necessary for the men at the top. Such is the Russian business environment today that the men at the top often have use for the shadowy army of killers and thugs who work further down in the scale of corruption, running prostitutes and protection rackets. The old KGB, a gangster outfit itself, used to call this side of things "wet affairs." Every large business in Russia today has its own department of wet affairs.

Me, a gangster? Berezovsky is quick to take the moral high ground. "The Western press portrays Russia unfairly," he says. "Russian business is not synonymous with the Mafia." But isn't the government powerless to bring any of the thousands of mobsters to justice? Oh, yes, says Berezovsky, but don't blame him. "In the government," he says, "there are many people who are criminals themselves."

Berezovsky should know. He stands close to political power. He organized Russia's most powerful bankers in support of President Yeltsin's presidential campaign earlier this year. "It is no secret that Russian businessmen played the decisive role in President Yeltsin's victory," says Berezovsky. "It was a battle for our blood interests."

Berezovsky and friends did whatever was necessary to prevent the Communists from gaining a victory. The Yeltsin campaign is facing allegations of massive financing violations. Legally, each party's campaign was limited to $3 million. The Yeltsin campaign is estimated to have spent at least $140 million.

As in the U.S., most people in Russia who give big money to political campaigns hope for favors. The difference is that in Russia the payoff is often very direct. After Yeltsin's reelection Berezovsky was appointed deputy secretary of the National Security Council, the body responsible for coordinating military and law enforcement policy.

The fox now guards the chickens.

In appearance and in background, Berezovsky is no thug. Boasting a Ph.D. in applied mathematics, the 50-year-old Berezovsky says he spent 25 years doing research on decision-making theory at the Russian Academy of Sciences. He speaks nervously, articulately, waving a hand still scarred from an assassination attempt two years ago.

He first appeared on the business scene in 1989, when he started Logovaz for automaker Avtovaz. The original purpose was to develop management software, but Berezovsky moved quickly into selling cars. Within four years he was the largest Avtovaz dealer in the country, accounting for more than 10% of its Russian sales.

While Berezovsky waxes rich, however, Avtovaz is, by his own statement, "in terrible shape." Why? Many parts and even whole cars are simply stolen from the factory, only to turn up soon after in criminally connected auto dealerships. The stolen cars are usually in very good shape. Not so with cars ordered directly from Avtovaz or from independent dealers, which often arrive with windshields smashed, wiring pulled out or tires slashed.

Asked about the problem of gangsters controlling his dealer network, Avtovaz's president, Alexei Nikolaev, admits: "The problem exists."

To understand the economics of the problem, examine the pricing structure. Dealer markups are huge: Avtovaz sells the typical Lada sedan to the dealer for about $4,800; but the dealer sells the car to the consumer for $7,500. In short, the dealer, not the factory, makes the profit.

Not only do the dealers make most of the money, they even finance themselves with company money. It works like this: To get a car in Russia, a consumer usually must pay upfront. However, the dealer often doesn't pay the factory until long after he has sold the vehicle.

Not only were the dealers in control of large amounts of other people's money, they were making huge
inflationary profits. During 1992-94, inflation often reached 20% a month; thus, by delaying payment to Avtovaz for, say, three months, a dealer ended up paying half price for his cars.

"These guys are criminals on an outrageous scale. It's as if Lucky Luciano were chairman of the board of Chrysler."

In the past two years, with the ruble stabilizing, a dealer could invest his cash in three-month Russian T bills, which, until recently, had annualized dollar yields of 100% or more.

Currently dealers owe the carmaker some $1.2 billion, about one-third of the company's sales.

Why does Avtovaz continue to sell to the gangster-dealers who are bankrupting the company? Carrot and stick. The carrot: an envelope full of cash to car executives. The stick: a bullet in the head.

"These guys are criminals on an outrageous scale," says one American businessman who supplies parts to Avtovaz. "It's as if Lucky Luciano were chairman of the board of Chrysler." This businessman had to make big payments to a Lausanne, Switzerland-based company called Forus Financial Services, which he says is owned by Avtovaz managers.

And who is the biggest car dealer of them all and a key figure in Avtovaz? Boris Berezovsky.

In 1993 Berezovsky launched another project, grandly entitled the All-Russian Automobile Alliance (AVVA). AVVA sold $50 million worth of bonds to Russian investors, promising to pay them back with new cars at some future date. The idea was to use the money to set up a new assembly line for Avtovaz cars.

Not until 1996 did AVVA begin investing in a small assembly operation in Finland. For nearly three years, in other words, Berezovsky had the AVVA money to play with as he pleased.

While AVVA investors waited in vain for their cars and Avtovaz slid deeper toward bankruptcy, Berezovsky acquired $300 million worth of prime real estate in Moscow and St. Petersburg. He bought one of Russia's most respected newspapers, Nezavisemaia Gazeta, a popular newsmagazine and part of a new TV station called TV 6. He has acquired at least 80% of Sibneft, one of Russia's largest oil companies.

"Oil is good security for loans," he says. "Owning an oil company opens the door to acquiring other businesses." Acquire them for what? To run? Or to loot?

Russia's national airline, Aeroflot, is one of the country's top export earners, but it has cash problems. Same story as with autos: The travel agents get paid up front by the customers, but pay Aeroflot either very slowly or not at all. They get the float; Aeroflot gets questionable receivables, which, if paid at all, get paid in depreciated currency.

Now meet Aeroflot's deputy director, Nikolai Glushkov. This gentleman has an interesting background. He was convicted in 1982 under Article 89 of the Russian criminal code (theft of state property). Later Glushkov served as head of finance for Avtovaz and was one of the founders of Logovaz. In short, an associate of Berezovsky. Are Glushkov and Berezovsky in cahoots to siphon money from Aeroflot? The parallels with Avtovaz are certainly striking.

According to Moscow police reports, Berezovsky started his auto dealership in close collaboration with the powerful Chechen criminal gangs. Presumably they provided him with physical protection--a "roof," as it's called in Russian slang.

But two years ago the Solntsevo gang began to muscle in on the Chechens' control of the Moscow auto market. When the Russian gangsters approached Berezovsky about an alliance, he is reported by one police detective to have said: "I already have a roof. Talk to the Chechens."

The "conversation" between the Russian and the Chechen gangsters over the Moscow auto market took place outside a Logovaz showroom, near the Kazakhstan Cinema. In the ensuing gun fight, six Chechens and four Russians were killed.

Berezovsky says he remembers the 1994 shootout but doesn't know what it was about.

Shortly after, Berezovsky barely escaped death himself. He was being driven out of his office complex, sitting in the back of his Mercedes 600, with his driver and bodyguard in the front, when a remote-controlled car bomb exploded next to the car, decapitating the driver. Berezovsky got away with burns to his hands and face. A few days after that, the headquarters of Berezovsky's Obedinenyi Bank were bombed. No culprits were ever identified. They rarely are in Russia. Says Berezovsky: "I am not one of those people who seeks vengeance."

Maybe not, but people who have stood in his way have sometimes met bloody ends. The most famous death came with Berezovsky's move into TV broadcasting.
Two years ago Vladislav Listiev was Russia's most popular talk show host and its most successful TV producer. Listiev had recently persuaded the government to privatize Channel 1, Russia's biggest nationwide TV network. In early 1995 Listiev was named head of the reorganized company, now known as ORT (Russian Public Television).

The government kept 51% of ORT; a group of well-connected businessmen got the rest. Leading the businessmen was Berezovsky, who acquired 16% of the stock for a mere $320,000.

Listiev had no intention of being a figurehead. He decided to clean up the network's unsavory connections. His main target was Sergei Lisovsky, a 36-year-old advertising man who made his first fortune from a chain of Moscow discotheques. These glittering dives were known as good places to procure drugs. They were a haunt of Russia's crime bosses.

From discos, Lisovsky moved into advertising. To buy time on any of the top five Russian TV channels you must go through Lisovsky or an allied company. Here, as in cars and airline tickets, the middleman seems to have captured the float. This year advertisers will pay about $80 million to buy time on ORT. The money goes first to the media sales company, which then pays the network. But companies like Lisovsky's Premier SV were keeping most of the money while government subsidies (some $250 million) were keeping the TV network operating.

Why is organized crime so powerful? "In the government there are many people who are criminals themselves," says Berezovsky.

Lisovsky's business has been connected with some unsavory characters. One of Premier SV's founding shareholders, Sergei Antonov, has been arrested by the Moscow police on racketeering charges. The chief financial officer of Premier SV, according to police investigations, is Alexander Averin. Known in the underworld as "Avera Junior," Averin is important for his family connections--his older brother, Viktor, is the right-hand man of "Mikhas," a former hotel waiter, now boss of the notorious Solntsevo Gang; Mikhas was recently arrested on money laundering charges in Switzerland.

This was the crowd that Vladislav Listiev, the TV producer, decided to take on.

On Feb. 20, 1995 Listiev announced that he was breaking Lisovsky's advertising monopoly and instituting a temporary moratorium on advertising until ORT could work out new "ethical standards."

"I knew he would be killed--the people he was dealing with were totally criminal," says one close friend of Listiev's. Two weeks later Listiev was gunned down by professional assassins at the entrance to his apartment building. FORBES has obtained documents on the case from the organized crime unit of the Moscow police department.

According to these documents, Listiev knew that he was a marked man. He knew law enforcement authorities in Russia are powerless against the kind of opposition he faced. So Listiev gathered a group of his closest friends and explained the reason he might be killed.

This is the tale he told them.

When Listiev announced that he would be ending the advertising monopoly, Lisovsky demanded $100 million in damages. Listiev found a European company (name undisclosed) willing to buy the ORT advertising franchise. Lisovsky asked Boris Berezovsky to act as transfer agent and hand over the $100 million to Lisovsky. Berezovsky took the cash and stalled Lisovsky; he would get his money in three months, Berezovsky explained.

Thus the reforming Listiev was caught between two ruthless characters. He paid with his life.

Now Berezovsky effectively controls ORT with 36% of the network's voting stock, and Lisovsky is again the sole agent for its advertising. In June Sergei Lisovsky was caught by security guards as he was coming out of Russian government headquarters with $500,000 stuffed into a cardboard box. The matter is still "being investigated."

The public outcry over Listiev's death was immense. Thousands of mourners showed up at his funeral. But the subsequent investigation was a tragic farce. Lisovsky's and Berezovsky's offices were searched by the police immediately after the murder.

Five months later the federal prosecutor's office announced that it had closed the Listiev case, and identified the names of both the people who ordered the killing and those who had carried it out. The very next day the prosecutor's office recanted, saying that the investigation was continuing. Two months later the prosecutor-general was fired and thrown in jail on charges of corruption.

Berezovsky denies that he had anything to do with Listiev's killing. He blames unnamed advertising and production companies that were being hurt by Listiev's reorganization of the network.
Did Berezovsky adopt a low profile after the killing? No way. This spring, Berezovsky emerged as a participant in the National Sports Fund, a charity organized by Boris Yeltsin's tennis coach to benefit sports in Russia. Over the past several years the organization has received billions of dollars in revenues from the duty-free importation of alcohol and cigarettes. When at least $100 million went missing earlier this year, the organization was revealed as a massively corrupt racket. Its privileges were withdrawn and the tennis coach was sacked.

The president of the fund was Boris Feodorov, a close ally of Berezovsky. Feodorov gave a newspaper interview in which he claimed that he was being victimized by criminal organizations within President Yeltsin's administration.

In June, before the interview was published, Feodorov was shot and repeatedly stabbed by unknown assailants in Moscow. He survived and fled to Western Europe. Apparently that interview was so close to the truth as to threaten the gangsters and their higher-up accomplices.
Is Boris Berezovsky the godfather of Russia's godfathers? It sure looks that way.

EDITOR'S NOTE BEREZOVSKY VERSUS FORBES

In our Dec. 30, 1996 issue, we published an article about the rise of Boris Berezovsky, a Russian businessman and politician with significant holdings in the automobile, oil, and media industries. Entitled "Godfather of the Kremlin?" the article described the climate of violence that surrounded Russia's transition from a planned to a capitalist economy. It said that Berezovsky has been investigated in connection with the murder of Vladislav Listiev. It also said that Nikolai Glouchkov, a Berezovsky ally and an executive of the Russian airline Aeroflot, had been convicted of theft.

Berezovsky and Glouchkov sued Forbes for defamation. Over six years have elapsed since the article was published and the proceedings were commenced in the UK and it is likely that it would have taken at least two more years before this case came to trial. The article described the conditions in the very turbulent times between the introduction of privatisation and the date the article was written in 1996. The article was about Russians and events that had taken place in Russia. The suit was brought in England, despite the fact that only a small number of magazine copies were distributed there and the subjects of the article were in Russia. Forbes argued that the case belonged in Russian or U.S. courts, but lost this point on appeal to the House of Lords (in a 3 to 2 decision). The English court ruled that under English libel law the article's description of the Listiev case was tantamount to stating that Berezovsky was guilty of murder and that he was a gangland leader running a mafia-style operation.

On 6 March 2003, the resolution of the case was announced in the High Court in London. Forbes stated in open court that (1) it was not the magazine's intention to state that Berezovsky was responsible for the murder of Listiev, only that he had been included in an inconclusive police investigation of the crime; (2) there is no evidence that Berezovsky was responsible for this or any other murder; (3) in light of the English court's ruling, it was wrong to characterize Berezovsky as a mafia boss; and (4) the magazine erred in stating that Glouchkov had been convicted for theft of state property in 1982. Berezovsky and Glouchkov withdrew their suit.

Click here for the Statement in Open Court

Re: Boris Berezovsky (businessman), by Wikipedia

BY: admin - Sat Aug 04, 2018 2:11 am

U.S. Investigative Journalist Is Shot to Death in Russia
by C. J. Chivers and Sophia Kishkovsky
July 10, 2004

NOTICE: THIS WORK MAY BE PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT

YOU ARE REQUIRED TO READ THE COPYRIGHT NOTICE AT THIS LINK BEFORE YOU READ THE FOLLOWING WORK, THAT IS AVAILABLE SOLELY FOR PRIVATE STUDY, SCHOLARSHIP OR RESEARCH PURSUANT TO 17 U.S.C. SECTION 107 AND 108. IN THE EVENT THAT THE LIBRARY DETERMINES THAT UNLAWFUL COPYING OF THIS WORK HAS OCCURRED, THE LIBRARY HAS THE RIGHT TO BLOCK THE I.P. ADDRESS AT WHICH THE UNLAWFUL COPYING APPEARED TO HAVE OCCURRED. THANK YOU FOR RESPECTING THE RIGHTS OF COPYRIGHT OWNERS.

A prominent American journalist who had written incisively about the connections of politics, business and crime in Russia throughout its post-Soviet reorganization was shot to death Friday night outside the magazine offices where he worked.

Paul Klebnikov, the editor in chief of Forbes Russia magazine, was shot four times as he left work and walked toward a nearby subway station, a local radio station reported. The radio cited witnesses who said he was shot by a bearded man who had stepped from a car.

Mr. Klebnikov, 41, had moved to Moscow last year to open Forbes Russia, a Russian edition of the American business magazine, at which he had worked since 1989. Under his editorship, Forbes Russia published its first issue in April.

The magazine was published during a crackdown on the independent media here, but Mr. Klebnikov had vowed he would not be deterred.

"Forbes has over the decades won a reputation for independence, and we don't want to give that away lightly," he said at the magazine's introduction.

Mr. Klebnikov's brand of investigative journalism had long irritated many of Russia's elite. The new magazine under his stewardship bore his stamp.

In May it published a list of Russia's 100 wealthiest business people, including 36 billionaires. Such lists are sensitive in a country with high rates of poverty and unemployment and a common belief that many of today's wealthiest Russians had swindled public resources during the early and murky years of post-Communist privatization.

Although no motive for the killing was immediately clear in the hours after his death, the Committee to Protect Journalists,
A descendant of émigrés who had fled Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution, Mr. Klebnikov was born in New York, the son of an interpreter at the United Nations. Like many of these descendants, he had remained deeply connected to his family's heritage, and had traveled to Russia after the Soviet Union's collapse.

As a correspondent with both an economics background and fluency in the Russian language, Mr. Klebnikov was especially well equipped to report on Russia's new political and business class.

In his work, he had been sharply critical of Boris Berezovsky, the media and oil magnate who was influential in former President Boris Yeltsin's administration, but who later sought asylum in Britain, saying he was marked for murder in Russia.

Mr. Klebnikov wrote two books. The first, "Godfather of the Kremlin: The Decline of Russia in the Age of Gangster Capitalism," was a biography of Mr. Berezovsky. The second, "Conversation With a Barbarian," dealt with organized crime in Russia's continuing war in Chechnya.

Mr. Klebnikov was married and left three children. Steve Forbes, president and editor in chief of Forbes, sent condolences to the family in a statement from New York.

"Paul was superb reporter -- courageous, energetic, ever-curious," Mr. Forbes said. "We eagerly anticipated reading his stories. The information was always fresh, insightful, fascinating. He exemplified the finest traditions of our profession and served his readers well."

The killing of Mr. Klebnikov follows the general tightening of independent news media in Russia. Television here has gradually slipped under effective control of the state. Just hours before Mr. Klebnikov was fatally shot, the program "Freedom of Speech," the last live political talk show in Russia, broadcast what appeared to be its final show. And last month, Leonid Parfyonov, who was host of a popular and provocative current affairs program, was fired after broadcasting an interview with the widow of a former president of Chechnya who was killed by a car bomb in Qatar in February.

Mr. Parfyonov said the authorities had asked him not to broadcast the interview. Two Russian intelligence officers were recently convicted of the killing.

Both of these programs appeared on the network NTV, which had come under serious pressure after a "Freedom of Speech" program in October 2002 featured relatives of hostages pleading with the Russian government not to storm a Moscow theater that had been seized by Chechen rebels. The government attacked the theater nonetheless. More than 120 people died.

The channel's troubles began almost immediately after President Vladimir V. Putin came to power. Vladimir A. Gusinsky, the founder and owner of the Media Most empire of which the channel was part, was briefly jailed, then forced to cede control and leave the country.

Erin Arvedlund contributed reporting from Moscow for this article.
Alexander Davidovich Goldfarb (a.k.a. Alex Goldfarb, Russian: Александр Давидович Гольдфарб) (born 1947 in Moscow) is a Russian-American microbiologist, activist, and author. He emigrated from the USSR in 1975 and studied in Israel and Germany before settling permanently in New York in 1982. Goldfarb is a naturalized American citizen.[1] He has combined a scientific career as a microbiologist with political and public activities focused on civil liberties and human rights in Russia, in the course of which he has been associated with Andrei Sakharov, George Soros, Boris Berezovsky, and Alexander Litvinenko.[2] He has not visited Russia since 2000.

Scientific career

Goldfarb studied biochemistry at Moscow State University and graduated in 1969. After graduation, he worked at the Kurchatov Institute of Atomic Energy in Moscow.[3] He emigrated from the USSR in 1975. He received a Ph.D. in 1980 from the Weizmann Institute, one of the only non-governmental producers of polonium, in Israel.

Back in the west, he continued his research with a post-doctoral program at the Max Planck Institute for Biochemistry in Martinsried, Germany. From 1982 to 1991 he was an assistant professor at Columbia University in New York.[4] From 1992 to 2006 he was a faculty member at the Public Health Research Institute in New York where he led a U.S. government-funded study "Structure and Function of RNA Polymerase in E. coli" with a total budget of $7 million.[5] He also directed the project "Treating Multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis in Siberian Prisons" funded by a $13 million grant from philanthropist George Soros.[6]

Activism

After he emigrated, Goldfarb maintained contact with dissidents in Russia and was a spokesman for Moscow refuseniks.[7] He translated for Andrei Sakharov at press conferences in advance of his 1975 Nobel Peace Prize and helped organize the first American television appearance of Sakharov when Mikhail Gorbachev released the physicist from internal exile.[8][9] From 1984 to 1986 Soviet authorities refused Goldfarb's father permission to leave the USSR after their unsuccessful attempt to make him collaborate and entrap American journalist Nicholas Daniloff.[10][11][12] Goldfarb was among the first political emigres to return to the USSR after Gorbachev launched his reforms.[13] Impressions of his first visit in October 1987 were published as a cover story in The New York Times magazine under the title "Testing Glasnost. An Exile Visits his Homeland".[14]

The story caught the attention of US philanthropist George Soros, leading to a decade-long association between the two men. According to Soros' biographer Robert Slater, Goldfarb was among the first group of Russian exiles in New York whom Soros invited to brainstorm his potential Foundation in Russia.[15]
In 1991 Goldfarb persuaded Soros to donate $100 million to help former Soviet scientists survive the hardships of the economic shock therapy adopted by the Yeltsin government.[16]

From 1992 to 1995, Goldfarb was Director of Operations at Soros' International Science Foundation, which helped sustain tens of thousands of scientists and scholars in the former Soviet Union during the harshest three years of economic reform.[17] In 1994 Goldfarb managed Soros' Russian Internet Project, which built infrastructure and provided free Internet access for university campuses across Russia.[18] That project created a controversy because of a conflict with emerging Russian commercial interests in the ISP field.[19] In 1995, during the first months of the First Chechen War, Goldfarb oversaw a Soros-funded relief operation, which ended disastrously with the disappearance of the American relief worker Fred Cuny.[20] From 1998 to 2000 Goldfarb directed the $15 million Soros tuberculosis project in Russia.[21] He worked with Dr. Paul Farmer to battle TB in Russian prisons, an endeavor described by the Pulitzer Prize winner Tracy Kidder in his book Mountains Beyond Mountains.[22]

Since 2001 Goldfarb has been Executive Director of the New York-based International Foundation for Civil Liberties, founded and financed by the exiled Russian oligarch Boris Berezovsky.[23]

Involvement in the Litvinenko affair

Goldfarb first met Alexander Litvinenko during his tuberculosis project in Russian prisons. In October 2000, at the request of Boris Berezovsky, Goldfarb went to Turkey where he met Litvinenko and his family, who had just fled from Russia.[24] Goldfarb arranged their entry to the United Kingdom, an offense under British law, for which he was banned from visiting Britain for a year.[1] His involvement would also "...cost him his job with George Soros."[25]

When Litvinenko was poisoned in London in 2006, Goldfarb was his unofficial spokesman during the two last weeks of his life [26] On the day of Litvinenko’s death, Goldfarb read out his deathbed statement accusing Vladimir Putin of ordering the poisoning.[27]

Goldfarb later explained in interviews that he had drafted the statement at Litvinenko’s request and that Litvinenko had signed it in the presence of a lawyer.[1] With Berezovsky, Litvinenko’s widow Marina, and the human rights lawyer Louise Christian, Goldfarb founded the Litvinenko Justice Foundation to campaign for the truth about his murder, and for the perpetrators to be brought to justice.[28] He later testified in a libel suit, in which Berezovsky successfully contested the claim by Russian state television station RTR (now Russia 1) that he had murdered Litvinenko.[29][30]

He received a Ph.D. in 1980 from the Weizmann Institute, one of the only non-governmental producers of polonium, in Israel.

-- Alexander Goldfarb (biologist), by Wikipedia

Writings


His books


Appearances on TV

• Charlie Rose - A conversation with Marina Litvinenko and Alex Goldfarb
• BBC Hardtalk - http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/h ... 723863.stm

References

5. http://www.researchcrossroads.org/index ... id=660646
Boris Berezovsky finances revolutions and plots to overthrow Putin - but it's his newspaper antics that are really entertaining

Last night's TV
by TheGuardian.com
Fri 9 Dec 2005 02:26 EST First published on Fri 9 Dec 2005 02:26 EST

NOTICE: THIS WORK MAY BE PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT

You are required to read the copyright notice at this link before you read the following work. That is available solely for private study, scholarship or research pursuant to 17 U.S.C. Section 107 and 108. In the event that the library determines that unlawful copying of this work has occurred, the library has the right to block the I.P. address at which the unlawful copying appeared to have occurred. Thank you for respecting the rights of copyright owners.

The first part of Russian Godfathers (BBC2) was a cracker containing, like all good crackers, a crown, some jokes and (less common this) a crash course in rather coarse Russian.

It could have been another remake of King Kong. Here was Vladimir Putin, clinging ferociously to a large, gold onion on the Kremlin, and flailing at the hornets who buzzed around, determined to torment and topple him. The chief hornet is Boris Berezovsky. When the Soviet Union collapsed, he grew enormously rich and powerful on the pickings, and when Yeltsin collapsed, usually after lunch, Berezovsky choose Putin as his successor. Or, perhaps, as a pun. This was a catastrophic misjudgement. Putin turned on the Russian godfathers.

Berezovsky fled to England, where he was granted political asylum, and lives in some splendour in Surrey with a yacht, a jet and a fountain which seems to grow as you watch it. Ring-fenced by an Interpol warrant for his arrest, he plots to dethrone Putin and gives television interviews. Being in the media business himself.
One of his few remaining assets in Russia is the financial newspaper Kommersant, whose editor, Andrei Vasiliev, shows the exasperation common to all editors with overwhelming proprietors. "Boris says, 'Putin's fucked.' I say, 'You're the big shot. Why don't you explain to me how exactly he's fucked? Is he fucked from the front, from the right or from the left?' But he never can."

In any contest between an ant and a rubber tree plant, the clever money is on the rubber tree plant. But, in the course of this programme, Putin began to wobble.

Berezovsky was indefatigably busy. "It's like Boris always needs a piss," as his editor put it. He undermined Putin in Ukraine by financing a popular revolution. Having gained a toehold there, he started another newspaper.

His newspapers may be a sub-plot to his politics but they amuse me more. Any journalist would enjoy (and recognise) the brainstorming session as the untried staff tried to find a front-page lead. Reporter: "There's a party celebrating 65 years of the Ukranian artist Nicolai Guravsky." Editor: "Who the hell is that?" Reporter, defensively: "He's well known." Editor: "You don't have a clue who he is either." Silence fell with a bump. "So," said the editor, grinding a tooth or two, "in real terms we have fuck all. As you can see," he confided to camera, "they're a hopeless bunch." Berezovsky sent in Vasiliev to teach them how to run a paper and teach us the Russian for shit.

Meanwhile he flew to Latvia to tweak Putin's tail. "Latvia should realise such actions will not go without consequences" said Putin's spokesman grimly. As Berezovsky flew out, the Latvian government was convulsed under his jet like mild turbulence. It hardly shook the wine in his glass. The next time he went to Latvia he took Neil Bush, the brother of George W. This time there was no menacing roar from Russia.

**Russian Godfathers is very elegantly made by Patrick Forbes. Or as elegant as you can be with your tongue in your cheek.**

"When a statement is "tongue in cheek" it is ironic, slyly humorous; it is not meant to be taken seriously, however its sarcasm is subtle. Though not meant to be taken seriously, it is not overt joking or kidding around, it is "gently poking fun". A "tongue in cheek" statement may have a double meaning, some sort of inuendo or is witty in some way, particularly to the speaker. The tone or the context of the statement may make it to be taken seriously by the listener.

It's origin comes from when Spanish minstrels would perform for various dukes in the 18th century; these dukes would silently chastise the silliness of the minstrel's performances by placing their tongue firmly to the inside of their cheek.

-- Tongue in Cheek, by Urban Dictionary
Marat Guelman
Марат Гельман
Guelman in 2010
Born Marat Aleksandrovich Guelman
24 December 1960 (age 57)
Chişinău, Moldavian SSR, Soviet Union
Occupation gallerist, collector, op-ed columnist, art manager, political consultant
Parent(s)
Alexander Isaakovich Guelman (father)
Website [http://guelman.ru](http://guelman.ru)

Marat Guelman[n 1](Russian: Марат Александрович Гельман; born December 24, 1960 in Chişinău, Moldavian SSR, Soviet Union) is a Russian collector, gallerist, and an op-ed columnist. The former Director of PERMM contemporary art museum in Perm. **The Deputy Director of Channel One (Russia) from June 2002 to February 2004.** A political consultant, a co-founder of the Foundation for Effective Politics, and a member of Russia’s Public Chamber (2010-2012 convocation).

Guelman has lived in Montenegro from 2014.[1]

Biography
Marat Guelman was born on 24 December 1960 in Chişinău. His father is the writer and playwright Alexander Isaakovich Guelman. Upon finishing high school 34 in Chişinău in 1977 Marat Guelman went on to study at Moscow Electrotechnical Institute of Communications while working as a mechanic and a sceneshifter at Moscow Academic Art Theater, Sovremennik and Mayakovskiy Theater. He graduated in 1983 earning a degree in engineering.[2]

Guelman worked as an engineer in Chişinău until 1986. After the Soviet era criminal rule on social parasitism was abolished on 1 March 1986 he quit his job to write a novel and to start his own business.

In 1987 Guelman, who had had an interest in art and specifically in contemporary art since his early youth, made his very first art exhibition, displaying the works of Moscow artists in Chişinău.[3] The exhibition was a major success, in terms of both publicity and finance. When he came to Moscow to hand over to the artists the paintings and the money earned from sales, Guelman decided to stay in the capital.[4]

He started his career in arts as a collector,[5] however, having made poor choices for his first collection due to lack of experience he had no choice but to acquire the skills of selling artworks thus becoming the first art dealer in the USSR. In 1990, upon finishing his contemporary art studies abroad, he put together a collection of Ukrainian art, which became the core of South Russian Wave exhibition, shown in 1992,[6] which caught the attention of the publicity and resulted in major feedback. Guelman himself describes his path into art and his career in art as a series of accidents. However, he believes this flexibility and open-mindedness in taking chances to be even more important for success than determination.[7][8]

In 2014 Guelman moved to Montenegro to implement cultural projects in this country. That was also the year when Dukley European Art Community residency program was launched by Neil Emilfarb, Petar Cukovic, and Marat Guelman.[9] The residency program was initially invitation-based, however, it is now open to all artists through an application system. The results of the artists’ work are exhibited on a regular basis. The activities of the residency program have been gradually making significant changes to the cultural status of Kotor, the city hosting the project, and to all of Montenegro. Marat Guelman has chosen this country to further advance and implement his concept of post-economy society and humanitarian engineering[10]

Guelman Gallery

In 1990 Guelman opened his gallery, one of the first Russian private contemporary art galleries.[2] The gallery worked until 2012, changing a few names during its 20-year-long history (Gallery Guelman, M. Guelman Gallery, M. and Y. Guelman Gallery). It also moved three times. From 1992 to 1995 the gallery was based in the Contemporary Art Center in
The history of Guelman Gallery more or less depicts the history of contemporary art in post-Soviet Russia. Over the years, the gallery had collaborations with almost every prominent artist of the respective period, from the classics of Moscow conceptualism (Yuri Albert, Igor Makarevich, Vadim Zakharov, Dmitry Prigov), Sots Art (Vitaly Komar & Alexander Melamid, Boris Orlov, Leonid Sokov) and postmodernism (Pavel Pepperstein, Georgy Ostretsov) to St. Petersburg “New Academy” artists (Timur Novikov), to the legendary Mitki group, and Moscow action Art (Oleg Kulik, Anatoly Osmolovsky, Alexander Brener, Oleg Mavromati, Avdey Ter-Oganyan, RADEK group), to South Russian Wave (Alexander Sigutin, Arsen Savadov, Alexander Roitburd, Oleg Golosiy), to the pioneers of media art (Blue Soup group, AES+F, Olga Chernysheva, Vladimir Elmov & Aristarkh Chernyshev); and from painters (Yury Shabelnikov, Valery Koshilyakov, Alexander Vinogradov & Vladimir Dubosarsky, Dmitry Vrubel) to photographers (Boris Mikhailov, Ildislav Marnyshnev-Monroe), architects (Alexander Brodsky, Alexey Belyaev-Gintovt, sculptors (Dmitry Gutov, Grisha Bruskin, Martynchik couple) and artists who work with installations and new media (Irina Nakhova, Vladimir Arkhipov, Blue Noses group) and others.[12] [2]

Apart from Russian artists, Guelman exhibited Ukrainian art in his gallery, which was at the very roots of his work as a curator and a gallerist (South Russian Wave exhibition, 1992). A significant share of his collection has always been reserved for Ukrainian art. From 2002 to 2004 there was a local branch of Guelman Gallery in Kiev,[14] managed by Guelman’s friend and one of the artists featured by the Moscow Gallery, Alexey Roitburd.

Besides, in the early 1990s, Guelman was working hard to bring the post-Soviet art back to the international context. First, he established contacts with New York’s leading galleries, which allowed the global art community to have an insight into the art of a large number of Guelman Gallery artists. At the time he also strived to exhibit the international stars in Russia. Amongst other things, during its Yakimanka st. period, Guelman Gallery hosted such landmark events as Andy Warhol’s and Joseph Beuys’s personal exhibitions (Alter Ego, 1994 and Leonardo’s Diary, 1994, respectively).[15]

Running major non-commercial exhibiting events in external spaces was another important activity of Guelman Gallery. The list of major events includes Conversion (Central House of Artists, 1993), Dedicated to the VII Congress of People’s Deputies of Russia (Central House of Artists, 1993), New Money (State Tretyakov Gallery, 2006), Dynamic Couples (Moscow Manege, 2000), South Russian Wave and Nostalgia[16] (State Russian Museum, 2000, which marked the 10th anniversary of Guelman Gallery), Russia 2 (Central House of Artists, 2005), St. Pete Folks: Contemporary Art of St. Petersburg (Central House of Artists, 2005), and a number of other events.[2]

The Gallery participated in international exhibition-related events, festivals, and fairs from the very start of its work. In the early 2000s, it took part in some major international fairs such as FIAC (Paris)[17] and ARCO (Madrid). In 1999 it created the project for the Russian Pavilion at Venice Biennale.

In April 2012, Marat Guelman as well as Elena Selina and Aidan Salakhova, also among Russia’s leading gallerists, announced that they would redesign the operation of their galleries. As a result, Guelman Gallery was closed down. Guelman stated that the main reason behind it was the shrinking of the contemporary art market in Russia due to the general political and economic instability.[18]

The last event hosted by the legendary gallery was Alexey Kallima’s exhibition Consider Yourself Lucky (May–June 2012).[19]

Cultural Alliance

In October 2012 Marat Guelman opened another exhibition space in Winzavod Contemporary Art Center.[20] where the now shut down Guelman Gallery used to be. The Cultural Alliance production center specializes in exhibiting art from Russia’s regions and the Commonwealth of Independent States in Moscow venues. It has hosted exhibitions representing the contemporary art of Kazakhstan, Izhevsk and Perm.

Turning his attention to regional art was not a mere accident for Guelman: from his very first exhibitions back in the 1990s he has engaged in searching for new artists and bringing them to Moscow. He is the person who “discovered”, amongst other artists, the Novosibirsk-based Blue Noses group,[4] as well as many artists from St. Petersburg, Rostov-on-Don, and Ukraine.

The name of the gallery, as well as a significant part of its concept, comes from the Cultural Alliance association, founded by Guelman in 2010 in collaboration with the United Russia political party. It was designed as an association of Russian cities which have their own lively scene in the domain of contemporary culture. Within the time frame of two years the association run two major festivals and about ten exhibitions, which have shown that even far away from Moscow “there are peculiar art communities, that provincial artists do not feel completely disconnected from the art scene of the capital and even from the international art scene, that they speak the language of contemporary art bridging the gaps of geography and biography”.[21]

In 2012, Guelman suspended his collaboration with the Russian regime. [22][23] However, he did not cease his activities aimed at boosting the development of culture in the Russian regions. The Cultural Alliance Gallery at Winzavod Art Center came to be the result and the successor of such activities.[24]

The 2011 Art Against Geography, held within the 4th Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art, came to be another landmark event that shaped the concept of the gallery. It revealed a new situation in the Russian art, in which the Russian regions network and collaborate with the Russian art community in order to overcome the depression of the territory with their own efforts, skipping the regional Ministries of Culture, the state museums, and other official institutions.[25]

The Cultural Alliance Gallery has become a prominent venue in Moscow, specialized in exhibiting the art of the Russian
In 2008, Marat Guelman ran the exhibition Russian Povera in Perm.[27] The exhibition, supported by Sergei Gordeev, the Representative of the Administration of Perm Region in the Federation Council of Russia, came to be a landmark project for Guelman in terms of his work as a curator. The exhibition included the works of the most prominent Russian artists of today, both of those renowned (Yuri Albert, Vladimir Arkhipov, Dmitry Gutov, Nikolay Polissky, Leonid Sokov, Igor Makarevich, Alexander Brodsky, Yury Shabelnikov, Sergei Shekhovtsov, and others) and young (Recycle, Anya Zhlod, Zhanna Kadyrova, Ilya Trushevsky). It was held on the premises of Perm River Terminal, which was at the time out of work and rundown, restored to the minimum level required for the exhibition at Gordeev’s expense.

45 thousand people came to see the exhibition within the scheduled one-month duration period, and it was extended for one more month at the request of the citizens. The case of the Russian Povera and its huge success paved the beginning of a large-scale project aimed at making Perm the “cultural capital” of Russia.[28] The River Terminal, which had hosted Russian Povera, now restored and revamped, became the seat of Perm Museum of Contemporary Art (PERMM).[29]

Marat Guelman became the head of the Museum as its Director. His activities at this post provoked criticism from certain Perm art workers as early as 2009.[30] Alexey Ivanov, a renowned writer, who has a degree in the history of art, claimed that “the Museum fed on vast amounts of money, basically all of the local budget for culture”, pointing out that as much as 90 million rubles had been provided for PERMM, while Perm Art Gallery had been provided with only 30 million rubles.[31] Ivanov accused Moscow art workers of delivering overpriced projects and services. When Marat Guelman was awarded the Stroganov Award,[32] Ivanov renounced his own award, which he had won three years earlier, as a gesture of protest. In response, Marat Guelman accused Ivanov of making false statements pointing out that the Museum was not financed from the budget.

Guelman curated the majority of the Museum’s exhibiting projects, including a number of projects that have had a major impact on shaping the Russian art community, such as Dmitry Vrubel’s Gospel Project (2009), A Night at the Museum (2010),[33] Anonymous (2012), The Face of the Bride (2012), and Grand Caucasus (2012), co-curated by Nailya Allakhverdieva, Fatherland (2011), Icons (2012), etc. PERMM projects have been exhibited in other Russian cities as well as abroad. One of the Museum’s exhibitions, Vision, was shown in St. Petersburg in 2010 and in Tver in 2011, Russian Povera traveled to Milan in 2011,[34] Fatherland was displayed in Novosibirsk and Krasnoyarsk in 2012.

The exhibitions held by PERMM produced an outcry of discontentment from the Russian Orthodox Church. Bishop Cyril of Stavropol confronted Guelman’s exhibitions saying that Guelmans’ work had nothing to do with true culture and that it was aimed at driving inter-religious and interethnic hostility. In 2012 PERMM failed to run an exhibition in Novosibirsk as the Ministry of Culture of the region denied the project exhibition spaces.[35]

The 2009 Living Perm Festival is another important achievement both for PERMM and for Marat Guelman. The Museum was involved in creating and implementing the concept of the festival, supported by Oleg Chirkunov, ex-governor of Perm Krai. Living Perm came to be a key cultural event for the city, and a prototype of a larger festival, Perm White Nights,[36] which has been held annually since. In 2012 it had over 1 million visitors. On 23 March 2009 PERMM became one of the state institutions of Perm Krai.

In June 2013, after a series of scandals Marat Guelman was dismissed from the post of the Director of PERMM.[37] The related legal commentary laid stress on the fact that the employer had no obligation to provide reasons for its decision. Guelman named censorship the main reason for his dismissal. The media believe that the cause leading to Guelman’s dismissal from the post of PERMM’s Director was the personal exhibition of Vasily Slonov, a Krasnoyarsk-based artist, titled Welcome! Sochi 2014, which was opened within the program of Perm White Nights.[9][39] The new governor of Perm Krai Victor Basargin later said that it was the alliance with Guelman that had cost his predecessor Oleg Chirkunov his post.[40]

**Notes**

1. Official (in the passport) Latin-graphics spelling of his last name is Guelman as in French.

**References**

3. Шевелев, Игорь (March 29, 2006). “Галерист на галерах” Деловая газета «Взгляд».
Re: Boris Berezovsky (businessman), by Wikipedia

Why Russia produces (and quashes) so much radical art
by Marat Guelman
Updated 27th November 2017

NOTICE: THIS WORK MAY BE PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT

"Seam" (2012) by Pyotr Pavlensky. Credit: Courtesy Pyotr Pavlensky

Editor's Note: Marat Guelman is a Russian art curator living in Montenegro. His most recent exhibition, “Art Riot: Post-Soviet Actionism,” opened at London’s Saatchi Gallery on Nov. 16, 2017. The opinions in this article belong to the author.
Artists have always held a special place in Russian society. My father, the playwright Alexander Guelman, was well known in the 1970s and was once lauded by Mikhail Gorbachev as the father of perestroika, the movement for reform within the Communist Party. At that time, theater was changing the perceptions of an entire generation.

During the period of glasnost (“openness”) in the mid-1980s, restrictions on forbidden books were relaxed. This newly available literature allowed people to evaluate society in ways that had previously been suppressed by communist propaganda.

The return of the great writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn from exile in 1994 became symbolic of a new era. But by this time, rock music had taken over the roles previously held by theater and literature. The creativity of acts like Mashina Vremeni, Boris Grebenshikov and DDT led the charge for a new, open world. The whole country knew the lyrics by Kino’s lead singer Viktor Tsoi: “Our hearts demand change.”

Now, social debate in Russia has been catalyzed by contemporary art, and provocative performances have proven the most effective medium for influencing public opinion. Artists have their fingers firmly on the pulse of the rapid changes taking place in Russian society.

A new subversion

Until 2012, many of us assumed that, after communism, Russia would develop as a democracy. The authorities paid lip service to European values, but after Putin's reelection in 2012, Russia's work-in-progress democracy transformed into a stereotypical autocracy.

The Russian government dropped any pretense of appearing Western; officials stopped trying to hide the wealth they had accumulated through corruption; and the media was increasingly regarded as a tool of state propaganda. Courts became punitive rather than judicial bodies, with political disagreements treated as criminal conduct.

In these circumstances, even the most politically engaged segment of Russian society became despondent and apathetic. After all, as one often hears uttered in Russia, “There’s nothing we can do.”

Just two weeks before Putin’s reelection, Pussy Riot emerged with their raucous prayer “Mother of God, Drive Putin Away!” After the song was performed in Moscow’s largest cathedral, the Orthodox Cathedral of Christ the Savior, news of this extraordinary protest spread, and the video was watched by millions online. When the band was subsequently arrested on hooliganism charges, an epic saga with almost daily episodes began: Pussy versus Putin.

Pussy Riot became the anti-Putin on every level. He is a man, they are women; he is old, they are young; he is gray, they are brightly colored; he is rich, they have nothing; he is in the Kremlin, they were in prison.
Pussy Riot’s trial, and the imprisonment of two members, drew global attention to Russia’s seemingly biased judiciary, and their treatment highlighted the fate that befalls many political prisoners: Amnesty International called the court’s decision "a bitter blow to freedom in Russia."

Then came Pyotr Pavlensky. In contrast to Pussy Riot’s outspoken approach, he demonstrated the strength of the weak. There was nothing the government could take away from him, because he didn’t have anything to lose.

His politically referential performances are often exercises in self-harm. He sewed his mouth shut ("Seam," 2012) and entangled himself in a barbed wire cocoon ("Carcass," 2013); he cut off his earlobe ("Segregation," 2014) and nailed his scrotum to the Red Square ("Fixation," 2013).

Through Pavlensky, society saw how a single person could oppose the state’s machinery of violence. In turn, hope has arisen that people like him will help the country turn a page in its history and move beyond its present stagnation.

Artistic awakening

Russia’s descent into authoritarianism has led to a crackdown on everything from supporting homosexuality and offending Orthodox Christians to criticizing authorities.

In 2013, when I was director of the Perm Museum of Contemporary Art, we hosted Siberian artist Vasily Slonov’s "Welcome! Sochi 2014," an exhibition that mocked the 2014 Winter Olympics. The exhibition was shut down the authorities, and I was dismissed from the museum. Two years later, I was evicted from my Moscow gallery space after hosting a fundraising exhibition for political prisoners who had protested Putin’s 2012 reelection.

But resisting such restrictions has offered another important artistic strategy. Siberian artist Damir Muratov does so by tackling the centralization of power through the language of art. He has created a separatist Siberian state from his own home (which he calls Bednotown, or "poor city"), which has many of the hallmarks of a real country: a coat of arms, a flag, a postal stamp and a currency. I once saw images of Muratov’s works when I was being interrogated at a police station, but he has managed to avoid arrest and imprisonment so far -- likely because his separatist sentiments are confined to art.

Just as the Bolsheviks did 100 years ago, following the October Revolution, today’s Russian government is trying to make art serve the state and further the government’s ideology. However, only the most incompetent artists willingly serve this cause.

The artistic community at large rarely sees eye to eye with the state. This conflict may not always boil over, but it exists because of a fundamental truth: Artists will always seek to be open to the world, looking to the future and seeing their place in it. By contrast, Putin’s rule is characterized by the rhetoric of isolation and Russian nationalism, looking to the past for traces of former glory.

Perhaps because of this, a sense of alienation is growing among the Russian people. In the artistic community, more clearly than anywhere else, one can see the green shoots of a new Russia rising.

Semibankirschina (семибанкирщина), or seven bankers, was a group of seven Russian business oligarchs who played an important role in the political and economical life of Russia between 1996 and 2000. In spite of internal conflicts, the group worked together in order to re-elect President Boris Yeltsin in 1996, and thereafter to successfully manipulate him and his political environment from behind the scenes.

The seven businessmen were identified by oligarch Boris Berezovsky in an October 1996 interview, and the term "semibankirschina" was then coined by a journalist in November 1996 as a takeoff on the Seven Boyars (semiboyarschina), who deposed Tsar Vasily Shuisky in 1610.

The seven bankers

Russian oligarch Boris Berezovsky, in a 29 October 1996 interview in the Financial Times, named seven Russian bankers and businessmen that he claimed controlled most of the economy and media in Russia[1][2][3][4] and had handanked Boris Yeltsin’s re-election campaign in 1996.[5][6][3][4][7]

The word “Semibankirschina” was subsequently coined by the Russian journalist Andrey Fadin of the Obschaya Gazeta newspaper, in a 14 November 1996 article titled “Semibankirschina as a New Russian Variation of Semiboyarschina”. He wrote that “they control the access to budget money and basically all investment opportunities inside the country. They own the gigantic information resource of the major TV channels. They form the President’s opinion. Those who didn’t want to walk along them were either strangled or left the circle.” Slightly over a year later, Fadin was killed in a car accident.[9] Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn also used this word in his critical 1998 essay Russia under Avalanche to describe the current political regime and to warn people of what he considered an organized crime syndicate that controlled the President and 70% of all Russian money.[10]

The identities of seven bankers are usually taken from the original Financial Times interview with Boris Berezovsky.[2][1][1] Those include:

1. Boris Berezovsky – United Bank, Sibneft, ORT
2. Mikhail Khodorkovsky – Bank Menatep, Yukos
3. Mikhail Fridman – Alfa Group
4. Petr Aven – Alfa Group
5. Vladimir Gusinsky – Most Group (ru) banking and media group
6. Vladimir Potanin – UNEXIM Bank
7. Alexander Smolensky – Bank Stolichny

Other sources, including collective photo and video materials, suggested that Vladimir Vinogradov (Inkombank) and Vitaly Malkin (Rossiysky Kredit) were part of the closed group.[12][13] From then on, various sources featured different combinations of those nine names to describe the phenomenon of Semibankirschina. Tom Bower also added Vagit Alekperov to the list.[14]

Since most of the seven oligarchs had Jewish roots, it led to a rise of antisemitism in Russia.[15]

History

It is generally considered that the group was created in March 1996 when a political consultant Sergey Kurginyan invited a group of thirteen Russian oligarchs to sign the so-called Letter of Thirteen (alternatively named Come Out of the Dead End!) in an attempt to cancel the Presidential election of 1996.[16][17] The manifest was published in Nezavisimaya Gazeta and suggested that two major candidates — Boris Yeltsin and the Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov — should strike a “political compromise” in order to prevent “the economical collapse.” It contained eight tips that described the position of business elites. The letter was called “a provocation” by the Communists and thus ignored.

After the plan failed, half of those oligarchs formed what became known as Semibankirschina — a group of seven business moguls ironically named after the 17th century seven boyars who owned the majority of Russian media...
Since Yeltsin was highly unpopular by that time, with only 3—8% support, a complex technology of crowd manipulation was developed by the Gleb Pavlovsky’s and Marat Gelman’s [Guelman] think tank Foundation for Effective Politics,[18] with the involvement of American specialists (the latter fact was used as a basis for the comedy film Spinning Boris released in 2003).

Known as an extremely "dirty" election campaign both inside and outside of Russia,[19] it was discussed in detail in Gleb Pavlovsky’s report President in 1996: Scenarios and Technologies of the Victory published shortly after. As Nezavisimaya Gazeta summarized it, "the formula of victory: attracting the expert resources + dominating in the information field + blocking the competitor's moves + dominating in mass media + dominating in elites."[18] The main analyst of the NTV TV channel Vsevolod Vilchek also admitted that they actively applied technologies of mass manipulation.[20] Both Dmitry Medvedev and Mikhail Gorbachev confirmed that Yeltsin's victory was hoaxed.[21][22]

Following the election, the seven bankers became the main power behind Russian politics and economy.[1] Between 1996 and 2000 they gained control over the most valuable state enterprises in the natural resource and metal sectors and unofficially manipulated Yeltsin and his decisions.[23][17] According to Boris Berezovsky, they acted through Anatoly Chubais — an architect of privatization in Russia and Yeltsin’s right-hand man who granted access to him at any time.[2]

All this resulted in further impoverishment of the population, criminalization of businesses and the infamous 1998 Russian financial crisis.[13] This was also the time when the word oligarch grew in popularity, substituting the nouveau riche term (both with extremely negative subtext). The 1999 saw the sudden rise to power of the unknown FSB officer Vladimir Putin. Boris Berezovsky and his associates claimed that it was him who single-handedly promoted Putin and insisted on his candidature as a Prime-minister and a President.[24][25]

Yet the following years saw a quick demise of most of the seven bankers and the rise of the new generation of "manageable" Russian oligarchy. Khodorkovsky, Berezovsky and Gusinsky turned into personae non gratae in Russia. Khodorkovsky lost his business as well as freedom in 2003, while Berezovsky and Gusinsky left Russia in 2000. Smolensky still owns significant companies, but lost his political influence. Vinogradov died in 2008. On 23 March 2013, Berezovsky was found dead at his home, Titness Park, near Ascot in Berkshire.[26]

See also

• Boris Yeltsin presidential campaign, 1996

References

8. Semibankirschina as a New Russian Variation of Semiboyarschina fragment in the Kommersant newspaper, June 23, 2003 (in Russian)
10. Russia under Avalanche, page 57 at the Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's official website (in Russian)
12. Dmitry Butrin. The Results of 10 Years of Capitalism. Kommersant newspaper, March 5, 2002 (in Russian)
13. Seven Bankers. Power Punch at the TV Tsentr official YouTube channel, October 6, 2015 (in Russian)
17. Dmitri Butrin. The Undersigned in the Kommersant newspaper, April 24, 2006 (in Russian)
18. Sergei Kartofanov. An Approach to the President's Victory by Nezavisimaya Gazeta № 60, August 29, 1996 at the Foundation for Effective Politics website (in Russian)

External links

• Russia bows to the ‘rule of the seven bankers’ at The Irish Times, August 29, 1998
• Thayer Watkins. The Russian Oligarchs of the 1990’s at the San Jose State University website
• Of Russian origin: Semibankirschina at Russiapedia
• Seven oligarchs who decided the fate of Russia at the Snob Magazine, January 21, 2011 (in Russian)