

This thesis addresses an issue of Russian federalism and focuses on its development between 2000 and 2008. The main argument is that the nature of Russian federalism has changed from very loose relations between the Centre and the regions in the end of 1990s to a rather centralized structure in the end of Putin's presidency. The thesis rests on a theory of federalism developed by Daniel J. Elazar. After applying this theory of federalism the conclusion is that both Yeltsin-era and Putin-era federalism fail to meet some of the key features of genuine federations.

In the first part the thesis briefly examines early institutional development of the Russian federation and describes the main features of Russian federalism of 1990s. In the latter part Putin's federal reforms are examined in detail and their influence on the nature of Russian federalism is studied. In the conclusion the theory of federalism is applied to addresses the change of the nature of Russian federalism since 1999