

**The Democratic Consolidation of a Federal Political System:  
The Case of Russia**

by

David R. Foley  
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Department of Political Science

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## Abstract

There is general agreement among scholars of political change that Russia's democracy remains stalled in the transition process, yet many analyses ignore this problem and focus on impediments to the democratic consolidation of Russia. Some studies emphasize the dual transition of Russia and focus on the establishment and maturation of the institutions necessary for a free market liberal democracy. Others focus on the demos, and describe the social, cultural and ethnic cleavages that impede the emergence of an integrated civic society so crucial to democratic consolidation. In spite of all of the effort to date, the question of what issues constitute significant impediments to a successful transition to (and consolidation of) democracy in Russia has yet to be satisfactorily answered. Whether presented by consolidologists or transitologists, most commentaries have shared a neglect of the national organizing structure that has been adopted from, and represents an important legacy of, the Stalin era of Soviet state crafting. To focus attention on some of the least studied aspects of the Russian democratization process, this study will address the topic of democratic consolidation, with a particular emphasis on the argument that *the consolidation process cannot proceed until the institutional foundations of a free market federal democracy are implemented and demonstrate congruence*. The evidence presented in this study will demonstrate that *the consolidation of the Russian (federal) democracy becomes increasingly difficult as the asymmetric regional system of governance becomes entrenched in the current political configuration*.

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## Chapter One:

### INTRODUCTION

*“The Russian Federation is not Russia.”<sup>1</sup>*

*“The Russian Federation is not a federation. Calling it one does not make it so.”<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> This observation by Goble is based on the fact that 25 million ethnic Slavic Russians live outside of Russia’s borders, and about the same number of ethnic non-Slavic Russians live inside its borders (about 1/5 of total population). (Goble, in Blaney, 1995, p.163)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. in Blaney, 1995, p.164

Analyses of the democratic consolidation of the Russian political system in the post-Soviet era have, in most instances, neglected to pay sufficient attention to the particular type of national structure that has been adopted by the political crafters. System type is a topic of particular relevance to Russian political state crafting, regime transition and democratic consolidation because, quoting Valenzuela, “democratic consolidation involves both the elimination of residues of the old system that are incompatible with the workings of a democratic regime and the building of new institutions that reinforce the democratic rules of the game.”<sup>3</sup> There are many analysts (if not most) who agree with the conclusion of Blaney, “the collapse of the Soviet Union was first and foremost an internal system failure which would have been almost impossible to avoid,”<sup>4</sup> and because a major portion of that failed system has been adopted into the democratic federation, it is reasonable to suspect that the nascent system may also fail.

By utilizing Russia as a case study, some selected propositions related to political change, federalism, democratic transition and consolidation which have been advanced in recent years can be tested. The system structure of the Russian democracy, like its Soviet predecessor, is based on the federal model, and because Collier and Levitsky demonstrated that “democracy subtypes are data containers which convey the most salient facts about a regime,”<sup>5</sup> the fact that Russia was, and remains a federation, some salient facts which are shared characteristics from one regime to the next should be discernable. The importance of a focus on what is ‘federal’ about Russia’s goal of

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<sup>3</sup> Munck, 1994, p.362

<sup>4</sup> Blaney, 1995, p.12

<sup>5</sup> Collier and Levitsky, 1997, p.432

political change was highlighted by Shin's statement, "the success of democratization depends a great deal on the kind of a democracy that is adopted at the outset,"<sup>6</sup> and the analysis of the transition process from a Soviet federation to a democratic republic will shed light on how much of the Soviet federal legacy has been co-opted into the democracy.

### **The Process of Analysis:**

The process of analysis utilized in this study is both qualitative and quantitative, with the focus of this study on the consequences to Russian political change and in particular, democratic consolidation of the selection of the Soviet model of federalism as a system type. The qualitative analysis of the relevant patterns in the history of Imperial, Soviet and post-Soviet political change provides a foundation for an appropriate perspective of the Russian case, with support for this path dependent approach supported by Cohen's observation, "though it is no longer fashionable to say so in the social sciences, political, economic and social realities are shaped by the historical process that produced them."<sup>7</sup> The analysis of Russia's Soviet history in this study affords an opportunity to test some selected hypotheses and propositions which have been advanced to explain the unexpected demise of the Soviet political system, a system that was considered to be a consolidated and stable political system right up to the weeks before it dissolved. The rapid and unexpected collapse of the Soviet Union has spawned a glut of after-the-collapse analyses that claim to identify the variables that contributed most directly to the demise of the Soviet federation, but few have attempted to reconcile the

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<sup>6</sup> Shin, 1994, p.135

<sup>7</sup> Cohen, 1999, p.41.

inconsistencies which are inherent in the adoption of a failed federal system by the crafters of the emergent democratic republic.

The process of analysis employed here provides a forum for the follow-up on previous studies that identified certain causes for, and the consequences of, Soviet administrative and institutional regime structures and policies which directly contributed to the collapse of the system.<sup>8</sup> Throughout this process of analysis the simple idea that will be consistently developed is that if a flaw in the system related to a certain objective variable was identified as a contributing factor in the Soviet collapse, and if that 'condition' continues to exist in the federal system, its disintegrative effects should also be a problem for the Russian Federation. An example of this dilemma of cause and effect contradiction between causes of the Soviet demise that were adopted into the Russian transition is an argument presented by Zvi Gitelman who blamed ethno-politics for the breakup of the Union. According to Gitelman, the politically engineered solutions of the Soviets to the problems of ethno-national unity failed, and the events of the late 1980's and early 1990's provided a separatist opportunity for "a push to autonomy in ethnic republics."<sup>9</sup> There are currently twenty one ethnic republics within the Russian Republic (as well as eleven other ethnically designated regions), so we must question why the push for autonomy did not result in a similar pattern of "secession pressure"<sup>10</sup> in the formation

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<sup>8</sup> Based on the reasoning of Barrington Moore, who was motivated to develop his 1966 analysis because he believed that "in an effort to understand the history of a specific country a comparative perspective can lead to asking very useful and sometimes new questions," (Moore, 1966, xix) it is hoped that this analysis may contribute to a comparative study of other post-Soviet states.

<sup>9</sup> Gitelman, 2001, p.130

<sup>10</sup> See Triesman, 1999, for a full discussion of the implications of "secession pressure."

of the Russian Federation. Why, for example, is the war for independence in Chechnya the exception rather than the rule in this post-Soviet ethno-federation? Although in the immediate post-Soviet period of disintegration many former SSRs declared and achieved independence, the independence efforts of the ASSRs that had been subsumed within the boundaries of the Soviet Russian Republic have been successfully thwarted. The post-Soviet independence that was achieved by the fifteen former SSRs suggests that Soviet classification type mattered for legitimizing the formation of the Russian Federation and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) more than such factors as the ethnic, cultural or religious composition of the population groups involved. In the same geographic region we see the Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijan SSRs achieve independence while the bordering Chechen, Ingush and Ossetian citizens are denied the same secession option. The location of an administrative political unit was a defining characteristic for the assignment of Republic status under the Soviets, and it was the difference between a designation of unit status as an SSR rather than an ASSR that provided a right to secession for some, and denied it to others. Chechnya has not been denied independence because it is strategically located or because it has a significant 'Russian' or 'Orthodox' population groups, but because it was an ASSR, and under Soviet law it had no right to secession. In the post-Soviet Russian Federation Chechnya gained recognition as a Republic, but the right to secession did not accompany that elevation in status. A major factor that appears to explain why Chechnya stands as an exception to the norm for Russian Republic subject unit behavior is because the secessionist rebels refuse to accept the terms of the Soviet Constitution that provided the right to independence only to SSRs.

In the analysis to follow Hanson's conclusion that the coalition that merged to bring down the Soviet system was one of "ethnic anti-Russians and civic anti-Soviets"<sup>11</sup> is also challenged. It is important to understand what became of the ethnic anti-Russians and why there is such a strong neo-Soviet revisionist sentiment in the Russian Republic today. This is an especially important issue because Hanson also hypothesized that post-Soviet Russia has managed to hold together mainly due to "the loss of a common anti-Soviet secessionist unity."<sup>12</sup> These conclusions by Hanson require the tacit acceptance of a limiting condition for the statement suggesting that anti-Soviet sentiments brought about the disintegration of the Soviet ethno-state, because those same sentiments must have had a significantly limited importance within the Russian Soviet Republic (perhaps with the exception of Chechnya). If it is a fact that it was Russian secession that initiated the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and if we are to believe that the disintegration is explained in large measure by the existence of widespread and deeply held anti-Soviet sentiments, then why would the Soviet districting regime that imposed boundaries around ethno-nationals and forced their inclusion in the Union be accepted by those same ethno-nationals who are contained in the post-1991 Russian Republic? There are indications presented in this analysis from many sources (such as the results of post-Soviet surveys and opinion polls,<sup>13</sup> party list election outcomes, political party platform statements and

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<sup>11</sup> Hanson 1999, p.17

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> See such sources as the Russia Votes and Russian Outlook web sites as well as published resources such as Barrington and Herron, Finifter, and White, Pravda and Gitelman which provide data that clearly indicate that the vast majority of Russians disagree with the premise that it was a good thing that the Soviet Union was dissolved.

select policy actions and decrees of the federal government<sup>14</sup>), that there is a significant amount of neo-Soviet revisionism in Russia that has only strengthened since 1991, and is shared by many non-Slavic ethno-national population groups. These results beg the question: What happened to all of that anti-Soviet unity?

Certainly the Chechens, the only ethno-national group currently engaged in an active rebellion against inclusion in the Russian Federation, are not all that is left of the 'ethnic anti-Russians' that Hansen described. The CPRF has, by all indications, established political legitimacy based on its self-identification as the successor to the policies and the vision of the CPSU, a vision that includes the restoration of the power, unity and prestige of the Soviet empire. When the conditions that have been identified as contributing to the demise of the Soviet Union are not ignored in the many post-collapse analyses, they are used to account for some significant challenges to the transition to democracy of the former Soviet republic. In most cases, the co-optation of structures and practices from the ancien regime are treated as instances of a necessary (albeit evil) adaptation of legacies from the past that have been adopted for purposes of convenience, expediency or tradition. The fact that the federal structures that have been carried over into the democratic federation are rooted in a system design that was intended to satisfy the specific demands of Soviet state building has, until now, remained a relatively ignored subject.

### **Legacies, Leaders and the Hybrid Regime:**

In an attempt to provide a clear assessment of the consequences to democratic consolidation of the mix of the old structures and practices with the new, Shin has

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<sup>14</sup> Among which is the treaty that has (at least symbolically) reunited Belarus and Russia.

identified the characteristics of a “hybrid regime.”<sup>15</sup> This is a system that emerges at a time when “institutions of the old regime coexist with those of the new regime and authoritarians and democrats often share power, whether through conflict or agreement.”<sup>16</sup> This analysis demonstrates that the hybrid stage continues to persist in Russia, particularly in interregional and region-to-center political and economic relations, and it is this hybrid regime which is being consolidated in Russia. Shin also describes the conditions that represent the completion of the transition period as the time when “a new democracy has promulgated a new constitution and held free elections for political leaders with little barrier to mass participation.”<sup>17</sup> A problem that must be addressed in the analysis of democratic consolidation in Russia is the fact that these necessary events have long since passed, and it would seem that an incomplete process of democratic political, economic and regional change has evolved over the past decade due to instances of structural and functional asymmetry that are incompatible to the desired transition outcomes. Symmetry of form, function and interrelations are necessary conditions for the successful consolidation of a federal democracy which were left off of Shin’s list, and pose a significant problem for the consolidation of Russian democracy and for the accuracy of the analysis of Russian political change.

Democratic consolidation, the subject of this thesis, “involves an increasingly principled rather than instrumental commitment to the democratic rules of the game, [and

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<sup>15</sup> Also see Brown, 2002, p.211 for a discussion of Russia as a hybrid mix of “arbitrariness, kleptocracy and democracy,” and Shevtsova, 2002 “Russia’s Hybrid Regime” for an elaboration on this theme.

<sup>16</sup> Shin 1994, p.144

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.



ends] when major political actors as well as the public at large expect the democratic regime to last well into the foreseeable future.”<sup>18</sup> There are few who would make the argument that the Yeltsin era was a time of ‘principled’ state building to the contrary, it was widely reported that the appointment of Putin as his successor was conditioned on the assurance to Yeltsin that neither he nor the members of his personal inner circle (including members of his family) would be prosecuted for the corrupt practices of his regime. A strong case can be made for the proposition that the Russian transition has been dominated by individuals who have shown themselves to be characteristically (and notoriously) shallow in their capacity for principled actions, and there is an ample supply of questionable policy implementations and decrees to suggest that the federation crafters have attempted to establish a shield of federal structure to mask the plundering of the assets of the state.<sup>19</sup>

It is not uncommon for there to be disagreements among conclusions pertaining to specific instances of political change, but it is significant that twelve years after the establishment of the Russian Federal Republic there continues to be disagreement over the basic question of what stage of political change the Russian state is currently in. If the case that is made for the identification of the current stage in the process of change is dependent upon the objective variables and procedural mechanisms that a particular (and perhaps biased) analyst selects, then the analysis of political change becomes a subjective art. If process of analysis is not founded on specified objective conditions that represent

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p.145

<sup>19</sup> See such sources as Lars, Lundgren and Olsson, 2001; Cohen, 2000; Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe documents, 1994-1999; Gaddy and Ickes, 1998 and Sergeev, 1998.

such concepts as ‘transition’, ‘consolidation’ or even ‘democracy’, a good case could be made for either of the conflicting propositions that Russia has completed the consolidation phase and that Russia remains stalled in the early stages of transition. The effort to identify exactly what stage in the process of political change Russia is in is further exacerbated when the view expressed by Shin that “democratic consolidation cannot be (strategically) achieved without abandoning the formal and informal institutions, procedures, and arrangements that constrain the performance of the newly democratic regime”<sup>20</sup> is considered.

Although the ability to identify what specifically constitutes a ‘constraining institution’ is left ill-defined by Shin’s comments, there is little doubt that Russia was forced to depend on a legacy<sup>21</sup> of Soviet era legal, formal, political, administrative and economic institutions and procedures in order to function as a governable state in the immediate post-collapse period. The issue to be addressed in this analysis is the fact that many of these ‘legacies’ from the past continue to be utilized in the new Republic, and it is important to determine which of them have been unnecessarily retained and therefore result in the constraint of political development or the hindering of the consolidation of the democratic regime. It is argued in this analysis that one such constraining institution that has been retained and negatively impacts the whole of the consolidation process in Russia is the Soviet federal districting system. The adoption of the Soviet districting system brought with it asymmetric patterns of process, ethno-national identification, segmentation and other related issues that directly affect the dynamics of Russian

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<sup>20</sup> Shin, 1994, p.145

<sup>21</sup> See Millar and Wolchik 1994 for a full discussion of post-communist legacy issues.

political change, and by its utilization as a state-organizing regime, it represents a structural bulwark against the establishment of symmetric regional interrelations and the successful (and complete) consolidation of democracy.

This analysis demonstrates that a focus on the impact of the retention of the Soviet era asymmetric districting system reveals not only the contribution of this regime to the problems encountered in the transition and consolidation of democracy, but also provides a base line for the identification and explication of other ‘constraining’ challenges to the political maturation of a Russian federal democracy. Many of the issues related to Russian and non-Russian nationalism and ethnicity that have been defined by the legacies of Imperial and Soviet internal colonialism are clearly identifiable in a districting system that designates subject regions based on ethnic composition related variables. It also becomes evident in this analysis that many of the ‘habits’ that are reflected in the patterns of civic actions and attitudes towards the federal regime result from the continuation of the tradition of utilizing both formal and informal mechanisms of governance that are based on the reinforcement of a personal vertical of centralized command and control. Issues related to political change, democratization, transition and consolidation of a federal system, when understood in both theory as well as practice, can provide a definitive focus on many of the unresolved issues which threaten to derail Russia’s democratic consolidation process. The contribution to the struggle to craft and consolidate a balanced federal democracy of the issues described above is summarized in the hypothesis that is central to the development of this analysis: *The potential for the failure of the consolidation of the Russian (federal) democracy increases as the asymmetric and illogical organizing system of republics, krais, oblasts, okrugs and*

*federal cities becomes entrenched in its current configuration because the failure to institutionalize an unbiased system based on law and administered in an impartial fashion undermines both democracy and free market capitalism.*

My research indicates that the asymmetry and illogic of the Russian federal districting system represents the core of many of the issues that have emerged as built-in contradictions to most paradigms and models of federal democracy, and have resulted in a process of legacy transition in Russia that threatens to result in the consolidation of a hybrid regime. The significance of this hypothesis is supported by analytical observations from the early transition process in Russia, such as that of Millar and Wolchik, that “many analysts of ethnic relations in the Soviet Union during communist rule argued that the impact of modernization and the federal political structure of the Soviet Union increased the political importance of ethnic identity and the incentives for mobilizing citizens around ethnic claims.”<sup>22</sup> If Russian political crafters have adopted virtually intact the federal political structure of the Soviet era, and must also aggressively pursue policies intended to achieve political and economic modernization, it is reasonable to expect that issues such as ethnic identity and the mobilization of the citizenry that have been identified as challengers to the stability of the previous eras will continue the pattern and threaten the integrity of the new Republic. If the institutionalization of ethno-nationalism contributed a separatist momentum to the dissolution of the Union (as many analyses have suggested),<sup>23</sup> the sudden loss of their separatist relevance in the federal

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<sup>22</sup> Millar and Wolchik, 1994, p.24

<sup>23</sup> For a good spectrum of analyses of the ethno-national issue for both the Soviet and the post-Soviet regimes see Triesman, 1999; Gorenburg, 2001; Grey, 1997; Saivetz (in Fischer), 1996; and Balzer, 1997.

Republic appears to represent a challenge if not a direct contradiction to an ethno-separatist based explanation of the Soviet collapse.

In order for the analysis of variables that are said to have conspired to destroy the Soviet system to be more relevant and useful, it is helpful to identify differences in the impact of ethno-nationalism between the Soviet Russian Republic and the Federal Russian Republic, and to explain why what contributed to the demise of one Republic has yet to have caused the disintegration of its successor. In the process of differentiating between Soviet and post-Soviet Russia, the lesson provided by Cohen's criticism of many analyses of Russian post-Soviet political change (that focus too much on the study and not enough on 'Russia' has resulted in a plethora of "Russian Studies Without Russia"),<sup>24</sup> will be heeded. The general problem to be addressed in this analysis is based on the conclusion that the Russian transition process appears to be stalled, and if that is the case, the consolidation process cannot proceed. Because the formal and informal foundations of a free market and of democratic federalism have yet to be fully formed and implemented (and do not yet demonstrate interregional congruence), the consolidation of the hybrid institutions and regimes of structure, governance and the political economy that were cobbled into existence will become long-term obstacles to the process of political change.

#### **The Method of Analysis and Some Measures of Change:**

With the consolidation of the Russian federal democracy established as the dependent variable for this study, the test of the success (or failure) of the consolidation process is developed from a mixed analysis that utilizes both qualitative and quantitative

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<sup>24</sup> This is the title of Cohen's 1999 essay.

indices of consolidation, measures that have been suggested in theory or demonstrated in practice, as the independent variables. Two independent variable categories or classes are utilized in this analysis in order to organize the many sub-variants and objectively identifiable ideological characteristics that have been selected. The first of these independent variable categories is what I describe as *the organizational unit type characteristics of the Russian federal districting system*. This is the regime that has been adopted from the Soviet era and is being utilized by the federation crafters for the organization of the eighty-nine “subjects of the federation.”<sup>25</sup> This group is made up of the regions that have been designated as federation member types based on one of five asymmetric categories- republics, krais, oblasts, okrugs and federal cities- and combine to form the Russian sub-federal regional system. A second organizing regime that provides an indication of the interrelations among and between the ‘subjects’ and the federal government, that was carried over as a post-Soviet regime in order to facilitate the organization of the subjects of the federation into asymmetrically grouped “Economic Areas,”<sup>26</sup> is also included in this analysis. It is an important task to investigate why the regime that was instituted by the Soviets to accomplish the division of the state into economically compatible groupings of ‘subject’ regions in order to facilitate the unique demands of the centrally commanded and controlled system has found a useful life in the Russian free market federal democracy.

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<sup>25</sup> See Kirkow, 1998 for a full description of this term that has been adopted by the federal regime to identify the eighty nine sub-federal political units that are second in political power only to the central federal government.

<sup>26</sup> This is a term that identifies the regime established for the economic centralization of the Soviet Union, and represents a legacy that originated in the Khrushchev era, has been carried over into the free market democracy, and is currently in its third post-Soviet manifestation.

The configuration of Economic Areas in Russia has ranged from a maximum of twelve Areas under Gorbachev and the Soviet regime, reduced to eight (voluntary groups) in 1992 that were dissolved and replaced by a revised and mandated regime of eleven Areas by Yeltsin, and included in Putin's reforms in the first months of his presidency was the reconfiguration and reduction of the groups to seven asymmetrically organized Areas. These Areas represent a wide range of units and territories in both geographic size and in the number of included subject units, with some Areas including as few as four subject units, while others have as many as seventeen units per grouping, and none of the Areas include an okrug unit type. Although these groupings are justified by the federal government as necessary to the development and coordination of the political economy of Russia by the grouping of the sub-units in categories of specific and uniquely shared or complementary characteristics, a more skeptical (and accurate) interpretation of the utilization of these organizing Areas is as a federally mandated regime that enables the government to establish and maintain a significant degree of centralized command, control and oversight.

The second independent variable class that I have selected for this analysis is the category that includes variables that represent the asymmetric characteristics or segments of the Russian federal system. This group is a compilation of objective variables that can be categorized by such characteristics as differences that result from demographics, ethnicity, national origin, population concentrations, language and urbanization. Although many of these objective independent variables are drawn from population related characteristics, there exist some economic characteristics of asymmetry in the Russian state that reflect both formal and informal disparities across the regions as well



as among the segmented population groups. Due to Soviet era industrialization and centralization policies, certain areas of Russia enjoyed the benefits of industrial development, but in the post-Communist era these regions or cities are often locationally illogical to the structures and processes of a free market economy or of a modern industrial state. Whole cities dedicated to the manufacture of a single product or group of products were established under Soviet tutelage based on a rationale for the targeting of regional development based on such factors as the proximity to natural resources and raw materials, with little or no consideration for a critical component of the system such as the limited capabilities of the national transportation system and the logistics of moving the finished product to market.

With the 'costs' of doing business based on the determination of costs, values and profits by the Kremlin based Party Secretaries, the capabilities of the core of this system to a market economy were (and remain) inadequate for the supply of raw materials, the distribution of the finished goods, the existence of a locally supportive workforce and the demands of a consumer driven market. Due to the organization of the districts of Russia for economic purposes, the asymmetries of gross regional product, the amount of foreign investments to a region and ratios of industrialization and urbanization are measures that impact the capacity of Russia to establish a balanced foundation based on the distribution of economic capacity and consumption that supports the consolidation of a national market economy. The economic indicators selected for this study represent an important legacy of centralized control that has been carried over from the Soviet period of industrialization and organization, and provide objective measures of the results of the establishment of an economic regime on the basis of an ideology that has become



detrimental to the modern free market and democratic era. Highlighting the contradictions of the mechanisms of the Soviet command economy to the requirements of a free market system is a key issue to this analysis, and the selected economic variables I include in this analysis represent a significant arena of disparate and asymmetric structures and practices that condition the path of change in post-Soviet Russia.

If the components of the Soviet command economy significantly contributed to the collapse of the Soviet system (a position that has many advocates),<sup>27</sup> and the economic base of the Russian Federation remains dependent on virtually the same industrial, agricultural and natural resource base more than ten years after the collapse, Russia's survival devoid of dramatic infrastructure reform has been remarkable. If the Soviet infrastructure could not support the demands of the command economy that it was designed to facilitate, and the failure of this political economy had a direct impact on the demise of the Soviet system, its existence in a relatively unreformed condition should either undermine the foundations of the nascent Russian Federation, or it should be a goal of analysis to understand what has made the difference. There is no question that it was necessary in the transition phase for the Russian Federation to continue to depend on the economic base of its Soviet predecessor, yet no large-scale reconstruction of the infrastructure has yet been achieved (nor is it likely to be in the near future), and thus Russia appears to be engaged in a complicated scenario. It may be that the federal elites of Russia have determined that the regime cannot afford the economic and political costs a wholesale reform to its infrastructure would bring, but they seem to be ignoring some key lessons from the late Soviet era. The first lesson is that a market economy cannot be

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<sup>27</sup> For a good representative sample of economic-based explanations of the collapse of the Soviet Union, see Juviler, 1997; Blaney, 1995 and Berliner, 1997.

built without a free market infrastructure based on the rule of law, and the second is the lesson that a democratic society must precede a democratic polity.

The connection of economic conditions and political stability are made by Haggard and Kaufman's conclusion that "the ability of both authoritarian and democratic leaders to maintain power is partly a function of economic performance, which in turn is dependent on the conduct of economic policy."<sup>28</sup> A comparison and analysis of economic variables that have been identified as having significantly contributed to the breakup of the Soviet Union and yet continue to exist in the post-Soviet era will not only identify some instances of theoretic concept stretching and contradiction regarding political change and democratization, but can also shed new light on the subject of regime stability and economic reform. The problems for consolidation that both political and economic variables pose was described by Lipset's observation that "the contradictions between political and economic inequality opens the field for tensions, institutional distortions, instability, and recurrent violence . . . and may prevent the consolidation of democracy."<sup>29</sup> Asymmetry in both political and economic institutions and practices represent objective conditions and policy instances that can poison the consolidation of a democratic state system. Institutionalized asymmetry is found in this study to be a key ingredient to the conditions that at times have indicated Russia is caught in a hopelessly stalled transition process that can result in nothing more than an incomplete democratic consolidation. The path to the consolidation of a free market democratic federation must be paved by patterns of symmetry in interregional relations,

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<sup>28</sup> Haggard and Kaufman, 1995, p.10

<sup>29</sup> Lipset, 1994, p.2

and a balance in the distribution of the institutionalized costs and benefits of the process of political change.

In many of the eighty-nine Russian subject regions the political and/or economic elites do not share the same ethno-national heritage as the majority population of their region of residence. The legacy from both the Imperial and Soviet eras of Kremlin representation in the regions by Slavic appointees has been repeated in the federal territorial policies that has installed the governors of many krais, oblasts and okrugs by presidential decree. Stalin's implementation of relocation and districting policies that insured ethnic heterogeneity in and among the administrative districts and republics resulted in significant disparities in culture, language and ethos among and between the ethnic identifications of the mass public. The combined effect of the appointment and national policies is the artificial segmentation of both mass and elite society that exacerbates disparities in political and economic policy participation, expressions of regime support, benefits from regime support, and other issues such as national and sub-national 'homeland' identification, political party based partisanship and participation and attitudes and actions towards economic reform. This analysis demonstrates that although there are objective indications of significant disparities, asymmetries and segmentations among the people and the regions of the Russian Federation, there are also some very consistent and commonly shared beliefs and traditions that help to explain many political outcomes and actions of the regime and the national electorate. The analysis of the objective measures of asymmetry selected for this study provide an opportunity to identify and assess the influence of many of the significant institutions, regimes and other legacies that have been carried over into the Russian Federation from

the Imperial and Soviet eras, and provide the 'glue' that holds this disparate Republic together.

### **The Role of Political Culture:**

Although political culture is an important topic for analysis, the variables that best identify 'national' or 'ethnic' traditions and belief systems of interest to this analysis are assessed according to the guiding proposition suggested by Brown's statement that "the dominant political culture is accepted by both the elites and a very large proportion of the population."<sup>30</sup> The mixed method of analysis that I have selected provides an opportunity to identify and test not only Brown's proposition of a shared political culture, but also will provide insight into propositions related to consolidation theory such as Diamonds assertion that "democratic consolidation can only be fully understood as encompassing a shift in political culture."<sup>31</sup> There is significant support for the historical path form of analysis, such as the findings of McAuley that "today's political culture has its origins in yesterday's political culture,"<sup>32</sup> and Petro, who concluded that "Russian political culture preserved the pre-Soviet religious, historical, and natural identity."<sup>33</sup> The importance of the impact of political culture's contribution to the failure of the Soviet Union was identified by Petro who believes that "Russian political culture prevented the concept of the 'soviet man' from taking root in Soviet society."<sup>34</sup> A shared ideology is a critical

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<sup>30</sup> Brown, 1984, p.175

<sup>31</sup> Diamond, 1999, p.65

<sup>32</sup> McAuley, 1984, p.16

<sup>33</sup> Petro, 1995, p.3

component of a unifying national ethos or national political culture, and the findings of this analysis indicate that there is little evidence of such shared political view of 'Russia' among the general population, but there remains a strong identification among all of the segments of the population with traditional 'Russia.' Just as Petro has shown that the lack of a modern political culture prevented the penetration of the idea of the 'soviet man' into the ideological consciousness of the Soviet people, there appears to be a similar detachment from federally structured regional identifications as well. Although there are some who argue that it may be the lack of a unifying political culture or a shared ideology that has held transitional Russia together, it is the conclusion of this study that it is localized identifications and mechanisms of civic society and culture that provide the bond for asymmetric unity.

It would seem to represent a further contradiction to many explanations of the demise of the Soviet Union if the lack of a shared political culture and national identity that combined with an ethnically based sense of localized continuity which conspired to facilitate the collapse of the Soviet state did not at least inhibit (if not derail) the consolidation of a free market federal democracy in Russia. In order to trace the path for the successful consolidation of democracy, it is critical to demonstrate that these segmenting issues related to identifications and ideologies have somehow been (or will be) resolved by the system and structures that make up the new Russian Republic. This analysis demonstrates that many characteristics of Russian federal form and function reinforce asymmetries that can be identified in differences of language, religion, ethnicity and national origin, and the impact of these objective variables on the consolidation of

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<sup>34</sup> See McAuley, 1984, p. 29 for a discussion of the importance of the concept of a 'soviet man' to Soviet ideological unity.

the federal union can be measured and compared in both qualitative and quantitative economic and political outcomes. Asymmetry in measures which represent characteristics identified with a Russian and/or Soviet political culture are available and will provide significant insight into the segmenting characteristics of the federal districting system, the mixed electoral system and of the presidential decrees that have guided (if not dominated) the transition and consolidation process since 1991.

### **Making the Case or Stating the Case?**

Shevtsova makes several observations that are insightful commentaries on the political changes that have occurred in post-Soviet Russia, that reflect the dire state of the stalled consolidation the Russian Federal democracy to date, and help to set the foundations for this analysis. Shevtsova concludes that Yeltsin's tenure as President is to be remembered most because he "failed to consolidate democracy in post-communist Russia [and] did little to ensure that the country would continue along the democratic path in the future."<sup>35</sup> The reason for this failure "was the inability, not just of Yeltsin, but of Russian society as a whole to resolve the problem of choosing a civilization model"<sup>36</sup> (or of a shared mass and elite political culture as outlined by Brown). There is general agreement that in order to succeed as a free market federal democracy, it is necessary for Russia to collectively throw off the Soviet model of central command and control and (presumably) to avoid a revision of the old Imperial model as a paradigm for a modern

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<sup>35</sup>Shevtsova, 2000, p.37

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

state system.<sup>37</sup> Perhaps as a result of necessity or for the lack of a viable alternative, the nascent federation finds itself saddled with what Shevtsova calls a “constitutional electoral autocracy” that has created a condition of national “ambivalence and uncertainty.”<sup>38</sup> Shevtsova identifies the post-Soviet Russian presidency as “monarchical”, the political system as “authoritarian”, and believes that Putin is the “heir” to Yeltsin’s presidential power and will continue this pattern into his administration. The utilization of the extraordinary powers of the Russian presidency in the composition and ratification of the federal constitution and the means and methods for the post-1993 electoral process have resulted in the legitimization, after the fact, of choices that the ruling class had already made. According to Shevtsova, the final act of the Yeltsin regime has resulted in the “legitimation of autocracy” by his “designating a successor” and “neutralizing any opponents.”<sup>39</sup> Even the war in Chechnya may not be the civil war for independence that it seems, but rather “a Soviet-style tactic [intended for] the whipping up of wartime patriotic sentiments and consolidating society around the hatred of a common enemy.”<sup>40</sup> In the end history will conclude that the political legacy of Yeltsin’s presidency was “unique not just in combining democracy with oligarchic

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<sup>37</sup> Remington, in Lowenhardt, states that the need to throw off the Soviet system was paramount. He argued that “the inheritance of the old order, particularly the highly centralized, uniform character of the Soviet system, meant that to replace Soviet socialism with market-oriented, liberal-democratic society required taking control of state power.” (Remington, 1998, p.217)

<sup>38</sup> Shevtsova, 2000, p.37

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

authoritarianism but also in bequeathing *a regime that is impossible to consolidate.*”<sup>41</sup>  
(Emphasis added.)

If Shevtsova is correct in her analysis, Russia is a case example of such a completely flawed process of transition to democracy that it can never be consolidated, and as a result it has become (and will remain) a hybrid regime that will last either into perpetuity or until the next separatist calamity. It would seem reasonable to conclude, even if Shevtsova is only partially correct, that the consolidation process in Russia cannot proceed until the institutional foundations of a free market democracy are reformed, implemented and demonstrate congruence, but even that is not enough. It is also a critical component of Russia’s transition and consolidation process that it be crafted as a legitimate (and institutionally symmetric) federation.<sup>42</sup> The weakness in Shevtsova’s claims that the democratic process and electoral outcomes in Russia serve only as a rubber stamp of legitimacy for an autocracy is because Shevtsova doesn’t take the effort to substantiate her claims with either objective or empirical evidence, a weakness that is substantially rectified in this analysis.

If the first decade of institution building and the crafting of participation procedures in Russia are interpreted more favorably than the view that Shevtsova has posited, then the practices and institutions which developed throughout the Yeltsin term may very well represent the transition to, and consolidation of, a democratic political

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> By ‘institutionally symmetric’ I mean in a legal and formal context. It is a condition of most (if not all) federal systems that asymmetries exist in regional, territorial and demographic characteristics and measures, and it is usually the case that these ‘natural’ asymmetries require formal, procedural and constitutional stipulations of symmetry in interrelations in order to mitigate obstacles to state-building.



system. On the other hand, if Diamond's suggestion that "to avoid tautology, consolidation must rest on conceptual foundations other than what we hypothesize to be its principal consequence: the stability and persistence of democracy"<sup>43</sup> is correct, then the fact that democracy has survived in Russia since 1991 is not reason enough to claim evidence of consolidation. Those who suggest that a consistent pattern of the utilization of electoral institutions and the survival of democratic regimes indicate definitive progress along the path of consolidation have led Przeworski to lament that "consolidation is an empty term."<sup>44</sup> It would be a methodological error for any analysis of the consolidation process in Russia to ignore the evidence of stability which the repeated iterations of the electoral process over the first decade of reform represent, but it would be equally erroneous to depend too heavily on the "minimalist"<sup>45</sup> value of elections and election related measures for a definitive assessment of the true nature of Russian democratic consolidation.

### **Some Guiding Principles and Propositions:**

Of significant influence to this analysis is the model of dimensions and levels of consolidation that lend themselves nicely to the process of analysis and are summarized by Diamond:

"Consolidation takes place in two dimensions—norms and behaviors—and on three levels. At the highest level are the country's elites, the top decision makers, organizational leaders political activists, and opinion shapers, in politics, government, the economy, and society. [Elite] At the intermediate level, parties, organizations and movements have their own beliefs, norms and patterns of

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<sup>43</sup> Diamond, 1999, p.65

<sup>44</sup> Przeworski, 1996, p.56

<sup>45</sup> For a discussion of "minimalist" characteristics of democracy, see Diamond and Plattner, 1996, p.21.

behavior. [Organizations] At the level of mass public, consolidation is indicated when the overwhelming majority of citizens believe that democracy is the best form of government in principle and that it is also the most suitable form of government for their country at their time. [Mass Public]”<sup>46</sup>

Following this outline proposed by Diamond, this analysis provides an opportunity to identify the dimensions and levels as they are manifest both nationally and regionally. Their origins in Russia’s Soviet and Imperial past are traced and explicated in the consolidation hypothesis of Diamond that is tested by utilizing a broad spectrum of sources, such as the results from the three post –1991 national legislative election cycles as well as opinion polls of the general population of Russia for indications of consolidation at the ‘mass’ level, ideological statements of selected political parties and party leaders for indications at the ‘organization’ level and the analysis of both official and unofficial interrelations between the leadership of regional regimes and the federal government for a sense of democratic consolidation at the ‘elite’ level. The indications from this study, that the consolidation which has occurred to date has not been of a stable federal democracy, is supported by the utilization of Diamond’s suggested variables.

Measures of consolidation that are reflected in the relations among elites are not only reflected in legal-formal and constitutionally sanctioned relations between the federal regime and regional governments, but are mirrored as well in key segments of the official and unofficial political economy. These relations indicate how patterns of organizing agreements between the government “super-ordinates” and the political and economic “subordinates” has evolved, and why they sometimes result in personalized pacts and at other times they maintain an adherence to a formal and transparent process

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<sup>46</sup> Diamond, 1999, pp.66-68

of negotiation and agreement.<sup>47</sup> The analysis of patterns of informal as well as constitutionally sanctioned relations between the political subject units and the federal government that include such issues as patterns of revenue sharing, taxation, the institutional and legal incongruence between many regional statutes and federal laws, (such as indications of cooperation or conflict related to the enforcement of laws and decrees by the federal and regional subject units) are objective indications of the degree to which the consolidation of the federal organizing system has advanced, and of the types of regimes and practices that are involved in the process.

A challenge to the development of a study such as this which outlines the norms and behaviors of the Russian polity was described by Linz and Stepan who noted that “Russia has a highly specific and difficult legacy of stateness and citizenship problems.”<sup>48</sup> Thus, the norms and behaviors of a citizen in relation to his or her localized community or region is usually different from the norms and behaviors exhibited by that same citizen in relation to the national and regional government institutions and regimes. This analysis demonstrates that there are three distinct ‘levels’ of citizen identification, two that are direct, localized and nationalized personal identification, and one that is in the abstract, the sense of inclusion as a citizen of a regional subject unit. Indications from this analysis are that even in the ethno-republics and ethno-okrugs, ideological, traditional and cultural identifications are localized and nationalized, but the middle range of regional ‘belonging’ is more a formality than a matter of a ‘homeland’.

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<sup>47</sup> See Eckstein et.al.,1998, for a full discussion of who make up the classes of “superordinates” and “subordinates” in relation to “authority patterns.”

<sup>48</sup> Linz and Stepan, 1996, p.26

Perhaps the most telling comment pertaining to the importance of the Russian federal administrative system and the personal identifications of the citizens to the success or failure of the state building process underway was expressed by Linz and Stepan's observation that "the greater the percentage of people in a given territory who feel that they do not want to be members of that territorial unit, however it may be constituted, the more difficult it will be to consolidate a single democracy within that unit."<sup>49</sup> Russia is divided into categories of Soviet era administrative units that subdivide the state into 225 electoral districts that are dispersed among twenty-one republics, fifty oblasts (which includes one autonomous [ethnic] oblast), ten okrugs, six krais, and two federal cities. The twenty one republics, ten okrugs and one autonomous oblast have enjoyed their special status of separation and designation, in some cases, since the first months of the formation of the Soviet Union, based on the existent or created presence of a non-Slavic ethnic majority population. These latter three unit types were justified by Stalin's national policy which at the time of their formation determined that ethno-national characteristics qualified select regions for a special status reflecting sub-national autonomy. This study outlines in detail the growing irrelevance of the ethno-national status of most of these subject units in the contemporary Russian Federation, an irrelevance due in no small measure to the fact that few of the ethnically determined subject units have maintained a majority ethnic population in the post-Soviet era. In spite of the fact that ethno-national subject districts are no longer justified by population demographics, the federal regime has yet to adjust federal organization to this reality, and

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p.27

policy proposals by the Putin regime suggest that the old Soviet policy of segmentation and control through ethno-autonomy may be revised in a new manifestation.

### **The Federal System as Co-opted Complexity:**

An example of the complexity of the federal structure is revealed in the location of a federal subject unit of equal constitutional status within the boundaries of a larger federal subject unit, a structure comparable to an American state within a state or a German Lander within the Lander . The krai subject unit exists today as a result of the Soviet attempt to place political boundaries around territories that were sparsely populated, but incorporating multiple ethnic or national groups. In the process of Soviet industrial development and the implementation of internal immigration policies this population base was altered in most cases, and the result for some citizens was that resident status became (and remains) complex. An example of this complexity of citizenship is represented in the region of the Caucasus where the Adygeya Republic is contained within Krasnodar Krai. In such a case, although both political units occupy the same ground, and one is subsumed within the other, they hold the same constitutional status in relation to the workings of the federation, but the republic enjoys a special and superior status according to the terms of the Federation Treaty that was negotiated to form the post-Soviet Republic. Citizen of the Krai may or may not also consider themselves to be a citizen of the regional Republic, and conversely citizens of the ethno-Republic may or may not identify with the Krai as a homeland. Compounding this problem of asymmetry in relation of the regional unit to the federal regime and to one another based on terms of the Federation treaty or the constitution is the fact that citizens of the ethno-Republic may consider themselves a dual citizen of two 'republics' (Russia

and Adygeya), and a resident of the Krai may identify with 'Russia' and their local community only. Oblasts, like krais, are artificially crafted political units that were designated, in the Soviet era, as locations for the targeted development and populating for particularized production and natural resource characteristics related to the command/demand industrial economy and this analysis demonstrates that like most of the republics and okrugs of modern Russia, they have no relevance as a unit type in the free market federal democracy. What of the two federal cities of St. Petersburg and Moscow? These holdovers from an Imperial emphasis on the city-state enjoyed a unique status in the Soviet era, and hold an equal status to the other eighty seven federation subject units in the modern Russian state. The recognition of a 'city-state' like unit as a separate but equal power to the oblasts within whose boundaries they stand (the Leningrad and Moscow Oblasts respectively) is also not conducive to the development of democratically "balanced disparities"<sup>50</sup> among the subject unit types.

In general, the challenge to the Russian consolidation process of the districting system that has been adopted to structure the Federation is in the fact of the many related problems which are associated with the contradiction of the institutionalized asymmetry of unequal-equals. It is a contradiction to, and incompatible with, the ideas of fair and balanced representation and equality of rights and interrelations to expect a democratic federation structured as Russia is currently configured to succeed in the democratic consolidation process with such a significant degree of crafted structural asymmetry and illogic. By measuring the impact the federal organizing system has had on the

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<sup>50</sup> The idea of balancing disparities in democratic structures was outlined by Eckstein who noted, "the democratic culture is a mixed culture in which disparate, perhaps even contrary, elements are balanced." (Eckstein, 1998, p.271)

consolidation process, and determining the continued relevance of the unit type designations as they exist in contemporary Russia, it becomes clear that economic indicators, election results and patterns and the existence of selected *soglosheniias* (bilateral agreements between the federal government and a sub-unit) cannot be correlated to justify the specific characteristics that define a particular unit type. Republics and okrugs are two ethnically determined subject types that we would expect to exhibit traits in their relations with the federal center, as well as patterns in the outcomes from the partisan rich proportional representation election cycles, that reflect their ethnically based interests. This analysis demonstrates that the interrelations and election outcomes for the ethno-units differ little (if at all) from those of the oblasts that owe their existence to the fact that they were designated as Soviet era target regions for industrial development. It is a significant finding of this study that these purely administrative subject units do not exhibit characteristics significantly more or less ideologically separatist than their ethnic counterparts.

One issue illuminated in this study is the fact that it was the hope of the Soviet political crafters that the establishment of the oblast and krai unit types would result in the influence of these ethnically and ideologically sterile unit types becoming the dominant relational pattern for the ethno-republics and okrugs as well. This study reveals that in most instances the opposite occurred, and the oblasts and kraia have taken on a sense of sub-national identity that rivals that of the republics, and is a 'political' identification that resulted in some oblasts demanding (and achieving) the designation of republic in the weeks and months after the Soviet collapse. Diamond and Plattner have observed that "the worldwide democratic revolution may create an external environment



conducive to democratization, but it cannot produce the conditions necessary for democratization within a particular country.”<sup>51</sup> The collapse of the Soviet Union may have followed from the Velvet Revolutions<sup>52</sup> of the middle to late 1980s in Eastern and Central Europe, but this study demonstrates that the existence of the conditions conducive to a democratic federation are essential for success, and Russia provides a case study example of the point made above by Diamond and Plattner.<sup>53</sup> This brief introduction has demonstrated that asymmetry and inequality abound within the Russian state as a result of legacies from the past, and the implementation and adoption of many of these regimes by the federal republic threatens to result in the permanent entrenchment of the illogic of a hybrid Soviet/Russian state structural asymmetry.

#### **Summary:**

Among the necessary conditions for the consolidation of a federal democracy is the requirement that the organizing regime of a federal system reflect a balance between the legitimate claims to authority over all of the citizens of the state and the amount of autonomy of action held by the regional regimes.<sup>54</sup> The differentiation between a federal

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<sup>51</sup> Diamond and Plattner, 1996, p.14

<sup>52</sup> Also known as the “velvet divorces,” this describes the relative non-violence of the secession and breakup of the Soviet satellite states of Eastern and Central Europe (with the exception of the breakup of the former Yugoslavia). See Linz and Stepan, 1996, p.36.

<sup>53</sup> A characteristic of Russian transition, as a case example of post-Soviet transition, that sets it apart from other post-communist case examples was described by Urban. “For nearly all postcommunist societies, the disassociation of communism from national identity has been facilitated by a background understanding that communism had not been ‘our’ doing in the first place. Russia does not enjoy this luxury.” (Urban, 1994, p.733)

<sup>54</sup> The need for balance is not confined to federal systems, but is necessary in the political systems of all nation-states. This point was made by Fish’s observation that “a feeble



and a confederal political system is determined by this balance, and when regional regimes hold too much autonomy a confederation results, and when the central political government maintains a role as the final authority on collective issues, the system is identified as a federation. But what happens when some regions have more ‘autonomy’ than others? This analysis describes the facts surrounding the inconsistency of interrelations that result in Russia due to the variances in regional autonomy that are manifest in treaty articles that provide the ‘ethno-Republics’ with greater powers and rights of autonomy and a significant degree of independence in regional policy actions and initiatives. This study provides insight into the attempt by Yeltsin to mitigate the patterns of regional interrelations which resulted from the adoption of the districting regimes as a Soviet legacy and as the basis of the post-Soviet treaty regime that formed the Republic. The imbalance of significance that has emerged in this study of the Russian ‘federal’ system is found in the comparative power, authority and citizen loyalty that is manifest at the intermediate level of Russian governance, the subject unit political regime. The implications from this analysis is that the Russian people identify with and support the office and the powers of the federation President as a national leader, identify themselves as ‘Russians’ and as members of a local or regional community, but have little or no loyalty to, and identification with, the regional subject regime that is their ‘federal’ residence.

A federation is selected as an organizing regime for a nation-state because it represents a means to achieve a balanced and legally symmetric bargain between representatives of the whole and representatives of the parts. In the transition and

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central state can impede democratization as surely as an overly strong one.” (Fish, 2001, p.73)

consolidation of a federal system, it is generally the case that “the conditions of keeping the bargain are different from the conditions for making it.”<sup>55</sup> In the Russian case it remains unclear what the founding conditions were and the consolidating conditions are, for this particular federation type. The arrangement that facilitated the transition from Soviet client state to independent Republic was based on the terms negotiated in the Federation Treaty, and this study shows several instances (such as Yeltsin’s constitution, the oversight regime of Presidential Representatives, the retention of Soviet era Economic Areas and the mitigation of the defining characteristics of most of the subject unit types) which demonstrate how the dominant pattern of post-Soviet reform has consistently undercut the ‘bargain’ that formed the federal Republic.<sup>56</sup> This analysis demonstrates that the successful consolidation of a Russian federal democracy is significantly precluded by the fact that the realities of the federal organizing system (which formed the basis of the formation bargain and was used to justify the mixed political process that was implemented after the first post-Soviet Russian political power crisis), facilitated a treaty regime, but is incompatible with a federal-constitutional democracy.

Shin’s conclusion that “the process of reaching democratic consolidation often requires abandoning or altering the very agreements and arrangements that facilitated the

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<sup>55</sup> Riker, 1964, p.16

<sup>56</sup> Even the terms of the original bargain are often contested, and attempts at accord have been compounded by the terms of the Constitution and policy practices since 1993. Ericson, Lapidus Et al. described this problem: “There remain considerable ambiguities about the legal status of the 1992 Federation Treaty and its relation to the constitution adopted in 1993, as well as about the respective rights of republics and regions, issues that remain highly controversial and contested.” (Ericson, Lapidus Et al., 1998, p.10)

completion of the transition phase”<sup>57</sup> is of particular relevance to the Russian case. Conditions have changed in Russia. The state no longer faces the task of founding a free market democratic system from scratch, but the regimes and systems that were formed in the transition phase are not suitable for long term consolidation. Contrary to what Shevtsova professed about the Russian collective failure to adopt the correct “civilization model,” this analysis demonstrates that Rustow was correct in his assessment of consolidation when he states that “a country is likely to attain democracy not by copying the constitutional laws or parliamentary practices of some previous democracy, but rather by honestly facing up to its particular conflicts and by devising or adapting effective procedures for their accommodation.”<sup>58</sup> The Russian political crafters and reformers have done some of both of these policies described by Rustow, but not enough of either. Russia does not face the crisis of a stalled transition and incomplete consolidation because it selected the wrong paradigm, but because it selected no paradigm of a successful democratic federation. Conversely, Russia’s dilemma is also not attributable to a leadership that would not face up to the particular needs of the nation, but rather because they would not do so honestly.

In 1917 Lenin wrote that “the state is a special organization of force; it is the organization of violence for the suppression of some class,”<sup>59</sup> and by all indications he (and Stalin after him) successfully organized the Soviet state in order to accomplish that

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<sup>57</sup> Shin, 1994, p.145

<sup>58</sup> Rustow, 1970, p.354

<sup>59</sup> Lenin, 1918, p.22

“organization of violence” and “suppression.”<sup>60</sup> History has shown that as long as the Soviet state system continued to facilitate the accomplishment of violence and the suppression of human rights and dignity it remained stable. It is now evident that the Soviet Union had not been consolidated after seventy five years of existence, and could not stand the strains of reform that accompanied the short life span of glasnost and perestroika. If it was true for the Soviets that the attempt to reform the Union-wide administrative districting system resulted in disintegration, and because the same organizing structure is in place in Russia, it is important analytical work to determine if there is the potential for a similar impact of its reform by the Republic. By focusing on the proposition that the federal organizing system is a significant impediment to the consolidation of the Russian Federation, the perspective for a conclusion such as Waller’s that “Russia has been saddled with unreformed structures that are deeply undemocratic, have furthered corruption, and have undermined the credibility of civil authorities”<sup>61</sup> can be more broadly based. The historical perspective of Russian political change is enhanced by the link that Gitelman observed, the fact that “like the United States, the USSR was established to serve and promote a political idea – not to be a state for a nation,”<sup>62</sup> and this analysis indicates that the loss of the bond provided by the Soviet political idea has yet to be replaced by a similarly shared view of the benefits of the free market federal democracy of the Russian Federation.

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Waller, 1998, 115

<sup>62</sup> Gitelman, 2001, p.2

As early as 1990, a parliamentary commission recommended that “the Russian state be reconfigured to include fifty or so non-ethnic-based constituent units similar to the German Lander [with] the Russian oblasts to be transformed into Republics.”<sup>63</sup> It is quite evident that this recommendation was rejected and, after more than a decade of transition, the full implications of the decision to ignore the commission’s recommendation can be developed by the hypothesis that directs the focus of this analysis. Of significant importance to this study is the fact that the establishment of the Russian Federation in its current asymmetric configuration of disparate administrative unit types was a choice made by the initial state crafters, and remains a neglected arena of reform by their successors.<sup>64</sup> Those early federation crafters may excuse their actions with the claim that history gave them little choice in the matter of how the Russian Republic was to be configured, but this study finds that the decisions they made were not because they were adopting a system that had been demonstrated to be effective or even suitable for a federal democracy, but rather because it was a system they believed they could manage.<sup>65</sup> The decision to adopt the asymmetric Soviet administrative system and the manipulations of the subject regions based on the many asymmetries that impact interrelations has had a far reaching effect on the transition process, and remains an

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<sup>63</sup> Smith, 1999, p.140

<sup>64</sup> Although the utilization of the Soviet districting paradigm is excused in part by Young and Light who concluded, “Hence, once state socialism collapsed the nation or Union republic was one of the few organizational forms in existence for building post-socialist regimes, and thus in this context a territorially bounded sense of identity is still important despite other globalizing tendencies,” the reason for the adoption of the other four segmenting unit types is left unresolved. (Young and Light, 2001, p.948)

<sup>65</sup> Colton and Levgold believed that the federal system that emerged after 1991 resulted from the fact that “There is no common understanding of what federalism ought to mean in Russia.” (Colton and Levgold, 1992, p.31)

impediment to the democratic consolidation process. By investigating and analyzing the consequences of the attempt to consolidate an illogical federal system that was established specifically to satisfy the demands of a defunct political and economic ideology provides a forum for the identification of a significant range of factors that contribute to the stalled transition and incomplete consolidation process in Russia, and establishes the basis for a related comparative analysis in the future.

It is reasonable to expect that the Russian state that has emerged as the successor to the Soviet era should not long survive if it has retained key components from the failed Soviet system, especially if those components are said to have contributed directly to the collapse of that system. The political, economic, cultural and civic regimes of Russia cannot mature into homogeneity if the political state fails (again) to rise to the challenge of consolidating a unified federal nation. By contributing new insights into the consolidation process and specifically addressing what Fish has argued is the neglected transition in Russia studies, the “recentralizing of state power,”<sup>66</sup> this analysis provides a long overdue window on the ‘federal’ component of Russian transition, and provides insight into the consolidation of what is best described as a territorially and functionally asymmetric federal democracy.

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<sup>66</sup> Fish’s complete statement was: “Putin’s political path stands on three pillars: centralizing state power, formulating a practical ideology, restoring state control of communication, and restructuring political competition. Recentralizing state power is the centerpiece of the Putin agenda.” (Fish, 2002, p.247)

## **Chapter Two**

### **POLITICAL CHANGE, TRANSITION AND DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION: A COMPARATIVE AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE**

This chapter will provide a basis for the analysis of the Russian case of political change, democratic transition and consolidation, by weaving the facts of the Russian experience with selected hypotheses and propositions from various sources. To give perspective to the examination of theories that may be tested by a case study of the Russian Republic, it is worth quoting Madison who believed, “we may define a republic to be, or at least may bestow that name on, a government which derives all its powers directly or indirectly from the great body of the people, and is administered by persons holding their offices during pleasure, for a limited period, or during good behavior.”<sup>67</sup> Madison’s criteria for assessing the veracity of a republic, when applied to the Russian case, brings and emphasis to the fact that to varying degrees these issues continue to remain in question after more than a decade of Russian post-Soviet political change. Of particular interest to this study are propositions pertaining to sources of real power in the central and regional governments, the administration of that power and the limits on those administrators. Adding to the list of issues that continue to impact the Russian transition and democratic consolidation process is the precondition that is the focus of a conclusion of Schmitter, “if there is one overriding political requisite for democracy, it is the prior existence of a legitimate political unit.”<sup>68</sup> This proposition is of special importance to the case study of Russian political change if it is factually true that the disintegration of the Soviet Union was the collapse of an illegitimate regime. Perhaps it was fated to collapse because the era began with the Bolshevik power grab of 1917, was sustained by an iron grip for 75 years and collapsed when the grip was relaxed in an effort to achieve

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<sup>67</sup> Madison, “Federalist #39,” p.191

<sup>68</sup> See Schmitter in Saivetz in Fischer, 1996, p. 266.



legitimacy. If legitimacy of a republic is defined as the consent of the governed as suggested in the quote from Madison, then the Soviet era was illegitimate, and Russia's best hope for success in building a democracy is to be selective in the foundational structure that is adopted from the prior regime.

### **Democratic Political Change:**

The idea that existing political requisites are critical to the political change of a state towards democracy is supported by DiPalma's conclusion that "democratization is ultimately a matter of political crafting"<sup>69</sup>, and Lipset's observation that "democracy has never developed anywhere by plan except when imposed by a democratic conqueror".<sup>70</sup> These statements of Schmitter, DiPalma and Lipset support the view that democracy is dependent upon preconditions, but there is an ample supply of theorists that have concluded that the process of democratization is not contingent on the process of planning or crafting at all, but rather the result of bargaining and elite negotiation. Eckstein makes this case by describing the process of 'garantismo' or 'pacts'; a process he has concluded represents a proven method for successful democratization. He stated, "New democracies can only be safeguarded if existing elites perceive a critical need to institute them, and if, by a series of understandings akin to treaties, the old elites are guaranteed that their special interests will not be seriously harmed by the change to democracy."<sup>71</sup> The guarantee that democratization would not only be accepted but that it would be welcomed by the old elites was assured in the months leading up to the Soviet

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<sup>69</sup> See DiPalma, 1990, p.8.

<sup>70</sup> See Lipset, 1994, p.6

<sup>71</sup> See Eckstein, 1998, p.26.

system disintegration into 15 sovereign republics when political legitimacy was provided to the republic level political leadership by Gorbachev's insistence that regional elections of 1989 be the first held under his reform plan. Although his intention had been to enhance his personal mandate to govern by gaining popular support for his national leadership of these popularly elected officials, the opposite was true, and "the ruling elite had very strong motives to take a leading role in declaring sovereignty."<sup>72</sup> By attempting to strengthen the Union on a new basis of regional loyalty, Gorbachev created a political elite that no longer depended on ties to the Party, the nomenklatura list system, the command economy or the central government for their future success and security. As described by Kahn, "democratic legitimacy was suddenly conferred on officials who had done little in their careers to earn it; those who decided to remain in government had every motivation to protect their positions in an increasingly uncertain environment."<sup>73</sup> The sequence of events set in motion by Gorbachev's reforms appear to have set the stage for the application of Eckstein's 'garantismo' theory, and culminated when Gorbachev was eliminated from the pacting process and the Union was dissolved.<sup>74</sup> The kind of legitimacy the last (and only truly competitive) Soviet era elections gave to this new breed of political elites translated into the critical incentive for them to support both the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the institution of additional democratic reforms,

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<sup>72</sup> See Kahn, 2000, p.65.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> The fate of Gorbachev adds credibility to the conclusion of Shin: "The most successful formula for democratic transition has been negotiating pacts among elites. (Shin, 1994, p.161) Gorbachev looked to an electoral legitimacy for securing his political fortunes rather than building a new pact based relationship among the emergent elected elite.

thus it was Gorbachev's decision to initiate the process of democratic transition that gave independence to Russia.

The political change that has been the Russian experience since the late 1980s is described, with little modification, when the propositions discussed above are integrated into a single theme. The hypothesis that results is as follows:

Although "democratization is ultimately a matter of political crafting, [and because] democracy has never developed anywhere by plan except when imposed by a democratic conqueror, [it is necessary that] new democracies be safeguarded [by] existing elites [who] perceive a critical need to institute them, and if, by a series of understandings akin to treaties, the old elites are guaranteed that their special interests will not be seriously harmed by the change to democracy."<sup>75</sup>

The perspective of Russian transition that this amalgamated statement provides sets the stage for the analysis of some key characteristics of the transition of Russia to a democratic system, and how well suited to democratic consolidation that system may (or may not) be.

It is important to consider the fact that the people of Soviet Russia, prior to the coup of 1991, never flooded into the streets of Moscow (or any other major Russian city) as a mass public<sup>76</sup> to demand regime change, or even to pressure the Kremlin to undertake democratic reforms.<sup>77</sup> The first real direct challenge to the Soviet federation came from the ranks of the Party political elite, and evolved from a demand that the long-

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<sup>75</sup> See the quotes above from DiPalma, 1990, p.8, Lipset, 1994, p.6, and Eckstein, 1998, p.26.

<sup>76</sup> See Kornhauser 1959 for a complete discussion of the characteristics of the "mass public", and its place in the process of political change.

<sup>77</sup> In their 1972 collaboration, Welch and Taintor explained that the discontent of the mass public should not be expected to instigate rebellion. They concluded, "No political revolution has ever sprung directly and solely from a sense of relative deprivation . . . no matter how widespread." (Welch and Taintor, 1972, p.7)

standing policy that had denied representation to the Russian SSR equal to that of other Soviet SSRs be reversed.<sup>78</sup> In what must be considered a truly ironic twist of fate, the Bolshevik fear that the greatest challenge to the stability of the Soviet Union would likely come from a politically empowered Russia came true. That happened when Yeltsin's demand that Russia receive equal political status took on a momentum that resulted in his declaration of Russian independence in 1991, and that action was followed by similar declarations in all of the Soviet republics. In all cases, the tug-of-war for power between the regional regimes and the central government was not a result of popular demonstrations organized at the grass roots in order to give voice to the demand for change, but rather a calculated struggle for political advantage between regional elites and the individuals who occupied the political center in the Kremlin. The pattern of elite-led declarations of independence and sovereignty that broke up the Soviet Union fits well with the condition for political transition outlined by Alexander who noted:

The chances for commitment to democracy are enhanced by any events or factors that *predictably* (and not merely temporarily) reduce actors expected payoffs from authoritarian rule or predictably increase expected payoffs from democracy. For their payoff matrix to be roughly rigid, actors must calculate that the bundle of overall political outcomes in one regime will be *predictably* closer to their preferred points than in the other regime.<sup>79</sup>

It was almost two years after Russia had become an independent Republic that political tensions among the elites concerning their expected payoffs escalated to the point that artillery shells detonated in Moscow and the focus shifted from the peaceful dissolution of the Soviet Union to the contestation of how the Russian Federal Republic would be

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<sup>78</sup> From the early years of Union formation, the concern that a politically powerful Russia would dominate or challenge the integrity of the federation resulted in the denial of Russian representation at the table of Soviet Republics.

<sup>79</sup> Alexander, 2002, p.64

configured and what path political reform would follow. The norm for a federal political system is to insure that power is balanced equally in the branches of government but in Russia the executive branch has been vested with greater powers than all the others.<sup>80</sup> The concentration of power in the office of the presidency is likely to have a negative influence on the consolidation of democracy in Russia if Przeworski is correct when he postulates, “parliamentary democracies prove more durable than presidential ones.”<sup>81</sup> The outcome from the confrontation of 1993 insured that Yeltsin became, in effect, a “super president”<sup>82</sup> who would almost single handedly dictate the path of transition and consolidation of the federal system for the critical first years. The political decisions that were made in Moscow determined how the formation of the Russian state would be accomplished, and were implemented through what has become known as the “presidential vertical,”<sup>83</sup> a process that is the subject of the remainder of this chapter.

### **The Demos:**

With the exception of the rebellion in Chechnya, the mobilization of a mass public to armed action in opposition to the control of the ethno-national territories of the

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<sup>80</sup> “Yeltsin’s forcible dissolution of parliament in late September 1993 averted a parliamentary republic where any autonomy of republics would most likely have been erased by ethnic Russian domination.” See Hughes, in White, Pravda, and Gitelman, 2001, p.143.

<sup>81</sup> Przeworski, 1996, p.44.

<sup>82</sup> Superpresidentialism is “a constitutional order that provides for an extraordinarily strong president and a relatively weak legislature”, was born in Russia in December 1993 when Yeltsin’s favored draft of a new constitution won popular endorsement in a national referendum. (Fish, 1995, p.326)

<sup>83</sup> Yeltsin’s team constructed a presidential vertical of independent political institutions with the apparent aim of squeezing out all other political bodies, especially the legislative ones. (Shevtsova, 2001, p.31)

Republic by the Moscow based government have been few, and the actions by ethn-  
nationals that did challenge the establishment of the federal Republic have been short  
lived. If the Chechen issue is set aside as atypical of the Russian transition experience,  
the argument could be made that the elite led process has demonstrated a remarkable  
capacity for the peaceful crafting and implementing of the institutions of a federal  
democracy. This process of political crafting by presidential decree fits well with  
Fischer's conclusion that an accurate conceptual understanding of political consolidation  
is a process that "refers to the actual government structures and procedures that are put in  
place and the institutionalization of the system".<sup>84</sup> Although this definition advanced by  
Fischer is compatible with the consolidation process as it has developed in Russia, to  
suggest that consolidation is most notably a matter of the government crafting and  
implementing institutions does not provide a suitable criteria for measuring success.  
After all, the Soviet political system existed in form and function for over 75 years and  
yet it disintegrated as if it were a temporarily imposed organizing regime when  
significant reform was implemented. One would have to conclude that the Soviet  
institutions of governance were never institutionalized, therefore the system was never  
consolidated and thus its demise was a matter of time and circumstance. An analysis of  
democratic consolidation, even when focused on government structures and institutions  
alone, must be expanded beyond the scope of the establishment of structures of  
governance to tests of their institutionalization that are meaningful to long term stability  
and survival. Shin advocates an expanded scope of the idea of political system  
consolidation, and places the burden for the justification of a research perspective on the

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<sup>84</sup> Fischer, 1996, p.254.

criteria established by the analyst. He suggests, “Conceptual issues come into play because how one defines democracy and democratization determines what one [objectively] identifies as the problems for democratic development.”<sup>85</sup> In the case of Russia, if democracy is conceptually defined with an emphasis on the fact that it is a *federal* democracy, and if the process of democratization has been identified as a case example of an elite led process, the analysis of the consolidation of that system must include objective conditions that represent elite relations as well as those of a federal system structure.

As a foundation for the general analysis of system consolidation, Collier and Levitsky’s “procedural minimum definition of democracy” provides the greatest conceptual latitude because they provide a broad based understanding of the workings of a democracy. At a procedural minimum, democracy “presumes fully contested elections with full suffrage and the absence of fraud, combined with effective guarantees of civil liberties, including freedom of speech, assembly, and association.”<sup>86</sup> The conditions outlined in this minimalist definition can exist at an early stage in the life of a democracy, but disappear over the course of time when the process of democratization becomes stalled (such as what occurred in postcolonial Africa). The procedural minimum must also include the idea of stability as a consequent part of democratic consolidation, so that empirical measures of a stable (consolidated) political system can be differentiated from unstable (transitional) structures. The history of the Soviet Union gives the best justification for this correlation because, by all appearances, it was a stable political

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<sup>85</sup> Shin, 1994, p.137.

<sup>86</sup> See Collier and Levitsky, 1997, p.434.



system for more than seven decades. If most currently utilized measures of consolidation or stability were tested against the record of the Soviet era, we would find that the Union exhibited and satisfied most (if not all) of the characteristics that are associated with a successfully consolidated political system (particularly given Fischer's definition), and yet it eventually failed the test of time. The Soviet legacy makes the association of the ideas of consolidation and stability a critical issue, because if consolidation is not synonymous with long-term system stability, then it is an "empty term."<sup>87</sup> Based on the Soviet example Alexander makes the point:

A definition of stability as mere longevity will not quite do . . . taking the term in this sense, a system may be stable because of its own effectiveness or simply because of the ineffectiveness (or bad luck) of its opponents; it may persist, as did the [French] Third republic, for no better reason than that it never quite manages even to collapse, despite much opposition and many hairbreadth escapes.<sup>88</sup>

To set the stage for the analysis of Russian democratization in terms of system stability, I emphasize Przeworski's observation that "the absence of democratic traditions impedes the consolidation of new democratic institutions."<sup>89</sup> The use of the term 'tradition' conjures up the idea of the institutionalization of a system characteristic through a history of its implementation, and as a form of regime stability. If the emerging Russian Republic cannot look to its past experience both in the form and function of democratic structures and find democratic traditions, the test of consolidation as a function of system stability becomes a decades long process of observation. With scant few democratic traditions to bring to the process of political change in Russia, and

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<sup>87</sup> The statement in full: "Consolidation is an empty term." (Przeworski, 1996, p.50)

<sup>88</sup> Alexander, 2002, p.58, quoting Eckstein, 1961.

<sup>89</sup> Przeworski, 1996, p.43.



with an understanding that survival must result from political system effectiveness and not the bad luck of regime opponents, it is important to outline the prerequisites for stable democracy that apply in a particular fashion to the Russian case.

### **Transition. Its Pre-Conditions and Paths:**

One of the conclusions Soares reached from his reading of “The Democratic Invention” by Claude Lefort (1981) was that “any democratic construction will constantly generate problems and *remains incomplete by definition*”<sup>90</sup> (emphasis added). This observation of Soares is foundational to a general understanding of the democratization process, and is particularly useful when applied to the Russian case of post-Soviet political change and democratization. In his discussion of democratic constructions Soares notes that:

Democracy cannot be taken for granted as something established once and for all, nor can it be viewed as a single static model applicable to any country, as if it were a finished and unchangeable work. On the contrary, democracy is an evolving system that is gradually enriched and fine-tuned in each country that adopts it in response to the socio-economic, technological, and cultural changes to which today’s open and dynamic societies are exposed.<sup>91</sup>

Considering this point made by Soares about democratic construction, and because path dependence means that “where you start out determines where you end up,”<sup>92</sup> the analysis of Russian democracy should be treated as a process of political change that is distinctly ‘Russian’ in some instances,<sup>93</sup> a shared post-communist experience in others, and exhibits

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<sup>90</sup> Soares, 2000, p.34.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., p.36.

<sup>92</sup> Linz and Stepan, 1996, p12.

<sup>93</sup> In Cohen’s 1999 essay “Russian Studies Without Russia,” he points out the error of many who treat Russia as a generalizable form of political change and democratization.

general democratization characteristics as well. The analysis of Russian democratization must include the relevant influences of its Imperial and Soviet history (where it started out), as well as the fact that Russia is in the process of the transition to (and consolidation of) a *federal* political democracy (where it ends up).<sup>94</sup> It is argued in this study that it is the shortcomings of the *federal* structure of Russia that are at the heart of its consolidation problems and that set it apart from other post-Soviet transition experiences.

The fact that Russia was established as a federation is accepted as most appropriate for the specific characteristic that it possessed as a Soviet Republic, but it should be noted that in the post-Soviet experience, the adoption of unitary systems was the norm. The federal systems of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union have become twenty-two independent states, with Russia the only remaining federation of the three states that selected that particular state form. The East German state had no choice but to cave in to the public demand that it merge with the West German state, and thus it absorbed the five additional *landers*<sup>95</sup>, which increased the German Federation from eleven to sixteen *landers*. It is a reasonable conclusion from the post-Soviet examples of the consequences of choosing a federal state system form that they often do not survive

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He advocates that Russian transition and consolidation of democracy are quite specific to a Russian ethos, and should be studied in that light.

<sup>94</sup> My insistence on the specification of the study of Russia as a federal democracy is explained by the observation made by Dahl, who wrote: "Yet a term that means anything means nothing. And so it has become with 'democracy', which nowadays is not so much a term of restricted and specific meaning as a vague endorsement of a popular idea." (Dahl, 1989, p.2)

<sup>95</sup> 'Lander' is the German term for a sub-federal political unit, similar to a 'state' in the United States.

long enough to be consolidated. What basis for federal democratic construction fits the conditions in Russia well?

With no significant traditional institutions of democracy to bring to the federal era, and no pre-Soviet experience as a federal republic, the list of preconditions for democracy and other patterns of political change, transition and consolidation that fit well the test that the Russian case provides become less evident. Stepan credits Riker with having identified the three primary factors underpinning American federalism that are necessary (but not sufficient) conditions for the successful crafting of a lasting federal system of any type.<sup>96</sup> First is “coming-together federalism,”<sup>97</sup> which results from the bargaining process between the formerly sovereign political unit or polity and a newly formed center, where the trade-off for the sacrifice of independence is the pooling of resources and the advantages of collective security. Although Russia was formed from the ‘coming together’ of political units, the 89 federal subjects that make up the state were either crafted political units under the Soviet regime, or colonial holdings from the Imperial era. In either case, any claim to rights as a sovereign political unit was far removed in time, and thus the capacity to negotiate the trade-off of independence for an advantage in resource or security related issues could not be justified by the preconditions of a demonstrated capacity to maintain independence as a sovereign state when the Federation was formed in 1992.

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<sup>96</sup> The fulfillment of necessary conditions does not assure success. This important point is made clear by the observation of Miller Et al., who noted, “Yet, while free and competitive elections, and competitive parties are necessary for democracy to succeed, they are not sufficient.” (Miller, Reisinger and Hesli, 1998, p.328)

<sup>97</sup> Stepan, 2000, p.91

The second factor contributing to a stable federal system is the “demos-constraining”<sup>98</sup> form of federalism, a structural relationship that insures that the power of the center is limited and that individual rights are protected through the establishment of representative legislatures which are generally bicameral, with one chamber of representatives determined by population concentrations, and the second chamber a body that represents the secondary units equally. Russia has fulfilled this requirement structurally in the establishment of the Federal assembly that is made up of an upper chamber, the Federation Council and a second body, the Duma. In form these two chambers follow the paradigm of representation described above, but in practice their representative powers are limited by systemic selection problems and the imbalance of power with the executive branch. In the absence of major reforms the legislative branch is incapable of performing the ‘demos constraining’ function that is necessary for a stable federal system.

The final characteristic drawn from the paradigm of American federalism is the one that is most in contradiction to the realities of the objective conditions of asymmetry in the Russian Federation. Stepan considers federal symmetry among political subunits to be a characteristic that insures that “the same constitutional competence” is accorded to all, with the “formal, legal and procedural relations between the federal center and all of the constituent parts of the federal state equal and symmetrical.”<sup>99</sup> Once again the formal statutory structure of the federal system appears to have symmetry, but taken together the Constitution and the Federation Treaty do not agree on the rights and

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid

responsibilities of the central and regional Russian governments, and do not treat each subject unit with the same “legal, formal and procedural relations.”<sup>100</sup> The intention of this final factor of federalism is that ideas of symmetry and equality be synonymous when relating to the formal and legal characteristics of the rights, relations and responsibilities of federal subunits and the central government. The problem this asymmetry poses for the Russian state cannot be solved simply by the amendment of the federal statutes because many of the provisions of the constitutions of the subject Republics and the charters of the other subject units contradict federal laws and statutes.

Federal systems that have failed to achieve the success of the American model share some characteristics that negatively parallel the three factors of successful federalism described above. A federal system that must impose the coming together of mutual gains and mutually assured benefits is an example of “holding together federalism.”<sup>101</sup> Utilized by state crafters who are faced with the challenge of building a federal system in a state that has strong centralizing or other unitary features, it is suggested that the best and perhaps only way to “hold their countries together in a democracy would be to devolve power constitutionally and turn their threatened polities into federations.”<sup>102</sup> The alternative to the demos constraining system type described above is the demos-enabling federal system. Although in Stepan’s opinion all democratic federations are more demos-constraining than unitary democracies, this path is selected by federal crafters because the deviation from the one citizen/one vote principle of

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p.92

<sup>102</sup> Ibid. Stepan exemplifies this situation with the cases of India, Spain and Belgium.

democratic governance must necessarily address the special needs of a demos which is made up of culturally and linguistically diverse (and at times contentious) minority sub-groups who demand a say in the political process. An effective political party system is key to the success of the demos enabling that insures that these minority groups have a voice, and therefore empirical measures correlated with the performance of the party system in a federal state can provide an indication of the efficacy of the federal minorities.<sup>103</sup> Russia appears to have established a political system and process to facilitate demos enabling, yet the failure of the political party system, the asymmetric relations between the federal center and the regional regimes, and the imbalance of powers in the federal government have yet to be resolved in order to assure proportional participation and representation in practice.

**Consolidation:**

Russia may well be on the road to the consolidation of a federal system, but the assurance that the state is on a straight and true path to democracy is less certain. As an instance of political change in general, McFaul suggests, “the more interesting question is not whether or not today’s Russia is a democracy, but what its future trajectory will be.”<sup>104</sup> Although the trajectory looks to be democratic, the process of political crafting and the pace at which it proceeds is set by the Russian president’s personal plan. The

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<sup>103</sup> Also of interest to the case study analysis of the Russian Federation is the further elaboration by Stepan in relation to the “enabling” characteristic of what he refers to as the “three constitutionally embedded variables [of] 1) the degree of overrepresentation in the chamber; 2) the policy scope of the territorial chamber; and 3) the sorts of policy issues that are off the policy agenda of the demos because they have been allocated to the states or subunits.” (Stepan, 2000, p.94)

<sup>104</sup> McFaul, 2002, p.192.

presidency is endowed with concentrated powers of decree that have enabled the occupant to create or dissolve government institutions in order to accomplish a personal vision of how Russia should be structured and governed. The power of the president to implement emergency decrees and the vertical relationships that dominate the way institutions have functioned over the first decade of the Russian Republic's existence add support to the claim that the greatest threat to Russian political consolidation is that the "transition stalls and the temporary government becomes permanent."<sup>105</sup> The analysis of Russia's likely success (or imminent failure) as a stable federal democracy requires that a clear set of criteria for the establishment of an infrastructure compatible with, and specific to, a *Russian* federal democracy be outlined.

A major step towards establishing such criteria is made by McFaul who argues that "pluralist institutions of interest intermediation [and] mass based interest groups" are essential to any successful instance of democratization.<sup>106</sup> Stability and consolidation results from "the actions of the formal institutions of the legislature, the political party system and the judiciary" combined with "a normative commitment to the democratic process on the part of both the elite and society."<sup>107</sup> If, as in Russia, the actions of the formal institutions are dominated by the personal powers of the president, a normative commitment to the democratic process becomes a counterbalance to the centralizing tendencies of a powerful executive. This situation makes the conclusion of Linz and

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<sup>105</sup> See Linz and Stepan, 1996, p.4 who consider the "temporary" government the short term and short sighted mechanisms of governance that address the immediate issues of transition, but neglect the long term needs of the state and its people.

<sup>106</sup> Institutions which he believes "lack strength and independence" in Russia. (McFaul, 2002, p.191).

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.



Stepan that “the very definition of democracy involves agreement by the citizens of a territory, however specified, on the procedures to be used to generate a government that can make legitimate claims on their obedience,”<sup>108</sup> even more essential. Because executive decree and elite bargaining dominated Russia’s transition to democracy, the input of the people was not a significant factor in the initial democratic construction process. It is reasonable to conclude that just as Russia’s status as a democracy can be challenged because the people were denied the opportunity to participate in the procedural development of the government, then the loyalties of the citizens throughout the territorial space must be suspect as well. This is a very important, even critical issue to Russian democratic consolidation because if Linz and Stepan are correct in their conclusion that “agreements about stateness are logically prior to the creation of democratic institutions”<sup>109</sup>, then the federal state has little claim on their obedience.

The commitment of the citizens of a state to the democratic process is impacted by their sense of participatory efficacy, and Diamond moves the definition of democracy to a more highly specified context in relation to electoral accountability by establishing what must be absent from a democracy:

Democracy encompasses more than just elections, even if they are regular, free and fair. It requires the absence of ‘reserved domains’ of power for the military or other social and political forces that are not accountable to the electorate. [Democracy] also requires ‘horizontal’ accountability of office holders to one another, so as to constrain executive power and protect constitutionalism, the rule of law, and the deliberative process. [Democracy] encompasses extensive provisions for political and civic pluralism, as well as for individual and group freedoms, so that contending interests and values may be expressed and compete

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<sup>108</sup> Linz and Stepan, 1996, p.27

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p.26



through a variety of means beyond periodic elections.<sup>110</sup>

### **The Slow Pace of Change:**

Beginning in 1989 and through 1999, Russia has experienced free and fair elections, but it is evident that reserved domains of economic and political power (that include a vast number of government officials) have impacted the process of political change in that same time period. The mechanisms necessary for horizontal accountability continue to be neglected at the expense of the expanded use of the previously discussed “executive vertical” system of presidential decrees and appointments.<sup>111</sup> The evidence from ten years of reform indicates that a civic culture and a political party system supportive of civic and political pluralism have also failed to mature in the Russian state.<sup>112</sup> Hahn came to the conclusion early in the Russian transition that “the persistence of a Russian political culture antithetical to democratic values all but ensures the restoration of authoritarian rule in one form or the other.”<sup>113</sup> It may be that Hahn’s warning is overstated, but it also may be the case that Russia is a country and a people not truly committed to the principles of democracy. For reasons that are related to its cultural and ideological perceptions of the world, and their place in

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<sup>110</sup> Diamond, 2000, p.17

<sup>111</sup> Hahn, 2000, p.498-503 describes no less than ten examples of Putin’s expansion of his personal “executive vertical”.

<sup>112</sup> The necessity of the rapid maturation of a political party system was advocated by Kitschelt who noted that it is “only where parties are institutionalized as lasting competitive organizational alternatives (whether based on clientelistic linkages or programmatic differences) do democracies survive for any length of time.” (Kitschelt, 1992, p.1031)

<sup>113</sup> Hahn, 1993, p. 300

it, Russians may be adverse to adopting a form of government that was born in the West. Nodia has studied the cultural basis for an aversion to democracy, and has found its basis in a chain of reasoning that goes like this: “Democracy appears in history as something Western, and a choice in favor of democracy assumes a cultural as well as a political character. Thus, feeling culturally close to the West will tilt a country toward political democracy. Conversely, a country where the West is seen as alien will be a country that is less likely for that reason to choose democracy.”<sup>114</sup> Although the choice of crafting a democratic system in Russia was put in motion by Gorbachev’s reforms before the collapse of the Soviet Union, the majority of Russians continue to express regret over the demise of the Union and indicate low levels of support for characteristics related to liberal democracy when responding to public opinion polls.<sup>115</sup> These same polls reveal a particularly mixed Russian view of the country they live in, with only slightly over 40 percent of the respondents identifying with Russia as a democracy, and even then it is democracy linked with a market economy.<sup>116</sup> This too is a critical issue for the Russian

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<sup>114</sup> Nodia, 2002, p.205

<sup>115</sup> In contrast to this polling data is the findings of Fleron that in Russian political culture, liberty and dissent are reasonably highly valued. (Fleron, 1996, p.232)

<sup>116</sup> This view is exemplified in the responses that indicate the “popular perceptions of Russia” (in percentages)

A state whose status in the world is determined by the well being of its citizens	52
A state with a market economy and democratic freedoms	41
A multiethnic state of equal citizens regardless of ethnicity	35
A mighty military power	21
A state of ethnic Russians	16
A Christian Orthodox state	13
As it was under communist rule	12
An empire within the borders of the USSR	7

chances for success because it has been demonstrated that the way in which people prioritize democratic principles is critical to democratic consolidation. Shin observed, “democracy becomes truly stable only when people come to value it widely not solely for its social and economic performance but intrinsically for its political attributes”.<sup>117</sup>

The Russian case not only presents an opportunity to test the general consensus among transition theorists that the culture of a people must support values of democracy in principle if consolidation is to be achieved, it also challenges the conclusion Rustow came to in 1970, that the degree of state stability which is an outcome of the process of political change depends upon the emergence within the state of a sense of national unity. The results of polls that measure the ideological beliefs and perceptions of the people of Russia reveal a mixed identification (at best) with the place they consider their “homeland”, with less than 35 percent of respondents choosing “Russia.”<sup>118</sup> This response indicates that Russia provides a test of democratization theories that place the role of national unity and national identifications central to the transition and consolidation process. The role of national identification is so fundamental to the process of democratization that Rustow considers it “a background condition in the sense that it must precede all other phases of democratization, [and] is best fulfilled when national

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(Source: survey by Moscow Institute of Sociological Analysis, Mat 1997. 1519 respondents from 12 regions of the Russian Federation were asked to choose not more than three of the above definitions of Russia) (White, Pravda and Gitelman: 2001)

<sup>117</sup> Shin, 1994, p.154.

<sup>118</sup> When asked, “When you are talking about the homeland, what do you usually mean?” only 34.5 percent of respondents claimed “Russia”. See White, Pravda and Gitelman: 2001.

unity is accepted unthinkingly, is silently taken for granted.”<sup>119</sup> There are more than a few analyses suggesting that the Russian state will eventually fracture along ethno-national lines, and these predictions are generally based on the historical path of Russia’s imposition of ‘national unity’ as an empire and as a state. The addition of the element of national unity to the analysis of transition and consolidation in Russia makes this a case of (at least) three segments undergoing the process of change. Young and Light have also identified Russia’s case as one of a triple transition, but use much stronger terms in identifying the process as it relates to national unity. They have concluded: “Along side marketization and democratization there is an accompanying process of decolonization, from a Soviet multi ethnic empire to the establishment of a postcolonial, post-socialist sovereign state.”<sup>120</sup> It is yet to be established that the federal form is the preferred model for the establishment of a modern postcolonial/post-socialist state, although it may be the best means to accomplish a structured solution to the problems associated with postcolonialism alone. Grey advocates, “The most basic structural technique available for providing a degree of self determination to regionally based ethnic groups appears to be the building of a federal system that involves the devolution of real decision-making authority to ethno-regional territories.”<sup>121</sup> Russia provides a special case for the test of propositions pertaining to postcolonialism because Russia can serve as a case study of one of many colonial holdings of the former Soviet Empire, or it can be useful as a study

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<sup>119</sup> Rustow, 1970, p.351

<sup>120</sup> Young and Light, 2001, p.946

<sup>121</sup> Grey, 1997, p.207.

of the former core state of the Imperial Empire . . . it has been both a colony and colonizer.

### **The Russian Nation and Nationalism:**

The postcolonial and post-socialist problem of establishing national unity is often related to contested boundaries, and the resolution of the boundary question is a precondition of national self-identification. Linz and Stepan have shown that when a state is structured in such a fashion, that boundary is “the determination of which demos or demoi should be members of a political community, it results in stateness problems.”<sup>122</sup> Even theories that focus primarily on the *process* of democratization often include variables associated with “boundaries and identities” among the collection of process related impediments to democratization.<sup>123</sup> Vihavainen has concluded that the issue of Russian national unity is becoming progressively worse, and finds the root cause of the problem in “what the Soviet Union left behind in the east.”<sup>124</sup> Since the time of the Soviet collapse, Russia has been left to deal with “a patchwork of nationalities who are not united, even in theory, into one people either by force of common work or common class interest [and] their national identities are developing and differentiation is growing [so] that they are learning to hate each other.”<sup>125</sup> The objective conditions that the Russian Republic must overcome in state structure, in issues of national ideology and

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<sup>122</sup> See Linz and Stepan, 1996, p. 18

<sup>123</sup> As an example see Schmitter, 1996, p. 84-89 who compiled a list of “extrinsic dilemmas to democratization” The impediments on his list include capitalist production, accumulation and distribution; overload and ungovernability; corruption and decay; and external security and internal insecurity.

<sup>124</sup> Vihavainen, 2000, p.92

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

in citizen conceptions of identification with the nation, challenge many of the principles of democratic construction that are considered necessary components for the successful consolidation of a political democracy. The fact is that after ten years of democratization the projected outcome of the process of political change in Russia is still in question.

The failure to solve the ethno-national problem has turned up in some explanations for the demise of the Soviet system.<sup>126</sup> A contradiction that often results from such conclusions about the Soviet collapse based on nationality-related objective conditions is the fact that in most instances the problem continues to exist in the Russian Federation. An example of this is found in the writings of Rogers Brubaker, a proponent of the constructivists / institutionalists approach to political change. In Brubaker's view the cause of the demise of the Soviet Union can be found in the "policies that institutionalized nationality on both the territorial and the personal levels"; policies, in his view that "helped to foster nationalism and the eventual breakup of the USSR."<sup>127</sup> A position statement such as this, in order to be useful for the development of general theories of system change, cannot be applicable to only the Soviet era instance of regime collapse. If the construction of the Soviet system included an institutional districting framework of ethno-national segmentation that would one day result in the disintegration of the system (in this case "institutionalized nationality"), and the Russian Federation has adopted that same system, simple logic implies that the current regime, by repeating the

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<sup>126</sup> Grey laments that "the demise of the Soviet Union can be attributed in large part to mobilized anti-state collective action on the part of national groups, and yet the focus of many scholars has not been on citizen action, but rather on the weakness of the internal core of the union." I am in agreement with the focus on ethno-nationals, but from a perspective of how the lack of citizen action assured the demise of the Union. (See Grey, 1997, p.198.)

<sup>127</sup> Brubaker, 1996, in Nodia, 2002, p.201

same pattern, has a high likelihood of experiencing the same outcome. If that is not the case, and Russia is not in jeopardy of ethno-national fragmentation, then the issue of institutionalized nationality is relevant only to the circumstances of the collapse of the Soviet Union and an explanation by Brubaker of the inconsistency is in order. In general, theories that focus on the influence of nationalism and culture in the process of political change agree that a 'state' is also a 'nation' when there is a basic sense within and among the population that they have a shared sense of a common history, culture, tradition and even language that bonds them as a people (a narod).<sup>128</sup> The issues most relevant to Russian political system consolidation continue to be strongly linked to the success or failure of Russia in the establishment of a shared sense of 'nation.'<sup>129</sup>

An additional issue that compounds the problem of nation development in Russia and is also related to the postcolonial path Russia has followed is the distinctions within the state between members of the nation and foreigners. Nodia point out that this traditional pattern of identifications helps to explain why many Russians have a complex sense of nationalism that "requires an aversion to the other".<sup>130</sup> The 'other' can be an

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<sup>128</sup> Kaiser (in Chin and Kaiser, 1996) provides a translation of conceptual terms dealing with national identity that is useful for understanding the perspective of the Russian people on this issue: narod, 'a people'; natsiya, 'a nation'; otechestvo, the fatherland as the entire state; and rodina, the ancestral homeland.

<sup>129</sup> Understanding the complexity of this issue in Russia is facilitated by the outline provided by Ingram. The Russian Nation (russkaya natsiya) is: "a nation which formed around the Great Russian (velikorusskii), Little Russian (malorusskii) and White Russian (belorusskii) ethnos and included many people closely linked with russkaya cultural, spiritual and state traditions. The closeness (almost identity) of the concepts 'russkii narod' and 'russkaya natsiya' is a terminological peculiarity which reflects the stage of nation-building in Russia." (Ingram, 1999, p.688)

<sup>130</sup> Nodia, 2002, p.205



internal ethnic minority or an external outbound nationalism that is usually “a current or former imperial power, but it can also be a great power that nationalists blame for imposing its will on their country.”<sup>131</sup> The Russian case provides an opportunity to test propositions of ‘aversion-based’ relations through the analysis of the interactions of the majority Slavic Russian population and the dispersed ethno-national minority groups. The conditions in Russia provide an opportunity for a focused analysis to test propositions related to issues of national unity and ethnic identity because Russia has adopted a mixed federal system structure that differentiates among sub-federal political units on the basis of the presence or absence of ethno-national characteristics.<sup>132</sup>

### **The Conflation of the End with the Beginning:**

Russia’s transition experience is often used as a test of theories of democratization as a form of political change, but it is also of interest to consider the observation of Archie Brown. “It is important to note that the most significant, and in many respects, most successful part of Russia’s political transformation—namely the transition from communism—took place while the Soviet Union was still in existence.”<sup>133</sup> In the simplest of terms, Russia is independent today because a Soviet era plan instituted to reform a stagnant political economy and to motivate an apathetic polity, unintentionally resulted in the disintegration of the Union. If Brown is correct and the communist regime ended before the Union came apart, then the reforms were successful in one respect, but if the

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid

<sup>132</sup> These designations include the Russian subject republic (that is akin to a state in the USA, or a lander in Germany), a krai (similar to a territory), an okrug (like a district), and an oblast (which is most comparable to a region or a province).

<sup>133</sup> Brown, 2002, p.209



political state that Russia has become is the result of an experiment in post-communist Soviet reform, we must ask ourselves the question, do we want to see the consolidation of this “hybrid” democracy?<sup>134</sup> One of the most important aspects of the mixed characteristics of the Russian system is the federal structure that is still in use by the Russian state, but was designed to facilitate a “divide and conquer” Soviet era nationality policy.<sup>135</sup> In the process of transition there are always a select few reserved domains from the previous regime that emerge in the initial formation of the new system, but in Russia many of the administrative institutions (and the staff) that facilitated the unitary characteristics of the central government and of a command economy, have been carried over into the core of the administrative structure of the Republic. Is it wise for this administrative legacy to be consolidated into the post-Soviet Republic? If the consolidation of a nascent democracy is to be successful, Valenzuela has described how it should proceed: “Democratic consolidation involves both the elimination of residues of the old system that are incompatible with the workings of a democratic regime and the building of new institutions that reinforce the democratic rules of the game.”<sup>136</sup> It is understandable that in Russia, as has been the case in other state transition experiences, that “the task of democratic transitions is to build a borrowed, or presumptive, legitimacy”<sup>137</sup> in the short run, and therefore the temporary utilization of forms, norms

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<sup>134</sup> The transition stage is characterized as “the hybrid regime” by Shin (1994, p.143), and that is the context in which I use the term here.

<sup>135</sup> See Franklin’s (1973) discussion of the motivations behind the Stalin led development of the administrative districting system.

<sup>136</sup> Valenzuela (1992) quoted by Munck, 1994, p.362

<sup>137</sup> DiPalma, 1990, p.44

and practices<sup>138</sup> from the previous regime may, by necessity, be the best and most practical choice. Russian political crafters, in spite of the availability of a long history to draw from, must discard the old mechanisms of government and state and configure new ones, all in the absence of democratic traditions.<sup>139</sup> The elimination of the most threatening legacies from the old regime would necessitate the complete near reconfiguration of the Russian federal state structure from its current configuration, as well as the abandonment of the related vertical structure of government institutions and related organizations.<sup>140</sup> The case study of Russian state crafting provides an opportunity to analyze the consequences of a process of political construction on an administrative and institutional foundation that is a significant legacy from the preceding (and failed) state system. It is of special interest when the ethno-national character of the legacy is a key component in explaining the demise of the former state.

### **Balance and Homogeneity:**

Representation and participation problems go hand in hand with what Watts describes as “majority-minority and multi-minority societies”,<sup>141</sup> and is a common

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<sup>138</sup> Diamond 1999, Reisinger, 1997 and Linz and Stepan 1996 are all examples of the discussion of the importance of forms, norms and practices of both governments and societies that are associated with democratic consolidation.

<sup>139</sup> The problem is so pervasive that Waller puts it as follows: Russia has been saddled with unreformed structures that are deeply undemocratic, have furthered corruption, and undermined the credibility of civil authorities. (Waller, 1996, p.115)

<sup>140</sup> The danger to democratic transition of this vertical model of institutional structure is outlined by Diamond and Plattner: “In delegative democracies horizontal accountability is extremely weak or nonexistent and elected presidents rule in highly personalistic, paternalistic, and majoritarian fashion, with a few effective constraints on their exercise of constitutional authority. (Diamond and Plattner, 1996, p.xiv)

<sup>141</sup> Watts, 1999, p.154

problem associated with the establishment of an ethno-federal state system. Watts describes conditions that exacerbate the minority-majority issue as when “the territorial segmentation of a society has been sharpest [and] where the territorial distribution of the different factors—geographical, economic, historical, ethnic and ideological—encouraging regionalism have tended to coincide, reinforcing each other, rather than cutting across each other.”<sup>142</sup> The entrenchment of territorial segmentations is at its worst when “differences of language, religion, social institutions, economic interest and geographical demarcation have tended to coincide, the cumulative effect upon regional consciousness can be extremely powerful.”<sup>143</sup> Because both Soviet and post-Soviet Russia have followed a pattern of federation construction as if the very goal desired had been the outcome that Watts warned against (that of territorially reinforced segmentation), the attempt to consolidate the Russian federal democracy as it is currently configured offers an interesting challenge to the problem, and how that problem is manifest in Russia affords an interesting opportunity for a case study. To suggest Russia as a case study for this issue does not imply that it is a unique case, because it has been determined that in any politically defined territorial unit “there is a tendency for minority groups to feel themselves vulnerable to dominance by the permanent majority and therefore to sharpen their defensiveness and insistence upon a clear measure of autonomous self rule.”<sup>144</sup> The majority-minority issue is most complex when it is “more than a mere bifurcation

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid

<sup>143</sup> Ibid

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p.155

between a majority and minority”<sup>145</sup> (as is the case in Russia). When the “weakness of conditions encouraging political integration” are linked with such ethno-national issues as “the degree to which the particular region itself is internally homogeneous in language, religion, race and culture,”<sup>146</sup> the process of state crafting becomes most difficult. In short, state building is most difficult under the conditions that exist today in Russia.

The critical issue pertaining to the segmenting variables above is that of ‘imbalance’. As Watts explained, “where there is an imbalance in which either the integrative or segmenting pressures are strong and the other weak, the result is likely to be relatively easy integration or complete disintegration.”<sup>147</sup> I don’t disagree with Watts’ assessment of the consequences of reinforced segmentation, but I do believe, and the study to follow provides an opportunity to test the existence of a third outcome, one that the Russian Federation is now experiencing - asymmetric federalism. Russia has been an example of institutionalized segmentation and geographically enforced containment for over 85 years now, and it has been shown to be a relatively stable organizing system, although it may not be a stable platform for national unity and minority participation. The question to be answered in this case study analysis is whether or not it is an appropriate system for the consolidation of a federal democracy. Territorial and demographic diversity are rational reasons for the selection of a federal system of organization and government, and although no federal system has (or can be expected to) eliminate all segmenting issues, it is to be expected that in its formative, as well as its

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., p.156

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p.157

functional characteristics, a stable federal state system must demonstrate that it has the means to manage and reconcile such issues. Keeping in mind the significant majority to the multi-minority ratio in Russia, Elazar's insight into the subject of ethnic federations is worth repeating at length:

Ethnic federations are among the most difficult of all to sustain and are least likely to survive, because constituent units based on ethnic nationalisms normally do not want to merge into the kind of tight-knit units necessary for federation. It may be that confederations of ethnic states have a better chance of success. Ethnic federations run the risk of secession. The management of ethnic nationalism is both the most common and the most difficult reasons for federalism today. Ethnic nationalism is the most egocentric of all nationalisms, and the most difficult basis on which to erect a system of constitutionalized power sharing; the essence of federalism.... In general, 19<sup>th</sup> century style ethnic nationalism tends to subordinate all free government to its uncompromising position. Federalism is a democratic middle way requiring negotiation and compromise. All aspects of society fostering uncompromising positions make federalism more difficult, if not impossible.<sup>148</sup>

The armed rebellion in Chechnya stands as an isolated case of ethnic warfare in Russia, but the likelihood of ethno-national fragmentation remains high because of the circumstances outlined by Elazar and also because Russia has adopted the failed Soviet state structure as a pattern. It is worthwhile to assess if Russia's overwhelming majority to minority ratio insulates the state from the spread of problems related to ethno-nationalism, problems that may have been ignored because they defy compromise or negotiation.

The recommendation by many theorists of democratization is that multi-ethnic states adopt a consociational form of democracy in order to minimize the negative consequences of a dominant majority. Lijphart described the environmental

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<sup>148</sup> See Elazar, 1994, p.167-68.

characteristics of a “consociational democracy,”<sup>149</sup> and Linz and Stepan have applied the ideas to a “multinational nonmajoritarian formula,” “The state and society might allow a variety of publicly supported communal institutions, such as media and schools in different languages, symbolic recognition of cultural diversity, a variety of legally accepted marriage codes, legal and political tolerance for parties representing different communities, and a whole variety of political procedures and devices.”<sup>150</sup> Schmitter and Karl have reduced the definition of consociationalism to the description of a “grand coalition government that incorporates all parties,”<sup>151</sup> and Linz has found that under certain conditions the unintended result of the absence of a “cohesive majority, a parliamentary system inevitably includes elements that become institutionalized in what has been called consociational democracy.”<sup>152</sup> In spite of the fact that it has been concluded by some analysts that “in ethnically plural societies, democratic consolidation might rest on consociationalism,”<sup>153</sup> Grey has concluded that “a consociational approach is unlikely to work in the USSR because of the numerical imbalance of ethnic groups, the huge size of the territory, the lack of political parties representing the major segments of society, and the relative intermixing of the various groups.”<sup>154</sup> This mixed bag of insight on the conditions for the application of the principles and structures associated with

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<sup>149</sup> See Lijphart 1969 for a full discussion of the objective conditions.

<sup>150</sup> Linz and Stepan, 1996, p.33

<sup>151</sup> Schmitter and Karl, 1996, p.53

<sup>152</sup> Linz, 1996, p.129

<sup>153</sup> Haggard and Kaufman, 1995, p.357

<sup>154</sup> Grey, 1997, p.207

consociationalism make the case of Russian transition and consolidation a true test that offers a challenge to the veracity of many of these propositions.

### **The Russian Federacy?**

Compounding the issue of finding solutions to the tendency towards a majority domination in an ethno-federal state is the fact that the 'cure' can create an additional problem - that of reinforcing preexisting segmentations. The institutionalized asymmetry that exists in Russia is reinforced by the organization of the 89 subject units of the Federation on the permanent segmentation of ethnic minorities into sub-federal political units. Asymmetry has been found to typically result in one of two general outcomes that significantly influence the state building process. First, "the balance of pressures for integration and fragmentation varies in different regions" and second, "the imbalance when a federal relationship is sought by a small or remote community with a larger and relatively integrated union, federation or even confederation."<sup>155</sup> The latter case results in what has been called a "federacy" or an "associated state"<sup>156</sup> and is a condition that exists in Russia. The Kaliningrad Oblast is a Russian federal subject unit of the same status as the other 88, except that it is geographically located outside of the borders of the Russian state on the Southwestern shore of the Baltic Sea, bordering Poland to the west and Lithuania to the east. Can Kaliningrad possibly have a stronger bond economically, culturally and regionally with Russia when the closest border crossing between the two is no less than five hundred miles (and two international borders) away? The simple answer

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<sup>155</sup> Watts, 1999, p.162

<sup>156</sup> Ibid

is that it cannot, but its existence adds to the study of Russian federalism a final element of interest in state form and function, that of Russia as a 'federacy'.

A necessary component of the analysis of any federal system is the identification of the system as one of two types, a peripheral zed federal system, such as those which grew from the transition of feudal Europe into a system of nation states, or the second federal system type, the one "invented in 1787"<sup>157</sup>, and put into practice in the United States, that of a centralized federation.<sup>158</sup> Although probably no federal system is purely peripheral or purely centralized, in all cases "the essential institutions of federalism are a government of the federation and a set of governments of the member units, in which both kinds of governments rule over the same territory and people and each kind has the authority to make some decisions independently of the other."<sup>159</sup> Riker suggests that all federal systems lie on a linear continuum, with one extreme minimal federalism, in which "the rulers of the federation can make decisions in only one narrowly restricted category of action"<sup>160</sup> and the opposite extreme, the federal state model, in which the power of the center is at a maximum (close to that of a unitary system). This is a case when "the rulers of the federation can make decisions without consulting the rulers of the member

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<sup>157</sup> From Riker, 1964, p.51

<sup>158</sup> Nathan and Hoffman, who described two patterns of federalism, presented the same idea:

- 1) One is fueled by centripetal forces and concerns, involving the adoption of the federal form to integrate a polity.
- 2) The second is centrifugal, involving the adoption of federal features to avoid disintegration. (1996, p.4)

<sup>159</sup> Riker, 1964, p.5

<sup>160</sup> Ibid



governments in all but one narrowly restricted category of action.”<sup>161</sup> Riker came to the conclusion that the Soviet political system was an example of a federal system at its maximum, and went on to suggest that the Soviet Union may have more accurately been described as a unitary empire system. The determination of whether a state is identifiable as a centralized (maximum) or peripheralized (minimum) federal system is determined by the application of “the administrative theory of federalism.”<sup>162</sup> This is a method that measures (or counts) the instances of implemented decisions or policies that are proposed for the entire federal state and if the process by which these issues were determined and implemented was one in which the federal government played a minimal role, the federal system is considered peripheral (dominated by the sub-federal government system), and if the policies, laws or decrees emanate from the central (federal) government and are implemented throughout the state with little to no input from the sub-federal regimes, that system is considered a centralized federation.

**Summary:**

The case of federalism in Russia presents a challenge and an opportunity for the determination of the centralized-peripheralized issue. On first blush, due to the strength of the presidential vertical and the dependence on bilateral pacts and agreements in the formative years of the establishment of the Republic, Russia looks like a centralized federation, much like the Soviet Union before it. On the other hand, when all of the independent actions of regional and local political and economic enterprises are considered, Russia then looks very much like a peripheralized federation, again, very

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid., p.6

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., p.51

much like its Soviet predecessor. The study of Russian policy patterns and decree implementations, when considered in the light of theoretical propositions such as those outlined thus far, should provide a strong case for the determination of the true nature of Russian federalism. The in depth analysis of the selected issues outlined above pertaining to regional segmentation, federacy, ethno-federalism, and asymmetry can provide the clearest picture yet of the transition and consolidation of democracy in the Russian Federation.

In order to proceed in the process of analysis, it is important to establish what is to be studied. Reisenger sets the stage by explaining that “the study of democratization is actually the study of what facilitates the replacement of one or another form of authoritarian rule with democratic institutions, norms, and procedures, and what facilitates the consolidation of democracy.”<sup>163</sup> The Russian state rapidly went down the road of democratization from the time of Gorbachev’s reforms in the late 1980s, but that rapid pace has slowed to a crawl, and where the state is on that road is in question today. If we accept Shin’s conclusion that “there are four stages of democratization; decay of authoritarian rule, transition, consolidation, and the maturing of democratic political order,”<sup>164</sup> a case could be made that Russia is in any one of those four stages. The retention of so many reserved domains from the ancien regime can lead to the conclusion that the state has yet to break out completely from authoritarian rule, the constant implementation of new administrative institutions and regimes of federal oversight and governance along with the failure to establish a stable and viable political party system

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<sup>163</sup> Reisenger, in Grey, 1997, p.53

<sup>164</sup> Shin, 1994, p.143

suggests that the transition stage is still in a relatively early stage. If the transitional period is far from over, then the consolidation of the Russian democracy cannot proceed, nor can a healthy political federation mature. The debate over the identification of the current stage of Russian democratization is moot if Bunce is correct in her assessment that “democracy is a process, not a result, and the democratic project can never be completed, therefore we can never understand the term ‘consolidation’ with its implication of democracy as an end state.”<sup>165</sup> Bunce’s proposition suggesting that democratization has no end makes all existing democracies victims of the consequences of an incomplete transition, and if consolidation has no place in the process, differentiating among the levels of stability evidenced by democracies must then be measured in degrees of ‘maturation.’ A problem that results from the application of this method is that a new democracy can seem more ‘mature’ than a democratic state that has had a longer life. The point is that whether the transition process is ever complete or not, or if the democracy is mature (consolidated) or not, the process of analysis is not freed from the responsibility of concept explication and objective evidence.

Whether an end in itself or an ongoing process, democratic consolidation is best understood from the perspective of analysis provided by Diamond who has determined that consolidation takes place in “two dimensions—norms and behavior—[and] on three levels.”<sup>166</sup>

At the highest level are the country’s elites, the top decision makers, organizational leaders political activists, and opinion shapers, in politics, government, the economy, and society. [Elite] At the intermediate level, parties, organizations and movements have their own beliefs, norms and patterns of

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<sup>165</sup> Bunce, 1994, p.125

<sup>166</sup> Diamond, 1999, p.66

behavior. [Organizations] At the level of mass public, consolidation is indicated when the overwhelming majority of citizens believe that democracy is the best form of government in principle and that it is also the most suitable form of government for their country at their time. [Mass Public].<sup>167</sup>

This theoretically structured outline of the characteristics of the consolidation process provides a means for a systematic test of the propositions against the process underway in Russia.<sup>168</sup> The analysis of Russian political change to date can provide indications about whether or not the necessary people are in place in order to accomplish consolidation at the elite level, and if the transitional development of the equally necessary levels of intermediate organizations and a mass public have yet to mature to the point that their contribution to democratic consolidation is a viable capability.

The final task to be addressed in this chapter is the establishment of some propositions that will guide the analysis of consolidation with a particular focus on the characteristics that separate a federal and a confederal political system. I believe it is important to begin by establishing in simple terms what differentiates the two, a task that was attempted by Madison over two hundred years ago: “The common authority dealt with the governments of the associating states, not directly with their people. We shall henceforth call this sort of arrangement confederal.”<sup>169</sup> The differentiation between a federal and a confederal system is important because the lack of propositional discipline

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<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> The outline developed by Huntington is also succinct and useful in the analysis of consolidation. He describes three problems in developing and consolidating democracy:

- 1) Transition problems of “forgive and forget”.
- 2) Contextual problems of “economy, culture and history”.
- 3) Systemic problems of “the workings of a democratic system”. (Huntington, “Why”: p.209)

<sup>169</sup> From “The Federalist #39”, in Sawyer, 1969, p.8

has resulted in many cases of concept overlap. This overlap has resulted from the fact that “no consensus exists about the defining institutional arrangements of federalism.”<sup>170</sup> The roots of the conceptual confusion was explained by Epstein who found that “a federal union, also known as a confederacy, was understood traditionally”<sup>171</sup> and because the idea of a central government with certain prescribed responsibilities working in conjunction with a group of sub-federal regimes was operationalized by tradition rather than statute. Epstein goes on to explain that both political configurations are defined as “a society of societies -Montesquieu’s phrase- meaning a union whose parts are states rather than individuals. This was thought to imply that member states would retain full control over their internal administration, that they would unite as equals in the federation, and that the federation would instruct its members in their collective capacities only.”<sup>172</sup> I suspect it is the case that, whether tested by indices of form or function, the Russian state system has violated the most basic condition for identification as either of the two organization types, the “uniting as equals.”

The facts surrounding the federal organization in Russia will contribute to the understanding of, and differentiation among, federal and confederal system types and is a worthwhile endeavor if for no other reason than that which Sawyer points out:

At least since the time of Bryce, it has commonly been asserted that federalism is a particularly unstable political form, and that federal states are usually in a state of disintegration into independent nations corresponding to their regions, or else are on their way to becoming unified states with omnipotent

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<sup>170</sup> Tsalik, 1999, p.157

<sup>171</sup> Epstein, 1984,p.51

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

central authority.<sup>173</sup>

It is time to attempt the determination of which way Russia is going. Russia represents a special case example of one of the greatest challenges to the survival of a federal system, because “while no federation can be completely symmetric (for example, in terms of population or area), very few give political form to asymmetries”, and Russia is one of those very few.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Sawyer, 1969, p.64

<sup>174</sup> Sakwa, 2002, p.4

**Chapter Three:**

**THE FOUNDATIONS OF SOVIET ERA FEDERAL CENTRALISM  
AND  
THE STRUCTURAL DIFFERENTIATION AMONG ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS**

The analysis of the current process of Russian state crafting and economic reform is placed in context by developing the connections that link the current regime to the preceding Soviet and Imperial eras. The two important issues of modernization and nationalism were problems that plagued both regimes which preceded the Republic, and they continue today as challenges to the successful consolidation of a modern federal democracy. Welch has provided some guiding principles for the study of modernization that are useful for providing perspective to the analysis which will be presented here. No matter what the form of the political system under study, “for analytical clarity, modernization is studied in three ways: (1) as a primarily economic phenomenon, bound up with the process of industrialization; (2) as a series of interconnected social and psychological changes that alter both traditional patterns of behavior and individuals’ perceptions; (3) as a variety of political changes, such as the differentiation of new political structures, widened political participation, the growth of ‘nationalism’ and the like.”<sup>175</sup> The analysis of any of the three Russian state system periods that have experienced attempts at modernization (Imperial, Soviet and Republican), the study of any or all of them could be organized under the guidelines suggested by Welch. Although the Soviet era is the paradigm most adjacent to the current phase of Russian political change, the issue of which regime had greater influence, is of interest. The conflicting Soviet policy towards the Russian Republic simultaneously structured political restrictions on Russian influence and yet made ‘Russia’ the cultural core of the nation and the Kremlin the ostensible political seat of Party power. The failure of the Party/State regime to solve the critical problems of national unity and modernization,

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<sup>175</sup> Welch, 1971, p.5



combined with the conflicting treatment of 'Russia' throughout the era, makes the pre-Soviet regime an appropriate starting point for the analysis of the legacies that continue to influence Russian state crafting. The historical events and reform policy patterns that have been selected and set out in this chapter will objectively outline the process of state crafting as it developed beginning with the territorial organization and administration reforms of Peter the Great followed by an analysis of the parallel Soviet era territorial policies. I have found that the continuity between the three epochs is better understood by concentrating on how the economic, social/psychological and political arenas of modernization have influenced the structuring of the Russian state.

#### **Formation and Administration:**

The federal districting structure of Russia has its roots in Imperial policy, but is a direct result of the Soviet era planning bureau's implementation of a system that would both facilitate (at least in appearance) the elimination of the territorial vestiges of Imperialism and (simultaneously) provide a structural and administrative foundation for the Soviet vision of modernization. The explication of the linkage between the Russian, Soviet and Imperial eras is an important one because at the core of this study is the proposition, the current structure of the Russian federal system significantly impedes the process of political change and democratic consolidation. The districting regime is one of the few institutions that can be objectively analyzed as a legacy resulting from a policy plan crafted by Peter the Great, altered by a combination of historical events and the state crafting/nation building reforms of Lenin and Stalin, and now modified by both Yeltsin and Putin. The formation of the Russian state of today has been a process that has included policy plans and historical incidents that at one time or another were intended to

facilitate imperialism and then anti-imperialism, feudalism and then industrialization, neo-colonialism and then Marxist/Leninism and now free market democratic federalism. The fact the structure that resulted from the mixed bag of ideological guidelines is now the foundation for the organization of a free market federal democracy makes it a worthwhile subject of analysis. It is reasonable to suspect that a system established as a command and control regime, when adopted by a successor state, will be most compatible with the command and control of the new parent system as well. It is also reasonable to expect that if it has failed in the past, it will fail once again at system unity, stability and maturity. The proposition guiding the development of this system structure analysis is; the Russian federal system, as it is currently configured, is better suited to economic segmentation and political subjugation of its component parts than it is to unity and democracy.<sup>176</sup> The assessment of the suitability of the current Russian federal structure to the demands of a modern federal state, an open economy and a democratic polity begins with an explanation of how the first 'modern' Russian system worked.

The history of Russian political and territorial organization can be traced back more than five centuries, but the system the Bolsheviks inherited was the structure established by Peter to facilitate westernizing political and cultural reforms.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> Although Miller, Et. al. have made the case "historical heritage and regime ideological orientation are not significant to democratic or anti-democratic values," the information developed in this analysis indicates that historical heritage is very important to democratic transition and consolidation. (See Miller, Reisenger, Hesli, 1996, p.153)

<sup>177</sup> A reason for the focus on this period of Russian history is, "Before Peter the Great, Russia was merely a 'people' (narod); she became a nation (natsiya) thanks to the changes initiated by the reformer". (Kaiser, 1994, p.38)

**Table 1.3:** Layers of Prikazy Administration<sup>178</sup>

<b><u>Tsar</u></b>		
	<b>Level 1</b>	
Patrician Council	←-----→	Boyar dvortskii
	<b>Level 2</b>	
Territorial Administrator & Assistants	←-----→	Prikaz & Diaks
	<b>Level 3</b>	
Governor General	←-----→	Namestnik
	<b>Level 4</b>	
District Administrator	←-----→	Veovoda
	<b>Level 5</b>	
Stoly Desks	←-----→	Sudni Denezhnyi Streletskii Razraid
Indigenous Regime	←-----→	The Local Patriarch

Table 1.3 shows the structure of the system of Imperial territorial administration, with the administrative bureau listed adjacent to the matching official title of the responsible individual. There were five levels of prikaz (administrative) control under the Tsar's patron-client system, with the patrician council (the Boyar Duma under Peter, renamed the State Senate after Peter and the State Council in the last century of the empire) made up of individuals who were directly and personally accountable and obligated to the Tsar. Following the pattern established by the relationship of the Tsar with the Boyar members, all territorial administrators (prikaz) were personally accountable (and obligated) to a particular member of the patrician council. This chain of patron-client relations extended from the territorial administrators to the governor general (namestnik), the city or district administrator (veovoda) and finally at the bottom of the vertical layers were those

<sup>178</sup> See Raeff, 1966 and Sumner in Raeff, 1972, who provide excellent sources for a complete outline of the system of personal vertical attributed to Peter, as well as an excellent description of the reformed Imperial administrative system that was instituted under Peter's rule.

officials who represented the localized issues of interest to the indigenous population of community. The consolidation of this administrative system established a management tradition (or legacy) through which “Russia increasingly sought administrative centralization through tight control at all administrative levels, but consistently stayed away from purely local matters.”<sup>179</sup> This pattern of localized autonomy is a key issue to the legacy that has been passed on from the Imperial Empire through the Soviet era and into contemporary Russia’s federal administration.<sup>180</sup>

The layers of civil servants (*nomenklatura*) continued to expand over time, with each *prikazy* (administrative district) headed by a *boyar* (state official) known as the *dvoretskii*, who was directly assisted by at least two *diaks* (officials) in the oversight of the stoly desks of *sudnyi* (justice), *denezhnyi* (finance), *streletskii* (police), and military (*razraid*). Ironically, the Imperial system of mixed colonial and subject territories was structured with more equality and symmetry of hierarchy than the Soviet and Russian systems that followed.<sup>181</sup> Rywkin’s research has shown that when ethnic non-Russian national territories became subjects of the Tsar through territorial expansion, the layers of bureaucrats would be expanded, but “there was no single colonial office to unite them

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<sup>179</sup> Rywkin, 1988, p.11

<sup>180</sup> When an ethno-territorial unit received classification as a *prikaz*, it indicated “an acceptance of national-cultural separateness within a framework of residual sovereignty” (Rywkin, 1988, p.10)

<sup>181</sup> The assimilation of a new territory is a process of “diminishing autonomy” which was characterized as a pattern of downgrading conquered ‘states’ to become first a “centrally administered colonial territory, [and then] a province administratively indistinguishable from neighboring Russian provinces [and] administered by the territorial *prikaz*, bearing the name of the conquered state [e.g. Kazan *prikaz*] accountable to the monarch, and the Duma.” This system and process lasted until 1917 and the end of the Imperial era. (See Rywkin, 1988, p.10).

under one roof, each prikaz administration remained separately accountable to the Boyar Duma.”<sup>182</sup> The fact that the administration of ‘colonial’ holdings was merged into the same territorial administrative system of ‘Russian’ territories indicates that in the Imperial system the form and function of all territorial holdings and administrators was designed for symmetry of management, and it was the parochial conditions of location, language, religion and ethnicity that determined the colonial or subject status of the population groups. Also of note is the fact that in this system of administration the only layer of institutional accountability of a horizontal nature is that found at the stoly desk level. This demonstrates a difference at the local level; in this case, the fact that indigenous leaders were simultaneously accountable to several bureaus and bureaucrats, while all layers of Imperial bureaucrats were vertically accountable to the next senior official. The only territorial unit type that had a special designation in the Russian Imperial system was the guberneyos, which delineated the administrative districts that were holdings located outside of the borders of ‘Russia’, such as the territories of the Baltics, Poland, and Finland.<sup>183</sup> Due to the hierarchical political structure of these conquered external colonies or territories, they were administered in a different ‘spirit’ than the internal regions, with the Russian Governor General responsible for a guberneyo exercising a liaison-like responsibility that was different than the delegative role of the administrators of the internal colonies.

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid., p.9

<sup>183</sup> For a full explanation of the differences between territories within the boundaries of the Russian Empire centered in Moscow (or St. Petersburg) and the holdings that stood external to the “Imperial” borders, (see Chin and Kaiser, 1996).

Eisenstadt summarized the process of empire building and its outcome in Imperial Russia, as the development from a feudal society to that of a crafted “centralized historical bureaucratic empire . . . and a historical bureaucratic society.”<sup>184</sup> In short, Russia came to share the same basic organizing characteristics of other traditional Western empire systems,<sup>185</sup> with the bureaucracy the dominant tool of managing the administrative structure, and therefore an appointment to a position within the bureaucratic system a coveted aspiration of any upwardly mobile individual who was neither an illiterate peasant nor an aristocrat of family means. The form, function and opportunities that the reforms of Peter provided the administrative bureaucracy of Russia is not what came to separate it from other empire systems, but rather it was the fact that the Russian ruling class resisted statist reforms of the system. Well into the twentieth century, long after its European counterparts had instituted economic, social and political reforms, the empire system of Russia remained entrenched, and its self-aggrandizing role as the sole guardian of the empire system assured its demise in an ever industrializing world.<sup>186</sup> By the start of World War One, the weakness and incompetence of the archaic Imperial system was not recognized, even by its enemies, yet after the Revolution the administrative versatility and suitability of the Imperial system proved indispensable to

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<sup>184</sup> Eisenstadt, 1963 p.6

<sup>185</sup> Although Russia shared many characteristics of an empire with its European neighbors, “the Russian Empire has been the only European empire to acquire colonial possessions not across the seas--a classical colonial pattern--but across endless landmasses of steppes, forests, and taigas, a situation not always recognized as equally colonial.” (Rywkin, 1988, p.xii)

<sup>186</sup>: These Empire traditions were described by Ulam as “Predating Peter’s reign and going back to the earliest day’s of Muscovy, there is the notion of the historical mission of the Russian nation as the representative and defender of Eastern Christianity as against Catholicism and also (and especially) as against Islam.” (Ulam, 1968, p.5)

the new rulers of Russia. The shadow of the Imperial nomenklatura system, traditions and methods found their way into the form and function of the Communist Party structure and the Soviet political system.

The issue of nationalism in the Russian Empire was not of great importance to the regime because an empire system has less need of patriotism than a political state does, and because stability results from the vertical loyalties and accountabilities structured into the Imperial administrative system. In general the institutional symmetry of territorial administration assured layers of personal loyalty, and by 1825 this vertical system had permeated all aspects of official life in the Empire, so that “official nationality equated ‘Russianness’ with loyalty to the Tsar and the Orthodox faith rather than ethnicity and geography.”<sup>187</sup> This pattern was repeated in the Soviet era, when the goal of the regime was the creation and dominance of the ‘Soviet Man’<sup>188</sup> who was loyal to the General Secretary, the Communist Party and to the orthodoxy of Marxist/Leninism. Although all of the subjects of the Empire who were loyal to the Tsar and Church were ‘Russians’, segmentations remained among and between the colonial and the non-colonial populations, with even the ethnic Slavs culturally (and territorially) divided into three narod (people): Great Russians (Russia), Little Russians (Ukraine), and White Russians (Belarus). The decades of territorial administration through a bureaucracy dominated by vertical loyalties and obligations resulted in a deep and personal investment in the system on the part of each individual bureaucrat. The Imperial policy of the

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<sup>187</sup> From Chun and Kaiser, 1996

<sup>188</sup> This was a concept introduced by Party dogma that never materialized. In support of the position that this failure is due to the pre-Soviet ethos of identifications, McAuley describes the attempt to produce the 'soviet man', and ascribes the failure to conflicts with pre-existing ideologies of citizen political culture. (McAuley, 1984, p. 29)



segmenting of territories by regions based on concentrations of subgroup populations of locally autonomous ethno-nationals that were subject to rule by 'Russians' on a grand scale, but accountable to local authorities in their everyday lives, was a pattern that continued into (and through) the Soviet era as well. The Bolshevik cadre that seized power and established the RSFSR and later the Soviet Union was dominated by 'Russians' (Great, Little and White), and the overwhelming presence of ethnic Slavs in the upper echelons of Soviet and Communist Party nomenklatura from Party General Secretary to local Soviet Commissars continued to the very end of the Union's existence. An additional legacy passed on from the institutionalized methods of the Imperial bureaucracy was the fact that the "nationalization process as it occurred in the waning decades of the Russian Empire was not leading to the creation of one Russian state, but rather to the formation of numerous nations living in what they considered to be their ancestral homelands."<sup>189</sup> It is logically consistent to suggest that if the Soviet regime failed to unify the Russian territories under one 'national' roof, then the current Republic's adoption of that same organizing system cannot be expected to do otherwise, unless it can be established that the national problems was of disunity in Russia under both the Tsars and Commissars one that can be solved by current and potential democratic reforms.

### **Empire Legacy:**

By the end of the Imperial period the duality of loyalties that identified a person's official 'Russianness' on the one hand usually conflicted with those on the other that bound one to local traditions and an ethno-national culture of a homeland and a people.

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<sup>189</sup> Kaiser, 1994, p.89



This was not simply a matter of an ethos of a Russian minority group but was a much more intense sense of ethno-nationalism, with the clash between identifications with nation-and-homeland versus tsar-and-religion a dichotomy of identity that had reached a crisis point in Russia by the end of the 19th century. In spite of the fact that loyalty trumped ethnicity as an officially sanctioned qualification for Russian citizenship, “the nationalization of the Russian peasantry shifted the emphasis of identity away from loyalty to the tsar and orthodoxy, and toward an ethno-cultural identity, which became a politicized and territorialized community of interest.”<sup>190</sup> This shift of sympathies by such a significant portion of the population to a localized focus of loyalty and identity set the stage for the demands for change and modernization that resulted in the civil strife and civil war that came to Russia at the start of the 20th century.<sup>191</sup> By the end of the 19th century the institutional power of the regime had diminished significantly, but as Platonov noted, “a centralized system can function without firm institutions [because] it can, like Muscovy, rest on a delegative system.”<sup>192</sup> The consequences to national unity of the delegative territorial system meant that “there will be no unity and control, and relations will be confused,” but the system itself “will remain strong by virtue of its closeness to the supreme authority.”<sup>193</sup> Although Platonov’s observations were made in

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<sup>190</sup> Chin and Kaiser, 1996, p.61

<sup>191</sup> Although many historians point to the Sino-Japanese War and Russia’s humiliating defeat as the major crack in Imperial stature, a significant consequence of the duality of the loyalties in the Imperial system was the fact that by the end of the 19th century, as Kaiser points out, “the peasants defined themselves in terms of locality, and only secondarily felt themselves to be members of a nation.” (Kaiser, 1994, p.86)

<sup>192</sup> Platonov, 1972, p.9

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

1972 and were intended to describe the crisis bureaucratic delegation brought to the Imperial system, it turns out to be an accurate description of the Soviet pattern of territorial administration and the attendant crisis experienced by that system as well.

According to Kaiser, the legacy of internal colonialism faced by the Bolsheviks meant that “Tsarist Russia was described as a ‘prison of people’, and [the problem of] ‘Great Russian Chauvinism’ was Lenin’s greatest national problem.”<sup>194</sup> Zlatopolsky has concluded that “Lenin’s starting point was that the national question, the question of the state forms for nations - autonomy, federation, separation - could only be resolved on the basis of historical conditions and the development of these conditions.”<sup>195</sup> It is clear that Lenin came to power with high ideological aspirations for the establishment of a radically new form of political, economic and national order, but was a pragmatist at heart who believed that “the economic, political and cultural conditions of the life of a given nation are the key to determining the form of state organization.”<sup>196</sup> Although prior to the Bolshevik seizure of power Lenin was opposed to the idea of a federal form of state organization,<sup>197</sup> he came to support the implementation of a federal system because, according to Zlatopolsky, he believed that it offered the best means to accomplish the three critical goals of state building. The first of these was the need to strengthen the bonds between the Muscovite core and the political and cultural traditions of the

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<sup>194</sup> Chin and Kaiser, 1996, p.25

<sup>195</sup> Zlatopolsky, 1961, p. 21

<sup>196</sup> Ibid

<sup>197</sup> See discussion Ibid.

“numerous nations,”<sup>198</sup> to be followed by the establishment of a centralized and industrialized economy that would “promote the economic unification of the nations inhabiting Russia.”<sup>199</sup> The third and final step was the establishment of a federal system of organization as “the most acceptable means of implementing the right of nations to self determination.”<sup>200</sup> Note that these three goals ascribed to Lenin’s state formation plan closely parallel the three characteristics of modernization that were described by Welch; a parallel of objectives indicating that Lenin understood that in spite of his radical long term plans, his first short term task was to modernize the state. Note also that the perspective and tone of the projected reforms indicate that for Lenin ‘Russia’ was synonymous with ‘Soviet Union,’ or “What’s good for Russia is good for the Soviet Union.”

It has been suggested by some that neither Lenin nor Stalin were prepared to deal with the “national” issue they inherited from the Imperial era because they had no Marxist ideology to guide the establishment and crafting of a state system.<sup>201</sup> This is an erroneous suggestion, as there were “two dominant intellectual strands in the legacy of

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<sup>198</sup> Zlatopolsky, 1961, p.21

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid. Lenin believed that self determination was a necessary prerequisite to the goal of a proletarian state, and the establishment of the proletarian state was a necessary precondition to the elimination of the state system all together.

<sup>201</sup> On the question of a state, Lenin said, “The bourgeois state does not wither away but is put an end to by the proletariat in the course of the revolution. What withers away after the revolution is the proletarian state or semi-state.” (Lenin, 1917, p.17) On the establishment of a nation, Lenin believed that it would result from “Voluntary centralism, of a voluntary union of the communes into a nation, a voluntary fusion of the proletarian communes in the process of destroying bourgeois supremacy and the bourgeois state machinery” (Lenin, 1917 p. 46)

Marx and Engels” that provided a policy choice between the dogmas of the “strategic socialists” and the “tactical nationalists.”<sup>202</sup> Tactical nationalist theory is based on the utilization of national aspirations as a means for achieving socialist goals and was advocated by Austrian socialists in the 1890’s. This school of thought promoted the idea that “neither territorial national-cultural autonomy, nor extraterritorial national-cultural autonomy, but a ‘federation of nationalities’ was the answer to the problem of multi-ethnic unification.”<sup>203</sup> In contrast to the tactical nationalists, the strategic socialists<sup>204</sup> of the period were insistent that, to be faithful to Marxist ideals, class must take priority over nation and socialism over nationalism. Because in the class struggle, according to Communist theory, nationalism and socialism “stand in contradiction to each other.”<sup>205</sup> According to the strategic socialists a solution to the problem of conflicting ideologies could be accomplished based on the belief that “it is not necessarily true that all nations either should or should not enjoy self determination. Rather, each case has to be settled on the basis of its own merits. *It is a mistake to treat nations as units.* As nations consist of the working class and the bourgeoisie, it would be ludicrous for socialists to support the bourgeoisie, even in so indirect a manner.”<sup>206</sup> (Emphasis added)

Finding himself the leader of an existing national unit, and having no means to avoid the issue of nationalism, Lenin chose a state crafting solution that positioned him

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<sup>202</sup> Motyl, 1990, p. 77

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> The principle advocate of the strategic socialist dogma was the Marxist Rosa Luxemburg.

<sup>205</sup> Motyl, 1990, p.79

<sup>206</sup> Ibid., p.80

“straddling the strategic socialist and the tactical nationalist strands.”<sup>207</sup> Motyl’s interpretation of the events prior to 1924 led him to conclude that “Lenin’s solution [was] that all nations have the right to self determination via separation, [with] the right to self determination . . . unconditional”.<sup>208</sup> This perspective was combined with the belief that “the support of self determination as such was not unconditional: rather, support was contingent on whether or not separation advanced the proletariat’s interests--foremost of which was, of course, unity.”<sup>209</sup> Although it is likely that had Lenin lived to implement his compromise policy to the nationalism issues faced by the Bolsheviks, a significantly different Soviet Union would have emerged,<sup>210</sup> that was not to be. The incompatibility of democratic centralism and the principles of federalism is clear when it is understood that “democratic centralism means that the state is administered from a single center, that the decisions taken by the higher organs are binding upon the lower organs, that the minority is subordinated to the majority, and that there is strict discipline.”<sup>211</sup> Lenin had determined that democratic centralism was the political means to the accomplishment of the Marxian goal, and with his death, the impossible task of organizing a federation

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<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid. p.81

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> The one decision that has (thus far) had a permanent impact on Russian state crafting has been Lenin’s decision to establish a federal system which propagates ethno-nationalism. “In federalizing what became the Soviet Union, Lenin in effect bequeathed to the ethno republics the institutional space to carry out limited ‘nationalizing’ policies.” (Smith, Law, Wilson Et al., 1998, p.6)

<sup>211</sup> Zlatopolsky, 1961, p.34

around a political system ideologically suited to a unitary regime fell to Stalin, who initiated policies which caused the contradictions to become more deeply entrenched.

### **Soviet State Building:**

The process of unification was undertaken during the period of War Communism, when the Red Army instituted “the integration into a single state of the borderlands conquered in the course of the civil war [and] terminated in 1923 with the establishment of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.”<sup>212</sup> Beginning with Bashkir in 1919, by 1923 the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic (RSFSR) had been established with 17 autonomous regions and republics. By designating these political subunits as ‘autonomous,’ through the actions of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Council of Peoples Commissars of the RSFSR, “the message to be understood by all of the regional regimes was that “autonomy means not separation.”<sup>213</sup> This gesture of autonomy for these regions was devoid of any practical effect regarding self-rule or self-determination of the indigenous ethno-nationals because the Kremlin maintained a monopoly on all power. As Pipes points out, “By 1924, . . . the autonomous regions and republics had so little self-rule left that their formal merger in a federal institution had virtually no practical consequences. It was a measure of primarily bureaucratic significance.”<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Pipes, 1968, p.246

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., p.248

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., p.250

Although Lenin set the ideological tone of transition, Stalin, who by 1920 had become the powerful chief architect of the new Soviet (federal) system,<sup>215</sup> set the agenda. He saw to it that each newly added subunit was assigned a regional or republican designation “depending on the level of indigenous national consciousness,” a ‘level’ that was determined by the characterization of the Party bureaucrat assigned to the task. Under Stalin’s tutelage “this system . . . evolved haphazardly by means of bilateral treaties”<sup>216</sup> (a process which would be repeated to a substantial degree by Yeltsin some 70 years later). Based on the views expressed in his 1913 essay “Marxism and the National Question,” we know that at one time Stalin believed that “a nation is a historically evolved, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.” After the Bolsheviks had seized power Stalin apparently underwent a dramatic change of attitude. Perhaps he concluded that he could not wait for the necessary unifying national conditions to evolve, so he embarked on the path of nation crafting by demanding that all Soviet citizens adopt Russian as the common language, that all regions be subjugated within the common territory of the Soviet state, that a common economy be centrally planned and commanded from the Kremlin, and that the Soviet ideology that was derived from the amalgam of Marxist-Leninism be promoted as the basis for a common culture throughout the Union. The failure of this early ‘nationalizing’ policy based on the ‘Russification’ of the Union population had caused

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<sup>215</sup> Pipes, 1968, points out that Stalin was the chairman of the Commissariat of Nationality Affairs (NKN) which beginning in the spring of 1920 became a “miniature federal government of the RSFSR.” (p.249)

<sup>216</sup> Ibid., p.250

Stalin to rethink the 'national problem,' and he concluded, "a minority is discontented not because there is no national union but because it does not enjoy the right to use its native language. Permit the use of its native language, and the discontent will pass of itself, give it its own schools and all grounds for discontent will disappear, give it liberty of conscience [religious liberty] and liberty of movement and it will cease to be discontented."<sup>217</sup>

In order to eliminate the discontent among Soviet minority groups, Stalin initiated a new plan to reconfigure the administrative subunits of the state to establish the "regional autonomy" of "crystallized units."<sup>218</sup> Because of the new way in which he now understood the minority-nationals problem, he would not depend on the 'state' to ideologically unify the people, but it would be the function of the Communist Party to unify the one people of one state into one Party. This new approach came about because Stalin had concluded, "the demarcation of workers according to nationalities leads to the disintegration of a united workers party, the splitting of trade unions according to nationalities, aggravation of national friction, national strikebreaking, and complete demoralization within the ranks of Social Democracy."<sup>219</sup> The only cure for this is Union organization on the basis of internationalism, because for Stalin it was the only way "to unite locally the workers of all nationalities of Russia into single, integral collective bodies, [because] to unite these collective bodies into a single party--such is the task."<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> Franklin, 1973, p.70

<sup>218</sup> Ibid., pp.79-80

<sup>219</sup> Ibid., p.82

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.



Note the emphasis on the “nationalities of Russia,” which indicates that even as he embarked on this new Party oriented path to solving the nationality problem through a plan of ‘internationalization,’ Stalin still considers Russia to be the nation that will subsume all others.<sup>221</sup> To insure the realization of his ‘unification’ plan, Stalin implemented three final policy initiatives. First, by murder, genocide, mass deportations and imprisonment, he purged his regime of persons or groups that he believed constituted a threat to his personal power base; second, he manipulated the districts of the Union in such a fashion as to insure the forced disintegration of as many national clusters as possible; and finally, he imposed a new districting plan that increased the number of non-nationally designated administrative units exponentially.

#### **The Soviet Administrative System:**

Although many reforms were instituted by Stalin after Lenin’s death, the basic territorial system that was in place in 1924 remained in use throughout the Soviet era. From the start, districting boundaries had been instituted in order to provide the ‘empire-state’<sup>222</sup> with “certain distinctions between the non-Russians situated inland, out of contact with foreign powers, and those located on the fringes. The inland areas were formed into autonomous regions and republics, [ASSRs] while the outlying ones were

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<sup>221</sup> The core that Russia represented was described by Tucker: “The Stalinist revolution of 29-39 yielded an amalgamated Stalinist Soviet culture that, paradoxically, involved at once the full scale Sovietization of Russian society, and the Russification of the Soviet culture.”(Tucker, 1987, p.95)

<sup>222</sup> I use this term because it most closely defines the political unit the Soviet Union had become by 1924. As Motyl (1999) points out, “In an empire, native elites are deprived of their political authority without losing their social status.” (p.119) Motyl goes on to say that “The Soviet Union was the quintessence of an imperially structured polity” (p.123) and yet had taken great pains to structure the greater Soviet political unit to reflect federalist spatial characteristics. Thus it was, in effect, an empire masquerading as a federal state.

made into so-called Union republics [SSRs].”<sup>223</sup> The practical significance of the system was in the fact that “national territory was for Stalin merely an empty container within which nations were created or destroyed through the development or disappearance of their objective cultural features.”<sup>224</sup> The system at the time of Lenin’s death was four tiered, and had, along with the two republic unit types (SSRs and ASSRs), two additional region types. One was established as an ethnically determined designation of a National Area (Okrug), and the second was the Autonomous Province (Oblast) an administrative unit designation for regions with no significant ethnic group concentrations. The history of the oblast is a significant issue to the Russian districting topic, because it was a region set apart for specific economic development plans and should have been a unit type most likely to be assimilated into the pathology of the Soviet Union. (The fact that it has been found that the people and the leadership of the Russian oblasts have behaved in ways indistinguishable from their districting relatives is a remarkable outcome of the research to follow). It was not until ten years after Lenin’s death that Stalin added to this four-tiered system the ‘super province’ (Krai) that was implemented as a means to organize expansive and usually sparsely populated territories in order to disperse further any nationalist concentrations. Stalin hoped that the introduction of the krai district would facilitate the treatment of all citizens within that unit as a single population, insuring that nationality based identities would not be sanctioned and could be ‘justifiably’ suppressed.

This districting pattern is summed up by Sakwa’s observation that “under Stalin, border policy took on a far more instrumental role, and while formally arbitrary they

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<sup>223</sup> Pipes, 1968, p.250

<sup>224</sup> Kaiser, 1994, p.103

were part of a conscious design to foster ethnic conflict as part of his *divide et imperare* policy, to make all nationalities dependent on Moscow.”<sup>225</sup> At times this was accomplished by combining ASSRs, oblasts and okrugs within a krai, with an intentional disregard for traditional ethnic boundary characteristics. By creating ethno-national tensions and conflict through the implementation of his divisive districting policies, Stalin guaranteed that he had all the evidence of subversive activities necessary to justify the tightening of his personal grip on the people and territories of the Union.<sup>226</sup> Under the new organizing plan the number of oblasts and rayons<sup>227</sup> increased dramatically, and the borders of many Soviet Republics (SSRs) and Autonomous Republics (ASSRs) were adjusted in order to facilitate the new configuration and to justify the new nationality policy of local disunity for the sake of the Union.

The most devastating Soviet territorial administration policy that impacted on the ethno-national districts was implemented by Stalin in his First Five Year Plan (of collectivization), and was also intended to guarantee that his personal grip on power would not be challenged. In order to accomplish this, Stalin “exterminated communist federalists all over the Soviet Union [and] deprived almost all the important non-Russian peoples of an entire generation of their political leaders, economic experts, and cultural

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<sup>225</sup> Sakwa, 1993, p.340

<sup>226</sup> This description of the Soviet era districting process is closely adapted from Pipes, 1968, and adds to the earlier description of the divide and conquer policy pursued by Stalin.

<sup>227</sup> A rayon is, relative to the American districting system, a unit similar to a ‘county’.

workers.”<sup>228</sup> The implications of this ethno-national decapitation policy for the future of Russian Federalism is described in detail by Kolarz:

Thus the Non-Russian peoples lost two sets of their national elites during the period stretching from the October revolution until roughly the outbreak of the Second World War. The first included intellectuals who had championed the cause of their peoples under the Czarist regime and the second group was made up of the Bolsheviks who had taken their place and had tried to defend the interests of the nationalities and territories of which they had been put in charge.<sup>229</sup>

With his ethno-national rivals dead or in prison, Stalin turned his attentions in order to focus on his plan to achieve national unity by Party assimilation.

By 1938 he had crafted an elaborate and deeply penetrating administrative system structure that significantly expanded the number of loyal Party cadres,<sup>230</sup> and by the time of his death in 1953, he had established titular leadership in control of all administrative districts, including the ethnic territories.<sup>231</sup> An added segmenting characteristic of

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<sup>228</sup> Kolarz, 1967, p.11

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Stalin had determined that it was necessary to improve the “day to day leadership of the party [and bring it] closer to the work of the lower bodies”, and therefore a final reorganization was necessary. The result was a reconfigured USSR that had expanded

- from seven to eleven union republics
- from 14 to 34 peoples commissariats of the USSR
- from 70 to 110 territories and regions
- from 2559 urban and rural districts to 3815

Which were over-seen by:

- 11 central committees (headed by Central Committee of CPSU)
- 6 territorial committees
- 104 regional committees
- 30 area committees
- 212 city committees
- 336 city district committees
- 3479 rural district committees
- 113,060 primary Party organizations (Franklin, 1973, p.152)

Stalin's districting policy was the effective blockage of any real form of independent cooperation and interrelations among and between the peripheral units separate from those officially sanctioned by Kremlin policies. Both Eisenstadt and Motyl concur in their writings regarding empire systems, that a key component of empire power is derived from maintaining a structure of political relations that denies interrelations among the subject units.<sup>232</sup> Motyl points out "in an empire, native elites are deprived of their political authority without losing their social status,"<sup>233</sup> and thus by the destruction (through murder or imprisonment) of this strata of ethnic leadership, Stalin had gone beyond the empire paradigm of subjugation to the inhumanity of totalitarianism. Motyl also makes the point that "the Soviet Union was the quintessence of an imperially structured polity"<sup>234</sup> and yet Stalin had taken great pains to draft a constitution that would provide ideological and statutory legitimacy for his claim that the Soviet Union was a federation. It was, in effect, a totalitarian empire-state that was masquerading as a federal union.

#### **Post-Stalin Reform:**

After Stalin's death, Khrushchev attempted to reform the Kremlin-centered regional administration system by establishing a more integrated and locality centered

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<sup>231</sup> See appendix for a full list of the administrative districts established in Russia under Stalin.

<sup>232</sup> Motyl, 1999 modeled the characteristics of an empire system and compared them to those of a modern state by the depiction of a wheel's rim, spokes and hub. The model depicting a hub and spokes but no rim represents the empire system, and the model of a modern state consists of the hub, spokes and rim. In this model, the rim represents interrelations and the spokes the concurrent relations with the political center.

<sup>233</sup> Motyl, 1999, p.119

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., p.123

oversight process. The Party secretaries and department heads who were responsible for the oversight of regional affairs often had never left Moscow in the execution of their responsibilities, but rather depended on the delegation of power to accomplish the implementation of central policies through the Soviet version of a vertical chain of personal nomenklatura relations. An example of Khrushchev's attempt at reform was the institution of a decentralized means for oversight and planning of the territorial economies through the establishment of regional economic councils (sovnarkhozy).<sup>235</sup> Along with the establishment of local councils came the very unpopular policy that was simultaneously implemented requiring that the Party secretary or Soviet bureau director responsible for a particular region or city, maintain a presence in the local office in order to work in close coordination with the local sovnarkhozys. In 1957 there were 105 such councils, but because of the lukewarm (at best) reception that this policy received in the ranks of the party bureaucrats (who coveted an office of their own in the Kremlin, and the privileges that went along with it), the number of sovnarkhozy fell to 100 in 1962, to 47 by 1967 and were abolished shortly after that through Brezhnev's policy promoting a return to Stalin's centralized patron-client oversight methods.<sup>236</sup>

Along with the Brezhnev's return to the old ways of command and control came a new sense of bureaucratic power and security among the Party cadres of the Union.

Thanks to the death of Stalin and the removal of Khrushchev from power, a new era

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<sup>235</sup> This was not a superfluous policy initiative, as the need for an economic development regime is an issue that transcends the Soviet era. Lynch has shown that many of the problems associated with Russia's "economic geography" make the costs of economic development excessive. Because of this, "Russia has never developed under conditions of free movement of capital and possibly cannot do so." (Lynch, 2002, p.7)

<sup>236</sup> For more detail see Hanson, 1994.

emerged in the Union that restored the benefits of membership in the Party elite, and removed the uncertainty that had pervaded the top echelons of the Party due to Stalin's propensity for purges and Khrushchev's penchant for destabilizing reform. A significant consequence of this new security was described by Gill and Pitty: "Most changes to republican party leaderships under Brezhnev occurred because incumbents died rather than because of failures in party supervision or due to corruption. Republican leaders depended on Brezhnev for their positions in the top leadership. Brezhnev in turn depended on their ability to keep their fiefdoms in order."<sup>237</sup> The combined effect of the locally empowering reforms of Khrushchev followed by the return to the long distance centralized command and control system that was reinstated under Brezhnev was a new practical reality in Soviet territorial administration - that the further a district was located from Moscow, the more independent from Kremlin control that subunit was.<sup>238</sup> From 1964 and the end of the Khrushchev era until 1985 and the selection of Gorbachev as Party Secretary, the pattern of official command and control of the territories from the Kremlin but real power over regional and local actions in the hands of a powerful class of regional 'barons,' resulted in the consolidation of a Soviet "don't ask, don't tell" administrative oversight policy.<sup>239</sup> The result of Brezhnev's regional policies was

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<sup>237</sup> Gill and Pitty, 1997, p.45

<sup>238</sup> Gill & Pitty concluded that throughout the Brezhnev period there was a big increase in the autonomy of republican leaders from central control. "While qualifications were made by the center to the basic policy of administrative stability, in no case studied here was there any central intervention similar to Khrushchev's policy of pressuring leading personnel on the ground." (Gill & Pitty, 1997, p.70) The implication: of the Brezhnev policy pattern suggests that many districts were effectively disconnected from the center as virtual 'fiefdoms' long before the breakup of the Soviet Union.



corruption and gaps in the implementation and enforcement of territorial policies, which by 1985, ensured that the territories could not be managed by Moscow without significant reforms. According to Alayev, “the three aspects of management: production, population and environment”<sup>240</sup> had been the guiding principles for the development of the districting patterns of the Soviet state,<sup>241</sup> but the corruption and lack of accountability described above insured that enterprise management resulted in personal and/or cadre gains above all others, command driven production quotas would provide unwanted and poorly manufactured consumer goods, the people would sacrifice a clean environment in support of an archaic industrial system which came to a climax with the Chernobyl nuclear disaster of 1986.

#### **Soviet Legacies:**

The major contradiction to be resolved today in the Russian Federation is not so much the fact the Soviet state was organized to satisfy Stalin’s interpretation of Marxian principles, but rather the fact the state, as a federation, should have been organized on principles of federalism. In its most basic manifestation, “federalism exists in structural, behavioral, historical, and cultural terms as a distinct political form,”<sup>242</sup> and therefore it cannot be successfully established for the satisfaction of the particularized dogma of a

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<sup>239</sup> Adopted from the policy of the U.S. Armed Forces towards issues of homosexuality. When Gorbachev became General Secretary, one of the first problems he became aware of was the fact that central policies had not been carried out in the regions, and it was evident that no one in Moscow had wanted to know, and no one in the regions had wanted to tell.

<sup>240</sup> Alayev, 1976, p.175

<sup>241</sup> As discussed earlier, these principles applied to the formation of the oblast as a regional district, and also was the basis for the location of many Soviet cities and towns.

<sup>242</sup> Nathan and Hoffman, 1996, p.4



unique political economy. This structural contradiction is clarified by Hanson's description of the ideology which guided the development of the Soviet state, and resulted in "location principles" which determined that "economic development was the basis, but the focus was 'most efficient' not profitability."<sup>243</sup> The determination of the establishment of such things as cities, towns, factories and industrial complexes based on projections of production and transport costs that have no basis in supply and demand principles (or no basis in what is reality for the rest of the world's economies), "resulted in the neglecting of items such as accessibility, demand, linkage and market factors [and instead] focused on volume and low production costs in site-specific locations."<sup>244</sup> The focus on the needs of a centralized bureaucratic system and a command economy above all others resulted in the "dominance of branch over territorial planning" and in the end insured that "the very structure of Soviet central planning worked against territorial interests."<sup>245</sup> The territorial interests which were most affected were those that would have unified and solidified the Soviet state, and created a structural-functional failure of Soviet territorial policies that significantly contributed to the practical breakdown of the Soviet state system years before the Union broke apart. It is evident that in the process of modernization, the Soviet crafters devolved a system of state organization that was inextricably linked with the ideology, economic interests and politics of the very specialized Soviet system, and what set Russia apart from its post-Soviet contemporaries

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<sup>243</sup> Hanson, 1994, p.26

<sup>244</sup> Ibid

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., p.30

is its utilization of that Soviet system of social, economic and state integration and organization in a post-Soviet political, social and economic democracy.

Hughes summarized the cause for the collapse of the Soviet Union persuasively: “When democratizing pressures were unleashed by Gorbachev in the second half of the 1980s, and accompanied by his undermining of the Communist Party’s will for coercion, the largely symbolic ethnified federal Soviet structure was activated as a natural platform for elite mobilization of a hitherto deeply moribund ethnic nationalism. There was also, undoubtedly, a secession ‘contagion’ effect on the Soviet Union from the revolutions in Eastern Europe.”<sup>246</sup> Hughes is not alone in his assessment that Gorbachev’s policy initiatives directly contributed to the demise of the Union. Saivetz added support to such a view when he concluded “glasnost seems to have unleashed pent-up interethnic tensions within the Soviet Union and facilitated non-Russian resistance to the central Soviet authorities.”<sup>247</sup> Insightful conclusions such as these of Saivetz and Hughes suggest that Gorbachev bears personal responsibility for implementing policies that contributed most directly to the causes of the Soviet collapse, but Blaney comes to a more fateful conclusion when he suggests, “although most events and factors cited in alternative explanations of the end of the Soviet Union undoubtedly affected the timing of that historic event, *the collapse of the Soviet Union was first and foremost an internal system failure that would have been almost impossible to avoid.*”<sup>248</sup> (Emphasis added) The conclusion that Blaney arrived at fits very well with the hypothesis of this study and

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<sup>246</sup> Hughes, in White, Pravda, and Gitelman, 2001, p.130

<sup>247</sup> Saivetz in Fischer, 1996, p. 257.

<sup>248</sup> Blaney, 1995, p.12

a focus on the failure of the administrative districting system of the Soviet era in general. Blaney's observation may be equally true for the Russian Republic as a significant systemic problem from the Soviet era (the administrative districting system) now challenges the democratic consolidation of the Republic. A persuasive argument can be made that a built-in systemic flaw made collapse "almost impossible to avoid," and the same logic that provides support for a system's level approach to the analysis of the Soviet collapse suggests that it is applicable to the analysis of Russian democratic consolidation for the same reason.

There are analysts who disagree with a system level approach, such as Grey who concluded "the demise of the Soviet Union can be attributed in large part to mobilized anti-state collective action on the part of national groups, and yet the focus of many scholars has not been on citizen action, but rather on the weakness of the internal core of the union."<sup>249</sup> Although Saivetz and Grey share the general conclusion that ethno-nationalism contributed significantly to the collapse, they do not see the issue as a system structure failure, and do not see the weakness of the 'core of the union' as a critical ingredient. The focus on collective action that Grey suggests will not explain why, for example, the Khrushchev era did not facilitate an earlier post-Stalin release of the interethnic tensions or national group collective action, especially after the tactics of the Stalin era had been openly derided.<sup>250</sup> Khrushchev initiated what he called the "Back to Lenin's Path" program to address the 'nationality problem' that continued to plague the

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<sup>249</sup> Grey, 1997, p.198.

<sup>250</sup> The most recognizable example of this was Khrushchev's speech before the Party Congress in which he completely discredited the Stalin era and Stalin himself. It brings into question the idea of why the separation pressures did not blow open then?

Union by instituting initiatives which were intended to relieve the tensions among and between ethno-nationals. “The program promoted the idea of a Soviet national identity – the formation of the Soviet nation-state (sovetskaya natsionalnaya gosudarstvennost) and the supra-ethnic Soviet people (sovetskii narod),”<sup>251</sup> and was to accomplish this through the relaxation of many Kremlin centered command and control policies as well as the promotion of a less ‘Russian’ and more ethnically inclusive focus of inclusion. In the immediate post-Stalin years the personal relations that held the subject districts of the Union together were at their strongest, and the potential for the integration of all of the people and places into a federal union was at its peak. For ten years Khrushchev had attempted to build on this strength at the center in order to establish a stronger union of political units, and failed. The transition of the Soviet system from Bolshevism through Stalinism to reforms by Khrushchev, retrenchment by Brezhnev and finally, collapse under Gorbachev, is the chronicle of a failed attempt at statecraft and modernization as much as it is a story of the first experiment with state sponsored communism. Over the seventy-five years of Soviet rule, the system was able to accommodate changes in the people in leadership and survive the inefficiency of centrally commanded economic policies, but accommodation is not maturation, and the system never matured into a unity beyond its initial formation characteristics, and in the end could not withstand the pressures of reform. The national group based collective action that emerged when the Union dissolved and ASSRs, SSRs, okrugs, krais and even oblasts demanded either independence or sovereignty, it was evident that the mechanisms for such elite ethno-

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<sup>251</sup> Brudny, 1998, p.43

national actions had been lurking in the shadows for decades, and we have every reason to believe that they are still in force today.

Perhaps the most salient characteristic at the core of the failed Soviet experiment was described by Blaney's observation, "Most fundamentally, Soviet leaders failed in economic reform efforts because their economy was designed and constructed as an instrument of political control."<sup>252</sup> If both the Soviet economy and the Soviet districting system were established as political instruments, and political and economic reform contributed to the break up of the Union, why would we think that the districting system that formed the base of that system triangle is compatible as a basis for the formation and consolidation of the Russian Republic? If the Soviet political system was discarded along with the Soviet command economy, why expect the Soviet administrative districting system (that was established to support the discarded political economy) to be successfully implemented in a system it was not structured to facilitate? A conclusion of this and several other studies is that the Soviet system failed because the ethno-national districting system was incompatible with a command and control political economy, but I go further to suggest that it is also a poor fit with the political economy of a free market federal democracy.

Berliner explains that Gorbachev introduced glasnost because, "the people had to be told the harsh facts of Soviet life and history before they could understand and then support his program."<sup>253</sup> If this is true, the Soviet people didn't know how bad things had been, nor how bad they were at the time reforms were being initiated, thus the collapse

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<sup>252</sup> Blaney, 1995, p.8

<sup>253</sup> Berliner, in Millar and Wolchik, 1997, p.384

cannot be explained by pent up ethno-national tensions, unless we are to believe that the tensions existed but lacked an explanation. As a result of my own research into the matter, I am inclined to conclude that issues related to nationalism did significantly contribute to the collapse, and I also believe that they were issues that the people did not need to be told about. I generally concur with Balzer who concluded that the breakup of the Former Soviet Union (FSU) into 15 independent states was a consequence of “Soviet nationalities policy gone awry,”<sup>254</sup> with one exception, the statement “gone awry”. The suggestion that Soviet nationalities policy had ‘gone awry’ implies that in its inception, or prior to its implementation or before it was corrupted, Soviet nationalities policy was sound. The nationalities policy of the Soviets cannot be separated from the districting structure, and both the policy and the supporting structure failed to unify the Soviet state by a failed plan, not by having ‘gone awry’. The structure we see today in the Russian Federation is the culmination of a very mixed, shifting and often conflicting nationalities policy established by Stalin. From the time that he determined that the districts of the state were to be a collection of “crystallized units,”<sup>255</sup> the stage was set to support Blaney’s conclusion that the demise of the Union could not have been avoided. Stalin’s death signaled that the relaxation of the iron grip of the Kremlin over all aspects of Soviet life had begun, and that loss of totalitarian control culminated in “state dissolution that was a function of the eroding importance of the center as the primary area of decision and of its displacement by lower-level political arenas.”<sup>256</sup> It was not so much ethno-national

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<sup>254</sup> Balzer, 1997, p.56

<sup>255</sup> See earlier discussion from Franklin, 1973, pp.79-80.

<sup>256</sup> Leff, 1999, p.227

pressures in the regions that broke them free from the Union, it was the fact that all along it had been the local regimes that had actually done the governing, not the center, and the unmasking of the hollow core at the center brought the 'legitimate' governments out of the shadows to rule in the light of day.

**Summary:**

The legacies from the Soviet era are many. Mason has concluded a shared general legacy which effects all of the post-Soviet states is the fact, "most people in the post-communist states still have a basically egalitarian and statist orientation that works against the laissez-faire and decentralizing reforms being implemented in the region."<sup>257</sup> More specific to Russia is the legacy described by Vihavainen: "What the Soviet Union left behind in the east is a patchwork of nationalities who are not united, even in theory, into one Soviet people either by force of common work or common class interest. Instead their national identities are developing and differentiation is growing, which may entail that they are learning to hate each other."<sup>258</sup> This nationalities problem can be traced to Stalin's 'divide and conquer' policy of intentionally districting regions in order to achieve ethno-national tensions. Gorbachev's liberalizing reforms may have released the final bonds that had held the Union together, but a resurgence of traditional ethnic hatreds is a potential threat to the national unification of the Russian Republic. Although ethno-national tensions are generally traced to traditional antagonisms that go back centuries, the fact that they remain unresolved is largely a legacy from the Soviet era's attempt to establish a sense of national self identity in the ethnic territories, and then

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<sup>257</sup> Mason, 1995, p.393.

<sup>258</sup> Vihavainen, 2000, p.92

followed with contradicting policies that denied and even punished the existence of ethno-national identities.<sup>259</sup> It is ironic that the Union was envisioned as a political system that would cease to exist when state borders and national identities had “melted away”, and yet, “the very idea of an Azeri, Tadjik, Kerghiz, Kazakh, Bashkir or even Tatar national identity was created by the Bolsheviks,”<sup>260</sup> and the conflicts between these ethnic groups became ‘national’ rather than ‘communal’ thanks to Soviet nationality policy.

It is evident from the example of the post-Soviet Chechen rebellion in Russia that ethno-nationalism is an issue which has yet to find a solution, but is the solution to be found in the recycling of Soviet era nationalities policies and districting segmentations? If the Soviet nation crafters were unable to build a Soviet national identity, and failed as well at attempting to establish the dominance of the Russian national culture and language in the many ethnic territories of the Union, what has the new Federal Republic done differently? How can Russian political crafters learn from the errors of the past and how can they build a state populated by a majority-multi-minority mix of citizens? How can Russia ignore the fact that at the time of the dissolution of the Union, according to Savetz, no less than 25 million ethnic Russians were living outside the borders of Russia?<sup>261</sup> With 25 million ethnic Russians outside, and a mix of about 30 million non-Slavic ethnies inside the borders of the Russian Republic it is evident that the remaining vestiges of the integration and internationalization policies of the Soviet era will continue

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<sup>259</sup> Balzer has discussed at length the contradiction in that: “Nationalism was both repressed and stimulated historically by Soviet policies.” (Balzer, 1997, p.56)

<sup>260</sup> Vihavainen, 2000, p.94

<sup>261</sup> See Saivetz in Fischer, 1996, p. 266.



to exacerbate the problem of Russian national inclusion for the foreseeable future. Although the Soviet Union applied the same principles of organization to the districting of all of the Union SSRs and ASSRs, Sakwa points out that it was only in Russia that “ethnofederalism provided two very different constituent elements: First, the Soviet institution of the republics based on a titular nationality (or group of nationalities in the case of Dagestan, Kabardino-Balkariya and others) and based on specific territory; and second, regions based on territory alone.”<sup>262</sup> With so many ‘Russians’ living in other former Soviet Republics, it is of note that only Russia has chosen to solve its majority-minority problem through the implementation of a federal political system. After studying the patterns of Soviet leadership hierarchy, Gill and Pitty determined that “what the summaries of successive leadership periods show is that at no time in the post-Stalin era were policies which might have led to the strengthening of infrastructural power at the expense of despotic power consciously or consistently applied.”<sup>263</sup> This conclusion cannot be ignored. Any pattern of policy implementation that strengthened despotism in and among the districts at the expense of infrastructure must be considered for the implications it brings to the form and function of the democratic federal republic and the potential for the reinforcement of a new era of despotism.

This chapter has demonstrated that the segmentation of the Soviet era Russian SSR resulted in institutionalized recognition of concentrated pockets of national and regional power, and the adoption of that districting institution by the current federal system crafters has brought that problem to the new state system. Sakwa sees the roots of

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<sup>262</sup> Sakwa, 2002, p.4

<sup>263</sup> Gill and Pitty, 1997, p.180

the problem of Russian unity, which he defines as “a historical factor promoting segmentation,” as “the weakness of autonomous rational bureaucratic administration and civic associations in the regions themselves, a factor stemming from both the tsarist and Soviet past.”<sup>264</sup> The implications of this segmenting characteristic is that history will repeat itself, and the regions will once again suffer political fragmentation because of the inherent weaknesses structured into the political administrations and the institutional regimes related to a civic society.<sup>265</sup> It was Gitelman who made the observation, “Like the U.S., the USSR was established to serve and promote a political idea - not to be a state for a nation.”<sup>266</sup> The fact that the Union fell apart and has dissolved into the abyss of history would suggest that the political idea has suffered the same fate. That is not the case. Public opinion polls indicate that the majority of the people of the former Soviet republics regret the fragmentation of the Soviet state, and maintain an expectation that the social contracts of the Soviet era are to be fulfilled, and a longing for the prestige that citizenship in the Soviet superpower provided. The Soviet Union may be gone, but many of the ideas, institutions and expectations from that era remain vibrant and influential today.

This chapter has outlined the events surrounding the rise of the Soviet Union from the ashes of the Imperial era in order to bring into focus the impact legacies from both of

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<sup>264</sup> Sakwa, 2002, p.4

<sup>265</sup> The fragmentation problem may not be as divisive as it had been thought. In her 1999 essay Lapidus notes the conclusion of Beissinger (1998) that in the reform process “the past few years have been characterized by a notable degree of ethnic and political demobilization across the entire region of the former Soviet Union”. I would suggest, as shown in the Stalin districting policies, ‘ethnic de-mobilization’ had occurred long before the founding of the Russian Federation. (Lapidus, 1999,p.76)

<sup>266</sup> Gitelman, 1983, p.2

the past empire periods have had on the crafting of the modern Russian Republic. Because many analysts have identified Russia as the successor state to the Soviet Union, it is important that this study proceeds following the advice of Vihavainen and “assess the import of the Soviet era from the point of view of the post-Soviet reality.”<sup>267</sup> This chapter has established some salient examples of what the Soviet reality was and how it impacted on the Soviet Russian Republic. The analysis of the establishment and consolidation of the democratic Russian Federation affords an opportunity to identify the legacies of importance from the Imperial and Soviet eras that have had (and continue to have) on the development and consolidation of the Russian Republic. It is important to be skeptical of any analyses that claims a relationship between contemporary issues of state crafting and legacies from the Soviet and pre-Soviet eras but do not objectively demonstrate that connection. By focusing on some selected objective conditions of Russia’s post-Soviet reality, indications of the strength (or weakness) of the current political state structures can emerge that are useful in explicating the core problems facing Russian democratic consolidation and demonstrate how the import of legacies from the Soviet era is most relevant.

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<sup>267</sup> Vihavainen, 2000, 91

## **Chapter Four:**

### **THE FORMATION OF THE POST-SOVIET RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE POLITICAL CRAFTING OF REGIONALLY REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS, 1991-1998**

There are few who would argue against the assertion that the introduction of glasnost (openness) and perestroika (economic restructuring) were reforms that opened a ‘Pandora’s box’ of change which altered the course of Russian history. An additional course of reform embarked upon by Gorbachev, the youthful and progressive (and last) General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), was of the federal organizing system, in particular, of the Union Treaty of 1922.<sup>268</sup> He chose to bring openness and restructuring to the organizing regime of the state because he (correctly) recognized that the Union-wide system of centrally determined regional policy administration and implementation was corrupt and inefficient (due in large measure to the previously outlined Brezhnev regime), and that the problems that plagued both Soviet society and the political economy could not be solved unless the constituent parts of the Union worked together and in good faith to implement the necessary reforms and initiatives.<sup>269</sup> Gorbachev began renegotiating the terms of the Union Treaty in order to provide a new basis for regime legitimacy, and to negotiate incentives for the regions to concede authority to (and cooperate with) the central government. During the (unprecedented) open discussions and debates of the terms of the new treaty, Gorbachev found himself under pressure to provide the Russian Republic with what it had been denied throughout the Soviet era . . . leadership and representation regimes equal to those of all of the other Soviet republics (SSRs). To understand why the attempt at the

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<sup>268</sup> This 1922 treaty had been the basis for the ‘official’ relationship of all of the republics throughout the Union. It provided the spatially defined “Republic” regions with unique rights which were denied to other “autonomous” regions of similar size and demographic makeup.

<sup>269</sup> What Gorbachev did not appreciate at the time he was implementing his many reforms was what McFaul points out in hindsight. “[I]t became clear that the Party and not the state was the glue holding the system together.” (McFaul, 2001, p.62)

resolution of this issue initiated a series of events that contributed directly to the breakdown of the Soviet state, and the establishment of the federal republic, it is helpful to briefly outline the administrative history of Russia as an SSR.

### **Russia's Roots:**

From the time of the formation of the Soviet Union there were two major concerns about the Russian Republic that the Bolshevik political crafters faced. First, because 'Russia' had been the dominant Empire system that had subjugated the territories of the newly formed Union for scores of decades (if not centuries), it was determined that it would best serve the promotion of a sense of egalitarian unity among the new Soviet republics to emasculate the Russian bear in such a fashion as to ensure there would not even be the appearance of Russian domination of the region. The second concern was the real threat to the Bolsheviks associated with Russia's potential political power based on economic, military and organizational resources, and the traditional authority patterns from the empire era that the people remained in support of. Due to its sheer size and the strength of Russia's objective legacies from the Imperial era, any powers vested in the SSR would be magnified so that an aggressive provisional secretary (or a group of empowered elites) could challenge the power of the CPSU, the Soviet political regime, the Politburo or the General Secretary and either dominate the entire Union or cause its disintegration. To insure that none of these potential threats could negatively impact the integrity of the transition to and consolidation of the Soviet Union the Russian SSR, unlike other SSRs, was placed directly under the authority of the Supreme Soviet, the Party hierarchy and the General Secretary. It is no coincidence that the fears of the Bolsheviks proved true when Russia was granted the same privileges as the other SSRs

and Yeltsin, the newly elected president, stood against the 1991 coup attempt, outlawed the CPSU, declared Russian independence and led the call for other SSRs and ASSRs to do the same, a series of events that resulted in the disintegration of the Union through what has been dubbed the “parade of sovereignties.”<sup>270</sup> It was recognized early on by Stalin and the Bolshevik political crafters that a powerful political subunit within the state system could one day challenge the integrity of that system, and it was a lesson learned by Yeltsin and passed on to his successor as well. It seems that only Gorbachev did not understand that the balance of power in the Soviet Union centered on the fact that Russia was the ‘keystone’ republic that kept the structure from collapse, and if the keystone is removed, the Union falls apart.

Gorbachev was confident of his reform process because he believed, “the federation needed to be perfected, not transformed into a confederation,”<sup>271</sup> and was under the delusion that the declaration of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Party congress in 1961 which claimed the Soviet state was “a state of the entire people, an organ expressing the interests and will of the people as a whole”<sup>272</sup> was true in spirit if not in fact. Gorbachev became aware that his legitimacy as a leader was an issue that compounded his problems related to the implementation of his many reform initiatives.<sup>273</sup> Gorbachev had thought that if

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<sup>270</sup> A span of thirty three months from 1989–1991 was a period of transition when forty-one subject units of the Soviet Union declared themselves to be sovereign states. This has become known as the “parade of sovereignties”. Kahn, 2000, p.58

<sup>271</sup> Hough, 1997, p.378

<sup>272</sup> Zlatopolsky, 1961, p.28

<sup>273</sup> According to Colton, it was the combination of reform initiatives and elections that set the stage for the Soviet collapse. “Multi-candidate elections more than any other

he instituted regional elections to the Supreme Soviet which for the first time were truly competitive, his election to the Presidency of the Soviet Union by this newly formed Congress would provide him with the necessary legitimacy of his political authority.<sup>274</sup> What became evident in the 1991 election of Yeltsin as the first popularly chosen president of any kind in Soviet history was that the stamp of approval received by Gorbachev from the Soviet congress had little legitimizing effect when compared to that provided by Yeltsin's electoral mandate. In short order Yeltsin used his new-found powers to declare Russia a sovereign republic, and used as his basis for this declaration the terms of the Union Treaty that stipulated the Soviet Union must be comprised of a *voluntary* union of *sovereign* republics. Yeltsin was able to accomplish the remarkable feat of successfully challenging Gorbachev's powers of the office of General Secretary by his private and personal assurances that, after the renegotiation of the Union Treaty was complete and Russia had achieved sovereignty, he would use his wealth of political capital to promote the Treaty, the integrity of the Soviet Union and Gorbachev's legitimacy as President. Once again, Gorbachev did not appreciate the disruption to the delicate balance of power which his acquiescence to Yeltsin's terms would cause, but a small group of his inner circle at the Politburo did. In order to block the final negotiation and implementation of the new Union Treaty that would provide the Russian Republic with an overwhelming power base in the state, the cadre of 'hard line' party advocates

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innovation let perestroika get out of hand and brought on the subversion and ruination, not the rejuvenation, of the Soviet system. (Colton, 2000, p.3)

<sup>274</sup> The importance of the decision to 'manage' the first election cycle has been summarized by Zielinski's observation, "the early rounds of electoral competition [are] the founding moments when political actors determine which cleavages to depoliticize and which to establish as the permanent axes of political competition." (Zielinski, 2002, p.185)



within the Gorbachev administration attempted to seize power in the coup of August 1991, and failed. The chain of events that followed the failed coup have been well documented and will not be described here, but suffice it to say they insured the irreparable disintegration of the Union and the establishment of an independent Russian (federal) Republic.<sup>275</sup> Brudny succinctly wrote a description of the Soviet finale:

“On August 23, 1991, two days after the collapse of the coup attempt Yeltsin suspended the activities of the CPSU and the RCP [Russian Communist Party] on the territory of the Russian Federation. On November 6 Yeltsin issued a decree permanently banning both parties. On December 12, the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Republic voted 188 – 6 to ratify the Belovezh Forest Accords, which put an end to the existence of the USSR. At midnight on December 31, 1991, the Soviet Flag was lowered from the flagpole of the Kremlin.”<sup>276</sup>

#### **Federal Formation:**

A significant contagion effect of the Union Treaty renegotiations that began with the Russian Republic was an “ethnic revival” throughout the Union.<sup>277</sup> The attempt by Gorbachev to establish manageability in the administration of the federal union through the renegotiation of rights associated with sovereignty did not form the basis for a renewed commitment to the voluntary association, but instead rekindled resentments over ethnic boundary delineations in the federal structure. These tensions became a source of “separatist activism” when glasnost provided the opportunity for a new emphasis in the

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<sup>275</sup> The discussion of these events should be viewed in the context discussed in Chapter Two, and suggested by Brown., who made the case that “the transition from communism took place while the Soviet Union was still in existence. Far too often, the breakup of the Soviet union and the transformation of the communist system are conflated.” (Brown, 2000, p.35)

<sup>276</sup> Brudny, 1998, p.257

<sup>277</sup> See the article by that title (“Russia’s Ethnic Revival”) and the related topic outlined thoroughly by Triesman (1997).

ethno-national territories on traditional “self identifications.”<sup>278</sup> Other republic leaders followed on the heels of Yeltsin’s successful challenge of Soviet authority,<sup>279</sup> and after the Union disintegrated, this wave of declarations of independence and sovereignty threatened the integrity of the Russian republic as well. In order to hold the Republic together, Yeltsin was forced to make promises related to sovereignty and autonomy to the leadership of all of the autonomous ethnic republics (ASSRs), most of the autonomous regions (okrugs) and some of the nonethnic administrative districts (oblasts) that were located within the borders of the newly independent Russian state. Although Yeltsin gave assurances that they too would receive an unprecedented degree of independence in regional policy actions, and that all of the political subunits of the Republic would be treated fairly, openly and equally, he soon began the process of bilateral bargaining in order to establish Kremlin political dominance through his own version of ‘divide and conquer’. Between the summer of 1991 and Yeltsin’s 1993 dissolution of the (legitimately elected) Russian Congress -through the use of artillery shells- Yeltsin continued the pattern of betrayal he began with his broken assurances to Gorbachev. He imposed limits on the powers of the regional leaders who had expected the formation of a confederated system of sovereign republics, but instead got a Federation Treaty that was to be abrogated by a Constitution that provided the federal president personal discretionary power through statutory ambiguity.

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<sup>278</sup> Triesman, 1997, pp. 213-16

<sup>279</sup> Although Yeltsin is given the credit for initiating the flood of declarations of secession that brought an end to the Soviet Union, in fact it was in September of 1991 that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania declared independence and began the actual Union break-up. The Russian Federation initially declared “sovereignty within the USSR”, not independence.

The new Federation Treaty was announced as a necessary replacement for the Union Treaty that had been mooted by the Union collapse, and regional relations were now to be renegotiated with the new (and all-powerful) Russian President. Yeltsin claimed that Russia should not be required to honor the terms of a treaty that had been worked out with the (now) defunct Soviet government, and was able to use his newfound political power and popular legitimacy to deny in practice the sovereignty claims of the ethno-national subject units. With few voices raised in protest, and even fewer obstacles of substance, in a matter of months Yeltsin was able to subjugate all of the Russian territories under Kremlin governance,<sup>280</sup> to justify a brutal and bloody dissolution of the legitimately elected Russian legislature, to seize control of all the major mass media outlets, to implement a corrupt privatization process and to consolidate his hold on the regions of the Republic through bilateral deals and coercion.<sup>281</sup> In spite of the true nature of Yeltsin's personalistic state building methods, there are those who have put Russian transition and consolidation in the best light possible. An example of this is Smith's comparison of the Russian process of federalization with that of Spain. He states:

Developments in Russia demonstrate that federalization may involve a post constitutional process of reaching important agreements as much as it may on an original compact. Thus, as in Spain, expanding constituent governance has continued as part of

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<sup>280</sup> Except for the Chechen-Ingush and Tatar Republics. A bilateral agreement in 1994 brought Tatarstan under Kremlin authority, and Ingushtia was separated from Chechnya and brought into the federation peacefully. Chechnya remains the only ethnic territory in open rebellion to inclusion in the Russian state.

<sup>281</sup> The nature of Yeltsin's post 1993 relations with regional leaders was summarized by Warhola: "Once the parliamentary leadership—even the parliament as a body itself—had been eliminated as a political obstacle, the stratum of regional political chiefs came to represent the main threat to Yeltsin's vision of state formation." (Warhola, 1996, p.100)

an ongoing, fluctuating process in which an asymmetric federal construction has gradually unfolded, although in Russia the process has been less planned or systematically thought through than in Spain's transition to an *estado de las autonomias* (a state made up of autonomies).<sup>282</sup>

Smith does not account for the extent to which the power of the presidency in Russia has trumped all other constitutional and extra-constitutional statutes and agreements when it has been in the interests of the Kremlin to do so.

While Gorbachev and his inner circle struggled to reform the corrupt and oppressive Soviet system, seventy percent of the Soviet electorate voted in a 1991 referendum to retain the Soviet Union intact. The persistence of this sentiment favorable to the Soviet Union was verified when a 1997 study that found that “only 20 percent of Russians surveyed thought the breakup of the Soviet Union had been useful, or more useful than harmful.”<sup>283</sup> It seems it was necessary for Gorbachev to convince the Soviet people how bad things were, and he failed at this task as well, as it is evident that the Russian people wanted the Soviet Union saved then, and apparently would like to see it restored even now. In spite of the evidence of a broad based popular support for the continued existence of the Union, the collapse occurred with hardly a voice of protest to be heard from the Soviet mass public. The response of the people to the political clashes of 1991 through 1993 is reminiscent of the 1918 through 1922 period that witnessed the dissolution of the Imperial Empire and the establishment of the “nine fraternal

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<sup>282</sup> Smith, 1999, p.140

<sup>283</sup> Hough, 1997, p.399

republics”<sup>284</sup> that made up the newly formed USSR.<sup>285</sup> Although civil strife, demonstrations and street riots occurred in 1917 and contributed to the abdication decision of the Tsar, when the Bolsheviks successfully forced out the provisional government after losing in the founding elections to the Constituent Assembly, the mass public was silent. After they had succeeded in nullifying the election results, the Bolsheviks went on to transform the entire region (politically, economically, and spatially) to suit their vision of the new regime with almost no public voice raised in defense of the long heralded democratic reforms and long desired political independence of many. It says something about the Russian people that there were no significant protests, nor any mass show of indignation outside of the city limits over the events that eventually resulted in the “stealing of the state”<sup>286</sup> in 1918, 1991, or 1993.

#### **National Unity:**

Many of the objective conditions most commonly associated with the breakup of the Soviet Union, summarized by Alexseev (1999) as “the triumph of nations that escaped a prison house of nations,” continue to exist today in the Russian Federation.<sup>287</sup> As the discussion above has indicated, the rejection of the ideology of Marxist/Leninism and the political and cultural dogma that it represented did not provide the catalyst for system disintegration, and even the failures of the Soviet economy had not created a

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<sup>284</sup> Zlatopolsky, 1961, p.36

<sup>285</sup> See appendix

<sup>286</sup> Steven Solnick published a book of this title in 1998, (*Stealing the State: Control and Collapse in Soviet Institutions*) which presents the case that the institutions of the Soviet State had been co-opted by the career nomanklatura, and thus ceased to function as supporting state institutions which led directly to the downfall of the Union.

<sup>287</sup> Alexseev, 1999.

crisis that threatened the integrity of the Soviet Union itself, and so the explanation for the rapid collapse remains one of some debate. Hanson describes the nationalist coalition that merged to bring down the Soviet system as one of “ethnic anti-Russians and civic anti-Soviets,”<sup>288</sup> and suggests that the main reason the Russian Federation has managed to hold together for the past decade is due to the “loss of a common anti-Soviet secessionist unity.”<sup>289</sup> In short, although the Soviet Union had failed at the task of establishing legitimate and competent institutions in support of a viable political and economic system, had not managed to consolidate a federal system for the unification of the republics and regions, and had failed to ideologically unite the population under a shared Soviet ethos, we are to believe that due to the absence of a unified challenge, the Russian federation will overcome these same problems that brought down the Soviet empire. I think not.

It is unsatisfactory to accept the conclusion suggested by Hanson that the critical condition leading to the collapse was a “common anti-Soviet secessionist unity” among the “subjects of the federation” because there is no evidence of regional ‘secessionist unity before, during or after the disintegration of the state. Even if Hanson’s claim were proved true, it would be foolhardy to pin the hopes for the successful consolidation of any democratic federation on the fact that no binding force for secessionist unity poses a threat to the republic. A stable regime is not the result of the lack of challengers, but rather, it results from the strength to meet and overcome such challenges. It is a system either in decay or in its infancy that survives only because it is not challenged. Does the

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<sup>288</sup> Hanson, 1999, conference address.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid.

Russian Federation owe the credit for its existence to the simple fact that it is not the Soviet Union?

As the fingerprints of Stalin and the Soviet party-state eventually fade, and free market democrats establish a new and modern Russia, what remains of the Soviet era that demands our attention, and makes Russian political change a worthy case study, are the ethno-national subject districts. If the general outlines of the explanations for the Soviet collapse presented thus far are at all accurate, the survival of the Russian Federation until now is remarkable. So many of the objective conditions said to have contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union are evident in Russia today (such as the failing economic institutions, ineffective political institutions, often ignored and contradicted Constitution and Treaty provisions and the lack of national unity based on a shared ethos) that their persistence suggests one of two conclusions. Either the analyses have been wrong to point to these objective conditions as culprits in the collapse of the Soviet system, or the Russian state will limp along like its Soviet predecessor for seven or eight decades, and then come apart in response to the reform efforts of some progressive leader who envisions a modern regime.

Because it was “necessary to adapt the institutional wreckage of empire to survive the challenges of social transformation in the scramble for security in anarchy,”<sup>290</sup> the Russian Federal Republic looks very much the same as the Russian SSR. Among all of the forms, norms and practices that have survived the Soviet era, the form of the districting regime is one of the most objectively definable structures that remains, and the analysis of this institutional holdover (and the related norms and practices) offers a

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<sup>290</sup> Snyder 1998, p. 7



wealth of insight into the struggles for consolidation faced by the Russian Republic. Of note is the fact that in his efforts to reform the Soviet regime, Gorbachev attempted to shift the power base of the Party system away from the patron-client relations centered in the list system of advancement for Kremlin nomenklatura towards an elected, representative, performance-based and accountable, process of governing. Two significant problems can be traced to this reasoning of Gorbachev; first, as previously discussed, he left himself out of the legitimizing process of direct elections, and second, the fact that he provided legitimacy to the regional leaders by instituting a competitive election process in which they all would participate in.<sup>291</sup> By instituting this new means of securing elite positions of wealth and power, Gorbachev had unwittingly “created new opposition elites and enraged and empowered entrenched republican elites.”<sup>292</sup> As party ideologues sought to secure their hard won successes within the disintegrating power structure of the CPSU system, the regional elites (freed from dependence on the one party system) saw personal opportunity in the extension of sovereignty to the regions over which they had secured a strong personal and democratically legitimate power base.<sup>293</sup> After the collapse it became evident that one of the most significant Soviet structures to come under attack was the administrative system of state organization, and yet perhaps

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<sup>291</sup> Yeltsin learned from this error and denied the regions the right to elect governors for several years. Through the appointment process he attempted to establish a leadership network of loyalists who he thought would be more likely to be popularly elected as incumbents.

<sup>292</sup> Motyl, 1999, p.179

<sup>293</sup> “The leaders of Russia’s 21 republics followed Yeltsin’s own example and were able to legitimize their standing through popular election as early as 1991, usually to the newly created post of president.” (Slider, in White, Pravda and Gitelman, 2001, p.149) (Thus Russia is often called the country with 22 presidents.)



one of the most significant Soviet era legacies chosen to influence Russia's reforms was the decision to form the new federation around that same Stalin era districting system. The result of that decision was "these arbitrary lines became state borders, and the scene was set for endless conflicts,"<sup>294</sup> with the conflicts ranging from armed rebellion and terrorism (such as in the case of Chechnya), to administrative and economic opposition by the regional districts to federal policies and regulation.<sup>295</sup>

A prediction that has dogged the Republic from the time it gained independence is that it too will disintegrate along national or ethnic fractures just as its Soviet predecessor had. As in the Soviet era, the regions have adopted the pattern of deflecting blame for failed policy initiatives and regional hardships and shortages on the Kremlin -the traditional scapegoat for the blame for all local problems. This deflection game works to the advantage of the Kremlin regime because the current conditions of the subunit economies and the disappointments experienced by the regional populations means that disintegration of the Russian Federation is unlikely. This is the case because there is little or no incentive for the regional elites to demand the separation that would make them solely responsible for the hardships and disappointments experienced by the people. As a result the regional elites have incentives to remain in the federal system, and do not have a cause to incite a mass public surge of separatist emotion that might lead to a calamity

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<sup>294</sup> Ibid., p.341

<sup>295</sup> There are many examples of these oppositional patterns of regional conflict in the form of noncompliance. The demonitization of the national economy (see OECD Survey, 2000) has resulted in the emergence of the "Virtual Economy" (see Gaddy and Ickes, 1998) as well selected reports which chronicle the tax collection process as a "culture of noncompliance" (IMF, 1999) and the identification of the federal government's greatest crisis as "the persistent failure to bring fiscal problems under control." (IMF 2000)

such as that exemplified by the horrors of the Chechen rebellion.<sup>296</sup> In short, Stalin's program of denationalizing the administrative districts (and establishing titular leadership) has its payoff today in the fact that most 'national' populations throughout the Russian Republic remain dispersed or leaderless or both,<sup>297</sup> and the pragmatists that hold regional power are far from being demagogues who depend on the rhetoric of nationalism. I suggest that the chief threat to Russia's consolidation process is not that it will be thwarted by the breakup of the Federation due to ethnic tensions, but rather that there will continue to be an incomplete consolidation of a modern state system, with the finger of blame pointing from the regions to the center, and back again.

#### **Federation as the Safe Choice:**

It is important to note that Yeltsin and the Russian state crafters did not adopt the Soviet districting system with little or no consideration of the consequences, but made a deliberate decision to do so in spite of recommendations to reconstitute the regional districts. There were two general redistricting recommendations, both of which were based on the idea of a symmetric union, and both were rejected by the Yeltsin administration. All indications are that Yeltsin and his close advisors decided to maintain the 89 federal districts, consisting of a mix of five disparate unit types, because of concerns that if the recommendation to establish a union of a smaller number of larger

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<sup>296</sup> Sakwa (1993, 179- 80) points out that "[T]he majority of Russia's republics lack a clear demographic basis to aspirations for independence, and, to date, a trigger for disintegration has been lacking in Russia." Treisman's 1997 essay "Russia's Ethnic Revival" develops a separatist scoring procedure of from 0 (no threat) to 11 (great threat) which indicates that, of the 32 ethnically defined subject units, five regions score above 5, only one scores a 10 (Tatarstan) and only Chechnya an 11.

<sup>297</sup> Kahn concludes "Ethnic composition as a possible factor in the speed with which republics declared sovereignty is not a very strong explanatory variable." (2000, p.63)

regions (based on the model of the krai unit type) was adopted, a regional power center could emerge and counter the authority of the federal government.<sup>298</sup> The alternative recommendation was to adopt a plan that reconfigured the districts into a system of a large number of smaller units (based on the model of the oblast unit type).<sup>299</sup> Although this plan also called for a reduction in the number of units from the Soviet subdivision of 89, this too was considered an unsatisfactory plan because simply the crafting of such a structure could pose a destabilizing threat to the central federal system. The creation of a (relatively) large number of smaller regions would be seen as a particular challenge to the ethno-republics who would be required to alter their boundaries and perhaps allow the placement of members of their ethnic group within a region controlled by a traditional enemy. The further reduction or increase in regional unit size could also result in the majority-minority balance of power altered in favor of one group at the expense of another simply due to boundary. The unmanageability of the task of imposing the reconfiguration of the sub-federal political units into a symmetric grouping was daunting, no matter what plan was considered, and for there to be success in the implementation of either of the recommended plans, time, negotiations and compromise would be required. The regional elite had managed to position themselves for the assumption of power in the new political system that emerged from Soviet disintegration, and they have not had

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<sup>298</sup> Kirkow (1998) provides support for the proposition that fewer and larger would be a threat and Hanson provides a concurring analysis. "The Center feared that a smaller number of larger provinces could exert stronger power against Moscow and even enforce separation from the Russian Federation." (Hanson, 1994 p.2)

<sup>299</sup> This comes from the rejection of the recommendation by a Parliamentary commission in 1990 that 50 or so non-ethnic-based constituent units similar to the German Lander be established and the Russian oblasts be transformed into republics. This is outlined in Smith, 1999, p. 140.

sufficient incentives to mobilize their populations against the federal government to date, but it was clear to Yeltsin in the founding months and years of the Republic, that a challenge to the territorial integrity of a regional power was a risk not worth the benefits of symmetry. In the end Yeltsin and his advisors chose to make very few modifications to the Soviet era districting system,<sup>300</sup> opting instead to avoid the conflict and confrontation that would surely accompany any attempt to alter the status quo, and relying on the self-interests of regional leaders for the stability of the federal union.<sup>301</sup> The short-term solution insured that Stalin's 'divide and conquer' regional structure would continue to exist, but the long-term problems of segmentation and asymmetry continue to retard the consolidation of a democratic union.

Yeltsin repeated the error of Gorbachev by providing legitimacy to the authority and power of local leadership regimes and individuals while the central government lagged behind in both power and authority.<sup>302</sup> Saivetz pointed out that Gorbachev did not

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<sup>300</sup> Because the SSRs (Soviet Socialist Republics), were a peripheral administrative district that, in most cases, had a prehistory of independence and bordered an adjacent state or SSR, and the ASSRs (Soviet Autonomous Republics) were effectively 'land locked' within the territory of the Soviet Union, the Republics in the Russian Federation are typically former ASSRs, although some are former okrugs and oblasts. The symmetry is supposedly to be found in the constitutional status of all of the 89 regions, but in practice, asymmetry can be readily identified in the structure, objective conditions and in the treaty status of these disparate unit types.

<sup>301</sup> One explanation for the lack of real political reform in the early post-Soviet period was presented by McFaul. "Rather than focus on political reform, Yeltsin and his new government used their political mandate to initiate economic transformation. Eager to avoid what they perceived as Gorbachev's mistake of putting politics before economics, Yeltsin's team concentrated their energies on dismantling the Soviet command economy and creating a new Russian market system." (McFaul, 1999, p.111)

<sup>302</sup> "Though Yeltsin was creating a new administrative structure separate from the soviets, he left in place the regional soviets that had been elected in 1990." (Slider, in White, Pravda and Gitelman, 2001, p.149)

realize that glasnost would “release the nationality genie from the Soviet bottle,”<sup>303</sup> and it would seem that Yeltsin did not realize that he was empowering that ‘genie.’ This did not prove to be cataclysmic for Yeltsin because, unlike Gorbachev who wanted to accomplish the reforms that would result in a stronger union, Yeltsin’s plans were much more pragmatic. He intended to first establish his own base of personal power by achieving the independence of the Russian state. Then he set about the task of consolidating his power through treaties, constitutions, charters and elections. And finally he negotiated bilateral deals between himself and a few of his regional counterparts in order to preserve the integrity of his power base in the state during the process of transition to a ‘free’ market economy. Yeltsin’s short-term success is demonstrated by the fact that his ‘deals’ have paid off and the Russian state continues to hold together, but his failure is evident in the long-term consequence that Russia’s stalled transition shows little sign of maturing into a unilateral process of the democratic consolidation of political and economic regimes.

Along the way of adopting the asymmetric districting structure, the federalists also managed to establish contradictory statutory rights, responsibilities, requirements and guarantees among the many regional subtypes. As Yeltsin did his best to insure that a few regions or territories would not have the individual or collective power to challenge the political makeup of the federal state, he also initiated electoral reforms that he believed would insure that no regional faction could dominate the federal legislature. The results of that planning decision have also contributed to the stalled transition of Russian reform, as the political party system continues to struggle to find a national base

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<sup>303</sup> Saivetz in Fischer, 1996, p. 259

of stability and unification.<sup>304</sup> The only political party that has consistently maintained a base of support throughout the state, and has been an effective competitor in each of the election cycles, has been the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF).

Russia emerged from the Soviet era with a set of challenges that are much different than those faced by other former Soviet Republics, and the paths of transition have shared few of the same process-related characteristics. In fact, the post-Soviet transitions have shared so little in common that Nodia concluded, “differences among post-Soviet countries are almost as big as those among any other sample of states in the world [as defined as free, partly free, not free].”<sup>305</sup> Nodia came to this conclusion as a result of an analysis that established objective measures (in this case, of relative freedom), and thus could provide a more useful sense of how these new regimes differed. This is an important issue to the analysis of Russian statecrafting because “to scholars of the influential constructivist or institutionalist school, who try to explain political realities through elite led institutional arrangements, this [existence of differences] is abnormal.”<sup>306</sup> Pertaining to the issue of the regime for districting the ethno-national regions, Rogers Brubaker concluded, “how Soviet policies that institutionalized

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<sup>304</sup> “Political parties were weakly represented in most of the new regional assemblies; according to data from the Central Electoral Commission, fewer than 14 percent of deputies were affiliated with a political party at the time of their election.” (Slider, 2001 p.150) (Based on outcomes from the elections of 1993 and 1995.)

<sup>305</sup> Nodia, 2002, p.201

<sup>306</sup> Ibid. This idea of ‘institutionalist’ studies is described by Thelen and Steinmo: “historical institutionalism represents an attempt to illuminate how political struggles ‘are mediated by the institutional setting in which [they] take place’. In general, historical institutionalists work with a definition of institutions that includes both formal organizations and informal rules and procedures that structure conduct.” (Steinmo, Thelen and Longstreth, 1992, p.2)

nationality on both the territorial and the personal levels and helped to foster nationalism and the eventual breakup of the USSR cannot begin to explain why the emergent countries differ so widely from one another in various ways, including their respective manifestations of nationalism.”<sup>307</sup> The problem, in brief, is; how do we explain why all post-Soviet states are different in such objective measures as degrees of ‘freedom’, as well as in the political form that is the goal of transition, when these differences cannot be explained by the fact that they shared decades of subjugation under an ethno-national districting system? A conclusion suggested by these observations on post-Soviet transitions is that the ethno-national issues faced by the Russian Republic are traced not to the administrative institutions of the Soviet era, but rather to the ethno-national institutions of the Imperial era that were exacerbated by Stalin’s ‘divide and conquer’ boundary placement policy. As the successor state to both the Imperial and Soviet empire systems, it is not surprising that Russia would experience transition and consolidation problems related to the inclusion of ethno-national minority groups within the boundaries of the state. The issue that remains in debate is the extent to which these ethno-national related issues threaten the stability and consolidation of the Russian federation, and that topic will be analyzed in the chapter to follow.

### **The Post-Soviet Path:**

Because other former Soviet client states and Union republics are faced with varying degrees of the same issues surrounding the process of state building, democratization and economic reform,<sup>308</sup> the process underway in Russia does not make

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<sup>307</sup> Brubaker in Nodia, 2002, p.201



it a unique case of special interest. Russia may not face the challenges that have characterized the reform efforts of other post-authoritarian regimes,<sup>309</sup> but that also does not separate Russia from other post-Soviet transition processes, but rather, it is the fact that it has been Russia alone that has adopted the Soviet era federal districting system into a post-Soviet federal regime. Although Brubaker has concluded that institutionalized ethno-nationalism cannot explain the differences, perhaps the districting system of Russia is different enough in ways other than ethno-nationalism to justify its inclusion on a list of legacies that influence post-Soviet reform. It is important to remember that although the ‘national problem’ was one of the rationales for the formation of the Union under the particulars of the Soviet districting dogma, it was not the sole reason for this system form and function. The economic interests of the state were equally compelling, and this system was intended to facilitate command and control of the means, modes and outputs of Soviet industrial production, and that aspect of the districting regime is shared by all former Soviet republics.

An additional characteristic that differentiates Russia from other instances of post-Soviet reform was alluded to earlier and elaborated on by Rywkin who made note of the

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<sup>308</sup> The description of the three aspects of post-Soviet reform shared by all of the independent former SSRs is clearly described by Shevtsova, 2002, p.241.

<sup>309</sup> Terry has described the “five ways in which the challenges confronting post-communist countries differ from those faced by their earlier post-authoritarian counterparts.”:

- 1) “dual-track nature of the present transition”.(state and democracy)
- 2) “most earlier transitions took place in countries at a lower level of socioeconomic and industrial development.”
- 3) “previous transitions have not as a rule involved the same degree of ethnic complexity as those now under way.”
- 4) “the question of the alleged ‘resilience’ of civil society in the former.”
- 5) “the potential influence of the international environment on the outcomes of the post-communist transitions.” (Terry, 1993, pp.333-36)



fact that even during the Soviet era, “the Russian Empire [was] the only one still in existence, [with] all other European powers having lost their colonial possessions in the twentieth century.”<sup>310</sup> The proposition that can be deduced from Rywkin’s observation is that because the current Russian Republic maintains a hold on colonial possessions from both of the preceding ‘empires’, it continues to manifest characteristics that conjure up images of, in the least, a pseudo empire. An important question regarding Russia’s identification as a newly constituted form of an old Empire is addressed by Smith who has concluded, “until the late 1980s, the Soviet federation served in effect as a means of managing a multiethnic empire, but it was not a form of internal colonialism or, as officially claimed, a federation of equal sovereign states. Rather, relations between Moscow and the borderland Union republics resembled what I have called elsewhere a form of *federal colonialism*.”<sup>311</sup> (emphasis added) For Rywkin, the fact that Russia maintained the internal territorial holdings that had once been prikaz of the empire meant that it remained an empire, in other words - ‘If it looks like a duck, it is a duck.’ Smith, on the other hand concluded that the need to manage an ethno-national state that had once been an empire required a form of ethno-federal colonialism, or - ‘If it looks like a duck, but it is not a duck, then it is duck-like.’ The perspective of this analysis, related to the question of empire status, is one that maintains a focus on objective conditions, and assumes that the Soviets attempted (and the democrats continue), a process of modernization that, as described by Eisenstadt, should result in a system that has the following six objective characteristics:

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<sup>310</sup> Rywkin, 1988, p.xi

<sup>311</sup> Smith, 1999, p. 34

- 1) Greater differentiation of political activities and the development of the division of powers
- 2) Distribution of political rights such as a system of voting
- 3) Active participation by various groups
- 4) Extensive development of specifically political and administrative organizations or political party organizations
- 5) Weakened traditions of hereditary patterns of legitimacy of rulers
- 6) The institutionalization of competition<sup>312</sup>

If in the final analysis it can be shown that Russia now exhibits evidence of all six of these characteristics of a modern state, then it will no longer be a duck (an empire), or even duck-like (empire-like). Although on the strength of the institutions that have emerged in Russia the basic criteria for the fulfillment of the six conditions of modernity are evident in the post-Soviet reforms to date, but it is not enough to claim that Russia no longer has the institutional trappings of an empire. It is also necessary to demonstrate that in both institutional structure and in policy practice (in forms and norms) that Russia no longer rules over some colonial holdings from a former empire.<sup>313</sup>

The process of state building includes the establishment of a sense of 'nation', and Brudny has provided an excellent summary of the three principle components of nationalist ideology. First is the definition of who is a member of the 'nation,' an inclusion that is territorially defined (what Brudny calls "civic territorial") and is equated

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<sup>312</sup> Eisenstadt, 1963, p.24

<sup>313</sup> The depth to which modernizing reforms have permeated into the fabric of Russian political forms and functions remains a matter of some debate, and thus the 'imperial' character if the Russian state remains a constant side note of interest in this analysis.

with the concept of 'citizenship'. The second component is also based on territory, and "excludes regions where other nations constitute a majority or the borders can be drawn to accommodate an imperial conception of the nation, thus including regions populated by other nationalities,"<sup>314</sup> and the third principle lays out the criteria that describes the political, social economic and cultural "arrangements best suited to the nation."<sup>315</sup> This final component is made up of the variables that determine if the state is to be configured as an imperial or non-imperial system, (or as a democracy or an authoritarian regime) that is liberal or conservative and dominated by the radical left or the radical right. Russia has a mix of these three components, with citizenship both a territorially and an ethno-nationally determined status that results in ethnic Russian Slavs considered as members of the nation even when living in other former Soviet republics, and ethno-national minorities identified as Russian citizens based principally on the unhappy circumstance of birthplace (such as Chechnya). As a result of the mix of the first two conditions, the state is a hybrid of the defining characteristics of the third component. The powers vested in the Russian presidency make his office capable of exercising decree edicts similar to those issued by an imperial patriarch, yet democratic institutions have emerged which have, so far, precluded the establishment of an authoritarian regime.<sup>316</sup> Because the political party system remains a mass of organizations and clubs that most typically vie regionally for representation and influence at the federal level rather than seeking

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<sup>314</sup> Brudny, 1998, p.226

<sup>315</sup> Ibid.

<sup>316</sup> This is made more significant when the warning of Roeder is considered. Early in the transition process he believed, "the prospects for authoritarianism—and specifically of vanguardism and bureaucratic reciprocal accountability—appear very strong within the former Soviet Union." (Roeder, 1993, p.250)

national power through a coordinated merger, the dominance of a conservative ideology and the marginalization of radicalism is assured.<sup>317</sup> A nation forms in one of two ways, according to Brudny, primordially, over time and through group ties, heritage, race, religion and blood, or instrumentally, most typically the result of elite manipulations.<sup>318</sup> Once again we find that Russia has experienced both methods of state formation, with a long history of blood and culture that supports the primordial attachments that are used to justify the instrumentalist structuring of the state.

A federal state is to include six quite specific dimensions, according to Nathan and Hoffman,<sup>319</sup> with loyalty, based on the historical/cultural dimension, the first requisite. Authority results from the political/constitutional (second) dimension and revenues come from the (third) fiscal dimension with the functional competency that is derived from the (fourth) programmatic dimension. The final two dimensions are related directly to the regional governments, with the fifth a measure of regional representation and participation in the central government, and the sixth and final dimension that of the

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<sup>317</sup> The problems associated with the types of issues which are the basis for the formation of many Russian parties is clarified in Schattschneider's observation, "all forms of political organization have a bias in favor of the exploitation of some kinds of conflict and the suppression of others because organization is the mobilization of bias. Some issues are organized into politics while others are organized out." (Schattschneider, 1959, p.71)

<sup>318</sup> Primordial formation typically results in a weak democracy and civil and political institutions, with variations in Russia that include a Soviet political culture once removed that becomes the national culture because the Soviet collapse required the existence of an alternative to Soviet nationalism.

Instrumentalist results in a national identity that is or has been fluid and changing with nationalism resulting from the elite manipulation of identities to gain and or preserve power. The variations as they exist in Russia result in institutional nationalism as a 'social marker' and national identity as a rational choice with nationalism as a tool for elites. For more details see Brudny, 1998, pp.3-5.

<sup>319</sup> Nathan and Hoffman, 1996, pp.2-3

effectiveness of the regional governments' ability to supervise local authorities and governments.<sup>320</sup> These dimensions, if structured and implemented correctly, will insure that the aims of a federal system are accomplished. "It is necessary that a federal system reconcile between unity and diversity, protect against abuses and arbitrariness by the central government, enhance participation by citizens in the political process within and between various organs of government, increase the policymaking and administrative efficiency of government through regional competition, and finally, stimulate innovative socioeconomic, scientific-technological and cultural-educational policies by regional governments."<sup>321</sup> The Russian federal system crafters have instituted an organizing system and a constitution that consolidates diversity at the expense of unity, provides decree powers that insure abuses by the federal government, is the basis for a political party system and legislative election process that assures that a substantial portion of the party-based vote will be discarded in national elections and left the extent of competition in regional selection and election processes to the surviving Soviet era nomenklatura who have an interest in maintaining little more than the appearance of competitive elections. Finally, the core of Soviet elites who moved in and took control of the state enterprises of value during the privatization process (leaving the wasteful and obsolete enterprises for private citizens to buy or for the state to operate) have established monopolies that all but eliminate the socioeconomic pricing incentives usually associated with a free market.

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<sup>320</sup> Sawyer (1969, pp.1-2) developed a list of six general principles of a federal government, and are worth noting due to the support they lend to the importance of certain characteristic components of a federal system. The principles outlined in Sawyer provide support for the importance of the list structured by Nathan and Hoffman.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid., p. 4

Much more than the implementation of the political and civic institutions of federalism are needed for Russia to complete a successful consolidation to democracy.

A consolidated federation will have “three levels”, according to Sawyer, “the regions, the center and the total state” (gesamtstaat).<sup>322</sup> It is more accurate to describe the Russian Federation as having three segments, not three levels, and these segments are subdivided into multiple levels. The federal government at the center is dominated by a ‘presidential vertical’ of authority that was instituted by Yeltsin, but also includes a legislature that is fractionalized, a judiciary with little enforcement powers and a bureaucracy that is in many ways a holdover from the previous regimes. Eighty-nine subject governments that are dispersed among five region types of mixed character represent the regional segment, and as a consequence of the central and regional segmenting, the ‘total state’ is a political federation that is best characterized as little more than a container that holds the many parts.<sup>323</sup> In a federal system, according to Tsalik, “there are five main dangers associated with the decentralization of government power. It may entrench or create authoritarian enclaves, permit intolerance of certain minorities, exacerbate geographical inequalities, foster redundancy and inefficiency, and stimulate ethnic and nationality consciousness.”<sup>324</sup> Russia has intensified all five of these ‘dangers’ by procedurally legitimizing the status of many powerful leaders in their regional enclaves and by structuring the federal Republic with the co-opted Soviet system that was specifically intended to encourage intolerance, exacerbate inequalities, foster

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<sup>322</sup> Ibid., p.119

<sup>323</sup> The Russian case is “a distinctive type of segmented regionalism [that] emerged, whereby Russia in effect had ninety governments” according to Sakwa. (2002, p.1)

<sup>324</sup> Tsalik, 1999, p.133

inefficiency and entrench ethno-national consciousness. One might conclude the Russian state planners were determined to violate all of the rules on Tsalik's list!

In the early years of transition, it was observed that power had devolved from the central government so significantly that the capacity of that government to regain power enough to exercise real authority over the regions was in question. Goble provided the best analysis of this loss of Kremlin control when he observed that, "decay of central control over the regions is not the same thing as decentralization and federalization".<sup>325</sup> In spite of the fact the Kremlin wielded only a fraction of the power that it once did, and the Red Army had shown itself to be indecisive in actions against Soviet citizens and performed below expectations in Chechnya, the territories of the Russian state continued to behave in a restrained manner in the push for autonomy and separation. Kahn points out that in almost all cases of declarative statements issued by regional regimes, "these were, quite explicitly, declarations of sovereignty – not independence – and thus should be assessed in that considerably different light."<sup>326</sup> Kahn clarifies the importance of the intent of these declarations, "A declaration of sovereignty is an act of defiance. It is the public announcement by a subordinate government of the fact or intention that its relationship to the once-higher authority has been or is about to be deliberately and unilaterally changed."<sup>327</sup> The collective message to Moscow could be summarized; 'although the Republic will remain in tact, it will not be business as usual.'

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<sup>325</sup> Goble (in Blaney), 1995, p.165

<sup>326</sup> Kahn, 2000 P.59

<sup>327</sup> Ibid.



The people of the regions had little to do with these declarations, and as a result the process can be interpreted as an example of elite-led power politics.<sup>328</sup> The strategy behind the declarations of sovereignty was not independence or separation or anything of the kind, but rather it appears that the regional elites wanted to demonstrate to Yeltsin and the Kremlin elites that as regional leaders they were capable of demanding more, but they were reasonable men, and willing to accept less. This gesture of limited unity with the Kremlin regime prevented the repeat of the armed intervention that was to occur in Chechnya, and the acceptance by the Kremlin of these declarative statements provided the regional leaders with an enhanced prestige that could be translated into additional localized power, authority and popular support.<sup>329</sup> Kahn concluded, “The ruling elite had very strong motives to take a leading role in declaring sovereignty, summarized the situation. Democratic legitimacy was suddenly conferred on officials who had done little in their careers to earn it; those who decided to remain in government had every motivation to protect their positions in an increasingly uncertain environment.”<sup>330</sup> The choices made by the majority of regional elites in the first weeks and months of the formation of the Russian Republic support Kahn’s conclusion, and adds to our

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<sup>328</sup> “Though every declaration was made ‘in the name of the people’, the role actually played by the electorate was a very passive one. Drafting committees were composed of high-level government elites appointed by the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet [and] referendums played no part in the vast majority of sovereignty drives.” (Kahn, 2000 p.65-68)

<sup>329</sup> The benefits have been so significant that as of 2000, “the majority of the first elected republic leaders remained in power after easily winning re-election.” (See Slider, in White, Pravda and Gitelman, 2001, p.150)

<sup>330</sup> Kahn, 2000, p.65



understanding of why the Chechen rebellion is the exception rather than the rule for the response of ethno-national regions to Yeltsin's example.

In the end it the sovereignty declarations made it necessary for Yeltsin to negotiate with the regional leaders as peers, and thus his willingness to engage in a Treaty arrangement, but his unwillingness to honor the terms of the Gorbachev brokered Union Treaty, is clarified. As time went on and the central government consolidated a hold on power, the Treaty was supplemented by a Constitution ratified by a popular national vote rather than by regional assemblies. This mix of a treaty and a constitution caused Hughes to suggest, "perhaps the state that emerged in post-Soviet Russia was not a real federation at all, despite its label,"<sup>331</sup> and Goble, doubting the veracity of the claim that Russia is structured as a modern federal state, declared, "the Russian federation is not a federation. Calling it one does not make it so."<sup>332</sup> Perhaps the best perspective for the analysis of Russian political statecrafting is provided by Goble's observation that "historically, Russia has been a state-nation rather than a nation state,"<sup>333</sup> and the process that was followed to form the Republic has reinforced that status in both perception and in reality.

#### **Preconditions do Matter:**

With so many different ethno-national groups within the borders of the empire at the time of the demise of the Imperial system, it was a practical necessity to form the Soviet Union of fifteen republics around the 'Russian' core, and the core republic had sixteen ASSRs within its borders. When the Soviet Union collapsed, the consequence of

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<sup>331</sup> Hughes, in White, Pravda, and Gitelman, 2001, p.130

<sup>332</sup> Goble (in Blaney), 1995, p.164

<sup>333</sup> Ibid.

the Soviet national policy was the increase in the number of ethno-nationally designated political units of republic status to such a point that the Russian Federation was formed around twenty one 'nations' (republics), ten 'national districts' (okrugs) and one national region (oblast); a total of thirty two 'national' polities.<sup>334</sup> The fact that the Federation Treaty<sup>335</sup> of March 1992 was signed by eighty six of the eighty nine "subjects of the federation"<sup>336</sup> speaks to the success of Stalin's territorial plan as a statecrafting districting tool, and its utter failure as a method of establishing subunits of different objective conditions representing different relations to the central government. In spite of the fact that thirty two national groups are represented by the subject unit that bears their name, all eighty nine subject units or districts were provided sovereign like status by the 'federal' government so that they qualified as signatures of the new Treaty. It is remarkable that with only thirty two subunits qualified as 'national' representatives, a mix of 54 oblasts, krajs and federal cities, had achieved a status and a leverage against the

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<sup>334</sup> When the USSR was formed, the RSFSR contained sixteen ASSRs; Georgia contained three (Abkhaziya, Azariya, and South Ossetiya), Azerbaijan one (Nakhichevan), and Uzbekistan one (Karakalpak). As the Union disintegrated and the federal republic formed, the autonomous oblasti of Adygeya, Gorno-Altay, Karachayevo-Cherkessiya, and Khakassiya successfully declared themselves to be republics, and the Chechen-Ingush Republic split into two republics. Thus, the total number of republics in Russia today is twenty-one. (See Kahn, 2000, FN#3, p.59)

<sup>335</sup>, The signing of three federal treaties on 31 March 1992 became known as the 'Federation Treaty of March 1992.' Those who refused to sign were Tatarstan Chechnya and Ingushetiya, and the resolution required three different versions of the treaty. The pattern established in this process led to special agreement with Tatarstan of Feb. 1994, (Kirkow, 1998 p.2), which resulted in a successive "Parade of Bilateral Treaties" between Yeltsin and many of the regions for several years to come. (Kahn, 2000, p.83)

<sup>336</sup> This is the accepted descriptive term for all 89 regions and federal cities of the Republic. See Kirkow, 1998, p.2

federal center that made them equal negotiating partners.<sup>337</sup> Because these non-ethnic administrative districts were inventions of Stalin and were established as a means to achieve the Soviet ideological goal of a borderless proletarian state, the fact that they took on the characteristics of their ethno-national brethren is a cruel twist of fate for the Marxist-Leninist planners. It would seem that the lesson here is to beware of the dangers of the attractions of nationalism which have consistently trumped those of ideology. The reason eighty eight of eighty nine subunits eventually signed the Federation Treaty is because it “provided for joint jurisdiction over education, environmental protection and conservation, health care and natural resources, while recognizing certain areas as the sole prerogative of the subjects.”<sup>338</sup> The distribution of such a significant amount of discretionary authority to the regions makes a strong case that the union was established under terms more strongly associated with a confederal system than those of a federation.

#### **Patterns of Confederalism:**

A pattern of federal relations through the negotiation of bilateral treaty agreements followed the special negotiations that Moscow carried out with the Republic of Tatarstan in order to get its signature on the Federation Treaty. In fact, the earlier statement describing the Soviet disintegration and the Russian transition period as “the

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<sup>337</sup> In spite of the proposal of Russia’s Supreme Soviet in 1992 that a distinction be drawn between the ethno-republics and the regions, with the autonomy of the latter more restricted than that of the former, the regions were allowed to adopt charters, while the republics had a right to their own constitutions. “Although initially envisaged as a stop gap measure, this system, which was clearly designed to appease the more bellicose ethno-republics, formed the basis of the Federal Treaty and the constitution.” It has attracted considerable opposition from the regions, which see it as “creating two classes of citizens: those residing in the federation (the ethno-republics) and those who have to abide by the rules of a unitary state (the regions)”. See Smith (1999, p.140) for the full discussion.

<sup>338</sup> Sakwa, 2002, p.4

parade of sovereignties,”<sup>339</sup> is complimented by the definition of the period beginning in 1994 as the “parade of bilateral treaties”.<sup>340</sup> According to Kahn, these successive ‘parades’ have contributed “a serious effect on the conceptual development of Russian federalism”<sup>341</sup> because, although a federal system will invariably have asymmetry of some objective conditions, its strength and unity lies in the fact that it guarantees the symmetry of governmental interrelations. In order to gain commitments to inclusion in the Republic from eighty eight of the eighty nine subunits it was necessary to renegotiate three versions of the Federation Treaty, and in order to maintain that commitment it became necessary to negotiate several bilateral treaties with individual subunits as well. This pattern of events tells us two things about the Russian political process. First, it was essential for the success of state formation that the Russian presidency have strong powers vested in the office in order to carry out these necessary negotiations, and second, the power of the Russian presidency seems to have no bounds.

The successful negotiations of the three versions of the Federation Treaty are a testament not only to the extent of presidential power, but to the effective use of that presidential power as well. Hughes describes the power of the office of the Russian president and its application as “the presidential personalization of power, so widely viewed as destabilizing in transition, was central to the establishment of a rapport with the executives in the republics and regions. In this way Yeltsin’s presidential patrimonialism eased the negotiating process on the treaties. To the great extent it

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<sup>339</sup> The period 1988 –1991 is considered the era of the “parade of sovereignties” as well as the “War of Laws” (See Juviler, 1997)

<sup>340</sup> Kahn, 2000, p.83

<sup>341</sup> Ibid.

replicated the traditional patrimonialism of the Soviet nomenklatura system with which almost all of these leaders felt most comfortable.”<sup>342</sup> It may be that these powers of presidential patrimonialism did much more than assure the success of the many treaty negotiations that formed the basis of the federal Republic, it may well provide a key component to the explanation of why the Russian Federation did not, and has not, followed the path of Soviet disintegration. Although Hughes describes a total of four critical ingredients that combine to explain the survival of the Russian state, the fourth and final ingredient may have been the most critical to success, “Yeltsin’s management of federal relations was inextricably linked with the nature of his presidential ‘system’, which rested more on his charismatic authority than constitutional provision. Yeltsin’s presidentialism reflected his preference for the soft institutional constraints of informal patrimonial networks, and this was fully evident in the new executive patrimonial federalism that developed from early 1994 based on the bilateral treaties.”<sup>343</sup> It may be a

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<sup>342</sup> Hughes, in White, Pravda, Gitelman, 2001, p.135

<sup>343</sup> The full explanation described by Hughes is as follows: “There are four main explanations as to why the disintegration of Russia did not occur in the 1990s. First, there were structural *limiting conditions* against the emergence of ethnic separatism. Secondly, there was a process of experimentation with the whole federal *institutional design* in 1991-3 in an attempt to manage the demands for greater autonomy while the thornier issues of separatism that were most serious in two republics, Tatarstan and Chechnya, were continually postponed. Thirdly, from late 1993 the experimentation changed as the Yeltsin administration focused on a more selective federal institutional design to manage the demands from the most powerful recalcitrant republics and regions. A hierarchical framework of *bilateral power-sharing treaties* between the federal government and republics and regions was developed. Fourthly, Yeltsin’s management of federal relations was inextricably linked with the nature of his presidential ‘system’, which rested more on his charismatic authority than constitutional provision. Yeltsin’s presidentialism reflected his preference for the soft institutional constraints of informal patrimonial networks, and this was fully evident in the new executive *patrimonial federalism* that developed from early 1994 based on the bilateral treaties.” (emphasis added). Hughes, in White, Pravda and Gitelman, 2001, p.130-31.

credit to the powers of the Russian presidency that the Treaty was successfully negotiated and the Republic was established, but it is equally true that superpresidentialism in Russia has resulted in a “command and administer democracy.”<sup>344</sup>

Remington describes “the strong presidential system created in the 1993 Russian constitution [that] combines features of a separation-of powers system with a parliamentary/prime ministerial system [that is] exceptional in the broad legislative powers granted to him [that include the] right to propose legislation and amendments, veto laws passed by parliament [and includes] constitutional decree authority as well.”<sup>345</sup> The most troubling consequence of the vested decree powers of the presidency is the fact that “instead of actual checks and balances, a diarchy or dual system of power resulted.”<sup>346</sup> The lack of institutionally based checks and balances on the office of president is a threat to democratic consolidation, but the possibilities for subversion of democratic consolidation is even more pronounced when that institutional void is put in context with the lack of a motivated mass public. Mason explains that the shared ability of post-communist states to accomplish successful transitions was because “there was a kind of ‘silent majority’ in the post-communist countries of people who were not committed to the reforms but would not speak out or vote against them, thus allowing the reformist governments to pursue the difficult transitional policies without substantial opposition.”<sup>347</sup> Although the people of Russia shared with the people of their post-

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<sup>344</sup> Fish, 1995, p.330

<sup>345</sup> Remington et al., 1998, p.287

<sup>346</sup> Shevtsosa, 2001, p.37

<sup>347</sup> Mason, 1995, p.401

communist brethren republics the pattern of mass silence in the transition process, they departed from the shared experience with the key pre-condition for the successful establishment of a democratic state. According to Rustow, “national unity is listed as a background condition in the sense that it must precede all other phases of democratization, [and] the background condition is best fulfilled when national unity is accepted unthinkingly, is silently taken for granted.”<sup>348</sup> National unity in the cause of democracy can provide the collective voice that breaks the post-Soviet silence and places a check on the power of the Russian presidency, but to date that ‘nation’ has not found its voice. Institutional weakness and the silence of the mass public have laid the foundations for the expansion of the powers of the presidential vertical, and thus pose a threat to the future survival of Russian democracy. Evidence of the consolidation of the powers of the presidency are evident from the analysis of objective policy doctrines that have been proposed and implemented in Russia’s regions. It is indicated by the evidence that the most effective check on the power of the Russian president to date has come from the autonomy of policy implementation powers in the regions.

Shin justifies the need for the Federation Treaty in the case of Russia because “the emergence and survival of fragile or embattled democracies in ethnically or ideologically polarized societies requires bargains among all major political forces, including antidemocrats.”<sup>349</sup> This justification of the treaty is because it assures regime survival, but in Shin’s own words, “the particular mode of transition experienced by a given new

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<sup>348</sup> Rustow, 1970, pp.351

<sup>349</sup> Shin, 1994, p.168



democracy may prove to be a critical factor in determining its future,<sup>350</sup> which means that the Russian Federation has much to overcome from its emergence paradigm. It is important to clarify that it is not the mere fact of the process and implementation of the Federation Treaty which is of critical importance, but rather it is the fact outlined by Kitschelt that “the transition should be engineered through negotiated agreements (pacts) that focus on rules of decision making, rather than outcomes.”<sup>351</sup> The negotiation process that had resulted in the Treaty was abandoned by the federal regime when the Russian Constitution was crafted and submitted for ratification. The duality of a treaty-constitution based federation as it has occurred in Russia has consistently created a need for negotiations that result in bilateral agreements between the executive branch and a regional government, and federal policy implementations that have resulted from a form of regional ‘collective bargaining’.<sup>352</sup>

### **The Superpresident and the Legislature:**

A cost to Russia of adopting a strong paternalistic presidency and a regional bargaining system for the negotiation of pacts and treaties has been the failure of an effective political party system to emerge.<sup>353</sup> The role that a strong party system fills in a federal democracy is that of interest group advocacy and organized popular participation,

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<sup>350</sup> Ibid., p.167

<sup>351</sup> Kitschelt, 1992, p.1032

<sup>352</sup> Support for this can be found in the analysis of Hanson (1994, p.4). He makes a comparison of the Federation Council to a “political stock exchange.”

<sup>353</sup> Yeltsin feared that parties would provide a mechanism to formulate an alternative political program and to organize opposition to himself and his personal power base. “His determination to destroy the embryonic party system illustrates another of the obstacles to the creation of a solid party system.” (Hough, 1998, p.104)



but as long as elite strongholds, described by Kitschelt as “an autonomous state apparatus,”<sup>354</sup> are the dominant influence on policy decisions, then the long-term survival of the Russian Democratic Federation must remain in question.<sup>355</sup> The system of representation to the federal legislature, the Federation Council and the Duma, was promoted as the best means to assure the development of a viable political party system as the basis for selection, election and fair representation. To date this system has been a dismal failure at achieving all three of these goals.

The mixed electoral system of the Russian Federation has borrowed characteristics from the Westminster parliamentary model, the French dual executive, and the German Federal Lander political democracies.<sup>356</sup> The powerful Executive branch is composed of the president, who is popularly elected in a national election which requires the winning candidate to achieve at least fifty percent of the popular vote (a requirement which necessitated Yeltsin to compete in a second round vote), and the prime minister, who is appointed by the president and serves at the ‘pleasure of the president’. There is no requirement that the prime minister be selected from the legislative branch, nor any provisions that allows input from the polity or the legislature in any way in this selection process. The norm in most parliamentary systems, that the prime minister represents the majority party (or majority coalition) of the elected legislature, was rejected by the

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<sup>354</sup> The “large autonomous state apparatus (the nomenklatura) within weak civil societies does not bode well for democracy.” (Kitschelt, 1992, p.1031)

<sup>355</sup> This conclusion is based on Przeworski’s observation that “democracies are less likely to survive when they combine presidentialism with a fragmented party system”. (Przeworski, 1996, p.46)

<sup>356</sup> As noted by Stepan (2000, p.137) only Russia and Germany share the distinction of “the historical experience of being the only modern federation that had a totalitarian period.”

political crafters of the Russian Federation who opted for a mixed presidential/parliamentary system at the expense of a meaningful check on presidential appointment powers. If in fact there is opposition to the ratification of a selected prime minister, the president has the power to dissolve the legislature and call for new elections.<sup>357</sup> Thus, the Russian president is given extraordinary discretion and faces little oversight in the selection of a coexecutive and the cabinet ministers that make up the remainder of the Executive branch.<sup>358</sup>

In order to mitigate the check on his power that the regional governments represented, Yeltsin found it to his advantage to appoint the regional chief executives for most of the oblasts, okrugs and krajs. Because, as Slider points out, “the leaders of Russia’s 21 republics followed Yeltsin’s own example and were able to legitimize their standing through popular election as early as 1991, usually to the newly created post of president,”<sup>359</sup> the republics alone were safe from direct intervention through presidential appointments. The policy of appointment was brought on by the wave of democratic contests for regional leadership offices in 1993, when seven gubernatorial elections were held in subject units that did not have Republic status. The appointment process was imposed as an electoral injunction that lasted for two years, until December of 1995 when Yeltsin allowed elections for governor “on a case-by-case basis”.<sup>360</sup> Regional

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<sup>357</sup> The limits of the legislature in this process are evident in the fact that, if the legislature refuses to endorse the Presidents selection after a second round affirmation vote, the president has the authority to dissolve the parliament and begin anew.

<sup>358</sup> It became clear in 1999 that the powers of the presidency also include the right to select a successor, as witnessed by the appointment of Putin to the Presidency.

<sup>359</sup> Slider, in White, Pravda and Gitelman, 2001, p.149

governorships were placed before an electorate in such a haphazard way that little interregional continuity of political party representation could possibly have been achieved. The list of seven regional governors elected in 1993 increased to twelve in 1995 as elections were held with Yeltsin's personal approval, and finally in late 1996 as part of the national election cycle for the Russian presidency, Yeltsin allowed the regional electoral process to be implemented for the fifty-two remaining regions of the federation that had yet to elect a chief executive.

A final note regarding the interference of the Russian president in regional representation in the federal government is the significance of the events of 1993 when Yeltsin dissolved (by force) the sitting post-Soviet Russian Congress. Hanson has made it clear that "the elections of March of 1990 provided the provinces with representative bodies with a democratic mandate,"<sup>361</sup> and Yeltsin made it clear in 1993 that the power of the Russian Chief Executive would not be compromised by the collective will of a legislative body comprised of regional representatives. It is no surprise that in the post-1993 'artillery barrage' era the citizens of the regions did not embrace the political party system promoted by the Kremlin, nor do they put much faith in the efficacy of the election of representative to the federal congress.

The legislature, (the Federal Assembly), was established as a bicameral body, with an upper house, (the Federation Council) made up of 178 members, 2 from each of the 89 regional subunits. Both of these federal subunit Council representatives are usually selected from the highest levels of the regional government, but none are directly

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<sup>360</sup> Ibid., p.151

<sup>361</sup> Hanson, 1998, conference address

elected to a seat on the Council. In all of the regions the Council member is elected (or appointed) to a political position in the regional government, and is then consequently appointed as the regional representative to the Council.<sup>362</sup> The lower house of the Assembly is the Duma, and is made up of 450 members elected in a mixed system of party list proportional representation to determine 225 (one half) of the members, and a system of constituency based direct elections (first past the post) of the remaining 225 single member district seats. The requirements for a candidate to qualify for inclusion on the party list ballot is daunting, and purposefully so. In crafting the process for seating members of the Duma, it was the stated goal of the political crafters that the implementation of a party list proportional representation system would encourage the development of cross-national political parties, discourage the emergence of a plethora of small fractional parties and prevent the establishment of one or two dominant parties.<sup>363</sup> In order to be included on the party list ballot, it is required that a party submit a petition of no less than 100,000 signatures of voters from different regions with no more than 15% of the signatures from any one region.<sup>364</sup> If a party meets this challenge, they then must receive at least 5% of the total national party list vote in order to be awarded a seat in the Duma, a system procedure that has had significant consequences for the Russian

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<sup>362</sup> It has only been since the 1996 presidential election that regional leaders began to be elected (rather than appointed), and thus “legitimacy of the federation Council was established beginning in 1997, [which has] resulted in the rise of a regional elite beholden to the electorate rather than to the will of the president” See the East West Institute Survey of 1997.

<sup>363</sup> Putin has proposed changes to this system of qualification and selection, but it is the regime that was in place for all federal election cycles to date.

<sup>364</sup> See White, Rose and McAllister 1997, and Clem and Craumer 1993 and 1995 for detailed information.

democratization process.<sup>365</sup> The consistent pattern that has resulted from the three election cycles that have employed this system of selection and election has been the contestation on the party list ballot of scores of political parties, resulting in a select few that overcome the five percent threshold and rendering the majority of party list votes to the waste bin. The combination of the excessive powers of the Presidency with the dual role of Council members and the failure of the mixed Duma election process to spawn the development of a viable party system insures that regional representation in the federal government remains strongly correlated with personal relations. It could be that Russia's success as a federal democracy is a case example of a scenario that was envisioned by Roeder when he noted that in some cases "democracy results not so much from the plans of the far-sighted and principled but from the failure of the self interested and ambitious."<sup>366</sup>

### **Summary:**

The path the formation of the Russian Republic has followed reinforces how important a legacy can be to the process of political change.<sup>367</sup> Berliner concluded that the legacy of Soviet communism in Russia "takes the form of an obstacle to be overcome

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<sup>365</sup> I should point out that due to the ongoing conflict in Chechnya, neither of the two legislative bodies has enjoyed a full complement of seated members since the Russian Federation was founded.

<sup>366</sup> Roeder, 1998, p.227

<sup>367</sup> A legacy is "an enduring intergenerational transfer from the past to the present" (Millar and Wolchik, 1997, p.2) Aslund has concluded that it is the "small and powerful elite (the *nomenklatura*) [that] is one of the main legacies of communism. As the end of the old regime was approaching, the *nomenklatura* split into two groups: unreformed communists, who remained dogmatic, and pragmatists, who wanted to get rich off the transition." (Aslund, 2001, p.43)

rather than an endowment on which to build,<sup>368</sup> and yet opinion polls indicate that it is treated as an endowment by most of the people of post-Soviet Russia.<sup>369</sup> The wave of anti-Soviet and anti-Party sentiment that swept Yeltsin into power and sealed the fate of the Union in 1991 has become eerily calm. The disappointments the free market and federal democracy have wrought on Russia could not have been made more evident than by the actions taken by the Duma in early 1996.

On March 15, 1996, the State Duma, the lower house of the Russian parliament, abrogated the December 12, 1991 decision of its predecessor, the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Republic, to ratify the Belovezh Forest Accords by an

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<sup>368</sup> Berliner, 1997

<sup>369</sup> The obstacle the Soviet legacy poses to the consolidation of the Russian Republic has been thoroughly outlined by Juviler who listed them under five categories:

- 1) The multinational land empire that had been violently reclaimed by the Bolsheviks from the ruins of Czarist Russian Imperialism.

Consequence: The unity of this empire continued to rest on the vitality of the central socialist government.

- 2) Destruction of a developing civil society and nascent democracy, which created a near void of local mediation and adjustment processes.

Consequence: Civil society and democracy are essential for the ultimate resolution of inter-ethnic conflict.

- 3) Ethnic nationals

- a. The official recognition of ethnic identities that it nurtured and certified in obligatory passports and to which it gave territorial expression by naming regions after indigenous groups.
- b. Soviet power succeeded in transforming indigenous populations from amorphous settlements of diverse tribes into distinct larger nationalities.
- c. Ethnic cadres got promoted to local leadership in a process of so called 'korenizatsiia' (rooting)
- d. The general purpose of ethnic policy under Stalin was to produce national cultures 'social in content and national in form'.

- 4) An accumulation of ethnic resentments and separation suppressed under the tight lid of control

- 5) The failure of economic policies at the center – [an] economic 'grand failure' of communism [that] brought on its own decline.

- b. Cities became culturally Russian while hinterlands remained ethnic
- c. Assimilation failed to produce a civic society identity to prevail over other identities." (Juviler, 1997)

overwhelming majority of 250 – 98. In a concurrent decision, it voted 252 – 33 to recognize as legally binding the results of the March 17, 1991 referendum in which 70 percent of the Russian voters supported the preservation of the USSR. These two votes constituted an unambiguous sign that in the five years since the dismantling of the USSR, the Russian political elite strongly supported the restoration of the lost empire.<sup>370</sup>

The next issue to be investigated is the determination of what the objective measures of Russian unity, democracy, political participation and economic integration tell us about Russia's efforts at the consolidation of the democracy just described.

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<sup>370</sup> Brudny, 1998, p.259

**Chapter Five:**

**PATTERNS OF THE DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION OF THE RUSSIAN  
FEDERATION: INDICATIONS OF THE ILLOGIC OF THE ASYMMETRIC  
FEDERAL DISTRICTING SYSTEM,  
1991-1998**



After attempting to uncover any authoritarian elements that may have been retained within the transitional regime, Golosov concluded, “the study of Russian politics is doomed to rely on intuition, partial information, and subjective judgment.”<sup>371</sup> It may be that the analysis of any political regime in the process of transition and consolidation is a challenge that requires a certain amount of informed intuition, but in the case of post-Soviet Russian political change it is certainly the case. A clear understanding of the component parts of what has come to constitute ‘Russia’ must be established in order to guide the selection of some objective variables that can be useful indices of how deeply the process of political change has penetrated throughout the Russian Federation.<sup>372</sup> Ingram may have provided one of the most concise outlines of the Russian nation (Russkaya natsiya) when he explained that it is “a nation which formed around the Great Russian (velikorusskii), Little Russian (malorusskii) and White Russian (belorusskii) ethnoses and included many peoples closely linked with russkaya cultural, spiritual and state traditions. The closeness (almost identity) of the concepts ‘russkii narod’ and ‘ruskaya natsiya’ is a terminological peculiarity which reflects the current stage of nation-

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<sup>371</sup> Golosov, 1999, p.1361

<sup>372</sup> The importance of explicating the context of the perspective of the Russian nation presented in this (or any) analysis was emphasized by Tolz who noted, “five main definitions of the Russian nation are currently put forward in intellectual debates.”

1. Union identity: Russians defined as an imperial people or through their mission to create a supranational state.
2. The Russians as a nation of all eastern Slavs, united by common origin and culture.
3. The Russians as a community of Russian speakers, regardless of their ethnic origin.
4. The Russians defined racially, i.e. blood ties constitute the basis of common identity.
5. A civic Russian (rossiiskaya) nation, whose members are all citizens of the Russian Federation. (Tolz, 1998, pp.995-96)

building in Russia.”<sup>373</sup> By understanding the strong association between the concepts Russian *natsiya* (nation) and *narod* (people), the error of excluding the ideological perspective of a segment of the *narod* of Russia from an objective analysis of Russian transition and consolidation can be avoided.<sup>374</sup>

### **Segmentation and Federal Unity:**

In this analysis of Russian transition and consolidation, the relationship between the central government and the regional subject polities, populations and economic enterprises has been selected as the objective conditions that can help to bring into focus an accurate picture of the Russian case of political change and economic reform. The most important responsibility of the Moscow regime was articulated by Prime Minister Primakov in 1998 when he stated, “the new government must first and foremost pay special attention to preserving Russia as a single state [because] we are facing a serious threat of the disintegration of our country.”<sup>375</sup> Some of the reasons for the concern expressed by the Minister have been described in assessments of Russian transition that have found that many sub-national constitutions directly contradict various articles of the federal constitution (such as issues of sovereignty or who has authority over regional resources), and the conclusion by White et. al. that “the coexistence of a president, prime

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<sup>373</sup> Ingram, 1999. p.688 Also see Chulos and Piiranen, (2000, p.169) for explication of the terms *ruskii* (ethnic) and *rossiskii* (civic) Russians.

<sup>374</sup> For example, McMann and Petrov excluded ethno-territorial Russian regions from their 2000 study of Russia’s level of democracy, and did so because these units were designed as “administrative territorial units for non-Russians that tend to have a smaller proportion of ethnic Russians and have fewer people inhabiting larger areas that are less industrialized, more economically dependent on Moscow and clustered in North Caucasus and east Siberia.” (McMann and Petrov, 2000 p.158)

<sup>375</sup> Alexseev, 1999, p.5

minister and parliament chosen in different ways in different years creates confusion about accountability....and about who has the best claim to democratic legitimacy”<sup>376</sup> as well as the fact that “the center’s ability to enforce its authority and implement its policies is extremely limited and is outpaced in policy efforts by regional governments in a wide variety of policy areas,” according to the research done by Stoner-Weiss.<sup>377</sup> Perhaps one of the greatest threats to the integrity of the Russian republic is the fact that “laws passed in the regions and republics directly contradict those promulgated in Moscow,”<sup>378</sup> a pattern that indicates that the regions have pursued a path of autonomy in the founding stage of the federal Republic, and it would seem, have continued to consolidate that autonomy in the current phase of state formation.

Solnick concluded, “by 1994 Russia had developed into a highly asymmetrical federation, with Moscow engaged in extensive selective bargaining with subjects of the federation, and sharp distinctions between the treatment of ethnic republics and non-ethnic regions,”<sup>379</sup> if he is accurate then the analysis of indications of a shared (or disparate) region to center vision of Russia’s ideological path should confirm this distinction. Matsuzato has made the convincing case that “sub-regional politics has been a driving force for the transition of Russia’s political regime,”<sup>380</sup> and although his focus has been on the rising power of a class of post-communist *caciquism* (local bosses) his

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<sup>376</sup> White et al, 1997, p.xiv

<sup>377</sup> Stoner-Weiss, 1997, p.96

<sup>378</sup> Saivetz in Fischer, 1996, p. 267

<sup>379</sup> See Solnick, 1998, p.67

<sup>380</sup> Matsuzato, 1999, p.1367

determination that the study of regional to center relations is of critical importance to the analysis of Russian reform is compatible with the theme of this study.<sup>381</sup> Although Matsuzato arrived at the conclusion that regional voters are “pragmatic” rather than ideological in the choices they make at the ballot box,<sup>382</sup> the party list Duma election process is of particular relevance to this analysis for several reasons<sup>383</sup>. First, because few countries have a mixed electoral system of proportional and single member district representation, the outcome of Russian legislative election cycles provide a window for understanding how regional party partisanship is reflected in the makeup of the members elected through this mixed political process.<sup>384</sup> A second reason is based on the proposition that the party list outcomes for each regional subject unit indicate the degree of partisan or ideological integration between and among the many regional subject units and the central government, as the selection of a political party from the party list (PL) ballot list, even if that selection is pragmatic, is not a random act but rather a rational

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<sup>381</sup> The regional leaders may not be acting in a mercenary manner towards the perceived (or real) weakness of the federal regime, but rather it could well be that, “In the absence of a federal law, regional executives and legislatures set their own policies autonomously, frequently at odds both with one another and with the goal of a common federal legal system.” (Remington et al., 1998, p. 317)

<sup>382</sup> The importance of this emergent class of elites is described as follows: “The post-communist *caciquism* [local/rural bosses] emerges in regions where the pre-1990 local elite has survived, in which political culture is pragmatic and votes are cast not for programs or ideas but for concrete interests or personal confidence in leaders, and finally, where the regional administration helps local bosses to consolidate their positions.” (Matsuzato, 1999, p.1396)

<sup>383</sup> For clarity, throughout this analysis the concept ‘political party’ is defined as “a team of [individuals] seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election.” (Downs, 1957, p.25)

<sup>384</sup> Thames (2001 pp.1-3) describes the mixed system types as unique to the Ukraine, Russia, Hungary and Japan.

choice worthy of evaluation. Thirdly, the party list election process, intended to provide proportional representation, should provide a measure of the strength of political party permeation into the national political process and, at least in theory, an indication of the ideological or partisan makeup of the Duma, the lower house of the national legislature.<sup>385</sup>

Results from the selection process for members of the upper chamber of the Federal Assembly, the Federation Council, is not a useful measure of regional partisanship or national party development because this legislative body is made up of members evenly distributed from among the regions (two from each), and the election/selection of these members at the region level is not as Council representatives. A Council member is usually an appointed regional representative who may have been elected or selected as an Oblast governor, a Republic president, or a legislative leader, but in no case to date has the regional electorate chosen their representative on the Council through a competitive election process. Because the decree powers of the presidency have often provided the means to appoint a significant number of regional chief executives through 1996, most of the capacity (or will) of the Council body to act independently was significantly mitigated.<sup>386</sup> This policy of member appointments skirts

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<sup>385</sup> “The new mixed electoral system was originally imposed by President El’tsin’s executive decree. The adoption of a mixed system represented a political compromise between those desiring stronger parties and those demanding stronger regional representation. Thus the Russian mixed system attempted to strike a balance between two competing goals: the nationalization of politics and the representation of regional interests.” (Thames, 2001, p.3)

<sup>386</sup> The problems with attempting to develop correlations between the activities of the legislature and the regional polity is described by Shevchenko and Golosov: “The statistical analysis has generally confirmed our hypothesis that Russia’s complex institutional design, combining a mixed separation of power system, president-

both the measures of party partisanship and popular plurality support that the PL (party list) ballot and competitive elections provide in the case of the 450 members of the Duma.

### **Political Process, Outcomes and Information:**

The Duma selection and election process, can be a very rich source of information reflecting the ideological ‘mood’ of the voters, particularly as the results correlate to regional patterns of preferences expressed in the party list vote outcomes.<sup>387</sup> It is only through the election of Duma members from the PL ballot that the Russian people are required to demonstrate a voting preference that can be codified as an expression of partisan support for a political party. The three Duma election cycles that have taken place since 1993 have shown that the Single Member District (SMD) outcomes consistently correlate with strong support for individual candidates rather than any political parties, and thus the casting of a party list vote becomes the best aggregate indicator available of the ideological and political ‘mood’ of the Russian people based on regional outcomes.<sup>388</sup> The party list (PL) results are also the best available means to correlate the partisan outcomes of a particular region, of a specific subject unit type (republic, krai, oblast or okrug), and an objective category of region class based on a

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parliamentarism, with a mixed electoral system in the legislative elections, provides mutually contradicting stimuli for individual legislative action.” (Shevchenko and Golosov, 2001, p.254)

<sup>387</sup> For perspective on the significance of the Duma election patterns, Moser (1997) presents a precise outline of the key problems this representation system presents. “[T]he PR election is not designed to correct the disproportionality of the plurality elections. Rather the two parts of Russia’s electoral system are more like two separate elections occurring simultaneously for the same legislative body.” (p.289)

<sup>388</sup> This is true in spite of the observation made by Fish, that “Russia’s parties are commonly regarded as impotent, personalistic, and undifferentiated.” (Fish, 1995, p.340)

particular objective condition (such as population, economic or ethnic related variables).<sup>389</sup> This analysis combines the outcomes of the PL elections with other objective conditions of asymmetry among the federal subject regimes in order to reasonably measure the party ideology that best correlates to a particular regional outcome, and to test the usefulness and significance of indications of objectively identified classifications of regional symmetry and asymmetry. The purpose of this analysis is to determine if Russian consolidation can be better understood through the assessment of the regional PL election process on the basis of unit type and objective condition classification sets. The relevance of this approach to the process of transition and consolidation which is underway in Russia was stated by Bentley who has determined, “the prospects for democracy are seen as best when individuals have a multiplicity of identities that criss-cross rather than reinforce each other.”<sup>390</sup>

#### **Elections, Political Parties and Partisanship:**

The most successful political parties and political ideologies that emerged from the national party list ballot selections remain the focus throughout this analysis so that the comparison of the outcomes for the three Duma election cycles will remain consistent. The political parties that represented identifiable partisan ideologies and successfully competed in both the 1993 and 1995 Duma elections can be divided into

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<sup>389</sup> Although significant emphasis is placed on the relationship between political efficacy and the party list outcomes in this analysis, the warning of Diamond has not been overlooked. He insisted that analysts be on guard for “the ‘fallacy of electoralism’ [that] consists of privileging electoral contestation over other dimensions of democracy and ignoring the degree to which multiparty elections, even if genuinely competitive, may effectively deny significant sections of the population the opportunity to contest for power or advance and defend their interests, or may leave significant arenas of decision making power beyond the reach or control of elected officials.” (Diamond, 1999, p.22)

<sup>390</sup> Bentley, in Hesli, in Grey, p.190



four categories. First is the neo-Soviet and revisionist Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF), the only party that has successfully competed in all three of the Duma PL election cycles. The pro-regime reformers were represented in 1993 by Russia's Democratic Choice (RDC),<sup>391</sup> but the ebb and flow of policy dynamics and personalities diminished the support for the RDC and as a result, in 1995 Our Home is Russia (OHR) became the party in support of the Kremlin regime.<sup>392</sup> The anti-regime, free market, pro-reform democrats were most significantly identified with the 'centrist' Yabloko Party in 1993, and the anti-regime right wing ultranationalists found a base of support in the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)<sup>393</sup>, a party that in both 1993 and 1995 was strongly associated with the extreme views and the strong personality of Zhirinovskiy, the spokesperson and leader of the ultranationalist movement.<sup>394</sup>

The legislative elections that took place in 1999, after Yeltsin's resignation, continued the ideological categorization pattern from the previous election cycles, but some new parties arrived on the scene. By 1999 both the pro-regime RDC and OHR parties base of support had virtually collapsed and as a result the much stronger pro-regime and pro-Putin Unity Party replaced them. The right wing LDP all but disappeared

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<sup>391</sup> Support for Russia's Choice was based solely on political values and not economic circumstances or social structure according to White (1997, p.145).

<sup>392</sup> It is important to point out that it was very clear in the elections of 1993 and 1995 that the levels of support for the RDC (1993) or the OHR (1995) was considered a referendum on the policies of the federal (Yeltsin) government.

<sup>393</sup> Supporters of Liberal Democratic Party were distinctive in their preference for authoritarian alternatives rather than a government based on free elections. (White, 1997, p.145)

<sup>394</sup> The LDP was the only party that achieved electoral success and was represented by a powerful personality. The remaining party had partisan advocates, but no other had a face and personality associated so strongly with the party and its platform.



in 1999, with the Zhirinovsky Party becoming its replacement as the Russian nationalists choice,<sup>395</sup> and the CPRF remained the representative of the neo-Soviet partisans. A new party and a new partisan choice emerged in 1999 with the founding of the Fatherland-All Russia Party (OVR), the faction that formed to represent the interests of the regions and to facilitate a shift in the form of the Russian state system to more closely resemble a confederal pattern of region-to-center relations. The analytical value of utilizing the plurality results for these selected Russian parties, was summarized by Golosov who wrote, “the hypothesis that party development can be supported by intra-elite conflicts waged by electoral means has received statistical confirmation [and] it turns out that parties achieving relatively high degrees of institutionalization can translate their national electoral appeal into region-level political influence.”<sup>396</sup>

The summary of the three Duma election cycles that have been held since the time of Yeltsin’s forced dissolution of the legitimately elected legislature begins with the special Duma elections held by decree in late 1993. Intended by Yeltsin to accomplish the two goals of restoring his credibility and legitimacy as a democratic leader and replacing (what he had concluded) were the all-too-oppositional legislators from the 1991 Soviet era elections with a much less powerful legislative body, the 1993 elections became the first opportunity for the establishment of a post-Soviet political party system. The nationwide outcome of the 1993 Duma elections reflected a mix of support for neo-communists, nationalists, democrats, reformers and anti-reformers, with the only clear

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<sup>395</sup> The party Union of Right Forces was also an option for the ultra nationalists, but because its showing in the 1999 elections was at such a low level, it has not been included in the PL outcomes analyzed in this study.

<sup>396</sup> Golosov, 1999, p.1360. This conclusion indicates that it is in the interest of the leadership of regional regimes to support party development.

result being the strong showing of electability by independent and SMD candidates. The 1993 election cycle fielded an astounding 130 political parties with the intention to compete, of which twenty one submitted the required documentation, and only thirteen emerged with the appropriate number (and distribution) of petition signatures (only ten percent of the original 130). When combined, the thirteen party lists contained a total of 1,717 candidates competing for 225 seats, a ratio of more than seven contestants for each available seat. In the end, only eight parties reached the required five percent threshold that gave them access to a proportion of the 225 PL seats. An outcome of significance that reflects a shortcoming of this mixed political process is the fact that, with the close out of the remaining five parties that had submitted ballot lists, approximately thirteen percent of the 1993 national party list vote was wasted (and discarded).<sup>397</sup>

#### **Outcomes and Patterns from the Duma Elections:**

Figure 1 presents a summary list of the political factions<sup>398</sup> which emerged from this mixed system to fill the majority of the 450 lower house seats in 1993 were led by the independent (nonaligned) candidates with 31.3 percent of all Duma seats, followed in succession by Russia's Choice with 15.6 percent, the Liberal Democratic Party with 14.2

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<sup>397</sup> Because there was (and remains) no mechanism for the transference of any of the PL votes for parties that do not achieve the five percent threshold, votes cast for those parties are simply discarded, and the effort by that electorate was effectively wasted.

<sup>398</sup> The term is used here as depicted by Epstein. Madison's definition of a faction: "By a faction I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community." (Epstein, 1984, p.60)

**Figure 1:**

1993 & 1995 Duma Elections Results						
	1993 Results			1995 Results		
Parties on Ballot	13			43		
Parties at 5%	8			4		
Wasted Vote	13%			49.5%		
	Combined Seats		% of Total Seats	Combined Seats		% of Total Seats
	PL	Total		PL	Total	
1993 RDC, 1995 OHR	40	70	70/450= .16	45	55	55/450= .12
LDP Seats	59	64	64/450= .14	50	51	51/450= .11
CPRF Seats	32	48	48/450= .11	99	157	157/450= .35
YABLOKO Seats	20	23	23/450= .05	31	45	45/450= .10
All Other Parties	74	98	98/450= .22	0	64	64/450= .14
Independent Seats	0	140	141/450= .31	0	78	78/450= .17
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>450/450= 1.00</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>450/450= 1.00</b>

percent and the Communist Party of the Russian Federation with 10.7 percent and Yabloko with slightly more than five percent.<sup>399</sup>

Although White concluded that the “election results immediately and dramatically revealed the irrationality of the vote seeking efforts of politicians and parties,”<sup>400</sup> there are three general implications of interest to this study that are revealed in the national results of the 1993 Duma elections.<sup>401</sup> First, contrary to the projections of the political crafters who had intended this mixed system to encourage the development of a viable national party system, too many parties fielded too many candidates for too few seats. The second significant outcome of note in 1993 was noted above, that a substantial number of PL votes were wasted (thirteen percent), and resulted in five of the thirteen

<sup>399</sup> All election results reported here are from White, Rose and McAllister

<sup>400</sup> White, 1997, p.223

<sup>401</sup> A general implication attributed to the 1993 elections that has continued through all three legislative cycles was described by Slider et al.: “The proportional voting was carried out with Russia serving as one huge electoral district (called the ‘general federal district’) and insurmountable obstacles were placed in the way of parties that were based in just one or two regions.” (Slider, Gimpel’son and Chugrov, 1994, p.713)

parties on the ballot (over thirty eight percent) receiving no reward (in seats gained) for all of their efforts. The third result of note is the fact that when the SMD and PL results are combined, the ratio of seats gained by any one of the leading parties is less than half of what the total Duma seat gain was for the independent/non-aligned members.<sup>402</sup> In fact the independents were so successful that their 31.3 percent seat total is greater than any other two party seat gain totals combined. As the following outline of the party list votes will show, the success of the independents and the RDC can be attributed to the significant impact the SMD vote for individuals has had on the make up of the Duma.<sup>403</sup>

The elections of 1995 marked a return to the four-year election pattern that had been established by federal law and should have been allowed to perform the task of providing a legitimate solution to the political stalemate between Yeltsin and federal legislature in 1993. Analysts watched to see if the problems that had emerged in the Duma election process of 1993 would be resolved or repeated in 1995. Rather than a demonstration of political maturation, to the disappointment of many, the competition between too many parties and candidates that had resulted in such a high proportion of wasted votes in 1993 was not only repeated in 1995, but was much worse than before.

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<sup>402</sup> One explanation for this has been proposed by Remington, who believes that the shortcomings of party development can be traced to the fact that “interest aggregation through political parties owes more to top down and supply side strategies of ambitious politicians than to a bottom up, demand side processes of social mobilization.” (Remington, 1999, p.173)

<sup>403</sup> The impact of the mixed election process has had on the workings of the legislature is described as inconsequential by Shevchenko and Golosov. They concluded, “what is clear is that individualistic [legislator] behavior cannot be related to the mode of election.” (Shevchenko and Golosov, 2001, p.255) Thames came to a different conclusion, finding that “an SMD-PR divide appeared in analyses both of all contested roll-call votes and of contested budgetary roll call votes. Thus, deputy voting differences based upon mandate were found not only generally but also in one specific issue area-- budgetary politics.” (Thames, 2001, p.1)

Although the regions continued the pattern of little more than PL plurality support for the major political parties, in 1995 the CPRF succeeded in gaining thirty five percent of the 450 Duma seats, a success rate that exceeds that accomplished by the independents in 1993 who, when combined, held thirty one percent of all seats. In spite of the 1995 success of the CPRF, no one party received a consistent majority victory outcome among the eighty nine regions. The plurality margins were low enough to insure that no party could claim to represent the ideological, practical or collective regional interests. In sum, the 1995 election cycle reflected little region wide ideological unity based on party partisanship, and the increase in the number of competing political parties served to exacerbate the problems of wasted and discarded votes and too many parties competing for limited reward of PL seat allocation.

Of the forty three parties that submitted list ballots in 1995, only four reached or surpassed the five percent threshold (a fifty percent reduction from 1993 and less than ten percent of the parties in the race). An astounding 49.5 percent of the national PL vote was wasted on parties which gained no seats in the Duma, and when the results from the 1995 election are ordered from best to worst performance in total number of Duma seats won, although the CPRF led the pack with 157 seats, the faction which finished a strong second was the independents (the non-aligned single member candidates) with seventy eight seats. The CPRF had a net increase of 109 seats while the independent faction saw a decline of sixty two total seats, the LDP lost thirteen while the pro-government faction that backed the OHR in 1995 saw a decline of fifteen seats from the previous election cycle. Only the Yabloko Party shared PL gains with the CPRF, with an increase from twenty three total seats in 1993 to forty five in 1995.

A significant outcome of this election cycle was the surprising collaboration that emerged in the Duma between the CPRF and LDP, an alliance that was based on shared anti-government and anti-reform sentiments, and was to become the basis of a legislative faction that came to control 244 of the 450 Duma seats.<sup>404</sup> The results from both the PL and SMD outcomes gave the pro-government OHR and pro-reform Yabloko a combined total of only 122 Duma seats (a clear minority) and was an outcome interpreted as a signal to many that the people of Russia were rejecting the reform path in favor of a mixed neo-Soviet/neo-nationalist regime model.<sup>405</sup> If we interpret the success of the CPRF in 1995 and its legislative collaboration with the LDP as an indication of the consolidation of an ideological vision for the future of the Russian Federation, the results from 1999 should provide some flickering flame of confirmation.

The legislative elections of 1999 became the first organized challenge to the federal government by a political party representing regional interests. For regional elites seeking to blunt the power of the executive branch and expand their local base of legitimacy and authority, the Fatherland-All Russia Party (OVR) Party became the partisan voice for their political desires. In the months preceding the 1999 legislative election cycle the competition took on the characteristics of a referendum, but this time not on the course of the democratization and free market reforms, but rather on the limitation of the power of the presidency in favor of increased power and autonomy in the regions. As had been the case in the earlier Duma election cycles, the major political

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<sup>404</sup> This faction represents the so called 'Red / Brown' coalition of neo-communists and nationalists which caused great concern as to the future of democratic and market reforms in Russia.

<sup>405</sup> Election results reported here are from Belin and Orttung, RFE/RL Reports, and NUPI Reports.

parties aligned themselves with one of four ideological views. First was the Unity Party, which was established as the pro-government reform party that replaced the defunct RDC and OHR parties. The second new party on the political scene in 1999 was the previously introduced Fatherland-All Russia Party (OVR), a party born from the anti-Kremlin sentiments of Primakov (the Yeltsin era premier), and Luzhkov (the Mayor of Moscow). The CPRF remained the party of choice in 1999 for the neo-Soviet partisans whether they be true revisionists or simply sentimentalists, and a small group that included The Union of Right Forces (SPS), Yabloko and the Zhirinovskiy Bloc (representing all that remained of the LDP) finished at the bottom of the list of the six parties that gained seats in the 1999 PL elections.

The Federation wide results of the 1999 Duma elections are displayed in Figure 2 and reveal the contrast in success level between the PL vote and the SMD results, a contrast which clearly emphasizes the continuing discrepancy that resulted from the implementation of the mixed electoral system for the selection of Duma members. Only six (of twenty eight) parties managed to meet the five percent threshold requirement and gain Duma seats, with the CPRF and Independents once again emerging as the clear victors in 1999. Note that although the CPRF gained 113 total seats, and led all parties with twenty six percent ratio of Duma seats, that Unity, the next most successful party, managed to win only seventy two seats, eight from single member districts and sixty four from the PL process. As a measure of ideological support, the fact that the CPRF achieved only a one percentage point advantage over Unity's share of the total national PL vote (a result that gave a three seat PL advantage to the neo-Soviets) suggests that their success was a result of a formidable combination of popular support for individual



candidates and of the party platform that provided the CPRF its victory. Of note is the fact that although the Unity party finished as the number two political party overall, the forty six to eight ratio of Duma seats awarded to the respective parties from the SMD results suggests that the emergence of the CPRF as a party of power in 1995 was not a short term anomaly. Conversely, in its ideological identification with the Putin regime Unity found its core of party based support (with only eight SMD seats won) with results for the regime party in 1999 very much a pattern that was seen in the 1993 RDC and 1995 OHR results.

Although the CPRF has the strongest showing in both PL and SMD voting results and seats gained, the OVR party has emerged from the 1999 elections with the most balanced results, winning thirty six PL seats and thirty SMD seats and finishing only one percentage point behind Unity in total percentage of Duma seats. Of the three parties which achieved Duma seats in double-digit numbers in 1999, only Unity's base of support was clearly dependent upon the party list system, which indicates that the individual candidates in the local districts who represented the Unity Party did not enjoy popular support beyond their affiliation with the Party. This would suggest that the OVR and the CPRF have emerged from the 1999 election cycle with the strongest support for individual candidates nationwide, as both accomplished the most balanced support between the SMD and PL electoral methods.<sup>406</sup> All things being equal, this outcome may place OVR in a stronger position than Unity for the election cycle of 2003, because of its

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<sup>406</sup> When the Duma came into session, the representatives of the Unity and the Communist parties made the surprising move of joining forces. Colton and McFaul describe this unexpected alliance: "Within weeks it [Unity] entered into an agreement with the KPRF to divide control of most of the Duma's committees between them. Unity



**Figure 2:**

<b>1999 Duma Election Results</b>				
Wasted vote: 18.7 %	Turnout: 61.7%	Parties on Ballot: 28	Parties $\geq$ 5%: 6	
Party	Party List Seats	Single Member Seats	Total Seats	% Of Total Duma Seats
CPRF	67	46	113	.26
Unity	64	8	72	.16
OVR	36	30	66	.15
SPS*	24	5	29	.07
Yabloko	16	4	20	.05
Zhirinovskiy	17	0	17	.04
Other Parties**	0	16	16	.03
Independent	0	106	106	.24
Totals	224	215	439	1.00

- SPS is the abbreviation for the Union of Right Forces, a liberal and western looking party.
- 'Other Parties' represents the 22 (of the 28 total) political parties which had qualified by petition to compete in the 1999 PR vote, but failed to meet the 5 percent threshold required to be awarded a PR seat.

strong single member district support, and the pattern from 1993 and 1995 of a post-election demise of the pro-government party.

In spite of the fact that the CPRF has consistently advertised itself as the best ideological alternative to the post-Soviet regime in power, the fact that it has continued to develop and consolidate its base of support is probably a good sign for Russian democratic consolidation. As Lipset pointed out, "a crucial condition for a stable democracy is that major parties exist that have an almost permanent significant base of support. That support must be able to survive clear-cut policy failures by the parties."<sup>407</sup> Certainly the failure of the Soviet era regime and the emergence of a viable CPRF can count for an instance of the survival of a political party beyond a clear-cut policy failure.

The summary chart presented in Figure 3 confirms that, as had been the case in both the 1993 and the 1995 election cycles, a huge number of political parties competed

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was suddenly a major player on the national political scene." (Colton and McFaul, 2000, p.219)

<sup>407</sup> Lipset, 1994, p.14

for the available Duma seats in 1999, and the number of wasted votes, although in decline, were still at the undesirable level of 18.7 percent. The fact of these wasted efforts on the part the electorate and party activists is even more significant when we consider that the consequences of a plethora of political parties on the PL ballot in the first two elections had been well documented, both in scholastic works and by the media. The lessons that were provided by the previous cycles seem to have been ignored by the Russian electorate and the Russian polity. If the 1999 wasted vote percentage was included as a category in the ratio of support for the successful party list group, 'Wasted Vote' would be in the number three spot behind the CPRF and Unity, and finished ahead of OVR. Given that the highest level of support for the winning party list faction is slightly more than twenty four percent of the national PL vote, a level of wasted votes at nearly nineteen percent in this the third legislative election cycle of the nascent democracy is alarming. With only a five percent margin separating the winning political party from the number of wasted votes, no party can claim even a marginal mandate to govern from the PL electoral outcome of 1999. (This lack of organized party support is further revealed in the results recorded in Figure 3 which indicate the impressive number of seats won by 'Independents').<sup>408</sup>

The consistently high levels of wasted PL votes, when combined with the high number of seats won by independent candidates and the fact that overall turnout declined in this very important election of 1999, serves as a clear indication that the Russian

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<sup>408</sup> Note that if the wasted vote in Table 5 were to be combined with the support for independents, and a seat to vote ratio of 18 percent were assumed to accomplish the achievement of at least 40 to 60 seats, the combined total for all 'independents' would be in the neighborhood of at least 146 seats, and perhaps as many as 166 seats. In any case, a clear plurality.

**Figure 3:**

<b>Summary Chart 1993, 1995 &amp; 1999 Duma Elections</b>						
	<b>1993 Results</b>		<b>1995 Results</b>		<b>1999 Results</b>	
Parties on Ballot	13		43		28	
Parties at 5%	8		4		6	
Wasted Vote	13.5%		49.5%		18.7%	
Turnout	54.3		64.4		61.7%	
	<b>PL</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>PL</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>PL</b>	<b>Total</b>
93 RDC/95 OHR/99 Unity	40	70	45	55	64	72
1993/95 LDP, 99 Zhirinovskiy	59	64	50	51	17	17
CPRF Seats	32	48	99	157	67	113
1999 OVR	--	--	--	--	36	66
YABLOKO Seats	20	23	31	45	16	20
All Other Parties	74	98	0	64	24	45
Independent Seats	0	141	0	77	0	106
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>439*</b>

\*The conflict in Chechnya resulted in a number of seats remaining empty.

electorate is not embracing the political party and party list system as the means to achieve representative symmetry among the Russian regions. The overall outcomes summarized thus far may indicate that the electorate is simply not satisfied with the party choices that have been offered to date. The nationwide results, when delineated on a region-by-region outcome basis, reveal that there is little support (beyond a simple plurality) for any ideological group or political party alternative,<sup>409</sup> and may indicate that the Russian voter looks to district level single member candidates as their best hope for the future, by exhibiting an electoral show of partisan preference based on trust in individuals rather than faith in political parties or factional ideologies.

The national results of the PL election outcomes that I have outlined provide a necessary backdrop for the analysis of some examples of the asymmetric characteristics of the Russian Federation.<sup>410</sup> I have stated that the asymmetry inherent in the unit type

<sup>409</sup> See Appendix A for a full list of regional Duma election outcomes.

classifications of the regions of the Russian Federation is one aspect that can be reasonably measured in the process of analysis, and there are others as well. Along with subject unit type, the Russian Federation, like most state systems, finds it necessary to devise a means to diminish, at least in perception, the effect of asymmetries that are inherent in measures of such things as population concentrations and densities, income, revenues and the distribution of resources that may be manifest in any nation. The three legislative election cycles outlined above can provide an opportunity to compare and contrast selected regional results in an objective process of analysis when the PL results are utilized as ideological-political indices and are correlated with objective variables that represent asymmetry among Russian regional relations.

#### **Results from the Subject Regions and the Party List System:**

The outcomes for each of the legislative election cycles of 1993, 1995 and 1999 are presented in the tables summarized in the analysis to follow,<sup>411</sup> with the party list results and other relevant data for a selected regional group organized in a consistent form that maximizes the comparisons of asymmetry among the subject units. As was the case for the summary of the three election cycles, I have focused on the party list results for only the most successful parties in each of the three Duma elections. The most successful parties are those that are clearly identifiable with an expressed or implied ideological or partisan perspective of a political party towards the current federal regime,

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<sup>410</sup> This circumstance of asymmetry in Russia takes on special importance based on the conclusion of Sakwa. He noted “while a number of European countries have an asymmetrical state structure ... there is no example of asymmetric federalism in the rest of Europe, and indeed it is often argued that the success of Swiss and German federalism lies in symmetry.” Sakwa, 2002, p.4

<sup>411</sup> See Appendix A for complete table.

or the course of reform that Russia has followed thus far, and reach or surpass the five percent threshold for the achievement of PL Duma seats. Fourteen objective indicators of asymmetry are utilized in this analysis, beginning with what to many is the most obvious, population characteristics.<sup>412</sup>

The Russian subject regions that have the highest levels of population concentrations and those with the most significant measures of population density are the first two groups that have been selected to enable the analysis of national partisan PL outcomes at the subject region level. In the analysis of these 'population' groups, as in all of the objectively determined regional groupings to be presented here, election results given for the 'party plurality' reflect the party that was the plurality victor for that election cycle in the listed region, and represents a political party that reached the five percent threshold and gained seats in the lower house of the Federal Assembly.

For all groups of regions that have been objectively categorized, I designate the pro-government (PG) and anti-government (AG) party factions as follows: the CPRF and LDP are the significant anti government factions in 1993 and 1995, and the CPRF and OVR the important anti-government factions in 1999. The RDC was the pro-government party for 1993, with OHR representing pro-government interests in 1995 and Unity the 1999 pro-government Party. Yabloko and SPS have consistently been pro-reform parties, but both have remained tepid (at best) in support of the reform and democratization initiatives of the federal government, and are categorized as pro-reform/anti-government centrist factions. Throughout the remainder of this analysis the PL outcomes are

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<sup>412</sup> This is so because Clem and Craumer, who have been on the cusp of the regional election result analyses, have made it a practice to concentrate on the twenty most populated Russian regions.

interpreted based on the ideological and partisan platforms that each of the victorious parties represents. For example, if the CPRF is the plurality victor in the summary outcome for a particular region, it is assumed that there is a correlation between the neo-Soviet ideology of the CPRF and the selection of that party from among the choices available on the party list ballot.

In short, if a PL outcome for a particular region shows the CPRF as the winning plurality party, it is not assumed that that region is populated by a majority of neo-Soviets, but that the individual voters know that there is a partisan difference between the ideology promoted by one party (say the CPRF) over another (such as the LDP), and that the selection of a party from the list ballot reflects that informed choice.<sup>413</sup> A strong plurality for a particular political party is interpreted as a significant outcome to be noted for its potential correlation with ideological support, just as a very low PL outcome is noted as a significant outcome because it may correlate with a lack of ideological support for a particular party in a particular region. If information comes to light that corruption or intimidation has significantly influenced the PL votes cast at the regional district levels, the correlations, inferences and conclusions presented in this analysis would be severely impacted and should be discounted accordingly.

### **Population Matters:**

Beginning with Table 5.1 and Summary Table 5.1A,<sup>414</sup> the selected regions based on population, the asymmetric character of the districting system of the Russian

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<sup>413</sup> Because the elections have been monitored by international NGOs and other agencies, and the results have been thoroughly vetted, it is assumed that corruption is not a major factor in the PL outcomes, and that people are not being bribed, paid or otherwise coerced into casting a PL vote for a particular political party.

Federation becomes more evident. Although twenty six subject units are included on this list of those with the highest levels of regional population, note that only three of the twenty-one Republics are represented, while five of the six Krai and both of the Federal Cities have made the list. Also of significance is the population advantage the City of Moscow has in this regional group which, when combined with the Moscow Oblast, boasts a population density of over fifteen million citizens, a concentration representing more than sixteen percent of the total population of the Republic. This group of regions represents sixty three percent of the total Russian population, sixty percent of the combined national gross regional product (GRP), and an astounding eighty three percent of the amount of combined foreign investment (AFI) in Russia. The PL outcomes reveal strong CPRF support in the three Republics in 1993 (two of three), unanimous support for the LDP in the five Krai, and support for the Yeltsin regime revealed in the RDC choice made by both of the Federal cities. Outcomes at the oblast level revealed strong support for the LDP (ten of sixteen), a weak outcome for the RDC (four of sixteen) and only one oblast plurality each supporting the CPRF in 1993 and one with a split plurality between the neo-Soviet CPRF and the pro-regime RDC.

In 1995 support in two of the three Republics continued behind the CPRF, with one (Tatarstan) shifting popular support from a split vote to the pro-government OHR Party. Four of the five Krai shifted their support in 1995 from the LDP to the CPRF, and the two Federal Cities split between the pro-reform Yabloko and the pro-government OHR. At the oblast level overall support significantly shifted from the LDP to the CPRF, with three oblasts splitting their plurality choice and one of the three (Sverdlovsk)

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<sup>414</sup> See Appendix A, Table 5.1 and Map 5.1.



<b>Summary Table 5.1A</b>				
<b>PL Summary: Population</b>	<b>N=26</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>
CPRF		3	18*	11*
LDP		15*	2	0
RDC		6	0	0
OHR		--	2	0
YABLOKO		0	1	0
OVR		--	--	4
UNITY		--	--	11*
SPLIT (pro-government)		0	0	0
SPLIT (anti-government)		0	2	0
SPLIT (pro / anti)		2	1	0
<b>TOTAL: Anti-Government</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>TOTAL: Pro-Government</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>

splitting plurality support between the CPRF and the pro-government OHR. The summary of the PL vote for these regions outlined in Summary Table 5.1A reveals a readily discernable pattern in 1993 of plurality support by a majority of the 'population' set of regions for the LDP (fifteen of twenty six), a pattern of support that shifted en masse to the CPRF in 1995. In the end, anti-government sentiments resulted in more than two thirds of the regions selecting political parties opposed to the federal regime in both 1993 and 1995. Of note is the growing strength of this anti-regime sentiment which grew from a ratio of 69 percent of this region set selecting an anti-government party in 1993 to a nearly eighty five percent anti-government rate of selection in 1995.

The results for 1999 reveal a further (and surprising) shift in the dynamics of the pro/anti-government sentiments. After demonstrating consistent and growing support for alternative parties in both 1993 and 1995, the plurality outcomes for the regions in Table 5.1 reveal a split, with eleven regions supporting the CPRF and eleven regions supporting the pro-government Unity party. Two additional outcomes of note that emerged in 1999 deserve comment. For the first time no region split their PL plurality outcome between any two political parties in 1999, and only four regions provided plurality support to the



pro-autonomy OVR Party, with that outcome split between two ethno-Republics and what are best described as two administratively determined subject units. This latter outcome suggests that regional sympathies towards the enhanced autonomy of local governance are not just an expression of an ethno-nationally motivated desire for separation.

The summary of the results for all thirty two of the ethno-national subject regions to follow (republics and okrugs) may provide a better cognitive window on that issue. The correlation of the 1999 results with party partisanship indicates a bifurcation of popular support not previously seen in the party list process, and is a significant outcome because the OVR Party was established in 1999 as a political party alternative choice that hoped to send a clear message to Moscow on behalf of the federal subject units.<sup>415</sup> The fact that the people of Bashkortostan and Tatarstan gave PL plurality support to OVR is compatible with their history as ethnically defined autonomous ethno-republics, but the outcomes for Moscow City and Moscow Oblast are a surprise. Note that in 1993 the Moscow Oblast split with the City to support the LDP over the RDC, and the two split again in 1995 with the Oblast in support the CPRF while the City again supported the government-backed party. The 1999 results indicate that the Oblast has continued a consistent pattern of anti-government plurality outcomes, but what do we make of the fact that Moscow City has shifted partisan support to an anti-government and pro-regional autonomy political party? Given the significant population and the gross

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<sup>415</sup> The minimal number of 'split' party pluralities in this election cycle could be a signal of the beginnings of political polarization, a sign of the maturation of a party system according to Huntington. He summarized as follows: "The process of party development usually evolves through four phases: factionalism, polarization, expansion, and institutionalization." (Huntington, 1968, p.412)

regional product (GRP) and amount of foreign investment (AFI) levels that this combination of the City and Oblast represent, the signal sent by these 1999 outcomes may well have sent a tremor of apprehension through the halls of the Kremlin.

The ‘population’ list above includes the data for GRP and the AFI in each of the regions selected based on a population size threshold. It is not unusual that the most populated regions of an industrial state would also be the most impressive in GRP and AFI outcomes, as opportunity and demand attract a broad population base. Of interest to the analysis of a free market democracy, however, is the fact that sixty three percent of the Russian population reside in regions that do eighty three percent of the business with foreign markets and account for sixty percent of the total GRP. Map 5.1B<sup>416</sup> shows that, with the exception of St. Petersburg, Moscow and Nizhnii Novgorod, these regions form a geographic belt that extends across the southern expanse of the Republic, a belt that had been labeled the “Red-Brown” belt of neo-Soviets and ultranationalists that gave plurality victories to the LDP in 1993 and the CPRF in the 1995 Duma elections. The analysis to follow will show that this turns out to be more hyperbole than the actual PL electoral confirmation that Russia is about to reverse its path of reform.<sup>417</sup>

With the analysis of the set of regions selected based on their status as ‘most populated’ as a benchmark, the analysis of other selected objective variables that represent Russian federal asymmetry can be seen a clearer perspective. Table 5.2<sup>418</sup> and Summary Table

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<sup>416</sup> See Appendix A, Map 5.1B.

<sup>417</sup> Shlapentokh Et al. (1997, p.191), place these regions primarily in the ‘Red Belt,’ while White, Rose and McAllister (1997, p.235), see this as a Red-Brown coalition that is “dispersed among eight different parties.”

<sup>418</sup> See Appendix A, Table 5.2

<b>Summary Table 5.2A</b>				
<b>PL Summary: Population Density</b>	<b>N=13</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>
CPRF		2	10*	8*
LDP		9*	0	0
RDC		1	0	-
OHR		--	1	-
YABLOKO		0	0	0
OVR		--	--	2
UNITY		--	--	3
OTHER		1	0	0
SPLIT (pro-government)		0	0	0
SPLIT (anti-government)		0	1	0
SPLIT (pro / anti)		0	1	0
<b>TOTAL: Anti-Government</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>TOTAL: Pro-Government</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

5.2A is a list of the regional group that has been compiled based on measures of the highest levels of regional population density<sup>419</sup>. Would a change in the objective condition utilized to select a group of subject regions result in a change in the patterns seen above of unit type inclusion or of group PL outcomes over the three election cycles? The patterns from 1993 and 1995 were repeated, with the LDP and the CPRF winning pluralities in the majority of regions in numbers similar to those from Table 5.1. The difference for this group is in the 1999 results, where eight of the thirteen regions retained support for the CPRF, and gave the pro-government Unity Party a plurality in only three regions (all oblasts), and the pro-regional autonomy OVR Party support in two of the five ethno-Republic subject units.

Again, if we investigate PL outcome differentiations that are based on subject unit type, we find that in 1993 all seven oblasts, the one krai and one of the five republics supported the LDP by a regional plurality. In 1995 six of the seven oblasts, the krai and four of the five republics shifted to support the CPRF, and in 1999 two republics

<sup>419</sup> The two Federal cities are not included on this list because my interest here is in the shared characteristic of regional density rather than that of urban density.

supported the pro-regional autonomy OVR and three oblasts supported the pro-government Unity Party. Of note is the fact that in both 1995 and 1999 the CPRF won a plurality in a majority of the regional units (ten of thirteen in 1995 and eight of thirteen in 1999). Four of the five republics were anti-government in 1993, three of the five in 1995 and all five in 1999. The krai showed an anti-government outcome in all three election cycles, and the oblasts were 100 percent anti-government in 1993; the same in 1995 and only four of seven anti-government oblast outcomes in 1999. The fact that oblasts continue to reveal anti-government or split pro/anti-outcomes is a pattern development of interest because, as in all other selected groups, the oblasts are non-ethnic regions established under Soviet tutelage with language and cultural characteristics that, by a vast majority, are 'Russian'. As unit type representation, it is evident that things have changed when the population variable of focus shifts from one based on total regional population to that of regional population density. Note that the total N-coefficient for the density group is half of that for the Population set, and thus the fact that these results indicate that although anti-government sentiments remained high for this group in 1999, the difference among region types may not be significant.

Although the five republics, one krai and seven oblasts that have population density measures in excess of fifty percent of the unit territory represent a different mix of region types from that previously reviewed, the summary outcomes for 1999 that indicate a majority of anti-government PL results are compatible between the two groups. Also of note to the 'density' group is the change revealed in Map 5.2B<sup>420</sup> that shows this selected group is geographically concentrated west of the Urals, and relatively

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<sup>420</sup> See Appendix A, Map 5.2B.

Summary Table 5.3A				Summary Table 5.4A			
HGRP N=27	1993	1995	1999	AFI N=26	1993	1995	1999
CPRF	2	18	9	CPRF	0	18	10
LDP	15	3	--	LDP	18	4	0
RDC	6	0	--	RDC	5	0	0
OHR	--	2	--	OHR	--	2	0
YABLOKO	0	1	0	YABLOKO	0	1	0
OVR	--	--	4	OVR	--	--	3
UNITY	--	--	14	UNITY	--	--	13
SPLIT (pro-government)	0	0	0	SPLIT (pro-government)	0	0	0
SPLIT (anti-government)	0	2	0	SPLIT (anti-government)	0	1	0
SPLIT (pro / anti)	4	1	0	SPLIT (pro / anti)	3	0	0
<b>TOTAL: Anti-Gov.</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>TOTAL: Anti-Gov.</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>TOTAL: Pro-Gov.</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>TOTAL: Pro-Gov.</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>

disconnected from one another. Although the ‘belt’ pattern exhibited by the location of the population group regions has disappeared and been replaced by a smattering of location characteristics, the plurality results from the PL outcomes mirror those of the ‘population’ group in 1993 and 1995, but diverge from the pattern in 1999 to support the CPRF over Unity when the ‘population’ group split nearly down the middle with eleven Unity regions and eleven CPRF. In the next segment the focus of analysis will shift from regions set apart from the rest based on population characteristics to some based on economic indices.

#### **Economic Measures and Party List Outcomes:**

I introduced the economic variables of GRP and AFI earlier in this analysis, and the summary tables for these two objective indications of economic asymmetry are presented above. In the groups selected for inclusion in Tables 5.3 and 5.3A and Table 5.4 and 5.4A<sup>421</sup> Republics remain under-represented as a subject unit type, with Tatarstan the only Republic which is included on all four of the selected lists outlined thus far. The

<sup>421</sup> See Appendix A for Tables.

average representation by republic unit type on all four of the tables selected thus far is equal to that found on both the HGRP and AFI tables and is at four of the twenty one republics. Of significance to the pattern of unit type representation is the fact that either all, or nearly all, of the kraia are represented on these two groups of the most economically powerful regions; both of the federal cities are consistently included.

Although there are an average of 15.5 oblasts among these two groups, a total of twenty three of fifty oblasts (forty six percent of the total number) appear on these combined lists. Referring to Tables 5.3A and 5.4A, we see that the PL summary results for GRP and AFI are very much a repeat of the benchmark set in the Population group outcomes.

According to the summary results for 1993, the LDP received a plurality in eighteen of the twenty seven regions represented on the GRP list, and nineteen of the twenty six from the AFI group. In 1995, as was the case with the groups selected by population groups, both of these regional groups shifted their popular plurality from the LDP to the CPRF with eighteen of the GRP and eighteen of the AFI groups shifting plurality support for the CPRF. Pro-government support in 1993 was at a low level with only 6 of the GRP<sup>422</sup> regions and five of the AFI regional pluralities for the RDC Party, and lower still in 1995 with only two OHR pluralities each from both the GRP and AFI regions. In 1999 the dynamics of popular plurality reflected in PL support shifted in these two region sets, as they had for the previously outlined population regions, but this time the outcomes for the totals of anti and pro-government support by region indicate a

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<sup>422</sup> This outcome disputes the conclusion of Clem and Craumer (1995) who determined that “regions with better economic conditions are inclined to favor reform parties.” That conclusion may well be true if the SMD and PL votes are aggregated together as a Duma vote outcome, but not if the PL results are separated, and an objective condition of “better economic conditions” is established.

remarkably evenly bifurcated split of thirteen to fourteen for HGRP and thirteen to thirteen for the AFI group.

The election of 1999 turned out to be a contest between the anti-government CPRF and the pro-government Unity Party, with the pro-regime party the leading regional plurality overall and the neo-Soviets a close second. The OVR party received a party plurality in only four of the selected HGRP and three of the regions that lead the federation in the amount of foreign investments (AFI). Based on the four tables outlined thus far, the pattern which has emerged is that anti-government sentiment was strong in both 1993 and 1995, and has dramatically shifted to a divide between the two competing ideological platforms of the CPRF and Unity, with the OVR the only other party with any significant level of plurality support in 1999.

A comparison of maps 5.3B and 5.4B indicate that there is a pattern of a belt like connection among the subject regions listed in the HGRP group, with continuous borders on an east to west spread broken only by the Volgograd Oblast, a separation that isolates the subject units of the Caucasus from the bulk of the rest. The map that represents the location of the AFI group reveals a much more disconnected group of subject regions, with fifteen of the twenty six regions not even adjacent to the external borders of the Federation; five of the subject units stand alone geographically, with no adjacent AFI group units sharing a common border. Instead of Volgograd, the Rostov Oblast separates the members of this selected group from its members in the Caucasus, and it appears that only the kraia and the federal cities consistently appear on these measures of asymmetry with regularity as a subject unit type. The maps that indicate the separation of most of the HGRP and AFI groups from the borders of the Russian Republic provide visual



<b>Summary Table 5.5A</b>				
<b>LGRP</b>	<b>N=29</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>
CPRF		5	22	14
LDP		22	2	0
RDC		0	0	0
OHR		--	3	0
YABLOKO		0	1	0
OVR		--	--	2
UNITY		--	--	12
SPLIT (pro-government)		0	0	0
SPLIT (anti-government)		0	1	0
SPLIT (pro/anti)		0	0	1
OTHER		2	0	0
<b>TOTAL: Anti-Government</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>TOTAL: Pro-Government</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>

evidence of a legacy from Stalin's districting plan that helped to insure that no significant concentrations of regional power would take advantage of location to achieve an independence of actions with foreign partners, if not full political independence.

Thus far I have presented results from regional groupings that have been objectively classified based on indications of economic and political asymmetry that assumes that they represent some of the most powerful or influential regions in the Republic.<sup>423</sup> In order to bring balance and perspective to the results presented thus far and to determine if there is a difference in the outcomes for a selected group of regions which we might assume will have relatively little influence, I have developed in Table 5.5 and Summary Table 5.5A an outline for the comparison among selected group of twenty nine subject regions that have the lowest recorded levels of gross regional product (LGRP). It is reasonable to expect that the revenue starved subject units would be more likely to have a greater dependence on, and need for, the federal government to

<sup>423</sup> The imbalance does not necessarily dichotomize influential from marginalized regions, but it seems that its mere existence is a critical issue. If "asymmetry establishes a competitive dynamic where federal relations are in a state of constant flux." (Sakwa, 2002, p.4), then the political system cannot stabilize and consolidate.



redistribute revenues from the wealthy to the regional coffers of the poor. If that expectation is followed in its logical consistency, it would be likely that the group of poor regions would either support the federal regime in order to curry favor and receive the benefits of rewarded loyalty, or they may be reminiscent of the days when the Soviet Union provided the social and economic safety net that capitalism and democracy have destroyed.

The twenty nine regions with less than eight million rubles of annual GRP are included in this list, and the results indicate that the party list results from 1993, 1995 and 1999 are a much different mix than what was observed in the outcomes for the region types from the previous groups. This group of poor subject regions includes, for the first time, a significant number of republics (fourteen) and yet continues the pattern from the previous groups with this set inclusive of fifteen oblasts (the average for all of the selected groups with more than a total of thirteen members). Because of the results from the HGRP and AFI lists, it is no surprise that there are no krajs or federal cities included on this LGRP list, as it would be unlikely that these two unit types could be simultaneously both rich and poor.<sup>424</sup> This group of subject regions, representing a contribution of only .08 percent to the national GRP, showed a remarkably similar pattern to that of its wealthy co-subject units in both 1993 and in 1995. In 1999, as a group, these regions also expressed little interest in the idea of enhanced regional autonomy advocated by the OVR Party (with only two republics selecting that party option), with

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<sup>424</sup> It is important to note as well the fact that in none of the selected regional groups are there okrugs included. Economic measures for okrugs are typically at such low levels that they are either not reported separately (and included with the figures for the adjacent larger regional unit) or not reported at all. All indications from my research for this essay suggests that okrugs are not a significant regional player in the economic and political dynamics of the Russian Federation.

the remaining 27 subject units following the trend of the other groups by dividing their pluralities almost equally between the neo-Soviet CPRF and the pro-Putin Unity Parties, with the CPRF winning a narrow victory with fourteen regions to twelve for Unity.

This LGRP group has provided, for the first time among the selected groups, a region that split its 1999 PL outcome, with Penza Oblast dividing its loyalties between the CPRF and the Unity Party. The unit type selection, when considered by region type, suggests that the republics tend to be the poorest class of Russian federal unit type (excluding the okrugs) with fourteen of the twenty-one Republics included in this group (sixty seven percent). Also in regard to the republic unit types, the 1999 PL outcomes for the LGRP group reveal a level of support for the CPRF at a ratio of two to one over that by these Republics for the Unity Party (eight to four), and only two of these poor Republics supporting the OVR ideology with a plurality victory. With ten of the fourteen Republics casting anti-government election pluralities, and eight of those ten in favor of the neo-Soviets, it may be that most of the people of the Russian ethno-Republics favor a return to the Soviet era policies which had provided income redistribution and a sense of economic and employment security that made them better able to trust that the social welfare demands of the local population could and would be met.<sup>425</sup>

Map 5.5B provides a locational perspective for these regions, and as we can see, they are most typically border regions that serve to separate the more populous and

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<sup>425</sup> This is based on the generally accepted opinion among analysts that due to the legacy of communism there is a significant expectation among the people. It is “the belief that the government is responsible not only for assuring general prosperity for the country, but also for guaranteeing employment and the basic material needs of individual citizens.” (Millar and Wolchik, 1997, p.16) These authors go on to suggest that “These responsibilities have become enmeshed in the very definition of democracy for many Russians”. (Ibid.)

revenue-rich subject units from direct access to Russia's neighboring states. This alternative view of the locational legacy from Stalin's districting plan appears to have served the Moscow regime well during the unstable transition process. By ensuring that the regions most dependent upon the Kremlin remain independent from their more powerful federation neighbors, the poorer regions maintain a vanguard against the defection by those that would have little need of Moscow's intercession if they had direct access to foreign markets.

The next arena of asymmetric relations to be outlined is the objective measure of the unusual way some officially sanctioned policy relations are determined between a group of regional subject units and the federal regime.

### **Bargaining for Support?**

A policy employed by the federal government beginning in 1994 was the negotiation of special bilateral agreements (*soglasheniia*) between selected subject units and the central government.<sup>426</sup> In spite of the fact that the Constitutional basis of relations between the central federal government and the subject regions was to remain symmetrical, as were the terms of the Federation Treaty that was signed by representatives from all of the parties to the federal system, it became a policy of the Yeltsin regime after the elections of 1993 to negotiate special bilateral agreements with a select few of the eighty nine subject units of the federation. Because there is a group of sixteen regions that have successfully negotiated *soglosheniias*, they represent a group or

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<sup>426</sup> Triesman (1999) has referred to this process as the "selective federal fiscal appeasement of the regions."

<b>Summary Table 5.6A</b>				
<b>Soglasheniia</b>	<b>N=16</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>
CPRF		2	9	3
LDP		9	4	0
RDC		3	0	0
OHR		--	1	0
YABLOKO		0	1	0
OVR		--	--	2
UNITY		--	--	11
SPLIT (pro-government)		0	0	0
SPLIT (anti-government)		0	1	0
SPLIT (pro / anti)		2	0	0
<b>TOTAL: Anti-Government</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>TOTAL: Pro-Government</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>

class of region type that significantly contributes to the asymmetry of intra-republic relations in Russia, and are a worthwhile selection for analysis.

In the section to follow, I compare the same categories of outcomes for these soglasheniia regions as was the case in the objectively determined subsets outlined above, with the added task of attempting to uncover any clues in the outcome patterns that might suggest why these particular subject units have found it necessary (or beneficial) to negotiate these agreements.<sup>427</sup> It has been suggested that these agreements were necessary because the more powerful regions required special privileges in order to keep their separatist ambitions in check, while others have surmised that it was necessary to hammer out special agreements pertaining to needed subsidies for the revenue-poor

<sup>427</sup> There is disagreement over the true implications of this negotiation process. For some, there is little need to investigate further in order to understand the implications because they see the fact that the federal regime was forced into this process as “evidence that treaties and agreements are themselves examples of autonomy taken by the regions rather than autonomy granted by Moscow.” (Stoner-Weiss, 1997, p.92) Yet according to Solnick, “bilateral deals were the chief mechanism for establishing constitutional order.” (1998, p.70)

regions so that economic crisis or even conflict at the regional level could be avoided.<sup>428</sup>

If, for example, a correlation can be found between a shift of the PL vote pattern in this region group from an anti-regime outcome in 1993 to one that is pro-government in 1995 (or anti-government in 1993 and 1995, but pro-government in 1999), and it is evident that *soglasheniias* have been successfully negotiated between the election cycles, perhaps it is a clue to the fact that the federal incentive for reaching an agreement was to gain partisan support in that region. If, on the other hand, there is no change from partisan PL outcomes before and after the negotiation of one of these region to center bilateral deals, clues to explain the payoff must be found elsewhere.

The basic task is to determine whether or not the existence of a *soglasheniia* results in PL outcome patterns that are significantly different from what we have outlined thus far. Tables 5.6 and Summary Table 5.6A show the results from the three Duma election cycles of 1993, 1995 and 1999 for the regions grouped by the existence of at least one *soglasheniia* between the listed region and the Kremlin regime. Of the sixteen subject units included in this group, five are republics, two are krais, eight are oblasts and one is a federal city. For the sake of clarification, it is important to point out that these bilateral treaties are unlike the power sharing agreements which were anticipated as a necessary part of the post-Federation Treaty clarification process that would resolve some of the issues that had been left vague or ill-defined in the negotiations of the original

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<sup>428</sup> Hanson (1999) and Stoner-Weiss (1999) develop a discussion on the bilateral treaty process and have uncovered information on 43 agreements to the end of 1998. Stoner-Weiss in particular identifies these agreements as a means of “negotiated autonomy”, an acceptable federal alternative to regional crisis.

federal formation agreement (clarifications usually not in written form).<sup>429</sup> Most of these agreements apply only to the particular region with which they have been negotiated, and thus they did not serve as paradigms for the implementation of any unilateral federal to region policies.

In general these dogovorys (treaties) or soglosheniias (agreements) provide special considerations and preferential treatment to a subject region in the granting by the Kremlin of a heightened degree of sovereignty, autonomy, or independence of action regarding federal revenue obligations applied to the region. In short, these bilateral deals did for some of the Russian subject units what the ideological platform of the OVR Party advocated for all. Although all of the subject regions of the federation have the same rights and responsibilities under the federal dogovory clauses,<sup>430</sup> and most regions have attempted to arrange bilateral agreements, only five republics, two krajs, eight oblasts and one of the federal cities have signed some form of extra-constitutional bilateral agreement with the federal regime. Of further significance of this objective measure of Russian federal asymmetry, these sixteen subject units have succeeded in negotiating a total of forty four soglosheniias with the federal government, a ratio of policy relation that gives eighteen percent of the eighty nine subject units 100 percent of all the bilateral

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<sup>429</sup> In an attempt to outline the impact of negotiations between the individual subject units and the federal government, the OECD Report of 2000 describes the different forms of the negotiations. There has been a “proliferation” of bilateral Treaties (Dogovory) as well as what is referred to as “corresponding Agreements,” (Soglasheniia) since the original Soglasheniia on Intergovernmental Relations of 1994 and 1995. Many have resulted from negotiations between representatives of Federal organs at the regional level and local regional representatives.

<sup>430</sup> These clauses are: 1) Federal expenditures in a region are to come from federal taxes collected from that region. 2) Federal regional programs will be financed from the federal budget. 3) Regional authority over federal expenditures of extra budgetary funds. (From OECD, 2000)

agreements.<sup>431</sup> The Republic of Tatarstan was the first to demand and receive a *soglasheniia*, which was signed in February of 1994, and Chelyabinsk recorded the last known agreement in July of 1997. It appears that a thirty month window of opportunity opened for the accomplishment of these special relations and considerations under Yeltsin's presidency, and by all accounts the Putin regime has closed the window on any new bilateral deals and has displayed little patience with the idea of extending those that are currently in effect, but soon to expire.

When the list of *soglasheniia* regions on Table 5.6 is compared to the Population, HGRP and AFI Tables, we find that of the sixteen subject units included in the selected *soglasheniia* group, nine of the regions have also been selected based on population, twelve of the sixteen are regions included on the selected HGRP group and nine are also included on the AFI selected region list. Summary information available on the negotiated treaties<sup>432</sup> reveals that thirty seven of the forty four documented bilateral agreements were struck between the regions that are included on both the selected HGRP and *Soglasheniia* regions and the federal government, eighty four percent of all of the bilateral agreements on the public record. Of note is the fact that eight oblasts and two krais have successfully negotiated bilateral agreements with the federal government. This is an unusual circumstance because, as outlined earlier in this analysis, these unit types were crafted as administrative districts that would facilitate the economic and organizational goals of the Soviet era without building on the foundation of the ethno-nationalism that the Party planners hoped to assuage, and then eliminate, from the Union.

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<sup>431</sup> Based on documentation by OECD (2000) and Stoner-Weiss (1999).

<sup>432</sup> This information is primarily taken from OECD 2000 data.



When compared with the historical record touted by the ethno-national republics and okrugs, the oblasts and krajs have little to claim as a tradition of political separation or autonomy, and since the early days of the collapse of the Soviet Union the ethno-national subject units have garnered most of the attention as the class of regional subject units are most likely to challenge the sovereign authority of the Moscow regime. Therefore, to find that krajs, oblasts and even a federal city demand the right to negotiate a bilateral treaty with the Kremlin regime is noteworthy. The fact that they secured special treaty relationships with Moscow is remarkable. The PL patterns that have emerged thus far, when combined with the facts of these negotiated relationships between the Kremlin and some non-ethnic units, suggest that the Soviet era plan that envisioned center-to-region relations based on the ethnically sterile administrative model of the oblast and krai, has instead had the opposite effect. It seems that the oblasts and krajs have become more like ethno-national subject units rather than the okrugs and republics becoming more like Stalin's vision of the oblast. This would suggest that territorial size, history and ethno-national composition are not the crucial variables in predicting the likelihood of the existence of a bilaterally negotiated region-to-center relationship. Ethnicity does not appear to be the key component of the ability of a region to behave as an autonomous subunit.

I now turn to the issue of whether or not the federal government achieved an electoral payoff for its willingness to negotiate with these selected regions. Tables 5.6 and 5.6A show that the patterns from the other selected regional groups continue. It is not a surprise that the results from 1993 mirror those of other selected group patterns, as most of the *soglosheniias* were negotiated after the 1993 election cycle, but I would



expect evidence of a payoff beginning in 1995, and, if not, then most certainly in 1999 after all of the agreements had been concluded. The outcomes listed on Table 5.6A confirm that the 1993 anti-government LDP victory was followed by a repetition of the pattern seen above of the shift to the CPRF by a majority of the regional pluralities in 1995. As we saw with the previous group lists, 1999 witnessed a shift from the majority of regions recording anti-government PL outcomes to a significant pro-government plurality showing. The 1999 regional distribution of party pluralities saw 11 of these soglasheniia regions supported the Unity Party, only three provided pluralities to the CPRF and only two chose the OVR Party. For the first time the outcome for a selected group of regions exhibited a significantly different pattern than the other selected regional groups in the 1999 summary outcomes. In all other cases reviewed thus far the summary results gave the advantage in the pro-government versus the anti-government outcome totals to the combined anti-government pluralities of the selected group. In 1999 this changed for the soglasheniia group, with the pro-government summary total boasting a count of eleven regions, with the anti-government outcomes split between two parties in only five of the sixteen regions. Further research is necessary before we can conclude that the existence of these agreements translated into this sole instance of a majority pro-government outcome, but the correlation of the two is without question. To investigate further the strong relationship of the HGRP and the Soglasheniia groups that was evident in the fact that twelve of the sixteen subject regions were found to share membership in the two selected lists, I have compiled the results for the selected regions which are included in the group of HGRP, but are **not** regions with special bilateral agreements with the federal government.

<b>Summary Table 5.7A</b>				
<b>On HGRP but with no Soglasheniia</b>	<b>N=12</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>
CPRF		0	8	5
LDP		7	2	--
RDC		3	--	--
OHR		--	1	--
YABLOKO		0	0	0
OVR		--	--	2
UNITY		--	--	5
SPLIT (pro-government)		0	0	0
SPLIT (anti-government)		0	1	0
SPLIT (pro / anti)		2	0	0
<b>TOTAL: Anti-Government</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>TOTAL: Pro-Government</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>

Table 5.7 and Summary Table 5.7A reveal a PL outcome pattern for 1993 and 1995 which very closely resemble that of all other regional list outcomes. Of the twelve regional subjects which appear on this list, seven supported the LDP in 1993, and eight supported the CPRF in 1995. The 1999 results demonstrate a bifurcation of partisan support with 5 regions supporting the CPRF and five supporting the Unity party, with the final assessment of PL total closely repeating the pattern from 1993 with a total of seven regions recording an anti-government party plurality, and five pro-regime plurality results. Two outcomes of note for this group of wealthy regions deserve comment. First, with no republics included on this list, all of the subject units represented are non-ethnically defined regions; second, the two lone regional pluralities for the pro-autonomy OVR party came from the Moscow city/oblast area, a combined city/region that is the political and cultural heart of the Russian state.

The question of the payoffs related to the bilateral agreements may be answered in the circumstances surrounding the election outcomes for St. Petersburg and Moscow in 1999. The Mayor of St. Petersburg, Vladimir Yakovlev, was instrumental in the establishment of the OVR Party in the run-up to the 1999 Duma elections, and yet the

city's popular PL vote went in support of the pro-government Unity Party. It is evident from the information provided on Table 5.6 that St. Petersburg enjoyed the benefits derived from successfully negotiating the most agreements of any one federal subject unit with the federal government (ten), and after Yeltsin's shameful resignation, what had been a regime in rapid decline now looked to be a revitalized administrative system under Putin. That change could have been influential enough to result in a plurality of support for the federal regime that was expressed in a Unity Party plurality victory.

When the plurality outcomes for Moscow and St. Petersburg in 1999 are compared (see Table 5.17), it becomes clear that popular support for the OVR in Moscow received a significant plurality of forty two percent, and the PL results in St. Petersburg indicate mediocre support of Unity at eighteen percent of the vote, the CPRF with fourteen percent and OVR at sixteen percent, and fifty two percent of St. Petersburg's PL vote for other parties. Investigating further we find that turnout in Moscow City was over sixty four percent in 1999, compared to a rate of turnout at only fifty four percent for St. Petersburg, numbers of voters that represent an increase over previous PL cycles in Moscow, and a decline from the previous cycle in St. Petersburg (See Table 5.16). The illogic of Russian regional relations is exemplified by the situation in St. Petersburg. We find here a city that has the same constitutional-treaty defined status as any other federal subject unit type (such as a ethno-republic), it is included on all of the selected lists that have been compiled based on objective conditions that indicate the relative capacity for influence and political power, it has negotiated the most bilateral agreements between a subject unit and the Kremlin, and yet it consistently has recorded turnout levels in the Duma election cycles below the national average, and levels of votes wasted on minor

political parties at as high as seventy one percent in 1995 with plurality victory for a major national party as low as thirteen percent of the PL vote. To answer this seeming lack of political efficacy in St. Petersburg, the Mayor becomes one of the chief advocates for the anti-regime OVR Party, and the electorate of his city either ignored his advocacy, or he changed his ideological vision when a new president came to power.

Whatever the cause, a comparison of the summary results from Table 5.6A (Soglasheniia) and 5.7A (HGRP but no Soglasheniia) indicate that the group that held special bilateral agreements with the federal regime provided a 1999 pro-government margin of eleven out of sixteen region pluralities, and the HGRP subject units with no soglosheniias came down on the side of the anti-government parties in 1999 with seven of twelve regional pluralities for the CPRF or the OVR parties. Although the results from these two groups do not represent a conclusive outcome, the strong correlation of PL plurality results among these selected regions and the existence (or not) of a soglasheniia suggests that there may be a link between electoral outcomes favorable to the federal regime and the existence of a bilateral agreement. In any case, further investigation into the strength of the correlation between bilateral agreements and election related payoffs to the federal government is warranted, but beyond the scope of this analysis.

The next three issues to be considered related to federal asymmetry are first, based on the objective conditions utilized thus far, what are the most influential regions as a group; second, what subject unit types qualify as members of this group of the most influential; and finally, what kind of comparative results do we find in the party list vote outcomes for this combined region set?

### **Who and What Seem to Matter:**

This analysis has, in one group form or another, outlined the party list outcomes of a total of forty separate subject regions that are considered important based on some objective identifiers that contribute to the asymmetric character of the Russian Republic. By compiling a list of regions based on their previous inclusion on Tables 5.1 (Population), 5.3 (HGRP), 5.4 (AFI), and 5.6 (Soglasheniia), we come up with a set of regions that can be justifiably characterized as ‘influential’, and that provides a much larger ‘N’ group than has been analyzed thus far. The break down of subject unit types in this group includes seven of the twenty-one republics, all six of the Russian krais, twenty-five of the forty-nine oblasts,<sup>433</sup> and both of the federal cities. In order to put the results discussed thus far into a more clear perspective, I have compiled the PL results for all of these forty subject units into a listing that appears on Table 5.8 and are summarized on Table 5.8A. Note that I have again focused on only the three main parties that competed in the three election cycles, with the same summary focus in mind for this combined group as was the case previously. The application of this methodological approach has allowed me to focus on some very well defined PL-based ideological outcomes, and provides some interesting outcome correlations.<sup>434</sup>

The results in Table 5.8 and 5.8A indicate the expected LDP dominance in the 1993 PL elections, with that party achieving the plurality in twenty-eight of the forty

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<sup>433</sup> Although there are actually 50 Oblasts, I have redefined the Jewish Oblast as that of an Okrug because it was established for the sole purpose of providing a geographic space for the relocation of Jewish Russians during the Soviet era. Thus its characteristics are more akin to those of an Okrug than any other unit type.

<sup>434</sup> See Table 5.17 and Maps 5.17A-5.17C for the CPRF, LDP, RDC, OHR, Unity and OVR results for all eighty nine regions.

Regions of Influence	N=40	1993	1995	1999
CPRF		3	29	13
LDP		28	4	--
RDC		7	--	--
OHR		--	2	--
OVR		--	--	4
UNITY		--	--	23
SPLIT (pro-government)		0	0	0
SPLIT (anti-government)		0	2	0
SPLIT (pro/anti)		5	0	0
OTHER (Includes Yabloko)		(39)	(29)	(30)
<b>TOTAL: Anti-Government</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>TOTAL: Pro-Government</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>23</b>

selected regions of influence. In spite of what appeared to be a strong showing for LDP in 1993, it is note worthy that of these forty regional subject units only Dagestan provided a party list majority vote of over fifty percent, a result that turns out to be the only majority vote for one of these key parties in any of the three election cycles, and what is of special interest is that the majority was not recorded for the LDP, but for the CPRF. The average plurality vote for the LDP in 1993 was only 21.7 percent, with the 1993 CPRF meager average of 11.7 percent, and the RDC achieving a plurality average of 16.4 percent. An important outcome is the consistently high ratio of votes recorded in the 'other' category, with an average for all regions of 50.1 percent in 1993.<sup>435</sup> The fact that such a high percentage of votes are classified under this heading, in spite of the strong showing by the LDP in the number of regional pluralities won, indicates that ideological identification with major political parties was quite weak in 1993 among these 'influential' voters.

In 1993 only two regional units (Dagestan and Orel) gave a plurality vote to one of these three parties at or above the level of the 'other' vote, while in all of the other

<sup>435</sup> Note the astounding 73 percent of the 'other' vote in Omsk Oblast.

regions the 'other' vote plurality far outpaced that of any single party, and usually was at a greater level than the combined pluralities for the other three parties combined. In only eight of the regions was the plurality vote for the winning party at a level of thirty percent or greater, and in four regions the party plurality victor achieved only seventeen percent of the vote (or less). A telling example of the nature of the 1993 party list vote is the outcome for Bashkortostan, which gave the party plurality to the CPRF at fifteen percent, but sixty four percent of the votes were cast in the 'other' category. When the LDP, RDC, and Other vote outcomes are combined for Bashkortostan, we find that eighty five percent of the voters cast their ballots against the victorious CPRF and eighty seven percent against the election wide winning LDP.

The 1995 CPRF plurality in the majority of these regions almost duplicated the 1993 LDP results, with the CPRF carrying twenty nine of the forty regions, with an average vote plurality of twenty one percent (compared to the 1993 average of the LDP at 21.7 percent), and the average for the 'other' vote category at fifty eight percent in 1995, up by eight points from 1993. In 1995 there were only three party pluralities at or above the thirty percent margin, with twenty party plurality victories at twenty percent of the popular vote or less. Once again the outcomes for 'other' interests was the highest and again it was often the case that the combined vote for the three major political parties selected for this summary analysis was less than the vote for combined vote for 'others'.

Significant results abounded in 1995, such as the outcome for Sverdlovsk Oblast with eight percent of the popular vote for the CPRF, nine percent for the LDP, eight percent for the RDC and an astounding seventy five percent for other interests. Even Moscow City saw an increased "other" vote from forty one percent in 1993 to sixty four



percent in 1995. Although the LDP and CPRF achieved the most regional plurality victories in 1993 and 1995, it is clear from this data table that the partisanship of the Russian regional populations was not significantly in support of either of these ideological platforms. Sverdlovsk is an example of how extreme the PL discrepancy can be, with the LDP achieving the plurality among the three parties at a mere nine percent in 1995, as compared to the CPRF and OHR outcomes for Sverdlovsk at eight percent each, and the outcome against the LDP in 1995 totaled ninety one percent of the PL vote. It is evident from the party list vote data for this group in 1993 and 1995 that although the CPRF and LDP achieved plurality victories in the first two election cycles, that victory was shallow (to say the least) with an average plurality for the winning party over the two election cycles of only 21.3 percent of the PL vote. These outcomes for 1993 and 1995 support the conclusion of many analysts that the strength of the SMD victories of the Duma candidates was based on support for the individual candidate rather than party identification.

The outcomes for 1999, in the context of Table 5.8 and 5.8A, reveal that the shift from the patterns of the previous two election cycles was even more pronounced when these influential regions are analyzed as a group. Although the Unity Party was the popular plurality victor with twenty three of the forty regions supporting its cause, there has been a significant change to the overall outcome in 1999, with the ratio of anti-government versus pro-government outcomes moving from an average of thirty three regions casting PL votes against the regime and only 4.5 regions 'for' the regime, to only seventeen against and twenty three pro-regime in 1999. Not only did the CPRF suffer a defeat in total of regional pluralities for this group, but the LDP/Zhirinovskiy bloc all but

dropped from the scene and, for the first time in all three election cycles, the political party representing a pro-government platform was successful in a majority of the regions based on the party list outcome when compared to the previous results for the RDC and OHR Parties.

Although the total number of regions that gave plurality support to the winning party declined to twenty three in 1999, the average plurality outcome for a pro-government Party increased to 25.6 percent, with the CPRF the runner-up at 23.7 percent followed by the losing effort of the OVR Party that recorded an average plurality among the regions of only 10.5 percent. Significant as well for 1999 is the fact that the plurality for Unity was at (or above) thirty percent in twelve of the forty regions, that only two regional plurality victories for any party were at less than twenty percent of the region PL vote, and that the votes in the 'other' category declined by over seventeen percent from 1995 to an average for 1999 of 40.5 percent, the lowest combined total for that category in all three election cycles. Although when the plurality votes against the winning party are combined there remains a substantial number of regions that do not actually support the party plurality victor, such as Tomsk Oblast which provided a nineteen percent plurality for the Unity Party, but the combined popular vote against Unity turns out to be eighty three percent of the total PL votes. As an indication of ideological outcomes and pro regime partisanship, the overall reduction in wasted votes and votes for 'others', combined with the general rejection of the OVR Party and its platform in thirty six of these forty regions, made 1999 a very important election cycle.

Summary 5.9A									
PG, AG, and Mixed Plurality by Election Year									
Table Number and Name	1993			1995			1999		
	PG	AG	Mix	PG	AG	Mix	PG	AG	Mix
5.1 Population N=26	.23	.69	.08	.08	.85	.14	.42	.58	0
5.2 Population Density N=13	.08	.85	0	.08	.85	.15	.23	<b>.61</b>	0
5.3 HGRP N=27	.22	.63	.15	.07	.85	.11	.52	.48	0
5.4 AFI N=26	.19	.69	.11	.08	.88	.04	.50	.50	0
5.5 LGRP N=29	0	<b>.93</b>	.07	<b>.10</b>	.86	.03	.41	.55	.03
5.6 Soglasheniia N=16	.19	.69	.12	.06	<b>.94</b>	.06	<b>.69</b>	.31	0
5.7 HGRP No Soglasheniia N=12	<b>.25</b>	.58	.17	.08	.92	.08	.42	.58	0
5.8 Influential N=40	.17	.77	.12	.05	.87	.05	.57	.42	0
<b>Averages</b>	<b>.17</b>	<b>.73</b>	<b>.10</b>	<b>.07</b>	<b>.88</b>	<b>.08</b>	<b>.47</b>	<b>.50</b>	<b>.00</b>

The objective characteristics that have been utilized for the selection of regional groups for analysis in this study and their correlation with the outcomes described thus far are summarized in Table 5.9A. In this summary table I have indicated the percentage of the selected group of regions that cast a pro-government (PG), and anti-government (AG) or a split party list vote in the three election cycles to date. Note that I have indicated the highest levels of PG, AG and Mixed outcomes in bold print, and that highest measure of anti-government sentiments as expressed in a PL vote came in 1995 when ninety four percent of the regions on the Soglasheniia list cast a plurality vote for a party other than the OHR. Conversely, the highest measure of pro-government PL support before 1999 was that recorded in 1993 of twenty five percent of the included regions of the group with no Soglasheniia but high measures of GRP.

#### Summary of the Selected Group Outcomes:

The overall summary for these groups as they correlate with indications of government support levels based group wide party list results make 1995 the worst year for the federal regime, with an average of eighty eight percent of the regions casting anti-government votes, and only seven percent casting PL pluralities in support of the regime

<b>Summary Table 5.9B</b>					
<b>Range of Spread between PG and AG outcomes by Election Year and Between 1993 and 1999</b>					
		<b>1993 PG-AG Range of Spread</b>	<b>1995 PG-AG Range of Spread</b>	<b>1999 PG-AG Range of Spread</b>	<b>1995-1999 PG-AG Change in the Range of Spread</b>
5.1 Population	N=26	.46	.77	16	-61
5.2 Density	N=13	.77	.77	38	-39
5.3 HGRP	N=27	.41	.78	4	-74
5.4 AFI	N=26	.50	.80	0	-80
5.5 LGRP	N=29	.93	.76	14	-62
5.6 Soglasheniia	N=16	.50	.88	38	-50
5.7 HGRP but no Soglasheniia	N=12	.33	.84	16	-68
5.8 Influential	N=40	.60	.82	15	-67
<b>Average difference</b>		<b>.56</b>	<b>.80</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>-63</b>

in Moscow. What stands out in Table 5.9A is the fact that the Soglasheniia group was the most anti-government group in 1995, at ninety four percent of regions, and this same group became the most pro-regime in 1999, with a support for the regime backed party at sixty nine percent of the group's regions, with only thirty one percent still showing an anti-government regime outcome. Although it is noteworthy that the anti-government outcome for this group declined by sixty three percentage points between 1995 and 1999, it is remarkable to me that over thirty percent of these regions that were granted special bilateral deals by the Yeltsin regime defected from the pro-government plurality group.

Summary Table 5.9B provides data that indicates the changes over the three election cycles for these selected regions in the difference between the percentage of regions within a group that cast a pro-government party list vote and the number that select an anti-government party. Note the dramatic spike in the range between the two in 1995 when the average was eighty points, and the overall improvement that was revealed in 1999 when the range declined to an average of only seventeen points between the

**Summary List 5.9C: 1999  
Ordered Status as Pro-Government**

**Summary List 5.9D: 1999  
Ordered Status as Anti-Government**

<b>Table Number and Name</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>PG</b>	<b>Table Number and Name</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>AG</b>
5.6 Soglasheniia	N=16	.69	5.2 Population Density	N=13	.61
5.8 Influential	N=40	.57	5.7 HGRP No Soglasheniia	N=12	.58
5.3 HGRP	N=27	.52	5.1 Population	N=26	.58
5.4 AFI	N=26	.50	5.5 LGRP	N=29	.55
5.7 HGRP No Soglasheniia	N=12	.42	5.4 AFI	N=26	.50
5.1 Population	N=26	.42	5.3 HGRP	N=27	.48
5.5 LGRP	N=29	.41	5.8 Influential	N=40	.42
5.2 Population Density	N=13	.23	5.6 Soglasheniia	N=16	.31

highest anti-government group plurality and the best pro-government showing by a regional group. Column five of Table 5.9B indicates the change in range from 1995 (the worst year) and 1999, and it is evident that the overall improvement is dramatic. On average the gap closed by sixty three percentage points, with the AFI group showing the greatest amount of improvement with a change from an eighty point spread in 1995 to no difference (and a 50/50 PG to AG outcome) in 1999.

Of final note from Tables 5.9 A and B is the observation that in the category of mixed plurality outcomes among these regions and within these groups, the results confirm that the electorate has become more decisive, as the recording of split votes among political parties virtually disappeared in the 1999 election outcomes. In general, these two summary tables tell us that these selected groups from very similar paths in the PL election outcomes for all three election cycles, with all eight groups recording anti-government pluralities in the majority of the regions in both 1993 and 1995, with all groups shifting from the LDP in 1993 to the CPRF in 1995. In 1999 we see that, when the outcomes are averaged for all eight region groups, the anti-government and pro-government difference is nearly a fifty-fifty split (with forty seven percent PG and fifty percent AG), with only the group defined by population density indicating a significant

AG to PG ratio of sixty one percent to twenty three percent. If the 1999 results are considered the most reflective of a balanced PL outcome when compared to the anti-government polarization that emerged in both 1993 and 1995, we can compile a list of region groups ordered by measured support for the regime in the party list plurality outcomes from most to least supportive.

Table 5.9C provides a list of the selected region groups ordered from the most supportive of the federal regime in PL outcomes, and Table 5.9D is the list of anti-government groups in ordered status from least supportive of the Moscow regime to most supportive. As we might expect, the pressures of high population variables and low economic indices head the list of region groups that have anti-government sentiments in the most recent (and most balanced) election cycle, and conversely, the region group developed the most intimate policy relationship with the Kremlin regime that heads the list of regional groups that support the federal regime, followed by those with combined variables of influence and significant economic advantages. The correlations of region groups to outcomes suggest that poor and densely populated subject units are the regions most frustrated with the new Russia, and the wealthy and most 'connected' have the most to gain from the success of the federal regime as it is currently constituted. Of significance is the outcome for the soglasheniia group that suggests that their newly emergent level of regime support may be more a result of the opening of a door to special bilateral relations than any ideological stand for the principles of democracy and fair play.

## **Does Ethno-nationalism Matter?**

I have previously discussed the fact that Russia's population is composed of slightly more than eighty percent Slavic Russians, with the remaining twenty percent a mix of over ninety non-Slavic ethnic groups that range from the almost four percent of the population that are Tatarian, down to the 200 Oroki people who are so few in number that they don't register as a percentage point in the population data. These ninety or so ethnic groups are dispersed throughout the Russian state thanks to Stalin's relocation policies, but there remain in Russia thirty two regional subject units that are distinctly ethno-national in their most critical defining characteristic. Although ethno-nationality may be one of the most obvious objective characteristics that represent the asymmetry of Russia's regional form and function, I have saved this topic as the last objective measure of asymmetry to be outlined.

The subject units that have been set apart as ethnically defined republics, okrugs and an autonomous oblast are listed in Table 5.10 and Summary Table 5.10A, which provides the now familiar information related to subject unit type, PL outcomes and the summary totals of the pro-government or anti-government regional party plurality results.<sup>436</sup> Map 5.10 in Appendix A shows how the majority of the land mass occupied by these ethnic regions lies along the north to northeast coast of the Arctic Ocean, with one small group bordering the Black Sea in the volatile Caucasus region, a second group along the Central Asian border with Mongolia and the remaining group in the Volga-Ural region away from contact with any external borders. Only the Republic of Kareliya

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<sup>436</sup> The idea "exclusive ethnic identity denies the equality, or even the co-nationality, of other ethnic groups" that was expressed by Juviler (1997, p.97) provides an important perspective to the outcomes for these region types.



<b>Summary Table 5.10A</b>				
<b>Ethnically Defined Regions</b>	<b>N=30</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>
CPRF		4	15	8
LDP/Zhirinovskiy		15	6	0
RDC/OHR/Unity		2	5	-17
OVR		-	-	6
OTHER		6	1	0
SPLIT (pro-government)		0	0	0
SPLIT (anti-government)		0	2	0
SPLIT (pro / anti)		4	2	0
<b>TOTAL: Anti-Government</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>TOTAL: Pro-Government</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>17</b>

stands alone on the northwestern border of Finland with no other Russian ethnic subject unit adjacent to its borders. The belt of territory that lies to the south of these ethnic subject regions is substantially covered by the region group that was selected based on the objective total population measure, a location depiction that reinforces the general pattern of low populations in ethno-territories and high populations in administratively designated regions.

The summary data presented in Table 5.10A provides information that is both consistent with expectations and yet surprising. For many analysts, the greatest threat to the consolidation of the Russian Federal democracy has been the one posed by likelihood that the ethno-national territories would demand confederal-like political autonomy, or outright independence. Based on the patterns from the data tables presented thus far it comes as no surprise that the summary results of an additional region set mimic those that have come before. The surprise in the outcomes presented in Table 5.10A is that a selection of only ethnic territories would result in duplicated patterns of LDP support in 1993, the dominance of CPRF pluralities in 1995 and the shift to a support by a majority of the region group members to PL support for the Unity party, and a bifurcation of

summary results that put forty five percent of these regions in the anti-government camp, and fifty five percent classified as pro-regime.<sup>437</sup>

The 1999 outcomes for these ethnic regions are the key to understanding the illogic of Russia's federal districting plan. Although it is reasonable to expect that the electorate in the ethno-national regions might back a political party platform such as that advocated by the OVR Party, or even reconcile the support for the neo-Soviet advocacy of the CPRF based on a desire for the restoration of a more centrally controlled state that could better fulfill the social welfare contract that the people have come to expect, support of the Russian nationalist LDP in 1993 and the pro-federal regime Unity Party in 1999 challenge the logic behind the policy that retains Russia as an ethno-federal Republic.

Surprisingly, only six of the thirty-one ethnic regions supported the pro-regional autonomy OVR Party with a PL plurality outcome (nineteen percent), and of that group only one was an okrug. The neo-Soviet ideology propagated by the CPRF would seem to be the preferable alternative for this ethno-region group if autonomy or independence is not the goal and more support from the Kremlin coffers is, but even that Party choice was the plurality winner in only eight of the thirty one regions in 1999 (twenty six percent). It is surprising to see such a poor showing for the OVR Party, but the fact that the majority of these ethno-national subject units have provided the Unity Party with the PL victory in seventeen of thirty-one, or fifty five percent of this region group, is remarkable. This rejection of the OVR Party platform has implications that will be discussed at length in the chapters to come, but in brief, the fact that the CPRF and Unity hold a combined

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<sup>437</sup> Chechnya has been dropped from the summary results because of the lack of returns from the war-torn republic.

margin of victory in these ethnic regions of twenty five to six, when seen in the light of the post election merger of the CPRF and Unity factions in the Duma chamber, makes this outcome, in effect, what may be the triumph of a shared neo-Soviet-Russian-central-federalist vision of Russia's future path of reform.<sup>438</sup>

Although nine of the ethno-republics and one okrug have never provided the regime a pro-government party list plurality victory (see Table 5.11), this does not indicate a pattern of opposition that is significantly limited to ethno-regions. It turns out that there are at least twenty non-ethnic subject units that have never supported the regime with a PL plurality for the government backed party, and when compared to the fact that the okrugs gave Unity the plurality in nine out of ten PL outcomes in 1999, the argument that the ethno-regions are a threat to the disintegration of the union is significantly weakened.

Only six of the eighty nine subject units have always provided a regional party list plurality victory to the party that is backed by the federal regime (see Table 5.12), and, of those six, one half are ethno-national regions.<sup>439</sup> The summary of regional outcomes presented here indicates not only that the threat of the fragmentation of the Russian Republic along ethno-national lines is not as likely as many analysts have claimed it to be, but the results also suggest that the regional subject units are more united in a

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<sup>438</sup> Although these results indicate a softening of regional attitudes towards the federal regime and the political party system, Lussier sees little in the form of sincere intentions in this trend. "Ultimately the activity of the regional executives in forming regional parties did not advance the cause of party building in the Russian regions, but was simply the governors' latest tactic in trying to ensure future good relations with the Kremlin. Governors truly committed to any one political party or movement were few in number." (Lussier, 2002, p.67) Thus, the 'late hour' support for the Unity Party may fit in with this tactic.

<sup>439</sup> The three are Khanty-Mansii, Taimyr, and Yamel-Nenets Okrugs.

<b>Table 5.13</b>				
<b>Ethnic Republics With a Majority Russian Population</b>				
<b>N=9</b>				
<b>Region</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Results by Party Plurality</b>		
		<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>
Adyega	68%	CPRF	CPRF	CPRF
Buryatiya	70%	LDP	CPRF	CPRF
Gorno-Altay	60%	LDP	CPRF	Unity
Kareliya	74%	LDP/OHR	CPRF/LDP	Unity
Khakasiya	80%	LDP	CPRF	Unity
Komi	58%	LDP	LDP	Unity
Mordoviya	61%	LDP	CPRF	OVR
Sakha (Yakutia)	50%	LDP	CPRF	Unity
Udmurtia	59%	LDP	CPRF	Unity
<b>Anti-Government</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pro-Government</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Split</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

consistent pattern of ideological response to the transition and consolidation of the post-Soviet regime than had been previously thought. The similarity of results between the ethno-national regions and the objectively determined region groups could be explained by the relocation policies of the Soviet era. If the previously outlined process of divide and conquer, combined with the exile, imprisonment and executions of ethno-national leaders carried out under Stalin's orders resulted in the Russification of the territories, the shared result pattern makes more sense.

To shed light on this issue, I have compiled the list of regions on Table 5.13 of ethno-nationally designated regions that have a population majority of 'Slavic' Russians. This group of nine subject units represents a relatively small number of the total Russian subject regions, but the outcomes are of interest because they indicate that these illogically designated non-Russian-Russian regions overwhelmingly supported the LDP in 1993, the CPRF in 1995 and Unity in 1999. It appears that no matter how the regional subject units are assigned to grouped sets, the outcomes are remarkably consistent (if not

<b>Summary Table 5.14A</b>				
<b>Randomly Selected Regions</b>	<b>N=24</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>
CPRF		4	20	7
LDP		16	0	--
RDC/OHR/Unity		0	2	15
OVR		--	--	1
SPLIT (pro-government)		0	0	0
SPLIT (anti-government)		0	1	0
SPLIT (pro / anti)		4	1	1
<b>TOTAL: Anti-Government</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>TOTAL: Pro-Government</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>

slightly more anti-government for 'Russians' in ethno-territories). The patterns that have developed over the course of this analysis of objective measures of Russian regional asymmetry have not provided a strong case that regional unit type is a good predictor of list inclusion, except in the case of the Russian okrugs (which consistently fail to objectively qualify for listings that indicate power, population or influence).

Table 5.14 and 5.14A represent a group of regions that were randomly selected by the lottery method from the eighty nine federal subject units, and provides further evidence of the strong results in favor of the opposition parties in the first two post-Soviet legislative elections, and the significant shift in 1999 to a pro-regime stance reflected in the party list plurality outcomes. Table 5.15 is the 'N' coefficient summary table, and it reveals that among the eight objectively determined regional groups, the 'average' region group consists of a total of twenty four subject regions that is made up of five republics, three krajs, fourteen oblasts and one federal city.<sup>440</sup> When the summary information depicting the patterns of subject unit type inclusion in the groups of selected regions (in Table 5.15) is compared to the random sample of regions (Table 5.14), we find that the randomly selected group exhibits a pattern that is in line with what was found to be the

<sup>440</sup> See Maps 5.15 A-5.15D for depiction of location of each subject unit type within the boundaries of the Republic.

<b>Summary Table 5.15</b>						
<b>N Coefficient of Subject Unit Type Representation for Non-Ethnic Subject Unit Groups N= 8 Tables</b>						
<b>Table Number and Title</b>	<b>N Total</b>	<b>N Republic</b>	<b>N Krais</b>	<b>N Oblasts</b>	<b>N Cities</b>	<b>N Okrugs</b>
5.1 Population	26	3	5	16	2	--
5.2 Population Density	13	5	1	7	N/A	--
5.3 HGRP	27	4	6	15	2	--
5.4 AFI	26	3	5	16	2	--
5.5 LGRP	29	14	0	15	0	*--
5.6 Soglasheniia	16	5	2	8	1	--
5.7 Soglasheniia but On HGRP	12	0	3	8	1	--
5.8 Influence Group	40	7	6	25	2	--
<b>Average</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>--</b>
5.14 Random Sample	24	9	1	13	0	1

\*Several okrugs would have qualified for inclusion on the LGRP list, but to maintain a consistent region type selection for correlation and comparison, the LGRP regions were limited to the other four subject unit types.

average for the objectively determined selections. By testing for a selection bias through the utilization of this random sample, we can confirm that the outcome patterns of the pro-government and anti-government summaries are reliable. It lends further support to the hypothesis that the classification of the Russian regions based on the Soviet era typology classification has become illogical in the federal democracy, both in measured objective results and conditions, but in service to the political ideologically of symmetric federalism as well.

### **Conclusion:**

The results of this analysis of any correlation between party list outcomes and selected regional groups support the hypothesis of the illogic of the utilization of the Soviet era administrative districting system in the democratic Republic. The patterns of outcomes based on subject unit type as well as the patterns of inclusion on selected objectively determined lists suggests that the reform of this districting system would

contribute to the achievement of a more symmetric union. After more than a decade of post-Soviet transition, the likelihood that the rebellion in Chechnya will have a contagion effect on other ethno-territories is minimal, and when we see that nine of the ethno-territories have a minority population of ethno-nationals, that nine of ten of the okrugs have shifted support to the pro-regime political party, it leaves only fourteen of these ethnically defined regions (including Chechnya) that maintain the characteristics of autonomy that the Soviets used to establish these districts. When the results from all of the party list outcomes and the objective measures are combined in order to determine what regional subject units are most likely to be considered both influential and anti-government (see Table 5.16), we find that only one ethno-territory qualifies for this group set. Of the eleven regions that are most likely to continue to be a problem for the federal regime in the future, and have objectively qualified for inclusion in Table 5.16, ten are units that were designed to be administrative containers for the propagation of the economic and cultural vision of the Soviets.

The outcomes summarized here indicate that the ethno-territories do not pose a secessionist threat or a collective political opposition to the federal regime any more than the administratively-crafted subject regions do. The regional party list patterns indicate that Stalin's vision of a system in which the characteristics of the 'administrative districts' would be the paradigm to replace ethno-nationalism for future territorial organization has had the opposite effect. The oblasts and krajs exhibit policy and electoral outcomes that are more consistent with a sub-national ethno-republic than what had been expected from an ethnically 'sterile' administrative district. In spite of the general shift to pro-government sympathies that emerged in the results of 1999, the fact



that this shift occurred in only the most recent election cycle should remind us that the threat of a fracturing of the federal state may still exist. The severity of any ethno-national separatist threat to the Russian Republic and the approach to consolidation that Putin has brought to his presidency are the arenas of analysis to be presented next.

**Chapter Six:**

**POST-YELTSIN PATTERNS OF CENTRALIZED FEDERALISM:  
THE STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL BY THE CENTER CONTINUES,  
1998-2002**

The Putin era introduced a new phase in the transitional efforts of the federal regime to regain the initiative in the determination of how the power relations of the Republic would be configured. This new initiative to strengthen the hand of the executive branch of Russia's government, like many other federally initiated events, was introduced through what has become the extraordinary powers of presidential decree. In this case the decree resulted from the fact that the sitting president was under tremendous pressure to avoid the scandal that would lead to criminal prosecution and the demise of his corrupt administration including the elites who comprised his personal "presidential vertical" of power.<sup>441</sup> In order to avoid the legal and political consequences of his personal profiteering, Yeltsin appointed Vladimir Putin, the former Soviet KGB officer who had first been tapped to head the Russian Security Council and was then selected as the last in a series of presidential Prime Minister appointments, to the office of Russian President. In a clear violation of all of the norms of democratic power transition, this man who had made his reputation in a career as an expert in security and espionage (and who never in his life had sought or received a popular vote from a single citizen), was now the second president of the Russian federal democracy. The fact that the two branches of the federal government intended to balance the powers of the presidency, the Judicial and Legislative branches, as well as the general electorate were removed

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<sup>441</sup> Yeltsin's team constructed a presidential vertical of independent political institutions with the apparent aim of squeezing out all other political bodies, especially the legislative ones. (See Shevtsova, 2001, p.31)

completely from this process indicates how significantly and unquestionably the powers of “superpresidentialism” have been consolidated in the Russian Republic.<sup>442</sup>

### **Is Yeltsin’s Choice Russia’s Opportunity?**

This tactic of successor appointment not only insured that the participants with Yeltsin in the crimes against the Russian people remained beyond the reach of prosecution, but also guaranteed that the consolidation of a central-federal regime based on political and constitutional due process would remain unfulfilled. It has been long accepted and understood by students of political democracies that “the outcomes of elections or policy formulation are uncertain, *but the rules cannot be uncertain*”<sup>443</sup> (Emphasis added). Yet in Russia an appointment process was invented and implemented in order to defy any normative expectation of how the transition from the first chief executive to a successor would transpire. The sad fact of this process for the people of Russia was the recognition of the limits on political efficacy which this tactic represented, and it also drove home the point that “in post-Soviet Russia, the law only punishes those who lack imagination.”<sup>444</sup>

The establishment of Putin in the office of chief executive has presented a challenge to the consolidation of the Russian federal democracy as measured by the transfer of power because, as Sakwa described, “democracy may be viewed as consolidated if the party or group that takes power in the initial election at the time of

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<sup>442</sup> Superpresidentialism is “a constitutional order that provides for an extraordinarily strong president and a relatively weak legislature,” was born in Russia in December, 1993 when Yeltsin’s favored draft of a new constitution won popular endorsement in a national referendum. (Fish, 1997, p.326)

<sup>443</sup> Fischer, 1996, p.3

<sup>444</sup> Handelman, 1995, p.12.

transition loses a subsequent election and turns over power to those election winners, and if those election winners then peacefully turn over power to the winners of a later election.”<sup>445</sup> Yeltsin and his cohorts gambled that they could avoid the risk of an electoral loss for their preferred successor by setting the stage for a 2000 first round election victory that would come to provide a stamp of legitimacy on Putin’s presidency by utilizing the appointment process to provide ‘gravitas’ to this otherwise obscure political figure. In the view of some analysts, “Putin’s victory in the ethnic regions, therefore, is not simply the result of some minor electoral fluctuations, but illustrate how he won over sizable segments of the electorates in the ethnic regions.”<sup>446</sup> In short, the scheme set in motion with Putin’s appointment to the presidency worked out in favor of those who had come to control the political and economic fortunes of Russia under Yeltsin’s tutelage.

The political legacy carried over from the Yeltsin era that Putin was appointed to address has been characterized as one of “a legal and policy deadlock” between the legislative and the executive branches of government.<sup>447</sup> Putin has from the start successfully painted his ascendancy to the Presidency as a necessary method to quickly put a strong hand on the controls of the foundering ship of state that Russia had

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<sup>445</sup> Shin, 1994, p.149

<sup>446</sup> Marsh and Warhola, 2001, p.225

<sup>447</sup> The Duma’s and the President’s positions are symmetrical: “The president sees market transactions in land as at a standstill, and seeks to use his decree power to create a market. The parliament sees presidential decrees attempting to circumvent its constitutional prerogatives, and resists. The outcome is a legal and policy deadlock.” (Remington et al., 1998, p. 319)

become,<sup>448</sup> and he wasted no time in beginning his personal process of directives and decrees that would reassert the power of the central government.<sup>449</sup> In the view of some analysts, such as Remington, it seems to be a necessary compromise of democratic principles that the authority of the President be utilized to break any policy and power deadlocks, and the fact is that Putin's authority was validated by his first round electoral success. The transfer of power from Yeltsin to Putin may have insured that the status quo of the Russian transition was protected, and some might argue that this timely replacement of Yeltsin has assured the survival of the Russian Federation, but as Haggard and Kaufman point out, "survival is not the same as consolidation."<sup>450</sup> While many analysts focus on the likely reforms that will result from a Putin presidency, the circumstances of corruption and greed that marked the first decade of post-Soviet transition (along with the significant powers vested in the office of the President) suggest that the Russian Federation may be in the midst of what Schmitter describes as "the lingering demise scenario."<sup>451</sup> The 'scenario' is put in motion when "an autocracy fails

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<sup>448</sup> This claim is supported by Sharlet's conclusion that "[Putin's] predecessor's personal style of governing gradually dissipated the impetus of the state-building process begun after the fall of the USSR. Hence, Putin has focused on strengthening the structural capacity of the state's essential internal functions, while addressing longstanding substantive problems." (Sharlet, 2001, p.201)

<sup>449</sup> Sakwa provides an outline of the focus of the new regime: "On coming to power Putin committed himself to the reconstitution of the state. We have suggested that this could take two main forms:

- compacted statism, where pluralism of civil society and the federal elements in territorial arrangements were threatened; or
- a more pluralistic statism guaranteeing the unimpeded writ of the Constitution, individual rights and the legal division of sovereignty between the center and the regions." (Sakwa, 2002, p.13)

<sup>450</sup> Haggard and Kaufman, 1995, p.16

<sup>451</sup> Schmitter, 1996, p.77

to experience a revival, [and] democracies stumble on without satisfying the aspirations of their citizens and without consolidating an acceptable and predictable set of rules for political competition and cooperation.”<sup>452</sup> Case studies of the regimes that have fallen into such a pattern have shown that the failure of the hybrid system that ‘lingers’ is a slow and painful process. A strong argument can be made that the Yeltsin era was in the grip of the ‘scenario’, but the critical issue now is whether or not the appointment of Putin, and the electoral approval of that appointment, is a sufficient remedy for what may otherwise be the lingering demise of the unconsolidated democratic Republic.<sup>453</sup>

It has been shown in the previous chapters that both institutionalized and non-institutionalized variables of asymmetry,<sup>454</sup> as well the mixed electoral system of party list and single member district competition for seats in the Duma, have contributed to the failure of democratic consolidation. In order for a party list system to succeed, viable and lasting competitive parties must take root. It has become evident from the plurality patterns of the three election cycles that the mixed process of electing Duma representatives has provided little incentive for the consolidation of a competitive and

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<sup>452</sup> Ibid.

<sup>453</sup> With his 2000 election, Putin has been given the time to make the necessary reforms to avoid a further demise, but time for Putin is also a constraint. Linz has shown that “time for the democratic politician is both a resource, since he is given power independently of the changes in public opinion for a period of time, and an extremely confining and limiting condition.” (Linz, 1998, p.22)

<sup>454</sup> According to Hahn, “Russia’s federation problems are rooted in its non-institutionalized asymmetry.” (Emphasis added.) This is true, but because the asymmetries of Russia that were ‘non-institutionalized’ have their roots in traditions that came to form the basis for what has become the institutionalized asymmetries of the sub-federal districting regime, Hahn and I can agree in principle. More direct support for my focus on institutionalized asymmetries as legacies can be derived from Millar and Wolchik who chronicle the path dependence of today’s asymmetry. (For the full discussion see Hahn, 2000 and Millar and Wolchik 1997.)



viable political party system. It was evident for the first time only after the appointment of Putin to the office of president that the party list outcomes reflected a bifurcation of partisanship that was split between a measurable pro-regime - anti-regime outcome rather than an overwhelming outcome in support of an anti-government party. It has become more evident since 1999 that the shift in support for the Unity party was based on the referendum-like identification of Putin with that partisan platform, while it is clear that there remains an ideological (and somewhat sentimental) pull that gives strength to the political position of the CPRF. It is important to note that the apparent support for the Putin era that was identified by the success of the Unity Party, and Putin's personal victory in the presidential elections, can overshadow the fact that, as revealed in Table 6.1,<sup>455</sup> the turnout for the Duma elections in 1999 declined from 1995, and the average plurality margin for the winning political party in the regions averaged only twenty eight percent for the three election cycles. It is significant for the perspective of this study to point out the fact that those numbers indicate that almost forty percent of the electorate sat out the latest (and very critical) 1999 election cycle, and that on average, even when the party representing a referendum of support for the federal regime achieved a remarkable level of success, over sixty six percent of the party list outcomes were cast *against* the winning plurality party. Putin's mandate to rule may have received a boost in the elections of 1999 and 2000, but the consolidation of Russia's political party system was not helped by the electoral process, and has probably suffered a setback.

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<sup>455</sup> See Appendix

### **Putin as the Peoples Choice:**

Putin's first round victory in March of 2000 was at a margin of fifty three percent of the popular vote, and outpaced by far his closest challenger, Zyuganov who managed to win only twenty nine percent of the vote. According to the results of polling done after the 1999 Duma election cycle, it was determined that not only did a significantly high percentage of Unity Party partisans support Putin (ninety two percent), but also sixty eight percent of those who voted in support of Yabloko candidates, seventy nine percent of those who supported the remnants of the LDP that were represented by Zhirinovsky's Party and eighty two percent of the backers of the Party of Right Forces (SPS), saw Putin as the right man for the job. Perhaps most surprising is the fact that by January 2000 even twenty three percent of the Russian Communist electorate (CPRF) and sixty nine percent of the pro-regional autonomy OVR party partisans supported Putin's run for the Presidency. In fact, it is now evident that by January 2000 Putin's margin of victory in his first round battle with Zyuuganov was already established at fifty seven percent of those polled, compared to the approximately twenty percent who backed Zyuuganov.<sup>456</sup>

It may seem that this broad based and crosscutting support among political party partisans bodes well for Russian political stability, but that is probably not the case. The fact that Putin remained disassociated from an official affiliation with any political party (including the Unity Party) indicates that the 2000 elections were Presidential politics as usual in Russia, with the strength of character of the individual more important than the blend of the political ideology of the candidate with his supporting party platform.

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<sup>456</sup> All results here are from the polling of 1940 voters reported in The New Russian Barometer VIII, 19-29 January, 2000.

Although the penchant in Russia has trended towards political (and economic) leadership from individuals who are independent from political party identifications,<sup>457</sup> there has been a consistent connection between the presidency and selected political parties in all three Duma election cycles. In 1993 the lack of support for the RDC Party was tied to Yeltsin as a pseudo policy referendum, a pattern that was repeated in 1995 and the poor showing of the OHR Party. It was not until the 1999 Duma election cycle which linked popular support for the Unity Party to a referendum like statement on Putin's presidency that the trend showed signs of a shift. Instead of repeating the pattern of a poor showing by the 'referendum party' from the previous two election cycles, the party that was publicly supported by Putin achieved regional party list successes that were rivaled only by the performance of the CPRF. The support for the Unity Party in 1999 and the first round majority victory by Putin in the March 2000 presidential election reinforces the identification of 'a faith in individuals' as a characteristic that is dominant in Russian political culture, and the fact that Russia has a total of twenty two elected Presidents<sup>458</sup> who stand free of party affiliation seems to support the claim by Shlapentokh that "feudalism is the best parallel for contemporary Russia" due to what he calls the "privatization of political life."<sup>459</sup> Although a comparison of the Russian polity

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<sup>457</sup> Not only have the new political elite avoided party affiliations in the new democracy, it is becoming increasingly clear that they are not former members of the Soviet nomenklatura either. "Russia's new political leaders are not a simple reproduction of the old Soviet political elite. [T]hey were not members of an active counter-elite; . . . most of today's political leaders are not drawn from highly politicized segments of the old regime; they were neither Communist Party activists nor committed dissidents." (Rivera, 2000, pp.426-27)

<sup>458</sup> This sum includes the presidents of Russia's 21 ethnic republics and Putin.

to a feudal system may be extreme, the combined effect of the generally poor performance of the mixed party list – SMD system, the strong electoral support enjoyed by independent and non-aligned candidates and the popular support among both ethnic and non-ethnic regions for Putin’s presidency-indicate a strong partisanship base built on individual and personal considerations (rather than on a political party base) for the expression of a shared ideology or political efficacy.<sup>460</sup>

It was suggested by Balzer in 1997 that the standard formulation in discussing post-Soviet Russian political change is to accept the fact that “the old institutional structures have been demolished and new institutions, fit to the tasks of establishing stable democracy and a functioning market economy are yet to be created.”<sup>461</sup> The success of the anti-government LDP party in 1993 and CPRF in 1995, along with the corrupt privatization and marketization fiascos of the 1990s (which culminated in the monetary and banking crisis of 1998) that fueled the extreme economic hardships suffered by the population, combine to paint a portrait of a central regime that was on the brink of collapse in 1999. This summary of challenges to the rule of the federal regime supports Balzer’s claim, but does it indicate that Russia was on the verge of disintegration?

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<sup>459</sup> See Shlapentokh, 1997, p.397. A less harsh but equally substantive criticism of the Russian regime was presented by Schmitter who described it as a “dictablanda, a hybrid regime that combines elements of autocracy and democracy due to a persistent but unconsolidated democracy.” (Schmitter, 1996, p78)

<sup>460</sup> Fairbanks has also utilized the ‘feudalism’ analogy, summarized in his statement; the “seizure of state assets disguised as ‘privatization’ has feudalized the state.” (Fairbanks, 2001, p. 51)

<sup>461</sup> Balzer, 1997, p.343

### **Is it Stability or Stagnation?**

Five years and two election cycles after the establishment of the Republic, Russia may have had a new president and an ideologically reconfigured Duma, but if the most salient reason that explained the demise of the Soviet Union was that identified by Dunlop as “at its core nationality—[because] ethnic Russians comprised only approximately half of the USSR’s population,”<sup>462</sup> then the Russian Federation was (and is) in little jeopardy of disintegration. With over eighty percent of the population of the Republic consisting of what can best be described as ethnic (Slavic) Russians, there was no real threat of the disintegration of the Russian Republic prior to Putin’s appointment. The motivational factors that would serve to explain his appointment as president in lieu of a simple resignation on the part of Yeltsin to be followed by the free and fair election of his predecessor must address issues of regime consolidation rather than disintegration. Was it simply a deal brokered by Yeltsin to ensure that neither he nor his loved ones would face trial and imprisonment for their crimes against the Russian people, or would the impeachment and prosecution of Yeltsin have been a greater threat to the consolidation of Russian democracy than his personal appointment of a hand picked successor and his ‘above the law’ process of retirement with immunity from prosecution? I think not.

The events leading up to the appointment and subsequent election of Putin as president can represent no other process than the further consolidation of a dictablanda-like regime in Russia. The regime achieves stability through the retention of the asymmetric characteristics of the Russian federal districting system because it reinforces

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<sup>462</sup> Dunlop, 2000, p.46

the traditional ethno-national character of the union for the purpose of continuing the effective divide and conquers patterns from the past. The continued pattern of relatively low levels of support for political parties and (therefore) political ideologies<sup>463</sup> suggests that Russia's transitional political shift, described by Roeder, from a "balanced republic" in May 1990 through September 1993 to an "autocracy" in October 1993 may not have been reversed.<sup>464</sup> Although the central federal government had not been directly challenged by the time of Yeltsin's resignation deal, it was evident that the center was rotten and that it had found it necessary to bargain with the regions in order to maintain any political policy headway.<sup>465</sup>

There is no doubt that Putin's rise to the Russian Presidency has furthered the consolidation of the pattern of the wielding of unilateral presidential powers that was firmly established in 1993 when Yeltsin was able to dissolve (by force) what he deemed to be an uncooperative Duma, but the claim that this strong-hand policy of superpresidential decree power paid off in a dividend of political stability that has yet to be established. Mcfaul has concluded that "a decade later, the potential for democratic

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<sup>463</sup> The conclusion arrived at by Hanson is that the Russian Federation holds together due to the "absence of ideology." (Hanson in Alexseev, 1999, p.38)

<sup>464</sup> Roeder's statement identified December 1993 and the completion of the legislative election cycle as the end of the autocratic era, a position that I find puzzling. If Yeltsin's call for special elections in 1993 did not also include his willingness to stand for reelection after the September crisis, then I believe it is more accurate to conclude that the 'autocracy' period must have lasted at least until the presidential electoral challenge of 1996.

<sup>465</sup> Rather than direct challenges to the central government, the problem faced by Yeltsin and "the most likely form of opposition to Putin's reforms will be the kind of 'soft subversion' practiced by individual regional leaders." (Hyde, 2001, p.737)

consolidation remains, but so too does the potential for democratic collapse.”<sup>466</sup> In spite of the rise to political power by a relatively young, decisive and popular leader, there is a question of stability which was posed by Shevtsova and has yet to be addressed: “Can a regime founded on a less-than-heartfelt imitation of foreign ways, a reluctance to make strategic choices, and a desire to please all groups at once be sustainable or effective?”<sup>467</sup> That question, as well as how the issues of asymmetry presented thus far have been addressed by the new regime, can best be answered by an investigation of what policy initiatives the new Russian president has proposed or instituted to date.

### **Putin Establishes His Image and His Objectives:**

In order to regain the policy initiative and improve the conditions for the consolidation of centralized power in Russia, “Putin’s team has elected to promote three readily visible institutions as objects of affection and respect. The first is the presidency... the second source of allegiance that Russian rulers extol is the military ... [and] the third institutional vehicle for the propagation of a practical ideology is the law.”<sup>468</sup> This plan implies that Putin and his political team are developing a scheme to consolidate the federal political system on a power base patterned after that of the Soviet era. With a decisive and charismatic leader in a prestigious office that represents personal power, the reinvigoration of a much maligned military and the enhancement of the federal capability for the oversight and enforcement of domestic statutes and decrees is a combination that has the potential for some very undemocratic results. Perhaps the

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<sup>466</sup> McFaul, 2002, p.266

<sup>467</sup> The author goes on to point out that “such a regime could exist for a rather long time in a condition of stagnant stability.” (Shevtsova, 2002, p.243)

<sup>468</sup> Fish, Oct. 2001, p.74



Soviet revisionist view of Putin's policies can help to explain why "Putin strongly supported the treaty, signed by Yeltsin and Belarusan president Alyaksandr Lukashenka on 8 December 1999, that created a new Union State (soyuznoe gosudarstvo) composed of Russia and Belarus,"<sup>469</sup> but why has this new 'Union' received such little attention? With the foundation for future Putin policy initiatives backed by the strengthening of the existing powers of the presidency, and buttressed by the enhancement of the military and police enforcement capabilities within the state, this major step in the reunification of two of the three key Slavic former Soviet Republics suggests that inclusion in the Russian nation is more complex than is reflected in the federal districting regime. In order to better understand the retention of ethno-national divisions in the federal system the internal districting related policies of the post-Soviet era should be viewed with a restorationist focus.

The question of whether Putin had identified the forms of the federal districting of subject units as an impediment to the consolidation of the Russian state system was answered by his support of the plan proposed by Blokhin, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Nationalities and Migration Policy. The policy was explained as follows: "In most of the ethnically based republics in the North Caucasus, the titular nationality does not form a majority. So under Blokhin's system, they would be candidates for dissolution and inclusion in larger, non-ethnically based federal units."<sup>470</sup> Although action on this consolidation program has yet to be substantially initiated, it has been reported that "Moscow has adopted and begun to implement a system of national cultural

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<sup>469</sup> Dunlop, 2000, p.39

<sup>470</sup> Described by Blokhin and reported in a UPI article of Aug. 30, 2001



autonomy for the country's smaller and most dispersed groups which lack their own political territories and for members of groups that do have such territories but who live outside those territories.”<sup>471</sup> The combination of these two policies presents some interesting implications for the future of the Russian districting system.

### **Dividing and Conquering Anew:**

It is reasonable to suspect that the redistricting plan outlined by Blokhin is the ultimate goal for achieving a closer proximity to institutional symmetry in Russia, and there is every reason to believe that the policy initiatives based on national cultural autonomy that would result in non-territorially defined identifications of ethno-nationalism is the first step in that process.<sup>472</sup> The ratification by the new administration of the Union with Belarus and the movement towards ethno-national autonomy devoid of internal boundaries within the state suggests that Putin has not only recognized that the current configuration of regional asymmetry presents a problem for his vision of a consolidated Russian state, but it also reveals a willingness to reach back into the Soviet era tactics of utilizing ethno-cultural autonomy as a means to divide and conquer the collective mass public within a bounded space.

The implications of this policy of affording autonomy to ethnic groups outside of a geographically designated subject unit can be better realized when it is placed in the

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<sup>471</sup> Goble, UPI, Aug. 30, 2001. By November, the Duma had adopted a new law on accepting members into the federation, and “for the creation of new constituent entities.” See NUPI report of 11/30/2001.

<sup>472</sup> According to Yavlinsky, “The characteristics of the new political system, which I would call ‘national bolshevism,’ are becoming increasingly clear. In this sense, the combination of the Stalin-era national anthem and the imperial double-headed eagle is quite natural. Indeed, it is quite understandable – after all, nationalism naturally grows out of bolshevism, especially in Russia. (Yavlinsky, 2001, p.86)

context of the summary analysis presented by Marsh and Warhola: “The titular nationality comprises an absolute majority in only eight of thirty one ethnic regions, and only in Chechnya and North Osetiya do the titular nationalities exceed seventy five percent of the total population. Moreover, while there is no titular nationality in Dagestan, all of the non-Slavic groups in the region together comprise eighty nine percent of the population. When considered in this way, there are thirteen regions in the Russian Federation in which non-Slavs outnumber Slavs, and each of these thirteen is an ‘ethnic’ region.”<sup>473</sup> If the new districting plan continues to evolve, and the result of the establishment of a new multitude of those identified with ethno-autonomy is the silencing of what otherwise would have been dissenting regional voices, the Russian Federation will have the opportunity to eliminate no less than sixteen ethno-national subject units based on the UPI summary, and as many as twenty three if Marsh and Warhola are correct. That would result in a significant change in the ethno-federal character of the Republic.

The reform of the districting system based on ethno-nationally identified subject regions has important implications beyond the contribution it would make to the consolidation of a more symmetric federal system of balanced disparities among unit types, but also for its implications on any future plans for the restoration of a Soviet-like state. It has already been noted that a Unity Treaty exists between Russia and Belarus, but what is of equal relevance is the fact that “in Russia national identity goes beyond

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<sup>473</sup> Marsh and Warhola, 2001, p.222. It was noted in the Blokhin interview reported in the UPI article of August 30 2001 that “Of the 22 ethnic republics, oblasts and regions that exist in the Russian Federation today, only six have non-Russian pluralities. And using Blokhin’s logic, the other 16 would appear to be slated for extinction.”

political borders: *Russians outside* of state and *non-Russians within* the state.”<sup>474</sup>

(Emphasis added). The implications of this characterization of national identity places nearly 100 ethno-national groups within the parameters of nationality identification based on inclusion because they ended up inside of the borders of Russia at the time the Union collapsed (non-Russians within), and it provides an indeterminate number of Russian Slavs who happen to reside outside of the borders of the Russian state with rights to security protection and advocacy afforded to all citizens.<sup>475</sup> This policy establishes a Russian family tree that has two main branches. First is the establishment of an ethnographically based separation from existing politically defined boundaries and associations for ethnic Russians outside of Russia and second, the non-Slav Russians inside the borders of the state are assured both citizenship and autonomy under the same policy umbrella. Once these two branches of a single policy plan have matured, the Russian state can simply adjust its borders accordingly, both internally and externally, to reflect the inclusion and segmentation of the ‘Russian’ family of citizens.<sup>476</sup>

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<sup>474</sup> See Zevelev 2001 for the full discussion.

<sup>475</sup> The number of ‘Russians’ residing in other former SSRs is estimated by the latest census figures to be 25 million.

<sup>476</sup> This discussion cannot begin to address the issues related to identifications as a ‘Russian’, but Poppe and Hagendoorn provide a window into this issue: “[T]here are different types of identification among Russians in the near abroad. These identifications entail different attitudes such as Russian or republican patriotism, the degree of social distance from titulars, stronger or weaker assumptions about fifth column intentions of fellow Russians in the republic, different views on the future status of the republic and different attitudes towards migration. Clearly, the use of a single category to denominate these Russians, such as the Russian minority, the Russian diaspora or the Russian settlers, is not appropriate.” (Poppe and Hagendoorn, 2001, p.68)

### United by ‘Us-versus-Them’:

Nodia has determined that “mainstream Russian nationalism’s external other is the West, especially the United States,”<sup>477</sup> a perspective that contributes favorably to the establishment of a near abroad focus of inclusion and mass identity for Putin and the Russian planners. Nodia also points out that “the smoldering tension between democracy and nationalism [has] undermined the popular legitimacy of democratic and market reforms,” an observation that suggests that as the process of political change drags on in Russia the principles of a free market democracy are being trumped by ideas of nationalism and national identity.<sup>478</sup> By creating an environment where internal ethno-national identifications have little or nothing to do with political boundaries, the Russian state system may be in the midst of a process which could result in the establishment of a national demos that is organized based on majoritarian principles. This is an important issue because, as noted by Kramer, “the realization of the majority principle was compatible only with *the wielding of central authority, which was diametrically opposed to the principle of federalism.*”<sup>479</sup> (Emphasis added).

I have demonstrated that there are problems of asymmetry that have resulted in some unusual methods of center to region and region to region relations, but I have also shown that there is little evidence that the ethno-territories exhibit different region to center outcomes in terms of the policies, treaty agreements and party list measures of

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<sup>477</sup> Nodia, 2002, p.207

<sup>478</sup> Ibid.

<sup>479</sup> This is based on the organizational paradigm of France. See Kramer (1999) for a full discussion.

partisanship. Fish has determined that “decentralization, in a form that granted various territorial entities of the Russian Federation dissimilar rights and obligations, was a hallmark of the Yeltsin era. From the beginning of his political ascent, Putin made clear his intention to reestablish Moscow’s supremacy and to humble the regional barons who had profited most from the policies of the previous administration.”<sup>480</sup> There is little evidence that the rebellion in Chechnya has had (and is having) a contagion effect in Russia, and the analysis of selected objective measures of asymmetry has indicated that objective conditions such as GRP or population related variables have a more significant influence than ethno-national status on the type and degree of partisan party list support that the electorate of a subject region reveals, or the chance that a particular subject unit will have negotiated a special pact with the central regime. If ethno-nationalism is the basis for the determination of autonomy from a federal subject unit, and it is the ethno-national subject units that are the target of both Blokhin’s plan and Putin’s wrath, there must be evidence somewhere (other than Chechnya) that ethno-nationalism poses a separatist threat to the Russian Republic. The outcomes of the comparative analyses done earlier in this study show that there is little or no ethno-national differentiation that suggests that the leaders of these subject unit types are any more liable to be in need of ‘humbling’ than their non-ethnic regional brethren.

#### **Establishing Mechanisms of Control:**

Along with the ‘humbling’ of regional ‘barons’, Putin has concluded that he must also reform the way that the regions determine who and how representatives to the Federation Council will be selected. Sakwa has reported that “the new ‘senators’ would

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<sup>480</sup> Fish, 2002, p.247

be delegates of the regional authorities rather than popular representatives [with] one nominated by each region's executive branch and one by the legislature."<sup>481</sup> Although the implementation of this reform would provide a unilateral method for the selection of the 178 Council representatives, the proposal by its nature implies a contested relationship between a regional chief executive and the legislative majority faction. If it is evident that the national political party system is in need of additional avenues for it to penetrate into the political process beyond the party list half of the Duma election process, why would Putin propose this particular method that completely ignores the party system? Rather than the stimulation of democratic contestation, the implementation of this selection policy would serve as a means for the further entrenchment of elite domination of the political process, and would effectively leave the mass polity out of an important aspect of the process of political participation. If the Putin reformers hope to solve the problems associated with the disappointing levels of development of a viable political party system and an effective means of achieving proportional representation that were outlined in Chapter Five, why ignore those problems and strengthen the hand of regional elites? A motive for Putin's willingness to provide such a boost to the power of the regional elites was discussed in separate analyses done by Sakwa and Ross.

Sakwa noted that "attempts in the 1990s to build federalism from the top down were countered by the regions which managed, de facto if not yet de jure, to ensure a significant bottom up devolution of power."<sup>482</sup> The idea of 'bottom up' devolution of power suggests that regional participation was broadly based on popular mass public

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<sup>481</sup> Sakwa, 2002, p.15

<sup>482</sup> Ibid., p.3

support for political candidates and ideas (if not parties). When Sakwa's observation is compared with that of Ross that "the federal structure has strengthened authoritarianism and made it far more difficult for democracy to take root,"<sup>483</sup> the tactical motivation of the Putin regime can be postulated. If within the regions the political development has been a bottom up process that has begun to be consolidated, the adoption of a method of 'senatorial' representation that is based on elite selection and popular election within each region will serve to effectively reverse that bottom up pattern. The reliance on regional elites in the executive and legislative branches of governance to select these 'senators' insures that an elitist procedure is reinforced and that any competition between the elites who represent the two branches of regional government is balanced. If the regional elites who make these senatorial candidate selections can be brought into the presidential vertical of Putin's authority either directly or indirectly, the process of the selection of these regional senators would then, in effect, be determined in the Kremlin.

Earlier in this analysis I described the process by which the personal-vertical governance of the regions of the Empire was accomplished based on a policy of diminishing autonomy. First utilized by the Tsarist regimes, the process gave a visibly high degree of autonomy to the occupied territories at the outset only to gradually diminish that autonomy of self-rule over time until that region came under the direct control of the Kremlin through the appointment of a regional governor. The actions associated with autonomy and presidential representation in the regions that have been taken by the Putin regime since coming to power make the policy doctrine of the past

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<sup>483</sup> Ross, 2002, p.46



directly relevant to the policy patterns that have emerged in the federal administration of today.

Teague provides a very concise description of one of the first major policy initiatives that was implemented by Putin after his ‘election’ as the Russian President: “Putin moved to curtail the powers of the governors by creating an entirely new level of bureaucracy between the governors and the federal center. In a decree dated 13 May 2000, Russia’s eighty-nine republics and regions were divided into seven new ‘federal districts’. These new units, whose borders corresponded closely with those of Russia’s existing military districts, were each to be headed by a ‘plenipotentiary representative’ or ‘envoy’ appointed personally by the president.”<sup>484</sup> With the number of presidential representatives reduced by eighty-two, the similarity of this newly configured oversight regime to the form and function of the Imperial era Boyer Council becomes is uncanny.

<sup>485</sup> Teague also reported the fact that these representatives would now become “ex officio members of the security council, a body responsible directly to the president [and]

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<sup>484</sup> Teague, 2002, p.209

<sup>485</sup> The main tasks of the presidential representatives include:

- reporting to the president on the security, political, economic and social situation in their districts, and making policy recommendations.
- monitoring the implementation of federal government policy in their districts and reporting to the president on any discrepancies between federal and regional legislation.
- Monitoring the work of the regional departments of key federal ministries and agencies on the territory of their districts. These were to include, among others, the justice ministry, finance ministry, courts, police, procuracy, security service and tax police. Units for combating organized crime were also to be set up in each of the federal districts. These agencies were to be reorganized along the lines of the new districts and funded at that level.
- Approving personnel appointments to positions in the territorial branches of all federal agencies in their districts. (Teague, 2002, p.210)



headed by Sergei Ivanov.”<sup>486</sup> This twist in the role of these ‘representatives’ not only reinforces the analogy to the Imperial Council, but also underscores the implications of vested powers that the members of the Russian Security Council hold. The fact that Putin’s last job in the government before he was selected (from obscurity?) to be Yeltsin’s last prime minister was as the head of the Security Council, and this expanded role of the Council indicates that it possesses an inherent power and influence that mirrors the importance of some of its Imperial and Soviet ‘ruling council’ predecessors. It appears that the path to power that had run through the Soviet Politburo is now mirrored in a process that has established the Security Council as the last stop on the way to the offices of Russian Prime Minister and President. Teague also found that “it was reportedly the Security Council that drafted the 13 May decree [that established the new presidential representatives and the new districts] and Ivanov (Putin’s most trusted associate) who determined which regions should belong to which federal districts.”<sup>487</sup> This indicates a further substantiation of the premise that there is a concerted effort by the central regime to reestablish the role of a ruling elite centered in a ruling council or bureau in the Kremlin.

If the trend since Putin has come to power is the reinforcement of elite centered power, it is worthwhile to consider the potential for these reforms to lead to the reestablishment of an empire-like regime. Eisenstadt concluded that an empire-like centralized polity results from “a unified, relatively homogeneous rule over a given

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<sup>486</sup> Ibid. Teague, who commented that “the federal districts reminded some of the guberniyas into which the territory of tsarist Russia was divided until the 1917 revolution,” also noted the comparison to the Imperial era. (Teague, 2002, p.209)

<sup>487</sup> Ibid., p.210

territory, . . . more or less a clear definition of the frontiers of the territory . . . the definition of the total political unit in terms of political allegiance to the central authorities . . . subordinating allegiance to any intermediary authorities [and] the gradual establishment of centralized administration.”<sup>488</sup> Based on this outline provided by Eisenstadt, it would seem that the plans and policy moves of the Putin regime to date have been leading the Republic down a policy path towards a restored empire-like system rather than a process of reinvigorating the transition and consolidation of the democratic process. Although Putin’s federal policies continue the process begun under Yeltsin of the enhancement and consolidation of the powers of the federal chief executive, it looks to be a much more deliberate and goal oriented policy than the pattern that emerged under Yeltsin’s leadership. Whether it was due to the unpredictable nature of the transition of the Republic from a Soviet SSR to an independent Federal Republic, it has become more clear in hindsight that the policies of the Yeltsin era were more of a reactionary response to unanticipated challenges rather than long-term planning that motivated most of the decree initiatives.

It was established by Sakwa that “in the 1990s federal relations developed largely as a function of the immediate political needs of the presidency,”<sup>489</sup> and it appears that this is no longer the case under the current administration. The powers of presidential decree continue as an effective tool to be utilized by the President to carry on the Yeltsin era pattern of expediency in dealing with a crisis, but there has been little in the form of real reform of the many problems associated with representative selection and election

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<sup>488</sup> Eisenstadt, 1963, p.21

<sup>489</sup> Sakwa, 2002, p.7

that have plagued the transition and consolidation process. It has been well understood since early in the Yeltsin era that “the institutions employed in 1990 for democratization of the Soviet system allowed politicians to shape the means by which they would be held accountable for their actions,”<sup>490</sup> and because it is also true that “executive authority must eventually be depersonalized and made accountable if both democracy and economic reform are to be institutionalized,”<sup>491</sup> it is important to understand why such issues of political accountability and regional economic disparities do not seem to be arenas in which Putin is interested in utilizing his extensive decree powers. If Russia has evolved to become a relatively stable political state, and the president is no longer forced to use his decree powers in order to maintain the integrity and stability of the Republic, then his policy initiatives should be viewed as indications of a deliberate process to the achievement of a specific end result.

### **Putin’s Path:**

Thus far in his presidency, Putin has ensured that only a select few laws have actually been enacted. Among these is a set of laws intended to regulate the development of a more viable political party system. The Law on Parties of June 2001 has six main features, beginning with a measure intended to reduce the excessive number of political parties through the establishment of a membership threshold for a ‘recognized’ political party at a minimum of 10,000 members. With the mandated minimum established, the remaining five laws require that each political party have branches in at least half of subject regions, that they all carry a minimum of at least 100 members per regional

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<sup>490</sup> Roeder, 1994, p.62

<sup>491</sup> Haggard and Kaufman, 1995, p.335

branch, that they receive party and campaign financing primarily from federally budgeted resources with private contributions limited to 3000 rubles per individual per year, and finally (and perhaps most importantly), political parties are to be the only *public* organization able to nominate candidates for public office.<sup>492</sup> (Emphasis added.) The caveat on nominations that restricts the type of ‘public’ organizations that can be involved in the process is a subtle but significant complement to the procedure discussed above that puts the nomination of ‘senators’ in the hands of regional elites.

It may seem that the last of the six regulations insures that political parties will dominate the selection process in the future, but that is not the case.<sup>493</sup> The statute requires any ‘organization’ that nominates a candidate to be a political party, but based on the history of Russian political representation, it is more likely that the party will depend on the endorsement of the individuals who seek office rather than the individuals fulfilling the need of a party endorsement. The significant test of this new law will come when Putin stands for reelection and joins a particular political party and advocates the party platform as the policy goals of his presidency, a linkage that has yet to emerge in Russian politics. The research that has been compiled for this analysis has not provided any evidence that the problems with the political party system have been significantly associated with nonparty groups. The issue that has had the most debilitating effect on

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<sup>492</sup> From information posted on [Russiavotes.org](http://Russiavotes.org)

<sup>493</sup> It should be noted that there is no proposal that addresses the potential flaw that is related to the five percent threshold that was described by McAllister and White. The problem is as follows: “The simplest goal of a rational party would be to attract at least 5 percent of the vote in the party list election, thus securing more than 20 seats in the Duma. But the more parties contesting the election, the fewer that would pass the 5 percent threshold. It would, for example, be theoretically possible for no party to win any seats, for if 21 parties contested the election and each won the same share of the vote, all would fall far below the 5 percent threshold.” (McAllister and White, 1998, p.21)

the development of the political party system has been the refusal of the sitting president to join a particular political party, and because this new law is intended to regulate the mixed system of Duma election, it is likely that the president will find a way to gain the nomination of more than one political party and continue to avoid party membership. It is not likely that this new law on political parties will have a significant impact on the dominance of the personal attraction independent candidates have had on the electoral process in both the Duma and the Presidential election cycles.

A new law enacted in April 2001 on The Election of Deputies to the Duma has resulted in the removal of a provision which had been enacted for the 1999 election cycle “that annulled or rejected the nominated list in the event of the withdrawal of one or more of its three leading candidates.”<sup>494</sup> Intended as a measure that would help to prevent the luring of prominent individuals from one political party to a rival party just before the election, and to help reduce the significant influence that a strong individual candidate can bring to bear on a relatively weak party, it also does little to address the most significant problems that have been identified with the political party system. Although this measure may prevent a certain amount of individual manipulation of a party list ballot, the fact that individual candidates manipulated the party list system in such a way as to require the 1999 regulation that removed the party from the ballot after a candidate defection serves to strengthen the argument that the individual continues to dominate the political process, and the regulations enacted to prevent such manipulations are easily circumvented.

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<sup>494</sup> Ibid.

The relationship in Russian politics between the political parties and individual candidates has been a contrast to what has been the norm in other political party based democracies. The two issues that have created the most significant problems for the development of the political party system in Russia have been 1) that both Yeltsin and Putin have refrained from committing to a particular political party affiliation, and 2), that the mixed system of party list and SMD Duma representative election strengthened the appeal of the individual as a candidate and resulted in consistently high percentages of wasted party list votes and low party list plurality outcomes. The changes to the laws on parties and on deputies provide little more than the appearance of resolving the problems of the past election cycles, when in fact they do little to resolve the real weakness of Russia's party system . . . the lack of a few truly competitive and ideologically based *national* parties.

Perhaps the most significant segment of this group of new laws is the one titled Electoral Rights and Rights of Participation implemented in July 2001. This law was enacted to ensure the means by which Putin ascended to the presidency cannot be repeated. The language of the law is specific in order to "make it impossible for a president who resigns because of ill health or refusal or inability to continue carrying out his duties to participate in the elections called as a result of his resignation."<sup>495</sup> An additional purpose of the July regulation was to "set the limit of one year for the carrying out of supplementary elections if an SMD deputy resigns, and to allow regional elections to be delayed once by up to one year to make them coincide with national elections."<sup>496</sup>

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<sup>495</sup> Russiavotes.org, 2002, p.2

<sup>496</sup> Ibid.

This Law on Electoral Rights accomplishes two significant tasks. First, it assures that in short-order regional election cycles will be merged with the national election cycle so that the 'bottom up' process that has been specific to the regions (and was discussed above) can be further incorporated under the federal umbrella of top down devolution, and second, the too-little-too-late regulation on presidential resignation and successor appointment goes a long way towards silencing the critics who see Yeltsin's resignation as a precursor for future manipulation of the succession process.

### **Some Neglected Problems:**

There are two important issues that have yet to be effectively addressed by the Putin policy and decree initiatives outlined thus far. First is the conclusion that the transition process in Russia and the other former Soviet Union states is one that, by necessity, includes decolonization. This situation has been described by analysts such as Young, White and McFaul who have noted that "along side marketization and democratization there is an accompanying process (in the FSU at least) of decolonization, from a Soviet multi ethnic empire to the establishment of post-colonial, post-socialist sovereign states."<sup>497</sup> Because of the significance of the decolonization issue, these authors go on to point out that "transition is an imperfect metaphor ... political change has been only one component of the grand post-Soviet transformation, which also involves economic transformation, state building (after state destruction), and decolonization."<sup>498</sup> The perspective provided by McFaul is compatible with the problems of asymmetry I have previously outlined, and reinforce the proposition that the ethno-

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<sup>497</sup> Young and Light, 2001, p.946

<sup>498</sup> McFaul, 2002, p.263



national basis of the Russian territorial designations significantly contributes to the perpetuation of the error from the Soviet era, that decolonization should have coincided with the process of industrialization and modernization. The emphasis on ethno-national territorialism by researchers such as Young, White, McFaul, Triesman and Gorenburg combine with this analysis to indicate that the region to center relationship of the Soviet districting system reinforced a form of colonialism in the Soviet era, and its adoption in the Federal Republic continues to have the same effect. Although there have been districting reforms proposed by Blokhin and supported by Putin (of the dissolution of some ethno-regional subject units and the cultural autonomy of others), these new initiatives do not indicate that a long delayed process of decolonization is at hand, but rather, it is the institution of a reconstituted policy from the Imperial era of first dividing up the ethno-territories and then establishing a personal vertical of Kremlin oversight to be followed by a process of diminishing autonomy. Internal colonialism for ethno-nationals has begun anew.

The second issue that has yet to be effectively addressed by Putin is the issue of what has come to be called the “floating party system”<sup>499</sup> of Russia. Even if Blokhin’s plan comes to fruition, Russia is likely to continue to be a multi-ethnic republic, and as Grey has shown, “the structure of the electoral system is critical for the fair representation of ethnic-based interests.”<sup>500</sup> The reforms described above have addressed the need for modifications of the rules that regulate political party formation as well as some procedural reforms of the legislative and presidential election/selection process, but

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<sup>499</sup> Rose, Munro and White, 2001, p.420

<sup>500</sup> Grey, 1997, p.208.



none of these new regulations can be interpreted as a real attempt to reform a *system* that is clearly not performing the task for which it was intended. In all political democracies, the political party system is the preferred means by which the partisan ideologies of a collective mass of the voting public can find representation, and in politically diverse ethno-national states such Russia, fair and proportional representation of disparate population groups is achieved through the balanced and proportionally representative mechanisms of a viable national political party system. Russia's attempt at this balance has resulted in the development of a very unusual and hybrid system of party competition that was introduced above, the floating party system.

A problem that is at the core of Russia's political party system is clearly described by Rose, Munro and White as one that exemplifies the failings of the current election process, and is described as follows: "The only way in which a Russian voter can be certain of voting the same in both the single member and list ballots is to vote Against All on both, since most list parties do not fight a majority of single member districts. An Against All vote is also the only choice that can be confidently expected to persist in both ballots from one election to the next!"<sup>501</sup> It is not a viable solution for this problem to suggest the elimination of the 'against all' option because, for example, "in civic culture, voting may be considered both a right and a duty, but in Russia the Soviet legacy of totalitarian mobilization makes not being compelled to vote important, because it involves freedom *from* the state."<sup>502</sup> By following the logic of this 'freedom from' post-Soviet measure of democratic choice, it is evident that it is important to allow the Russian

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<sup>501</sup> Rose, Munro and White, 2001. p.428

<sup>502</sup> Ibid.

voter the option of expressing a rejection of all of the options presented on a ballot list. This negative vote is a positive response because this option provides an opportunity to participate in the democratic process in such a way that only those who were denied a real choice in the elections of the Soviet era can appreciate. Of the many issues that have plagued the mixed system of selecting and electing representatives to the legislature from the first election cycle, the one problem that has yet to be addressed is the fact that “the arithmetic of the system condemns a majority of parties to total defeat.”<sup>503</sup>

The most significant consequence of the inherent flaws in Russia’s mixed electoral process is the fact that “Russia has yet to see a truly nationwide party emerge, with the possible exception of the Communist Party.”<sup>504</sup> In fact, rather than the consolidation of a viable political party system based on the establishment, through electoral competition, of a few broadly supported national parties, the patterns from the Russian polity over the first decade of democratization has resulted in a ‘floating’ party system. This system of “parties competing for popular support [that] change from one election to the next, thus making accountability difficult, [emerged] because voters can neither reaffirm not withdraw their support from the party they voted for at the previous election.”<sup>505</sup> Because so many parties have come and gone, and the platforms and leadership cadres of many others have shifted back and forth, it has been necessary for substitute institutions to emerge to take the place of what should be a consolidated

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<sup>503</sup> White et al., 2001, p. xviii

<sup>504</sup> Moser, 1997, p.297

<sup>505</sup> Rose, Munro and White, 2001, p.420

political party system.<sup>506</sup> Although, according to Shevtsova “the two branches of power (executive and legislature) became substitute parties, thereby acquiring new adversarial functions,”<sup>507</sup> this may not be a transference that has occurred either due to necessity or by accident.<sup>508</sup>

### **The Russian System Takes Shape:**

It has been suggested that the existence of the floating party system “can be interpreted as a failure of political elites to create stable political organizations [but] alternatively, it may be interpreted as showing the success of Russian elites in insulating themselves from accountability to the mass electorate.”<sup>509</sup> It remains to be seen if the new electoral laws that have been enacted will resolve such problems as these, but there is a school of thought which shares the opinion described by Fish, “the law has been widely portrayed as a naked bid to eliminate most parties and assert full control over the few that survive.”<sup>510</sup> Even if this dire prediction is a bit too extreme in holding suspect

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<sup>506</sup> This is in contrast to the successful development of a party system in Western Europe as described by Fleron, Ahl and Lane: “[T]he organization of mass parties was effectively able to close off (or create boundaries to) the electoral market and thus stabilize mass democracy itself, eventually leading to a ‘freezing’ of the party system around a number of key social cleavages: center-periphery; church-state; land-industry; and owner-worker.” (Fleron, Ahl and Lane, 1998, p.225)

<sup>507</sup> Shevtsova, 2001, p.39

<sup>508</sup> In spite of the problems associated with the Russian party system there is evidence that progress towards the adoption of Western-like party identifications is emerging. Mendelson has concluded, “Western assistance has contributed to the ways in which political parties campaign and citizens monitor elections in Russia. Even the growth and acceptance of parties as organizational units, initially widely shunned after years of one-party rule, are traceable in part to the efforts of Western groups.” (Mendelson, 2001, p.2)

<sup>509</sup> Rose, Munro and White, 2001, p.439

<sup>510</sup> Fish, 2002, p.252

the motives of the federal elites, it was also acknowledged by Fish that, in the least, “the actual effects of the law are unpredictable.”<sup>511</sup> Fish came to his conclusions based on his assessment of the processes and mechanisms associated with the mixed system of selection and election, and as a result he also concluded that they exhibit a remarkably familiar pattern of form and function. He concluded, “the resemblance between the structure of Russia’s political parties and the structure of the Russian state is striking. In both the parties and in the state, ‘Moscow’ is grossly preponderant yet frequently unable to shape and direct events in the periphery.”<sup>512</sup>

The pattern of ‘Moscow’ occupying the center of Russian national politics with little de facto effect on the economic and political plans and policies in the regions is also repeated in the context of many political party platform statements. In spite of the fact that Russian party politics is a Moscow-centric endeavor, it has consistently been the case that “all major political parties in Russia strongly espouse the primacy of ‘the regions’, meaning all areas outside Moscow . . . in their public pronouncements and internal discourse.”<sup>513</sup> In fact, the relationship within the regions of the office of chief executive to the political party system very much mimics that exhibited by both Yeltsin and Putin throughout the 1990s. Ross has accurately described the pattern that has dominated the transition to a political party system, and it is worth repeating at length: “Rather than governors joining parties in order to promote their election prospects, it is more often the case that parties are forced to turn to the governors to help them bring home the regional

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<sup>511</sup> Ibid.

<sup>512</sup> Fish, 2002, p.354

<sup>513</sup> Ibid.

votes. Regional presidents and governors have considerable control over electoral finances, the local media, courts and electoral commissions. There are many instances of governors resorting to outright manipulation of the electoral rules in order to ensure their victory in gubernatorial elections or to pack regional assemblies with their own appointed officials.”<sup>514</sup>

Ross explains that there are five reasons for the “weakly institutionalized party system”<sup>515</sup> that facilitates the executive domination of the relationship between the ninety chief executives and political parties. The first explanation comes from the legacy of authoritarianism which was described earlier in this analysis, and provides a cultural foundation for the second problem impacting party development, that of weakly developed cleavages between the social and economic regimes of the state. The third problem described by Ross is the one that has become most evident in the course of this analysis, and that is the negative impact on party development that results from the inherent flaws in the mixed electoral system. The fourth problem is found in the structure and powers of the Russian presidential system, a system that not only provides extraordinary powers to the chief executive, but is also a very compatible match to the legacy of authoritarianism that has been carried over from the previous regimes. The final problem outlined by Ross, and the one that is at the core of this analysis, is “Russia’s weak and asymmetrical form of federalism.”<sup>516</sup> Although this chapter has outlined the many policy proposals and implementations of the Putin regime to date, it is

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<sup>514</sup> Ross, 2002, p.42

<sup>515</sup> Ibid., p.43

<sup>516</sup> Ibid.

clear that none have yet to effectively address the issues described by Ross above, and the plans proposed to reform the federal districting system fail to include a provision for the elimination of the disparity of the unit type classifications. Why would the political leadership of the Russian federal government propose reforms to the oversight, election and districting regimes of the Republic that do not solve the problems that have been described in this analysis?

Remington summarized the main reason why the federal government has done so little to confront issues such as asymmetry and executive dominance of the political landscape. The reason so many problems go unresolved is because, according to Remington, “the president is more likely to use the veto and act by decree on high salience issues,”<sup>517</sup> and most of the problems outlined here have not had ‘high salience’ for the Russian President or the Russian people. If one reason that the political party system is weak (and that weakness results in low levels of party list plurality outcomes and a high numbers of wasted votes) is because of a lack of interest or focus on the problem on the part of the Russian mass public, why should the President spend his political capital on the resolution of the problem? The voices that call for reform are as segmented and disorganized as the political party system itself, and it is reasonable to conclude that Putin does not consider reform of the electoral system and the balancing of the inherent asymmetry of the Russian federal organizing system very high on scale of salient issues.<sup>518</sup> The fact that so many issues related to the asymmetry of the region to

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<sup>517</sup> Remington et al., 1998, p. 308

<sup>518</sup> Remington has determined that “decree making is most common when the distance between the president and parliament is great, the issue is salient, and the constitution does not require a federal or constitutional law.” (Remington et al., 1998, p. 307)

center relations are so significantly based on unit type designation (such as the contradictions between the regional charters of oblasts and cities and those of the subject republic constitutions and the articles of the Federal Constitution or the Federation Treaty), and most infractions or contradictions have continued to go unresolved through enforcement if not by explicit bargains, suggests that in the end Putin does not see many of these issues as challenges to his presidential powers. The evidence suggests that in both the Yeltsin and Putin regimes it has been the manipulation of the formation and consolidation of these institutions of governance and participation that has been the chief aim of the state crafters.

It is no secret that “the president’s decree making power virtually eliminates the president’s incentive to compromise,”<sup>519</sup> and this fact also infers that he has little incentive to reform a system of interrelations that makes his powers of ‘superpresidentialism’ paramount and personal.<sup>520</sup> It has been reported by Saivetz that the powers of the president “reflects the Russian penchant for a strong state to solve economic and political problems,”<sup>521</sup> and the opinion polls seem to support that conclusion.<sup>522</sup>

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<sup>519</sup> Ibid., p. 290

<sup>520</sup> This is supported by the findings of Fish that “in a superpresidential system, most of the custodians of the state’s resources are answerable only to the president. (Fish, 1995, p.327)

<sup>521</sup> Saivetz in Fischer, 1996, p. 271.

<sup>522</sup> The question of who is reached by such opinion polls has been challenged by Colton, who has stated his belief that “pro-democracy Russians-real ones, not those designated by the U.S. government-now speak of a ‘manipulative democracy,’ in which democratic

An example of a how unquestioningly a presidential policy decree is accepted by the Russian polity is found in the results of the survey of public opinion from what should have been a controversial Yeltsin era decree concerning regional chief executives. It was found in the Duma election results outlined in Chapter Five that the Soviet era administrative units (oblasts and krais) did not reveal party list outcomes that were any more (or less) favorable to the central federal regime, and yet after the election Yeltsin took an extraordinary step in the exercise of his decree powers. In response to what appeared to be a wholesale rejection of his regime and his path of reform in the regions, Yeltsin provided himself with “the power to appoint and dismiss the heads of administration (governors) of the oblasts and krais, though not the republics,” a power he exercised right through the presidential election cycle of 1996.<sup>523</sup> An underlying benefit from the implementation of this appointment policy (that clearly usurped and contradicted the democratic process) can be seen in the results from a 1997 survey presented by Hough. It was determined that “the percentage of the population as a whole who think that the USSR is their Motherland (Rodina) remained stable from 1993 to 1996, but it declined rapidly among young adults. The most striking feature however is that the percentage who identify Russia as their Motherland [Rodina] has not been growing even among young adults. Instead, they have increasingly identified with their oblast or republic. Surprisingly, even 35 percent of Russian 17 year olds who live in the capitals of the non-Russian republics of Russia chose the republics as their Motherland

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institutions exist but produce only results ordered by the state, a ‘democracy without alternatives,’ and a ‘pseudo-democracy.’ (Cohen, 2000, p.185)

<sup>523</sup> Solnick, 1998, p. 67



rather than Russia or the USSR.”<sup>524</sup> This information matches well with a backward looking view of the events. It goes beyond coincidence that while Yeltsin maintained his control over regional elites through this appointment process there was a concurrently high level of love for ‘Rodina’, a sentiment that helped provide justification for his anti-democratic actions from 1993 through 1996. Because Yeltsin was able to outwit Gorbachev and the former Party cadres who attempted to thwart the establishment of the Russian republic under his leadership, it is not a stretch of the imagination to assume that Yeltsin understood that there was a real threat to the stability of the new republic in 1993. I believe that Yeltsin understood that the ‘homeland’ identifications of the electorate had become a delicate balance between the nation and the region, and the selection of regional governors from a list of cadres sympathetic to his personal plan for Russia’s future was his best course of action to insure regional complicity to his policies. Yeltsin established a model of Presidential activism by decree that Putin appears to have adopted, and survey results have provided insight into the fact that there is little incentive or demand for political reform faced by the Putin administration.

#### **What the People Think:**

Gibson has found that “the survey data for 2000 indicate that Russians have become dramatically more optimistic about their economy (personal and systemic), but that optimism does not translate into greater support for democratic institutions and processes. In general, it is not the economy that is driving people’s attitudes toward the consolidation of democracy in the country.”<sup>525</sup> This outcome can be interpreted to

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<sup>524</sup> Hough, 1998, p.91

<sup>525</sup> Gibson, 2001, p.122

suggest that Russian citizens do not see democratic institutions as a necessary ingredient for the achieving their economic aspirations, and thus pressure to reform the political problems described above, related to Russian formal federal and political asymmetry, is not connected to a larger picture of economic and political reform by the Russian people. When the earlier polling results that indicated high levels of localized 'homeland' identifications and low expectations for political reform are matched with more recent polling data indicating that (well into the process of democratic state crafting) young adults in Russia are inclined to be Soviet restorationists, the potential for political reversals and state expansion must be seriously considered.

Hough found in his survey results that "the 17 and 18 year olds in 1997 were even less negative toward the disintegration of the Soviet Union – but they still think the disintegration of the Soviet Union was a mistake by a 47 percent to 33 percent margin, with 20 percent undecided."<sup>526</sup> This nostalgia on the part of the young for the lifestyle that was offered in the Soviet past appears to stand in contrast to the results published by Millar and Wolchik who found that "survey results show clear cut cleavages by generation, educational attainment and degree of urbanization,"<sup>527</sup> with the cleavages indicating that support for democracy is disproportionately from the young as well as the better educated and the more highly urbanized. This comparison of survey results could indicate that the young adults of Russia see no contradiction between what they see as the benefits of what the Soviet system offered and the principles they identify with a Russian form of free market 'superpresidential' democracy.

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<sup>526</sup> Hough, 1998, p.90

<sup>527</sup> Millar and Wolchik, 1997, p.23

The true nature of the challenge of ethno-national minority groups to the stability of the state becomes more clear in public opinion polls as well. A cross section of Russian citizens was asked the following question: “Which of the following criteria are particularly important for a person to be considered Russian?” The top two selected responses were reflective of a very similar pattern of identification and inclusion. The first highest response agreed with the idea that to be a Russian is “to cherish the traditions of the Russian people”, with the second response the expectation of all citizens “to have Russian as a native language.”<sup>528</sup> When the views of this sample indicating that the people should share a common tradition and language as the key indications of their ‘Russianness’ is matched with the outcome from the survey data that found “among non-Russians who live outside their ethnic areas a civic Russian (*rossiiskaya*) identity prevails. Indeed non-Russians in Russia today are far more Russified and versed in Russian culture than was the case with the majority of non-Russians who were allotted union republics in the USSR,”<sup>529</sup> an ethno-national perspective of Russian unity and of Putin’s reforms becomes more clear.

It was described earlier in this chapter that Blokhin, Putin’s chief advisor on regional affairs, had recommended that ethno-national subject regions with ‘Russian’ majorities should be dissolved, and it was also described how Putin also intends to provide and recognize national cultural autonomy for many ethnic groups outside of any regional or ethno-national boundaries. The ‘salience’ of this issue of ethno-nationalism to the Russian President becomes more evident when viewed through the lens of the

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<sup>528</sup> See the Survey by the Moscow Institute of Sociological Analysis of 1997, published in White, Pravda and Gitelman, 2001.

<sup>529</sup> Ibid.

integration of the survey results. If we recall that the polls have shown that to be identified as a 'Russian' is a matter of tradition and language, and we add to this finding the fact that non-Russians have been 'Russified' as never before, who is there to stand to defend against the elimination of the ethno-national subject regions targeted by Blokhin's plan? If Putin can successfully mitigate the need for an ethno-national 'homeland' for minority groups through the acceptance of his policy on non-territorially based 'cultural autonomy', and the ethno-national subject units are eliminated, Russia can be both transformed and yet retain its ethno-national diversity.<sup>530</sup> Does this potential elimination of ethno-national boundaries portend an end to the problems of districting asymmetry that have been outlined in this study? It may succeed in the elimination of some Republics and all of the Okrugs, but the experience in Chechnya suggests that it is unlikely that the Republics that remain viable, due to their ethno-national majorities, will accept such a dramatic reform.

#### **What the Regions Do:**

It was reported by McFaul that "in response to a December 1999 survey, more than seven-tenths of Russian voters said they believed that the Soviet Union should not have been dissolved [and only] twelve percent expressed satisfaction with the way Russian democracy was developing."<sup>531</sup> This demonstration of remorse over the dissolution of the Union in the midst of a time when parliamentary and presidential election cycles were in full swing may provide a good context for insight into the way the

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<sup>530</sup> This change would redefine the type of 'diversity' that was outlined by Kuboniwa and Gavrilencov which is based on regionally dispersed political ethno-nationalism. In Russia, "diversity means that the lack of cooperation between the federal and regional administrative branches of power is one of the main problems facing Russia during the transition period." (Kuboniwa and Gavrilencov, 1997, p.262)

<sup>531</sup> McFaul, 2002, p.262

Putin regime has moved forward with democratic reforms. White's research supports that of McFaul, but goes a step further in describing the sympathies of the Russian people. "When Russians are asked to evaluate the former communist regime, just over half give it a positive rating and a third are negative including five percent who are very negative, [but] when Russians are asked to evaluate the current system, by contrast, more are negative than positive. Since a sixth give a neutral reply, the median Russian was neither positive nor negative about the regime. Even though the old regime did not rest on a broad base of support, the base of support for the new regime is even narrower."<sup>532</sup> The lack of support (or even cynicism) expressed towards the federal regime and its legitimacy as the successor state to the Soviet Union by the Russian people has yet to translate into a popularly organized demand for change on the part of the mass public. The testimony at a 2000 hearing before the CSCE committee of the U.S. Congress may shed light on why the people of Russia have yet to take any mass-based action.

It was reported in testimony to the committee that "what Putin does in Moscow doesn't make much difference in the regions, because the power is in the hands of local political bosses, the bureaucrats and criminal elements."<sup>533</sup> A factor contributing to this seeming lack of interest in federal policy decisions on the part of the mass public was suggested by Remington who has determined that "Russia's characteristic pattern of reciprocal detachment, mistrust, and misunderstanding which separates state from society has reemerged."<sup>534</sup> The power of these local bosses and the detachment (even

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<sup>532</sup> White et al., 2001, p.44

<sup>533</sup> Testimony before the CSCE Sept. 19, 2000

<sup>534</sup> Remington, 1999, p.92

atomization) of the citizens have been advantages to the federal policy elites throughout the transition era, and there is every reason to conclude that those factors continue to this day. Throughout the Brezhnev era, the regional Soviet era 'bosses' were left alone by the Kremlin as long as they were able to remain below the national radar screen in the pursuit of their corrupt activities, and it was only when Gorbachev attempted to put an end to this regional system of autonomous profiteering that he and the Soviet system failed. If a way was found throughout the Imperial era as well as the post-Stalin Soviet era to work in conjunction with these local bosses for the mutual benefit of all, and in consideration of Gorbachev's experience in the matter, there is little incentive for Putin to go out on a limb to expose and reform that system.

An additional reason for Putin to leave the regional bosses in power was reported in Lussier's analysis which concluded that "the elections also demonstrated the effectiveness of the Kremlin's divide-and-rule policy over governors. During the 1999-2000 electoral season the governors failed to build lasting horizontal coalitions which would give them substantial influence on federal policy making in the executive and the legislative branches. Now instead of trying to build coalitions with each other, the governors are back to the old game of trying to secure their own power in the regions and then working to build the best possible relations with Moscow in order to win the best possible deal for themselves."<sup>535</sup> Given the nature of the traditional region to center contest for advantage in the power relations, it is understandable that one of the first (and perhaps most significant) policy implementations of the Putin team was the reconfiguration of the regional Economic Areas and the attendant regime of Presidential

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<sup>535</sup> Lussier, 2002, p.75

Representatives from twelve to seven Areas and from eighty nine to seven Representatives. This initiative was seen at the time as “the most overt attempt to reassert central executive control over the oblasts . . . the emperor’s eye in the localities,”<sup>536</sup> and although these representatives appear to have little real power,<sup>537</sup> it may be that Putin is not yet interested in disrupting the regional status quo, but rather he would prefer to keep a watchful eye on how it functions.<sup>538</sup> It could well be that the priorities of the federal administration and the majority of the regional leaders are not far from the same. McFaul found that for the regional leadership, as was the case in the Yeltsin administration, “consolidating a democratic polity has not been the central aim of any rulers in the region. Reorganizing property rights, defining new borders, dismantling state institutions, building new state institutions and creating opportunities for theft and graft have all ranked as much higher priorities.”<sup>539</sup>

Teague has suggested that when the Federation Council was reformed, “in removing governors from Parliament’s upper chamber, Putin exploited the ambiguous wording of the 1993 constitution, which stated merely that the Federation Council ‘was formed’ of two representatives from each republic and region of the Russian Federation without specifying how the representatives were to be chosen.”<sup>540</sup> One does not have to

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<sup>536</sup> Stoner-Weiss, 1997, pp.73-75

<sup>537</sup> It is the view of Stoner-Weiss that “In reality the office of presidential representative did not carry with it much influence in local affairs.” (Stoner-Weiss, 1997,p.101)

<sup>538</sup> The potential power of coordinated regional actions and the fractional impact of federal regional policy was clearly described by Triesman. “Sub-national actors can coordinate to punish central attempts to exploit one of them [but] the central government strikes deals with some at the expense of others.” (Triesman, 1999, p.19)

<sup>539</sup> McFaul, 2002, p.263



stretch the intellect far to consider the possibility that in the future the representatives to the upper chamber of the federal legislature may be determined indirectly by Presidential appointment (by taking full advantage of the presidential vertical and the new regional nominating process), and such a development would provide the executive branch with a ideological partner in the legislative branch.<sup>541</sup> The advantages in the objective powers of influence and coercion that some of the regional governors and presidents have at their disposal has resulted in policy implementations that reflect an asymmetry that may be beyond the capability of presidential negotiation powers. Solnick has shown that there has been a “pattern of selective distribution of [regional] benefits [that] may be less a program to distribute political rewards than an effort to conceal political weakness. Some of the republics comprising Russia have decided not to pay taxes to the center, and the center, rather than use force, decided to shift the tax burden to others.”<sup>542</sup> Paradoxically, it has often been the case that “withholding tax revenues was a significant sanction that enterprises could wield against regional governments,”<sup>543</sup> a confirmation that the types of players engaged in regional power contestations are not limited to legislators, governors and presidents.

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<sup>540</sup> Teague, 2002, p.211

<sup>541</sup> A report of August 2002 indicates that a Unity-OVR coalition in the Duma is crafting legislation to provide the President the power to appoint a regional governor and abrogate election results if the election plurality is below a yet to be determined number. See NUPI reprint of RFE/RL Report of 8/2/02.

<sup>542</sup> Solnick, 1998, p.69

<sup>543</sup> Stoner-Weiss, 1997, p.43



### **Putin Gives New Relevance to the Economic Areas:**

The organizational regime that has received priority over all others in the amount of attention given to it by the Putin administration is that of the Economic Areas discussed above.<sup>544</sup> The assignment of federal subject regions of all five types into groupings that have collectively come to be known as Economic Areas is a regime which has its roots in the Soviet era de-Stalinization policies that were initiated by Khrushchev. Prior to 1956, the entire economy of the Soviet Union was overseen by the centralized “political-administrative system” seated in the Kremlin,<sup>545</sup> and as one of his major post-Stalin reform projects, Khrushchev established regional economic councils (sovnarkhozes) which were intended to facilitate a lessening of the rigid centralized command and control over regional economic planning. Throughout the ethno-national territories of the Union the regional directors under Stalin had all been ‘Slavic’ Russians. In his efforts to develop both regional cooperation and a broad base of loyalty to his administration, Khrushchev began the policy of appointing local (and ethnically compatible) directors of these councils. Because his policy advisors had determined that the “shaky satellite economies [were] contributing to the undermining of Khrushchev’s leadership,” he expanded his sovnarkhozys regime through the establishment of nineteen “super regions” in 1961, with the hope that this new bureaucracy would provide a more efficient management of the

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<sup>544</sup> On the reform process that established the seven Economic Areas, Brown has concluded; “perhaps the most significant aspect of this major administrative reorganization—aside from the fact that military districts rather than economic criteria determine their boundaries—is that it did not follow any discussions or negotiations between the central authority and the regions.” (Brown, 2001, p.50)

<sup>545</sup> See Hough, 1979, pp.211-23 for a full discussion.

satellite economies. These nineteen ‘super regions’ eventually spawned 101 sovnarkhozys (regional councils), and when it became evident that the local brokers of this system were achieving too much autonomy of action, the Kremlin attempted to reestablish control through the creation of an additional forty-two economic regions within the nineteen super regions.

Brezhnev came to power in 1964 partly on the promise that he would revise the Moscow-centric command and control practices from the Stalin era, and one of his first directives was the reestablishment of the raikom (‘party committee’) system of economic oversight in the regions. By reinstating the party cadre regime that utilized a central committee (obkom) oversight system along with the retention of the local leadership which Khrushchev had appointed, Brezhnev had established a powerful new layer of nomenklatura that soon corrupted the entire consumer economy. The result of this “return to normalcy” was the return to Moscow of the Party Secretaries charged with oversight, and the local officials were free to establish relatively autonomous regional economies, and the enhanced power that was soon accumulated by these regional leaders resulted in a type of ‘shadow’ economy that was able to create its own hierarchy and supporting mechanisms. Due to the inability of the Brezhnev regime to oversee the day-to-day operations of the regional economies, information from official reporting replaced reality for the central planners at obkom, and the regional administrations were able to further establish de facto autonomy from Kremlin interference throughout the Brezhnev era. By the time Gorbachev came to power, “administrative officials within the respective regions were not subordinated to the Soviet in any meaningful way”.<sup>546</sup>

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<sup>546</sup> Hough, 1979, p.491

These 'super regions' were eventually consolidated into twelve economic districts by the time Gorbachev came to power and, as pointed out in brief above, were further consolidated under Yeltsin into eleven "Economic Areas". Throughout the late Soviet era, and into the Yeltsin led democracy, the rationale for the establishment and retention of these 'Areas' was to centrally plan and coordinate the development of regional economic assets, and to integrate compatible regional interests and industrial sector concentrations.<sup>547</sup> Beginning in 1991 and the establishment of a free market economy after the demise of the Soviet system, "regional consolidation started with the emergence of various associations."<sup>548</sup> Chief among these new organizations was the Governors Association established by regional leaders in order to voluntarily coordinate the economic interests and capabilities of the regional subject units of the newly democratized state. As a result of this effort the Kremlin engineered regime was transformed into a voluntary organization of regional Economic Areas from 1991 through 1992. A total of eight Economic Areas were established in order to organize more than seventy of the subject regions into economically compatible groups which were designated the Central, Black Earth, Northwest, Great Volga, Siberian, Far East, North Caucasus and Ural territories of the Russian State.<sup>549</sup> This initiative by the leaders of the Russian regions to coordinate their interests through the development of a market based

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<sup>547</sup> This is according to the ITAR - TASS reports published in the NUPI study.

<sup>548</sup> Shlapentokh et al. (1997) describes this association as well as many others which emerged immediately after the demise of the Soviet Union. Examples of these associations are: The Alliance of Russian Cities, The Alliance of Northern Cities, The Association of Regions and Republics of the Urals, The Far East Regional Association, as well as eight others.

<sup>549</sup> Lyashevskaya (1995, pp.273-300) outlines this early regional initiative in detail.

political economy was not encouraged by the Yeltsin regime, and after the political crisis of 1993, “the interregional associations’ activities declined almost immediately,”<sup>550</sup> and by the end of that year the Yeltsin administration had dissolved the voluntary organization of Economic Areas and had established a centrally planned group.

Demonstrating a willingness to embrace a centralization tactic from the Soviet era, the Yeltsin planners reconfigured (once again) the old Soviet economic districting regime so that it now comprised eleven Economic Areas which included a total of seventy-eight of the regional subject units, with the ten okrugs and the one Jewish Autonomous Oblast excluded from participation. The motive in the Kremlin for this new regional policy is best described by Mariya Lyashevskaya’s observation that “an economic area is a product of a planned economy [and] centralization is used to eliminate every opportunity for territorial integration.”<sup>551</sup>

The revival of this centralizing vestige from the era of a command economy may have been a stopgap policy initiative instituted by Yeltsin in order to unify the political economy of Russia during some turbulent times, but Putin’s continued refusal to allow this regime to be organized from the bottom up indicates that the balance of power in Russia is still in flux. The reformation of zonal groups and the reshuffling of regional membership within and among those zones must be understood as a tactic that Putin has determined combines well with the other reforms he has initiated or outlined. Although this reform has been touted by the federal planners as the improvement and coordination of an ‘economic’ regime, in reality it has served a very political role that has been used in

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<sup>550</sup> Shlapentokh et al, 1997, p.198

<sup>551</sup> Ibid.

conjunction with Yeltsin's treaty system. Solnick summarized this coordinated policy combination when he concluded that "in addition to placating restive republics, the center may have also weakened the coordinating mechanism that had permitted the republics to act collectively since 1990."<sup>552</sup> Although Solnick has also suggested that "collective action among the selected leaders may prove difficult to disrupt, especially since the newly reorganized Federation Council provides a forum for their regular assembly,"<sup>553</sup> it has been demonstrated in this study that the history of the application of the appointment and decree powers of the President can be brought to bear at any time to counter any threat of regional collaboration.

#### **Putin's Reform Package in Brief:**

Fish attempted to accurately and summarily describe the focus of Putin's reform agenda when he concluded that "Putin's political path stands on four pillars: centralizing state power, formulating a practical ideology, restoring state control of communication, and restructuring political competition."<sup>554</sup> Fish is so certain that Putin has telegraphed his vision for the future of Russia that he emphasized his conclusion that "recentralizing state power is the centerpiece of the Putin agenda,"<sup>555</sup> yet he has not mentioned what looks to be an even more important goal envisioned by Putin. The personal philosophy that cements all of his reform policies was articulated in a statement Putin made shortly after his 2000 election: "In our post-Soviet space we are cemented by the common past,

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<sup>552</sup> Solnick, 1998, p.72

<sup>553</sup> Ibid., p.75

<sup>554</sup> Fish, 2002, p.247

<sup>555</sup> Ibid.

but also by the common present. Because many people are simply relatives of each other, millions and tens of millions of people, our quest for integration will be accompanied by the strengthening of the Russian Federation. They will come to us themselves. This is obvious.”<sup>556</sup>

It is not enough to think of the post Yeltsin reform era as one in which the main task and focus of the federal government is on the consolidation of the mechanisms of a free market democracy, but rather Russia should be viewed as an asymmetrically organized core republic that is engaged in a continuing struggle for power between the center and the regions. Asymmetry keeps the advantage in this power struggle in the favor of the central regime in Moscow, and as long as that is true, there is little incentive for the federal planners to initiate the kind of reforms that would both balance and symmetrically distribute federation power. Although Fish has concluded that in the time since Yeltsin initiated his mixed policy of negotiating some selected bilateral agreements (and appointing many regional governors) and today, “power over regional governments has waned as appointed officials have been replaced by elected governors,”<sup>557</sup> the reforms that have been either planned or instituted insure that the hand of the Russian President is strengthened. The issue of control over regional power remains critical to the future of reform in Russia because Yeltsin insured that “control over privatization put massive resources under the direct control of regional leaders.”<sup>558</sup> With economic power in the hands of regional ‘bosses’, the political power and political fortunes of the free

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<sup>556</sup> Dunlop, 2000, p.39

<sup>557</sup> Fish, 1997, p.330

<sup>558</sup> Solnick, 1998, p.67

market reformers was subjugated to the task of amassing private fortunes by this new breed of elites. The task that Putin has set for himself is to establish at least the perception of a strong central Russian regime so that he can attract the loyalties and imagination of those who have been effectively disenfranchised by a corrupt leadership and an ill-conceived system of political participation as well as the diaspora of the former empire-nation who long for a restored homeland.

Dunlop has identified the fact that “Putin considers all ‘Russian speakers’ living in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Baltic states, regardless of citizenship, to be ‘compatriots’ (sootechestvenniki).”<sup>559</sup> When it is recognized that a significant portion of Putin’s target audience for his statements on the reintegration of the post-Soviet space are those ‘Russian speakers’ who were left behind by the elimination of the Soviet borders, the policy actions that have followed his selection and election take on a new importance. Dunlop described the actions initiated by Putin in the Ukraine and Kazakhstan as part of a larger pattern indicating this restorationist vision. “Russia appears bent on using economic pressures plus the alleged persecution of Russians and ‘Russian speakers’ as tools of integration.”<sup>560</sup> Along with this vision of integration is a list of new laws that regulate center to region relations that now includes “a mechanism whereby the heads of regions could be removed and regional legislatures dissolved if they adopted laws that contradicted federal legislation.”<sup>561</sup> As the presidential vertical of personal power relations continues to penetrate the leadership of the regional regimes,

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<sup>559</sup> Dunlop, 2000, p.43

<sup>560</sup> Ibid.

<sup>561</sup> Sakwa, 2002, p.15

what has been described as “a compensatory mechanism, granting the regional leaders or the president the right to dismiss local authorities subordinate to them”<sup>562</sup> takes on a special importance. The future looks to be very much a return to the policies of the Soviet and Imperial eras, a time when not only would the Kremlin power brokers have extraordinary powers of dismissal and appointment, but the personal surrogates of the Moscow regime in the regions would carry that authority in congruence.

Fish identified the fact that within the overall theme of the strengthening of central powers, “recentralization also serves another part of Putin’s agenda: separating ethnicity from identity.”<sup>563</sup> The policy statements that focus on integration or reintegration have trumpeted two consistent themes. ‘Russians’ are now to be identified by the Kremlin as those who speak the language and ‘compatriots’ are identified as those who share a history as Soviet citizens. If this vision of inclusion is combined with the new reforms of the Russian president and his surrogates, the direction that this string of initiatives indicates appears very neo-Soviet. Hahn has outlined a summary list of Putin’s initiatives and describes them as “measures” of how the new President has progressively strengthened his “executive vertical” by decree:

- The establishment of seven Federal Districts.
- The appointment of seven Presidential Representatives.
- Each District subsumes from six to eighteen subject regions each.
- Replacement of representatives to the Federation Council with regional ‘senators’.
- The Federation Council is to sit on a continuous basis.

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<sup>562</sup> Ibid., p.16

<sup>563</sup> Fish, 2001, p.73



- The authority to remove regional governors.
- The authority to disband a regional legislature.
- The power of Federal Justice Ministry to review and reject any regional law.<sup>564</sup>

Hahn concludes his summary by pointing out two important implications of this decree process. First is the fact that any or all of these decrees “may be an unconstitutional action,” and secondly, “the new regional organization will result in a new personal patron-client system.”<sup>565</sup>

### **Summary:**

Putin came to power as the man to restore integrity and order to the process of political and economic transition in Russia, but rather than reform the mechanisms that had resulted in critical transition problems such as an unfair privatization regime, an unworkable mixed SMD-Party List electoral system, a federal districting regime that institutionalizes asymmetry and a balance of power asymmetry that gives the Russian president an extraordinary advantage, he is insuring the consolidation of power in the hands of those he includes in his newly configured presidential vertical. It was reported by the news media “in spring 2001, Unity and Fatherland All Russia (OVR) announced that they would form a common front to support the legislative programme of President Putin,”<sup>566</sup> with the collaboration also resulting in the formation of a new party to be called “Unity and Fatherland”.<sup>567</sup> Based on the analysis presented in Chapter Five it must be

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<sup>564</sup> Hahn, 2001, pp.498-503

<sup>565</sup> Ibid., p.503

<sup>566</sup> Russiavotes.org, 2002, p.1

<sup>567</sup> Ibid.

seen as a remarkable turn of events that the two political parties that had represented the two extremes of the federal to region power dynamic (with Unity supporting the central regime and OVR the advocate for regional autonomy) would find enough common ground to form a faction in support of Putin's legislative initiatives. The membership list of this unlikely faction of political ideologies becomes even more interesting when the platform espoused by the CPRF is seen in the 'compatriots of the post-Soviet-space' context described earlier.

Based on its own publication outlining its policy platform, the CPRF intends to "restore traditional alliances in the international arena [and] we will remove obstacles to the unification of Russia, Belarus, and the Ukraine."<sup>568</sup> When we compare the CPRF policy position to that of Unity, we find that Unity has published a platform statement that promises to "stand for the interests of Russian citizens living in other states, especially if their rights were violated."<sup>569</sup> These two position statements represent a perspective of 'inclusion' under a Russian umbrella of protection and unity that goes well beyond the current boundaries and powers of the Federation, and parallel the definition of who is a 'Russian' and who is a 'compatriot' that Putin has proclaimed in his own statements and directives. When the CPRF, Unity, OVR and Putin share the vision of what constitutes both the ideological and objective factors that determine the basis for inclusion into a nation, it must be recognized as a new and powerful unifying policy that is forming a new political foundation. This unity of vision is also mirrored in the economic realm, where we find that Unity has expressed support for "a [government]

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<sup>568</sup> See: [www.ceip.org](http://www.ceip.org)

<sup>569</sup> Ibid.

employment program, toughened control over state expenses, to strengthen the role of state regulation of the economy [and] to return to Russia national capital that moved abroad.”<sup>570</sup> The CPRF, as we might expect, has proclaimed its intention to “return property stolen by ‘reformists’ to the people, but keep strategically important sectors under state control”<sup>571</sup> and perhaps most significantly, “the CPRF supports the restoration of the former Soviet Union on a ‘voluntary basis’ and the adoption of a new Constitution by means of referendum.”<sup>572</sup> The OVR Party had been the strongest voice raised to counter the centralizing and neo-Soviet restorationist statements of the others, and had provided a vision of a Russian government that must “promote synergy between the Duma and the government, amend the constitution to strengthen Russian statehood, preserve the country’s integrity in combination with federalism, and amend the constitution so that some of the president’s powers are transferred to the government and the parliament. In particular, future governments should be formed by a parliamentary majority.”<sup>573</sup> Given such a strong message in support of federalism and a balance of power, there is little to explain why this pro-regional power partisanship was abandoned by OVR in order to form the new joint party venture with Unity, than the fact of Putin’s first round election victory and the power pattern that has emerged from his centralizing decrees and initiatives. The ‘writing on the wall’ may have provided a sufficient

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<sup>570</sup> Ibid. All of these Party position statements taken from the information published as a Carnegie Center document.

<sup>571</sup> Ibid.

<sup>572</sup> Ibid. This combination of CPRF statements comes from both the Carnegie Center and from RFE/RL publications listed on this site.

<sup>573</sup> This is the party platform statement expressed by the former Prime Minister Primakov and published in a 1999 report in RFE/RL

incentive for those who had attempted to find a political balance of power through electoral politics to seek out and find common ground with the true 'party of power' (the executive branch of the Russian government). As long as asymmetry provides a tactical advantage to the Executive branch of this hybrid federal system, the mixed electoral system, the feeble party system and the illogical districting system will continue to go relatively unchanged by the shallow reforms of a halfhearted effort.

## **Chapter Seven:**

### **SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION AND ANALYSIS**

Russia's struggles with democratic transition and consolidation can be traced to the violation of some very basic and general guidelines of process and structure that experts in the field recommend be followed. One of those experts, Eckstein, outlined in specific detail the "successful democracy syndrome."<sup>574</sup> Among the many factors that he included in the recipe for success, the successful democracy "has in a more general sense a strong civil society [and] its basic building blocks are horizontal relationships."<sup>575</sup> Eckstein concludes his outline by noting that in the end "it is a highly leveled society; and it is not a plural society,"<sup>576</sup> suggesting that disparities among the population groups of the state should (and can) be balanced and asymmetry could well be anathema to democratic statecrafting.<sup>577</sup> It is clear from the analysis presented in this study that the system of Russian federal governance is based on strong personal-vertical relationships, and that not only do the stratifications of the Russian Republic result in a weak civil

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<sup>574</sup> Eckstein, 1998, p.367

<sup>575</sup> Ibid.

<sup>576</sup> The quotation in full is as follows: The successful democracy syndrome, summarized exogenously, the polity is embedded in a society that has a highly developed economy as a result of a slow rate of economic growth; it has a market or mixed economy; it contains numerous organized groups that have large memberships, and it has in a more general sense a strong civil society; its basic building blocks are horizontal relationships; its members trust one another, are tolerant, restrict egotistic action, and accept disagreements; its culture is not based on an authoritarian religion or quasi-religion; it is a highly leveled society; and it is not a plural society. (Eckstein, 1998, p.367.)

<sup>577</sup> The problems associated with the development of a viable Russian civil society take on even greater importance when McFaul's conclusion is considered. He has concluded, "the states that emerged from the Soviet Union, however had no civil society to resurrect, [and] these new states inherited social and institutional legacies from the Soviet era (and before) that impeded democratic consolidation." (McFaul, 2002, p.87) An alternative explanation from Kubicek suggests that "the weakness of civil society and the rise of an oligarchy in both countries is in part the very result of policies pursued by yesterday's reformers." (Kubicek, 2002, p.625)

society, the districting structure reinforces plurality in Russian mass society. The adoption of a system of vertical authority patterns and segmented regionalism insures that the state survives in the short term, but suffers the constraints to democratic consolidation that the institutionalized and non-institutionalized asymmetries described in this study bring to bear.

The mixed electoral system that has been implemented to facilitate balanced Duma representation and the establishment of the political party system has accomplished neither goal. The combination of SMD competition with a party list ballot system has assured that political party victories are a result of low plurality outcomes, and that few political parties survive from one election cycle to the next. The disappointing performance of this mixed system could have been significantly remedied by a demonstration of support for the party system and the idea of party plurality representation by the active participation of either of the first two Russian presidents. This lack of presidential participation has passively undermined the consolidation of the political party system by the omission of support, but the consistent policy actions by both Russian presidential administrations to rule by appointment and decree have confounded the consolidation of democracy by an active commitment to antidemocratic methods.<sup>578</sup> The net result of the combination of these actions (and inactions) to date has

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<sup>578</sup> These policies have undermined the presidency as well, according to Schroder, who concluded: "Consequently, it was not the consolidation of democracy that was the central focus of the political process in Russia but the deformation of the presidential democracy legitimated by elections and the constitution by incorporating commercial interests into the actions of the executive." (Schroder, 1999, p.981)

been the reinforcement and consolidation of social segmentations, institutionalized asymmetries and vertical power relations.<sup>579</sup>

Although Linz and Stepan describe in summary form the behavioral, attitudinal and constitutional benchmarks of democratic consolidation, and conclude that if no significant institutional actors from the social, national, political or economic regimes of the state “spend significant resources attempting to achieve their objectives by creating a nondemocratic regime,” democratic behavior has been consolidated. These same two analysts have also concluded that the consolidation of a democratic attitude has been accomplished when “public opinion holds the belief that democratic procedures and institutions are the most appropriate way to govern collective life in a society such as theirs.”<sup>580</sup> According to the authors, if these two propositions hold true for a given society in transition then the foundation for constitutional consolidation has been established, and the “governmental and nongovernmental forces alike, throughout the territory of the state, become subjected to, and habituated to, the resolution of conflict within specific laws, procedures and institutions sanctioned by the democratic process.”<sup>581</sup> Although much more research into localized patterns of political participation and elite power relations is necessary for a clear understanding of the issue, it appears that some very nondemocratic behaviors and attitudes significantly influence

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<sup>579</sup> A more dramatic summary of the events that have occurred in Russia’s post-Soviet transition, and the way in which they have been analyzed has been suggested by Cohen. He has concluded that “transitionologists missed the most important development in Russia since 1991, the exact reverse of the process they purported to study, the country’s progressive de-modernization. In the end the net result of transitionology has been to create a Russian studies without Russia.” (Cohen, 1999, p.48)

<sup>580</sup> Linz and Stepan, 1996, p.6

<sup>581</sup> Ibid.



policy and process at the two extremes of governance, the federal and the local regimes. The evidence suggests that some very nondemocratic characteristics of participation and governance are being habituated rather than those ‘sanctioned’ by the democratic process.<sup>582</sup>

A final and critical comparative characteristic of a successful democratization process was described by Rose, Munro and White who have determined that “the liberal theory of democracy is demand driven: voters decide what they want and politicians compete to supply their demands. By contrast, the realist theory is supply driven; the choice of voters is restricted to the parties that elites organize and place on the ballot paper.”<sup>583</sup> If it can be said that Russian democracy was established with a vision towards the consolidation of a ‘liberal’ democracy by the establishment of the mixed electoral system that spawned multiple parties and an overflow of candidates, it is equally true that the reforms either proposed or implemented by the Putin regime are attempting to reconfigure that system to reflect more closely the characteristics of a ‘realist’ democracy. By imposing further restrictions on candidate nominations and political party competition, the regime has done little to improve the problems related to a lack of ideological identifications of political parties to the policies and mechanisms of Russian governance. Instead of giving real meaning to the partisan choices made by the electorate through the establishment and reinforcement of legislative actions and executive policies directly related to the platform statements of the political parties that

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<sup>582</sup> The implications of this pattern of democratization has caused Brzezinski to warn that “over the next decade or two, we may witness Russia turning into a kind of authoritarian democracy reminiscent of, say, pre-1914 Germany.” (Brzezinski, 2001, p.21)

<sup>583</sup> Rose, Munro and White, 2001, p.419

have won electoral victories, the opposite has been the pattern. The post-election patterns of faction building in the Duma has significantly contributed to the undermining of the identification of viable political parties with competing 'democratic' ideologies, and the relationship of the executive branch with the federal legislature has continued to do more to exacerbate rather than resolve this problem.

From the time of the collapse of the Soviet system the process of political change that has unfolded in Russia has continually resulted in the implementation of layers of democratic process and structure over the top of a foundation composed of system components of a traditional and historical nature that have survived from the previous two authoritarian eras. The vertical power patterns of governance and the institutionalized pluralities of the federal system contribute to the confounding of the consolidation of democratic behaviors in such a fashion as to ensure that the system continues to depend on the decree powers of the president to initiate and implement meaningful policy doctrines and federal legislation. The reinforcement of the asymmetries of the federal system not only prevent the development of regionally initiated collective actions, but also assures that public attitudes towards meaningful power identifications remain local, parochial and segregated in their focus.

Democratically founded processes cannot be consolidated if the patterns of negotiated relations between the federal regime and the subject regions that emerged from the first months of the establishment of the Russian Federation continue to reinforce a process of region-to-federal relationship that is in a constant state of modification.

Because the Federation Treaty reinforced the Soviet crafted differentiations among the identifications and relations of the federal government with the subject units

based on specific subject unit type characteristics (republic or non-republic), that formalized asymmetry of relations guaranteed that the Republic would be formed as a segmented ethno-federation. The 1993 forced dissolution of the Federal Legislature by Yeltsin was done in order to establish a legislature that would be 'legally' under his control. Yeltsin ignored the recommendations of his advisors who advocated a symmetrically organized union, and instead supervised the crafting of a Constitution whose popular ratification would not only facilitate the dilution of the power of the republics, but also would serve as a referendum in support of his policy vision. The new constitution either abrogated or contradicted much of what had been negotiated in the Federation Treaty to assure the creation of the Russian Republic as an ethno-federation, and the lack of reforms at both the federal and regional levels has resulted in the problem that continues to this day of constitutions and charters in the republics and regions that stand in contrast to the laws and statutes of the Federal Republic. Yeltsin and his cohorts in the Kremlin may have managed to stave off the transition of the Soviet Russian Republic into a confederation of independent republics, but it is evident from the material outlined in this analysis that Russia is a long way from the consolidation of either a 'liberal' or a 'realist' form of federal democracy.

Lynn and Novikov described how, in the midst of the transition process, debates about how the Russian Federation should be structured resulted in the proposal of "three competing federal models which ascribe to three different organizing principles: a territorial principle, a national-territorial principle, and a principle of local self-management."<sup>584</sup> The description and discussions presented in this analysis have

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<sup>584</sup> Lynn and Novikov, 1997, p.131

indicated that in the end the Russian federal state-crafters created a hybrid system that is by all indications an amalgam of all three models. The maturation of this mixed system of multiple subject unit types into a form that reflects any one of the three paradigms described by Lynn and Novikov is confounded by the refusal of the federal regime to allow the development of voluntary groups and associations of subject regions based on complementary unit economic and demographic issues and interests. The state crafting reform policies that have been proposed or have recently been implemented do more to assure that the final form of the Russian federal state will continue to be an amalgam of all three of the federal models outlined above rather than a specifically Russian form closely approximating the most appropriate system type paradigm.

Lynn and Novikov attempt to explain the failure of the Russian political crafters to establish the state on the foundations of any of the normative federation paradigms by describing Russia as a special case of federalism that is founded on traditional principles of “local self management.”<sup>585</sup> In contrast to ‘liberal’, ‘realist’ or other ‘western’ models of central or peripheral democratic federalism, a uniquely ‘Russian’ form of federalism based on the concept of “local self-management, the self expression and limited self government of communities at the local (rather than the regional or national) level [and] strongly influenced by an interpretation of the zemstvo reforms of the 1860s”<sup>586</sup> has emerged. Lynn and Novikov have concluded that the problems of political unrest that conspired to bring down the Empire were a direct result of the zemstvo reforms of the 1890s that had destroyed traditional patterns of local self governance, and the legacy that

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<sup>585</sup> Ibid., p.133

<sup>586</sup> Ibid.

remains from the failed attempt by the Soviets of establishing a Communist Party version of centralized control by local 'soviets' will all be resolved by "a devolution of power from both the center and the regions to 'local self governing territories' which will include an abandonment of the hierarchical organization of executive vertical links."<sup>587</sup> Although the evidence presented in this analysis does not contradict this conclusion, the outline of the problems related to asymmetry and electoral inefficiency described in this study indicates that it is not a lack of power at the localities that is the problem to be resolved, but rather control over the concentrations of localized power alliances that needs to be achieved by Putin's policy actions. If the lack of popular support for, or interest in, the intermediate level of federal power that is represented by the Federal Assembly and the political party system is an indication that power in the regions is already localized, the recommendation of the devolution of power to local self management is not be a departure from the past at all, nor is it a 'fix' for the problem.

I have described the vertical of power that was the hallmark of governance in both the Imperial and the Soviet eras, and the adoption of that form of political organization by both the Yeltsin and the Putin regime. When the vertical of power relations is combined with the reforms that have been either proposed or instituted since 1999, there emerges a legacy pattern that indicates that it may be the intention of the federal state regime to bypass the regional-intermediate level of governance in favor of the strengthening of a direct vertical of power from the Kremlin to the elites of the locally 'self-managed' community. If the Kremlin regime is able to establish a more direct power relationship with localized regimes, it is likely that the state will ultimately become a unitary political

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<sup>587</sup> Ibid.

system that may or may not exhibit the outward appearance of a federation, just as its Soviet predecessor had done.

The adoption of a vertical of power that ignores the processes of a true federal system may ultimately succeed if the “political legacy of the Soviet ethno-territorial state structure”<sup>588</sup> is adopted, but the errors of the Soviets are avoided. According to some experts, the failure of the Soviet federal system was due to a compromise of the principles of federalism, and “the root of the federal compromise in the Soviet Union lay in the Bolsheviks’ desire to co-opt and undermine local interests rather than to accommodate them within a genuinely federal structure.”<sup>589</sup> This recommendation comes from the conclusion that the Bolshevik planners (most notably Stalin) envisioned Soviet federalism “as a transitory stage, eventually leading to centralization and facilitating the emergence of new social relations in the Soviet Union.”<sup>590</sup> Perhaps the policy patterns, power relations and federal structures that have been described in this analysis, and are clearly connected to legacies from the Soviet era, represent the adoption of the Soviet goal of federal centralization and the plurality of social relations in order to achieve a similar goal to that of the Bolsheviks. It would seem that the recommendations of the type above by those who share the view of Lynn and Novikov are suggesting that the failure of the Bolsheviks (and later the Soviets) was in not establishing a localized basis for federalism. A further analysis of this relationship between Soviet central federal authority and the regional ‘Soviets’ would provide a very useful contribution to the

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<sup>588</sup> Ibid., p.129

<sup>589</sup> Ibid.

<sup>590</sup> Ibid.

understanding of the path of democratization and federation crafting that contemporary Russia represents.

As a case study, Russia not only provides a window on the process of democratic consolidation that demonstrates the impact of legacy on political change, but also demonstrates that legacy alone is an insufficient explanatory variable for the path of transition and consolidation that has been followed by nascent post-Soviet democracies. Although legacy is an important aspect of the process of political change, the legacy of Soviet federalism is not unique to Russia, and therefore it cannot stand alone as the explanation for both the general problems associated with post-Soviet transition and the unique problems faced by the Russian political crafters.

This analysis has demonstrated that the roots of the impediments to the consolidation of Russian democracy reach into the pre-Soviet, Soviet and post-Soviet eras of political crafting and political history. The conclusion that it is erroneous to place too much emphasis on the legacy of the Soviet era is supported by McFaul's analysis which has shown that "the variation among post-communist experiences in the region demonstrates that the shared history of communism was not as consequential as was originally assumed."<sup>591</sup> The legacy of Soviet Communism may be most prevalent and consistent at the mass public levels of post-Soviet societies, and as described by Stoner-Weiss, "the relatively uniform levels of mistrust across regions is a testament to the effectiveness of totalitarianism's atomization of Soviet society."<sup>592</sup> It may be a consequence of this atomization that the electorate of the Russian Federation has found it

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<sup>591</sup> McFaul, 2002, p.265

<sup>592</sup> Stoner Weiss, 1997, p.163

an overwhelming task to overcome the lack of top down leadership in order to establish a political party system that represents a select few nationally identifiable ideological interests. There is no doubt that the political process continues to suffer from “the cumulative effect of decades of participation in elections manipulated on behalf of unpopular and corrupt officials [that] has left a legacy of political distrust among many Russians,”<sup>593</sup> but it may not be Soviet legacies that present the greatest challenge to democratic consolidation.

The legacy carried over from the Soviet era that may be the most difficult to reconcile with the consolidation of a democratic federation is one that was established under Imperial rule (and was consolidated in the formation of a modern state system by the Soviets), the ethno-territorial core of the federal system. This study supports the findings of Fish that “ethnically divided societies are regarded as facing myriad obstacles to democratization that are absent in more homogeneous societies.”<sup>594</sup> The problems related to the districting system that has been institutionalized in Russia indicate that it is likely that the consolidation of these ethno-nationally based stratifications in the democratic Republic will be among the most difficult legacies to overcome. Opinion polls demonstrate that the ‘homeland’ identifications of the citizens of Russia have a foundation which is consistent with the findings of this analysis; the people identify en masse with a national concept of ‘Russia’, and personally identify with their immediate surrounding community.<sup>595</sup> There are no public opinion polling results indicating a

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<sup>593</sup> White et al., 2001, p. xvi

<sup>594</sup> Fish, 1998, p.223



significant public identification with the concept of a 'Russian Federal Republic' or in a unilateral sense with citizenship identification in the intermediate level of federal subject region in which they happen to reside<sup>596</sup>. When questioned on the topic of "popular perceptions of the national homeland and Russian identity,"<sup>597</sup> the top two most frequently selected responses to the question, "When you are talking about the homeland, what do you usually mean?" 'Russia' was the response chosen at a ratio of 34.5 percent of the respondents, and "city/village of birth and childhood" for 30.9 percent.<sup>598</sup> The selection of the Soviet Union as a homeland was the response for only 10.3 percent of those included in the survey, and when the option "city or village of residence for most of one's life" is merged to provide a total response based on identification with a city or village, the total is 47.2 percent.<sup>599</sup> The option provided for identification with the federal subject unit for this sample was the subject republic of residence, and with only 3.6 percent of the respondents selecting that option, it is evident that personal identifications are divided between the extremes of 'Russia' at one end, and the localized community group at the other.<sup>600</sup>

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<sup>595</sup> This identification with 'Russia' is best understood with Bowring's observation in mind. He has noted that "there is a further, linguistic, complexity. It should be noted that it is not the 'Russkii' (ethnic Russian) but 'Rossiiskii' (civic Russian) Federation." (Bowring, 2002, p.231)

<sup>596</sup> The exception to this pattern of low levels of regional regime identification are the ethnically related attachments that some population segments express for their namesake region or territory.

<sup>597</sup> White, et al., 2001, pp.1-3

<sup>598</sup> Ibid.

<sup>599</sup> Ibid.

When survey data that measures “the criteria [that] are particularly important for a person to be considered Russian”<sup>601</sup> is analyzed, the results indicate that “to cherish the traditions of the Russian people [and] speaking the Russian language”<sup>602</sup> are the number one and two responses. These survey results correlate with the implications of this study pertaining to the building of a national political party system and the low plurality outcomes in the election of representatives to a national legislature. There is reason to speculate that the declining turnout numbers, low party plurality outcomes and the wide spectrum of partisan views which are represented in the plethora of party platforms point to the priority of interest in localized issues. Future investigation may illuminate further the indications highlighted here suggesting that issues related generally to citizenship, when defined as a shared residence within the internal borders of a subject region of Russia, counts for very little. If Linz and Stepan are correct in their determination that “the greater the percentage of people in a given territory who feel that they do not want to

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<sup>600</sup> This report of such a low level of identification with the federal subject unit may be misleading. For example, Hough has found that “the percentage who identify Russia as their Motherland has not been growing even among young adults. Instead, they have increasingly identified with their oblast or republic.” (Hough, 1998, p.91)

<sup>601</sup> Ibid.

<sup>602</sup> The question and responses in full are: Which of the following criteria are particularly important for a person to be considered Russian?

To cherish the traditions of the Russian people	54.3
To have Russian as a native language	53.4
To live according to the moral ideals of Russia	39.7
To have Russian ancestors	36.8
To be an Orthodox Christian	18.9
To be Russian according to one’s passport entry	11.8
Difficult to answer/something else	9.5

(Source: based on a survey conducted by the All-Russian Centre for the Study of Public Opinion [VTsIOM] July 1996 n=2404) (White, Pravda and Gitelman: 2001)

be members of that territorial unit, however it may be constituted, the more difficult it will be to consolidate a single democracy within that unit,”<sup>603</sup> then the implications of these outcomes for the future of Russian democratic consolidation become more significant. If the normative identifications of the Russian citizens are the Russian nation, language and traditions at one level and the local community at another more personal level, then the reasons for the widespread acceptance of the centralizing and nationalizing policies of the Yeltsin and Putin eras that have kept the regional subject unit governments disorganized, weak and in fear of dissolution by decree become more evident. A Russia that is federally centralized and asymmetric in its structurally defined conditions, including political relations, will remain dependent upon the actions of an authoritarian like vertical of power rather than the slow grindings of the mechanisms of a democratic process that can never reflect a balance of horizontal power which does not exist. As long as the powers of the presidency are justified by the asymmetry of the system, and there are many elites who have a vested interest in the propagation of the power vertical, the asymmetric characteristics of the system that require the actions of a powerful ‘superpresident’ will continue to be reinforced, and the chances for the consolidation of a federal democracy patterned after any normative model of symmetric relations is unlikely.

The problems related to the establishment of a viable and stable political party system have centered on a key issue, the lack of a national base of sustained partisan political party support spread among a select few rival parties. The reforms that have been devised by the Putin administration do little to address the fact that individual

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<sup>603</sup> Linz and Stepan, 1996, p.27

candidates have a stronger base of sustained popular support than can be matched by that which the party system can (or has) produced. The necessity for the reform of the mixed electoral system is highlighted by the fact that the party list Duma election process has transitioned through three election cycles and yet continues to show results such as the outcome “in 1999 [when] the number of independents winning single-member seats was almost one and a half times that in 1995, and the vote won by new list parties more than doubled between 1995 and 1999.”<sup>604</sup> The lack of meaningful reforms that resulted in the emergence of a floating party system threatens to consolidate the patterns and mechanisms associated with the demise and reconfiguration of parties from one election cycle to the next, and the proposed reforms serve to exaggerate the dynamics of a system that “compels voters to delay making a decision until close to election day.”<sup>605</sup>

The problems with Russia’s mixed electoral system not only cause voters to delay their decisions, but also creates an environment in which the four criteria outlined by Rose, Munro and White that insure the establishment and consolidation of a stable political party system are violated.<sup>606</sup> According to that criteria, the necessary (but not sufficient) conditions for success include nationwide party competition, the persistence of the same major parties in competition from one election cycle to the next, that the majority of legislature seats are consistently won by the major national parties and the candidates remain loyal to the party after being elected as Members. The Russian party system has evolved from the time of Yeltsin’s triumph in his head-to-head confrontation

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<sup>604</sup> Rose, Munro and White, 2001. p.427

<sup>605</sup> Ibid., p.428

<sup>606</sup> See Ibid., pp.420-21 for a full discussion of the four criteria.

with an electorally empowered Soviet era Russian legislature in the summer of 1993, and it has been demonstrated in this analysis that it has been a consistent policy of the federal regime to continue the legacy of 'divide and conquer' when it faces the specter of political competition. With the power of the executive accomplished by Yeltsin combined with the revisionist Soviet era 'national' policy, it should be no surprise that there has been a relatively minimal effort to craft and support an effective and strong national party system. Not only is the party system unstable due to the 'floating' characteristics described earlier, but it has been documented that the behavior of party members in the legislature shift from one party and party faction to the next with seeming disregard for stated ideological interests. This critical violation of the fourth criterion was confirmed by Rose, Munro and White who found that "between election day and the first meeting of the Duma on 18 January 2000 a total of 147 Duma seats, one third of its membership, changed hands without a single vote being cast."<sup>607</sup> It is evident that at the grassroots of the party system little bonds the individual voter to a political party, and perhaps less holds a candidate to party loyalty. Although it has been determined that, in general "Russian politics is thoroughly fractionalized even at the district level,"<sup>608</sup> the reason for the factionalization of Russian politics at its foundations has yet to be explained, and the answer to the question of why faction and party loyalty are at such low premiums is most likely to be found by the analysis of participation and partisanship at the local-parochial level of Russian civic culture.<sup>609</sup>

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<sup>607</sup> Ibid., p.425

<sup>608</sup> Moser, 1997, p. 297

By all indications, the factionalization of interests in Russia is not simply an expression of changing political partisanship in the Duma or a manifestation of party identifications that shift for ideological purposes, but represent the consequences of the political representation of a divided Russian population into what White and others have identified as “five groups of unequal size.”<sup>610</sup> The largest of these five groups are the thirty nine percent of those who are classified in opinion polls as “uncertain” because they have yet to be convinced “that a parliament is desirable or survivable,”<sup>611</sup> but the list also includes a relatively balanced quartet of hopeful authoritarians, frustrated authoritarians, confident democrats and anxious democrats. Hough has described why the Duma factions are of a type that interfere with the consolidation of the federal democracy. He has determined from his research that “the party-faction system of the Russian legislature had a series of peculiarities that seriously interfered with the development of a strong democracy in Russia”<sup>612</sup> and as a result they exhibit the following characteristics:

- The number of factions is particularly high.
- Although factions are dominant in the Duma, they are weak.
- Factions have no analogous party-like bodies at the territorial level.

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<sup>609</sup> Although the reasons for the patterns in the interrelationships between and among legislative members remains unclear, Smith and Remington have found that “over a very short period of time, Russian parliamentarians crafted a new legislature that did not represent a single logic but instead reflected their multiple political goals.” (Smith and Remington, 2002, p.1)

<sup>610</sup> White et al., 2001, p.151

<sup>611</sup> Ibid.

<sup>612</sup> Hough, 1997, p.90

- Factions do not develop into parties with branches in the regions.<sup>613</sup>

Although the emergence of factions and the willingness of political actors to transition from one political party to a seemingly incompatible political faction may appear to represent a form of cooperation within the legislative branch of the federal government, Axelrod and Keohane have made the point that “cooperation, thus defined, is not necessarily good from a moral point of view.”<sup>614</sup>

Hanson and Alexseev have concluded that the factions in Soviet society that combined to bring an end to the Union were made up of the “ethnic anti-Russians and the civic anti-Soviets,”<sup>615</sup> and the activities of the remnants of these groups as they currently exist in the Russian Republic should be of particular interest to a future analysis of localized factionalism. According to Hanson, these particular faction groups have lost their viability as a forum for activist involvement for the rather obvious reason that the primary purpose that motivated their unification has changed or disappeared. The anti-Soviets no longer pose a threat because they lost the focus for secessionist unity when the USSR ceased to exist, and the members of the anti-Russian coalition, which was originally made up of a majority of other former SSRs who resented the ‘Russianness’ of Soviet culture, have achieved independence, and any coalescing of the ethno-nationals

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<sup>613</sup> This list is a summary of the original that was compiled by Hough, 1997, pp.90-92

<sup>614</sup> The full context of this selected quote will provide a helpful perspective to this point relating to the type of cooperation that is emergent in Russian politics: “Cooperation is not equivalent to harmony. Harmony requires complete identity of interests, but cooperation can only take place in situations that contain a mixture of conflicting and complementary interests. In such situations, cooperation occurs when actors adjust their behavior to the actual or anticipated preferences of others. Cooperation, thus defined, is not necessarily good from a moral point of view.” (Axelrod & Keohane 1985, p.226)

<sup>615</sup> Hanson in Alexseev, 1999, p 17



that still remain within the Republic, “has been unable to hold.”<sup>616</sup> The information outlined in this study has presented a good case for why this anti-Russian coalition has been unable to hold, and that reason is generally subsumed under the heading of ‘asymmetry’. As long as the Russian Federal government maintains policies and structural differentiations that reinforce the asymmetric character of (and relations among) the subject units and peoples of the state, a unified challenge to the central federal supremacy of authority will continue to be foiled. If reforms in Russia move in the direction of creating a positive environment for the establishment of voluntary associations among and between the regional leadership and segments of Russian society, anti-Russian factions could then ‘hold together’ with dire consequences for the federal regime.

It has been hypothesized that in Russia it takes a coalition of four unit types in order to bring a direct challenge to the integrity of the state. These four types must combine in such a way that the “catalysts” (expected to be republics) will be able to initiate a challenge to central authority that will lead the “followers” to action while insuring that the “fence sitters” do not find cause to join forces with the “integrationists” (probably oblasts) who desire a federal union, according to Hanson.<sup>617</sup> Hanson’s hypothesis has a test in the post-Soviet history of the Chechen Republic, a subject unit that has certainly taken on the role of challenger to the integrity and unity of the federation (and the right of rule from Moscow), but rather than acting as a catalyst for a challenge to the regime, it has had the opposite effect. With the ethno-national territories

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<sup>616</sup> Ibid.

<sup>617</sup> Ibid., p.20



showing by their actions a willingness to negotiate bilateral agreements with the Kremlin or to simply carry on business as usual with as much autonomy as they can get away with, there is scant evidence that the republics will provide anti-Russian secessionist leadership. The irony in this issue of secession and the paradigm that the disintegration of the Soviet Union provides is that there has emerged a general consensus among many historians and analysts who share the conclusion that perhaps the most significant explanation for Russia's secession from the Union is because it could (locationally and ideologically), and that the Russian Federation has held together through these difficult years of transition-related hardships because there is no internal "Russia-like" nation to challenge the integrity of the Federation.<sup>618</sup> In the end there seems to be much truth in Hanson's conclusion that "the Russian Federation holds together due to the absence of ideology,"<sup>619</sup> but 'holding together' is not consolidation, and Russia cannot consolidate a democracy in an ideological vacuum.<sup>620</sup>

This analysis has provided support for the proposition that liberalization is not a desired goal of the federal reforms that have been proposed or implemented, and if Linz and Stepan were correct in their conclusion that "liberalization (perestroika and glasnost) but not democratization had severe disintegrative consequences for the USSR,"<sup>621</sup> the

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<sup>618</sup> See Ibid., p.28 for a full discussion of this issue.

<sup>619</sup> Ibid., p.38

<sup>620</sup> The loss of ideological support was lamented by Yeltsin in a speech of 12 July 1996: "In Russia's history in the twentieth century, there have been various periods – monarchism, totalitarianism, perestroika and, finally, the democratic path of development. Each epoch had its own ideology. [but] now we don't have one." (Urban, 1998, p.969)

<sup>621</sup> Linz and Stepan, 1996, p. 367.

anti-liberalism of the Putin regime has a basis in history. If Putin has learned from the errors of Gorbachev, his Soviet predecessor, we can expect few liberalizing reforms of the political process or the political party system in the foreseeable future.<sup>622</sup> As the Russian President continues to initiate reforms that enhance the decree, appointment and oversight powers of the federal regime, the mechanisms available to regional political representatives for access to the arenas of policy planning and implementation become more limited. The lack of institutionalized procedures for region to center interrelations has resulted in an imbalance that has been described by Sakwa as “particularly acute in Russia [because] the resources available to the various actors in the bargaining process are far from equal, and it is these power asymmetries that shape Russia’s distinctive type of federalism and encourage the development of segmented regionalism.”<sup>623</sup> Although Sakwa has accurately described what is perhaps the greatest impact of the asymmetric structure of the Republic, that of segmented federalism, it is important to make a distinction between the analysis presented in this study and that of Sakwa (and others) regarding the establishment of the federal organizing system. Sakwa’s statement, “segmented regionalism was generated by historical, material and social factors and not simply by the strategic choices of post-communist central and regional elites,”<sup>624</sup> sounds accurate, but it is actually a misleading assessment when the results of this analysis are considered.

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<sup>622</sup> This lesson may be the best explanation as well for the clampdown on the news and entertainment media by the Putin regime.

<sup>623</sup> Sakwa, 2002, p.3

<sup>624</sup> Ibid., p.7

It would be a reasonably accurate statement describing the formation of most state organizing systems to say, as Sakwa has, that they have been generated by historical, material, social and strategic choice factors. To describe the roots of Russia's segmented regionalism in such terms suggests a balance among the stated objective variables that does not do justice to the reality for Russia; the extraordinary influence ideologically motivated political crafting had on the formation of this segmented system. It has been shown in the earlier discussions of this study that the Imperial era policy of internal colonialism established and institutionalized the practice of a vertical of personal authority and accountability as the strength of the Boyer system, and the process of diminishing autonomy is a method for the subjugation of the ethno-national peoples and territories that has its roots in the Imperial era as well. The particular form of segmented regionalism that now exists in the Russian Republic is a direct result of a policy plan initiated by none other than Joseph Stalin, a vision that was intended to facilitate the formation of a union of people and places that would fulfill a very specific and ideologically motivated goal. Gorbachev may have said it best when he wrote in his memoirs, "[I]f we do not examine and come to understand the idea of a federation, turmoil will continue. All that we are doing will be affected. Despite what the variations or the various steps may be, going in one direction or another direction, still the pivotal point is the idea of a federation."<sup>625</sup>

The information presented in this study has shown that for the Soviet planners the material considerations were ideologically based and crafted in order to fit a centrally

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<sup>625</sup> Gorbachev, 2000, p.106

controlled resource, production and distribution system as well as the relocation of the work force. The social factors that influenced this system formation were focused on the need to maintain divisions among ethno-national groups through regional segmentation and to achieve control by the implementation of a plan of diminishing autonomy for the subsumed traditional political units. The goal that dominated the strategic vision was the establishment of a Soviet state-like political container that provided a structure which looked like a federal organization when in truth it served to maintain centralized command and control, and was structured in order facilitate the expansion and containment of additional regions on short notice. The illogic of adopting this system of command, control, segmentation and institutionalized heterogeneity into a free market federal democracy has been introduced and outlined in this analysis, and it has been demonstrated that the region to center form and function of the Russian state suffers from the lack of reality based application of the historical, material, social and strategic patterns from the past and present, but the problems related to asymmetry and segmented regionalism go deeper still into Russian civic and political culture.

Perhaps Lapidus provided the most concise and accurate description of what 'Russia' was under Soviet rule, and what it has become today when he wrote, "The USSR could be described as a Russian heartland surrounded, on its northwestern, western and southern peripheries, by non-Russian republics; the 21 ethnically-defined republics of the Russian Federation, by contrast, are more like islands in an ethnically Russian sea, and most lack external borders."<sup>626</sup> The issue in Russia today is not the fact that ethno-republics such as Chechnya will find armed rebellion to be their best course of action

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<sup>626</sup> Lapidus, 1999, p.75

against their assimilation into the Slavic Republic,<sup>627</sup> but the fact that neither rebellion nor assimilation are possible or feasible for the ethno-regions because they have been purposely segmented out of 'Russia'. The Russian state crafters, beginning in 1991, ignored the recommendations of those who proposed a symmetric federal union based on any number of existing and successful paradigms, and chose to form a regionally segmented contractual federal Republic.<sup>628</sup> The 'contract' was the Federation Treaty, and it has been previously outlined as to how much of that contract was contradicted by the Constitution of 1993. If the contract was broken and yet the participants are left with the regional segmentation that was agreed to as the most compatible with the confederation like Treaty process, how can the asymmetric union of autonomous regions remain as the foundation for a Constitutionally based federal system that requires a balance of power and symmetric interrelations between the federal and sub-federal regimes?

The fact that Russian rulers for the last several centuries have found that the segmented and asymmetric character of the state-nation requires a strong and centered governing hand could explain why the "predominant view among political scientists [is] that the Russian system is effectively an authoritarian regime," and why so many have concluded that "Russia appears to be ruled by presidential decree."<sup>629</sup> Centralized and

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<sup>627</sup> I don't mean to diminish the salience of this issue of armed rebellion. Certainly it is an ever-present danger in this (and other) former Soviet territories because, as Huntington has suggested, it is probable that "the most important conflicts of the future will occur along the cultural fault lines separating civilizations from one another." (Huntington, 1993, p.25)

<sup>628</sup> Contractual federalism is defined as "sub-national units entering the federation on a negotiated basis." See Stoner-Weiss, 1999, p.38

<sup>629</sup> Remington, Smith and Haspel, 1998, p.287

authoritarian based power is not the only important legacy that continues to gain new strength in the republic; the localized power brokers who operate in the ever-present 'shadow' political economy have reemerged from the Soviet collapse and influence the Federation formation as well. Stoner-Weiss provided a report on this issue that is worth repeating in full:

*In terms of bringing regional governments more to heel, one could argue that they are heeding the center more now than they were a year ago or a year and a half ago. But I don't think it has anything to do with the creation of the new federal districts. And I'm also not sure so much that the center has brought regions to heel as much as regions have chosen to pursue a path at this point that happens to be coincident with the center ... I think Putin has misunderstood the root of the problem. The root of the problem is the coalition of forces at the local level, which is usually enterprise directors and regional politicians. His reform is not breaking down that coalition of those interests so that central institutions can function.<sup>630</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

When Yeltsin declared war on the legislature in 1993, he sent a message to the regional regimes that the federal Executive branch of government would never share power in balance with the legislative branch. Rather than pursue the path of rebellion that was chosen by Chechnya, the remainder of the regional subject units chose to return to the old tried and true methods of putting a public face on assimilation and pursuing in private the autonomy of action that was successfully achieved under Soviet and Imperial rule through the tradition of 'duality'. The regional power brokers have conceded the federal government to the Kremlin, but have retained, reformed and reinforced the powers of localized coalitions. Many of the policies that Putin has proposed and implemented are new variations of an old theme, and the local economic and political power brokers

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<sup>630</sup> This reprint of Stoner-Weiss from RFE/RL Russian Federation Report of April 25, 2001 in Marsh and Warhola, 2001, p.231

learned decades (if not centuries) ago how to operate out of sight of the eyes of the emperor and the commissar.

The problem for Russia's future is not so much the fact that these local bosses and entrepreneurs have reemerged in the Republic, but rather the fact of the consequences to democratic consolidation of the type of infrastructure this form of hybrid governance creates. Mitchneck has thoroughly outlined this issue, and he has found that the core problem for the future is the fact that the Russian political economy is structured on a foundation of "accumulation alliances." Mitchneck describes these alliances as a for-profit organization of "public officials as part of an increasingly corrupt group that forms alliances only to extract rent from entrepreneurs."<sup>631</sup> These alliances have been described as "the major decision makers or repositories of knowledge regarding urban and regional policies and strategies as the backbone of the regional governance environment in Russia. They provide government agents with the ability to achieve goals (and personal ones) not only because they generate access to capital, but also because they increase access to power otherwise outside of the domain of state institutions."<sup>632</sup>

These types of locally focused organizations of alternative governance and political economy are reminiscent of the pattern that has existed "throughout Russian history [of] the kruzok<sup>633</sup> or circle [that] has provided Russians with a sense of security in the absence of civil society and in the presence of an oppressive state."<sup>634</sup> Under

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<sup>631</sup> Mitchneck, 2001, p.364

<sup>632</sup> Ibid., pp.362-364.

<sup>633</sup> The 'kruzok' is the term for an alliance between trusted business and government agents. (Mitchneck, 2001, p.364)



Soviet rule, the cities of the regions were established as the centers of economic and political power, and for that reason, the impact of the kruzhok alliances in the regional city centers presents an unprecedented challenge to this federal regime. The tension or contradiction between the focus of the government hierarchy on regulation and order while the actual core of economic and political power is beyond their reach is because the Russian political system is organized as a federation, but operates like a hybrid form of the old Soviet segmented unitary system.<sup>635</sup>

The paradigms from other federal systems demonstrates that the powers of government authority, planning and enforcement should be devolved through a balanced and congruent pattern of federal to regional to local regimes and back again, with clear and explicit separations between the powers of the federal regime, the powers of the regional regime and the powers of the local government. In Russia the power of the middle range, the regional regime, are so weak and ineffectual that it is generally ignored or bypassed by both the local and the federal authorities. This unusual pattern of power relations makes the role of the institutions at the regional level of governance at best that of a filter for the processes that are required to maintain the illusion of federalism, democratic order and a free market. These regional regimes also provide an insulating cover for the activities of the local accumulation alliances centered in the major regional city centers, and it is this relationship that is perhaps most in need of illumination in a future analysis.

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<sup>634</sup> Ibid.

<sup>635</sup> This is supported by Reddaway's warning, "It seems increasingly clear that Putin's team plans a second phase of regional reforms, and that the aim may be nothing less than turning Russia – in effect, if not formally – into a unitary state." (Reddaway, 2001, p.33)



Mitchneck has attempted to provide a summary description of the contrast between what has been established in Russia as the structural and procedural form of relations, and what has emerged as the base of real power in the way the system functions. “In Russia today the region, not the city, is the scale at which alliances form, interact, and implement policy. As subjects of the federation, regional governments have greater rights and resources than urban governments. Also, in many regions, the capital city dominates economic activity and political life. *The fate of the city is really the fate of the region as a whole.*”<sup>636</sup> (Emphasis added.) By extension, then, the fate of the nation is directly correlated with how the federal government manages to counter the growing power of the cities.

As a case study of political change and democratic consolidation, this analysis has been developed in a manner which intentionally has avoided what Gel’Man has termed “The comparative-oriented approach to the study of national politics that has cross-national (i.e. international) comparisons” as its most widely utilized dimension.<sup>637</sup> I have purposefully avoided the application of this method in part because, as Gel’Man states, “this research approach has become quite common in contemporary Russian politics.”<sup>638</sup> I have focused my attentions in this analysis on the method that, according to Gel’Man, has been least used by analysts of Russian political change and transition, “the second dimension of comparative analysis of Russian politics, involving cross regional (i.e. intra-

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<sup>636</sup> Ibid., p.365

<sup>637</sup> Gel’Man, 1999, p.939.

<sup>638</sup> Ibid.

national) comparisons, [that] is still neglected among Western and Russian scholars.”<sup>639</sup> I have made no effort to address the important issues related to the fact that it has yet to be explained “why nearly identical administrative units of the Soviet empire developed in such different directions over the past 10 years.”<sup>640</sup> The transition and consolidation process in Russia has yet to be definitively understood in its proper perspective, and until that task is accomplished, an effective and logically consistent comparative analysis of the most recent iteration of Russian political change to that of any other former SSR is of limited value.

The citizens of Russia have traditionally identified with the Russian nation as ‘homeland’ when the perspective is an internationally based context of identity, but it is their local community and the parochial context of the homeland identification it provides that appears to be of equal importance to the establishment of the Russian Federation. To this point, the methods of analysis utilized in the study of Russian political change do not significantly stand apart from other modern regimes that have experienced a long history of transitional development. For a future case study of Russia to be of most value, perhaps it is time for the characteristics of this state that set it apart from the norm to be the focus of study. In Russia, power is divided very much along the lines of personal-vertical relations, and as a result the central-federal government (in particular the office of ‘superpresident’) dominates the laws, policies and processes that maintain central control over the territory of the Republic, and determine the tone and the focus of the international relations of the nation as well. The aspect that is least understood is the

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<sup>639</sup> Ibid.

<sup>640</sup> Ibid., p. 942

localized power alliances throughout Russia's regions, and how the asymmetric structure of the state facilitates that power dynamic.

It is evident that the personal identifications for the Russian people are indicative of a power nexus, and the local community centered basis of every day life appears to stand in contrast to both the mass based homogeneity that the demos of a unitary state reflects as well as the regionally based loyalties that the people of a federation generally project. It is at this local-city-community core that Russian power politics and the related political economy seem to live and function as an extension of real power relations and as an indication of the true nature of popular and elite political participation. It is the relationship and patterns between the power brokers in the Kremlin and those who compose the local power alliances that are most in need of further investigation. Russia is an example of a nation that has been established on the principle that an intermediate level of governance, which is regionally representative, is most suitable for the facilitation of the establishment of a free market democracy due to the inherent segmenting characteristics of the Russian territory.

There is no question or contradiction with the fact that the form of governance most typically utilized to organize an ethnically heterogeneous people is on the basis of the principles of territorial federalism. The problem in Russia is the fact that it has selected as a federal paradigm a model which requires certain objective conditions that Russia does not possess. In order to be true to the model of territorial federalism, Russia must be transformed into "a strictly spatial division of power [to be] achieved by either a fundamental reorganization of the administrative-territorial composition of Russia into a federation of a smaller number of larger regions, or an equalization of the existing eighty-

nine units.”<sup>641</sup> If the formation of the Russian Republic based on a model of regional symmetry was proposed and rejected in 1990,<sup>642</sup> why would the power, the will or the willingness to reconfigure the territorial system exist now? There is a justification for the retention of this asymmetric territorial system that was described by Lynn and Novikov who have suggested that, in the view of the federation crafters, “the titular nationalities of the republics (and also the okrugs) have a right to their own national territory and one cannot simply ignore or reverse the structures that have been in place for the last seventy years.”<sup>643</sup> According to these proponents of the maintenance of this system that was established by Stalin in order to subjugate and, when expedient, relocate the myriad of ethno-nationals that populated the Soviet Union was because any “moves towards equalization are moves towards limiting the republics’ sovereignty.”<sup>644</sup> How the reform of the system that was specifically designed to limit the sovereignty of the peoples involved would somehow violate their sovereignty, is a question that defies all logic. The only group who may lose a significant amount of sovereignty through reforms intended to achieve symmetry, equality and democratic transparency are the federal, regional and local accumulation alliances.

The problems associated with asymmetry that have been detailed in this analysis represent a spectrum of issues that range from simple problems of inefficiency to

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<sup>641</sup> Lynn and Novikov, 1997, p.131

<sup>642</sup> This proposal was made by Oleg Rummyantsev the Secretary of the Constitutional Commission of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation and called for the establishment of twenty regions (zemli) to be loosely patterned on the lines of the Lander of Germany.

<sup>643</sup> Lynn and Novikov, 1997, p.132

<sup>644</sup> Ibid.

significant contradictions of democratic traditions and deeply entrenched inequalities in political, economic and social relations. The major implication from this study is that the asymmetry that has been incorporated into both the formation and the functioning of the Russian Federal Republic represents a significant impediment to the consolidation of a federal democracy. It has also become evident in this analysis that the federation crafters have been aware from the birth of the Republic in 1991 that there was a need to mitigate the impact of disruptive asymmetries through the process of transitional reforms, reforms which have been either blocked or ignored. The question to be resolved is exactly who or what good that is.

A second significant finding of this analysis is the fact that the asymmetries of the Russian state system, territorially, politically and economically, have resulted in a bifurcation of power centers that are represented by the office of the President in the Kremlin at one extreme and the alliance members and power brokers of localized interests in the regional cities at the other. The emergence of these two power poles in Russia has provided evidence and an explanation for the third significant finding of this analysis, the indications of an intentionally weakened and relatively ignored middle range of regional power in the federal Republic.

The concentration of power and power elites at the sub-regional level is the arena that appears to serve the immediate needs and purposes of the population, and thus what happens to the national political party system before, during and after a Duma election cycle is of little consequence to the average Russian citizen. As long as the asymmetries of the Russian state system retain a value to the participants in the political and economic 'market', they will not be removed or balanced. It would seem that it has been

determined by the Russian political entrepreneurs that a segmented and asymmetric Russia is a Russia of opportunity, and the lack of a national ideology to justify federal governance, and the lack of real authority at the middle range level of governance, serves to insulate the power alliance elites from the enforcement of the law and from the wrath of an empowered electorate. The hope for the future of the Russian federal democracy lies in the investment of true powers into both the federal and the regional legislative and judicial branches of government. To date, the reforms that have been either proposed or implemented have served to strengthen or exacerbate the asymmetric forms and functions of the federal system, and to isolate the power alliances within and among the regions from democratic accountability. Any further attempts at the consolidation of this Russian case example of asymmetric federalism in the absence of dramatic reform and real political empowerment would be an egregious error. The implications of this study suggest that the power relations at the local and regional levels must be better understood so that real reform and democratic transition can be instituted which evolve from the bottom up, rather than the continuation of a failed process of devolution of power by decree from the top down.

## APPENDIX

**The information in this appendix was compiled from the following sources:**

- The American Enterprise Institute.
- Laura Belin and Robert Ortung, 1997
- Ralph Clem and Peter R. Craumer; 1993, 1995 and 2000.
- Europa Publications.
- IMF Occasional Papers.
- Mariya Lyashevskaya, 1995.
- NUPI Center for Russian Studies
- OECD Economic Survey.
- RFE/RL Election Reports.
- Peter Rutland, 1998.
- Stephen White Et al., 1997.

**Political Party abbreviation for all Tables:**

- agr: Agrarian Party
- cprf: Communist party of the Russian Federation
- dem: Democratic Party of Russia
- ldp: Liberal Democratic Party
- ohr: Our Home is Russia
- ovr: Fatherland All Russia
- pru: Party of Russian Unity
- rdc: Russia's Democratic Choice
- sps: Union of Right Forces
- unit: Unity Party
- wor: Workers Party
- yab: Yabloko

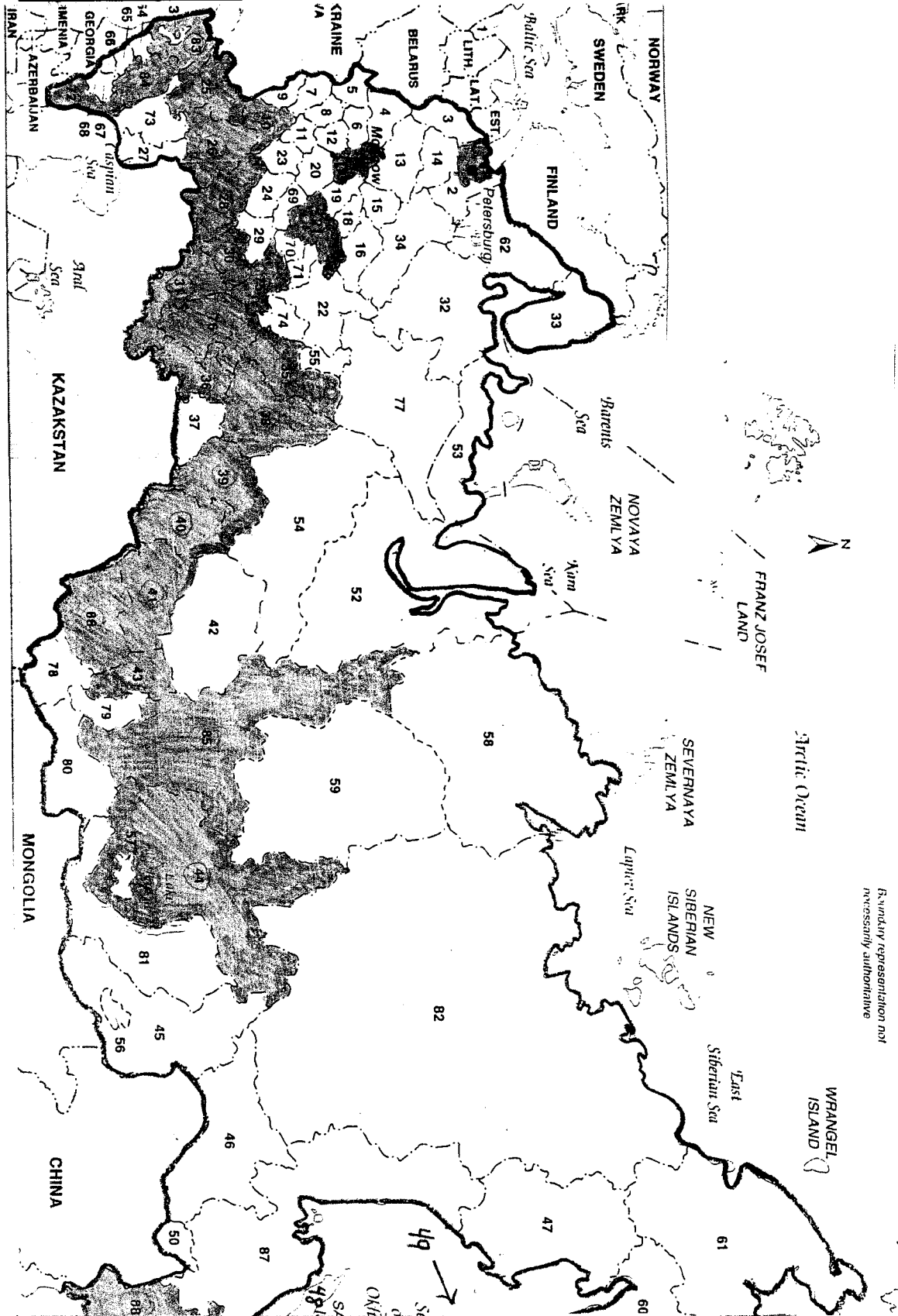


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Table 5.1		Selected Regions Highest Population			Republics 3 Oblasts: 16 Krais: 5 Cities: 2 N=26		
	Population	HGRP	AFI	Party Plurality			
Republic				1993	1995	1999	
Bashkortostan	4,097,000	39,435.9	2,485,000	cprf	cprf	ovr	
Dagestan	2,042,000	4,148.2	34,000	cprf	cprf	cprf	
Tatarstan	3,760,000	37,829.5	160,640,000	ldp/rdc	ohr	ovr	
<b>Krai</b>							
Altai	2,690,000	14,887.6	28,529,000	ldp	cprf	cprf	
Krasnodar	5,044,000	30,943.4	26,685,000	ldp	cprf	cprf	
Krasnoyarsk	3,106,000	44,098.9	363,000	ldp	cprf	unit	
Primorye	2,255,000	19,290.2	18,828,000	ldp	ldp	unit	
Stavropol	2,667,000	18,171.7	19,558,000	ldp	cprf	cprf	
<b>Oblast</b>							
Chelyabinsk	3,689,000	33,126.8	17,222,000	rdc	cprf	cprf	
Irkutusk	2,795,000	34,301.2	19,790,000	ldp	cprf/ldp	unit	
Kemerovo	3,063,000	36,371.7	1,359,000	ldp	cprf	unit	
Moscow	6,597,000	47,607.7	205,012,000	ldp	cprf	ovr	
Nizhnii Novgo.	3,727,000	35,172.3	59,837,000	ldp	cprf	cprf	
Novisibirsk	2,749,000	23,025.2	58,445,000	ldp	cprf	cprf	
Omsk	2,176,000	20,762.4	1,528,000	rdc	ldp/cprf	cprf	
Orenburg	2,229,000	18,136.1	720,000	ldp	cprf	cprf	
Perm	3,009,000	37,081.0	15,752,000	rdc	ldp	unit	
Rostov	4,425,000	26,338.6	99,000	cprf	cprf	unity	
Samara	3,312,000	45,031.6	69,693,000	cprf/rdc	cprf	cprf	
Saratov	2,739,000	20,425.6	18,044,000	ldp	cprf	cprf	
Sverdlovsk	4,686,000	58,097.9	8,386,000	rdc	cprf/ohr	unit	
Tyumen	3,170,000	108,885.1	102,580,000	ldp	cprf	unit	
Volgograd	2,704,000	19,629.8	17,341,000	ldp	cprf	unit	
Vorenezh	2,504,000	16,535.0	23,000	ldp	cprf	unit	
<b>City</b>							
Moscow	8,664,000	144,370.3	1,312,396,000	rdc	ohr	ovr	
St. Petersburg	4,801,000	47,011.6	154,727,000	rdc	yab	unit	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>92,700,000</b>	<b>980,715.3</b>	<b>2,320,076,000</b>				
<b>Average</b>	<b>3,565,384.6</b>	<b>37,719.8</b>	<b>89,233,692.3</b>	<b>ldp</b>	<b>cprf</b>	<b>cprf/ unity</b>	
<b>% Of Federal Total</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>83%</b>				

**Map 5.1: Population**



**Table 5.2**

<b>Regions With Highest Levels of Population Density</b>		<b>Republics: 5   Krai: 1 Oblast: 7 N=13</b>					
<b>Units</b>	<b>Density</b>	<b>Participation</b>			<b>Plurality Party</b>		
		<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>
<b>Republic</b>							
Adygea Republic	59.3	61.3	64.2	61.6	cprf	cprf	cprf
Chuvashiya Republic	74.4	63.5	61.0	59.9	ldp	cprf	cprf
Kabardino-Balkariya Rep.	63.2	58.7	68.0	78.1	pru	cprf/ohr	ovr
North Osetiya Republic	82.8	59.8	62.9	53.7	cprf	cprf	cprf
Tatarstan Republic	55.3	13.4	59.2	74.2	rdc	ohr	ovr
<b>Krai</b>							
Krasnodar Krai	66.4	56.7	60.5	58.4	ldp	cprf	cprf
<b>Oblast</b>							
Belgorod Oblast	54.2	67.3	75.5	66.8	ldp	cprf	cprf
Ivanovo Oblast	58.1	57.8	67.0	62.1	ldp	cp/ldp	unit
Kaliningrad Oblast	61.7	59.8	63.8	56.7	ldp	cprf	unit
Lipetsk Oblast	51.9	59.9	65.0	61.4	ldp	cprf	cprf
Samara Oblast	61.8	53.3	63.6	61.8	ldp	cprf	cprf
Tula Oblast	70.6	60.8	67.9	61.0	ldp	cprf	cprf
Vladimir Oblast	56.7	60.4	66.4	58.8	ldp	cprf	unit
<b>Average</b>	<b>62.8</b>	<b>56.4</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>62.6</b>	<b>ldp</b>	<b>cprf</b>	<b>cprf</b>

**Map 5.2: Population Density**

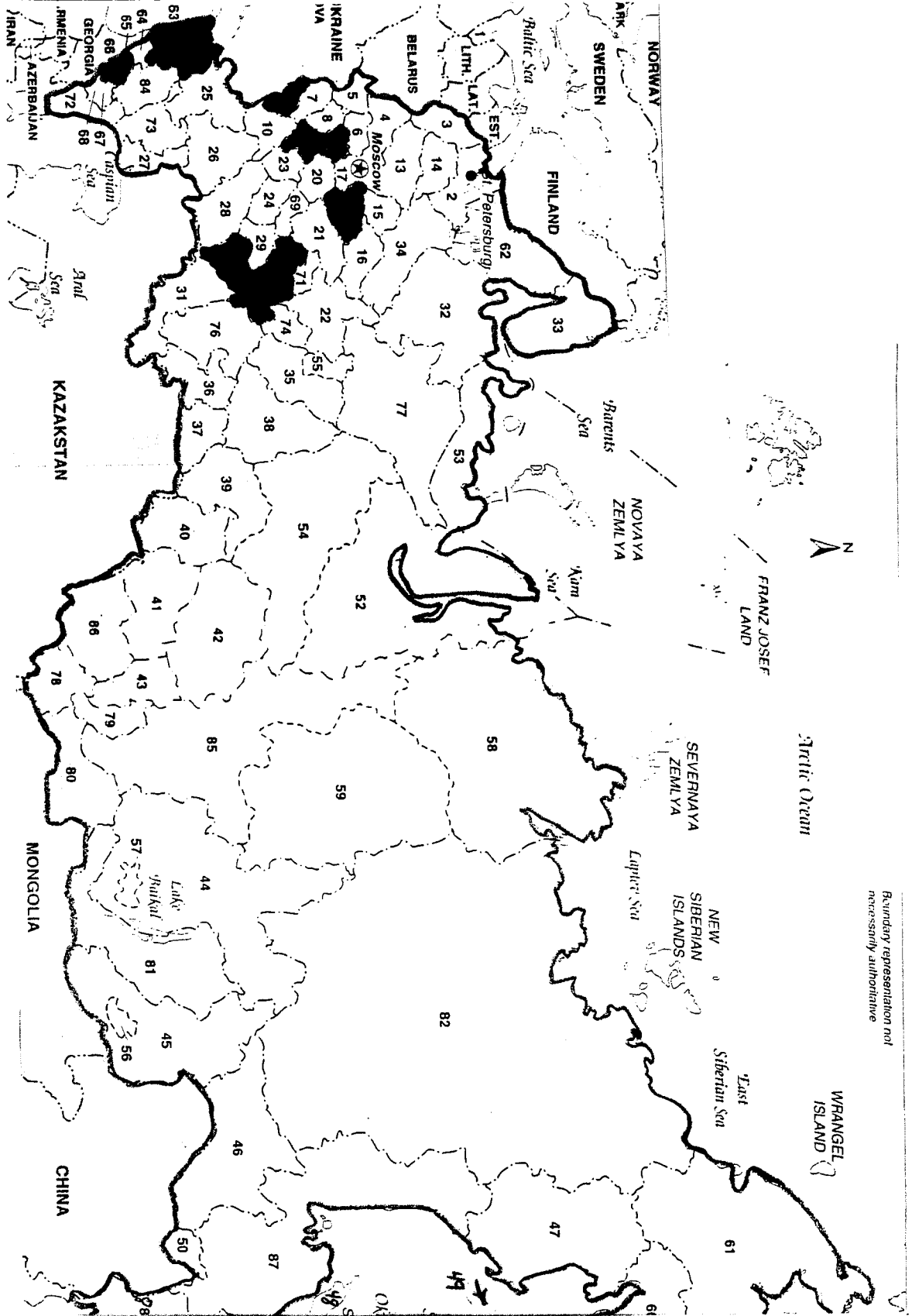
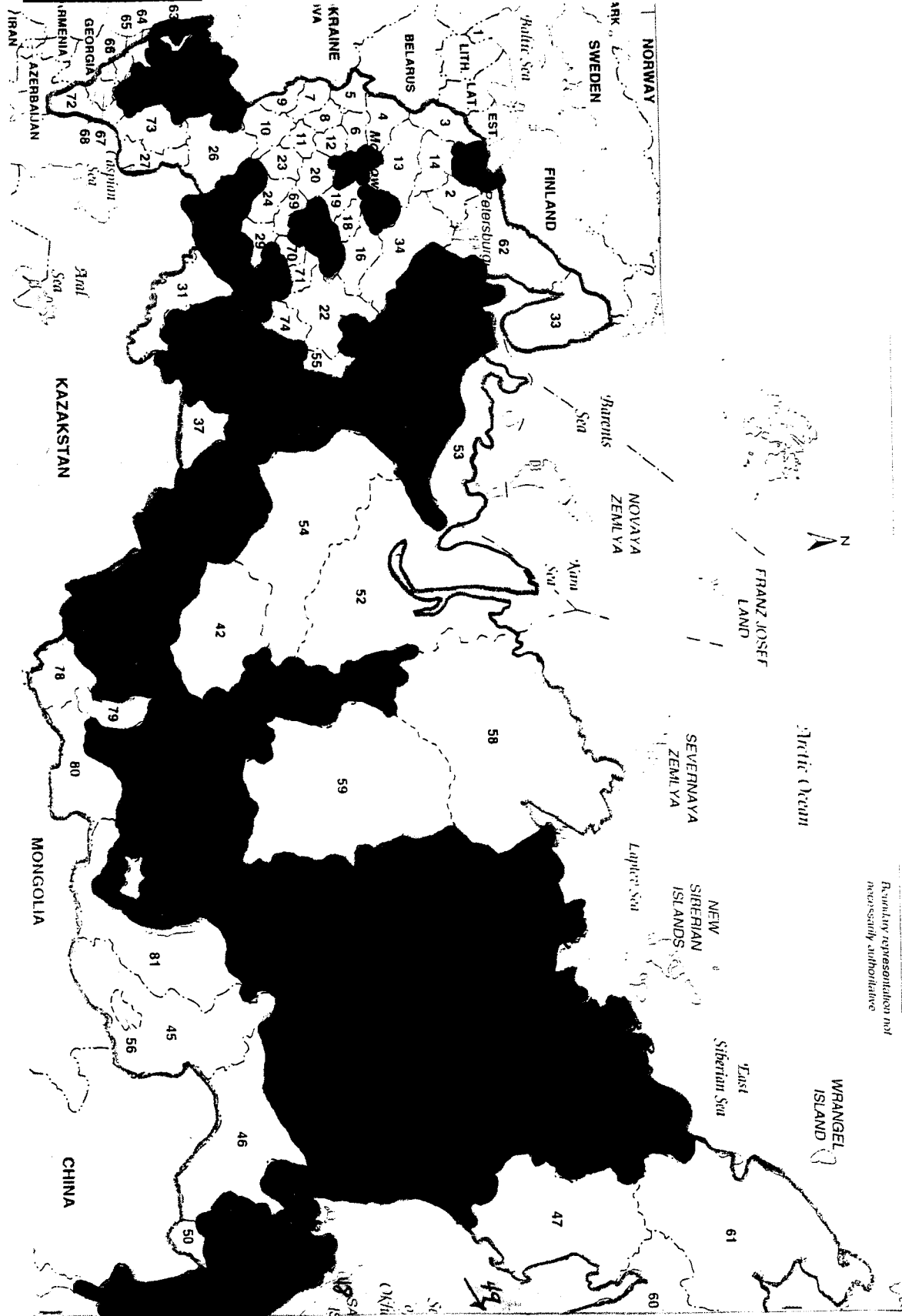


Table 5.3

Selected Regions: Highest Gross Regional Product (HGRP)			Republics: 4 Krais: 6	Oblasts: 15 Cities: 2 N=27	Election Results by Plurality Party	
	Population	GRP	AFI	93	95	99
<b>Republics</b>						
Bashkortostan	4,097,000	39,345.9	2,485,000	cprf	cprf	ovr
Komi	1,185,000	19,395.1	33,812,000	ldp	ldp	unit
Sakha	1,023,000	20,334,000	5,255,000	ldp	cprf	unit
Tatarstan	3,760,000	37,829.5	160,640,000	ldp/rdc	ohr	ovr
<b>Krai</b>						
Altai	2,690,000	14,887.6	28,529,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
Khabarovsk	1,571,000	15,074.1	32,801,000	ldp	cprf	unit
Krasnodar	5,044,000	30,943.4	26,685,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
Krasnoyarsk	3,106,000	44,098.9	363,000	ldp	cprf	unit
Primorye	2,255,000	19,290.2	18,828,000	ldp	ldp	unit
Stavropol	2,667,000	18,171.7	19,558,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
<b>Oblast</b>						
Archangel	1,521,000	14,263.1	2,723,000	ldp/rdc	cprf	unit
Chelyabinsk	3,689,000	33,126.8	17,222,000	rdc	cprf	cprf
Irkutsk	2,795,000	34,301.2	19,790,000	ldp	cprf/ldp	unit
Kemerovo	3,063,000	36,371.7	1,359,000	ldp	cprf	unit
Moscow	6,597,000	47,607.7	205,012,000	ldp	cprf	ovr
Nizhnii Novgorod	3,727,000	35,172.3	59,837,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
Novisibirsk	2,749,000	23,025.2	58,445,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
Omsk	2,176,000	20,762.4	1,528,000	rdc	ldp/cprf	cprf
Perm	3,009,000	37,081.0	15,752,000	rdc	ldp	unit
Rostov	4,425,000	26,338.6	99,000	cprf	cprf	unit
Samara	3,312,000	45,031.6	69,693,000	cprf/rdc	cprf	cprf
Saratov	2,739,000	20,425.6	18,044,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
Sverdlovsk	4,686,000	58,097.9	8,386,000	rdc	cprf/ohr	unit
Tyumen	3,170,000	108,885.1	102,580,000	ldp	cprf	unit
Yaroslavl	1,451,000	14,763.1	395,000	ldp/rdc	cprf	unit
<b>Cities</b>						
Moscow	8,664,000	144,370.3	1,312,396,000	rdc	ohr	ovr
St. Petersburg	4,801,000	47,011.6	154,727,000	rdc	yab	unit
<b>Total</b>	<b>89,972,000</b>	<b>99,006.4</b>	<b>2,376,944,000</b>			
<b>Average</b>	<b>3,332,296.3</b>	<b>3,666.9</b>	<b>88,034,963.0</b>	<b>ldp</b>	<b>cprf</b>	<b>unit</b>
<b>% Of Federal Total</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>85%</b>			



**Map 5.3: HGRP**

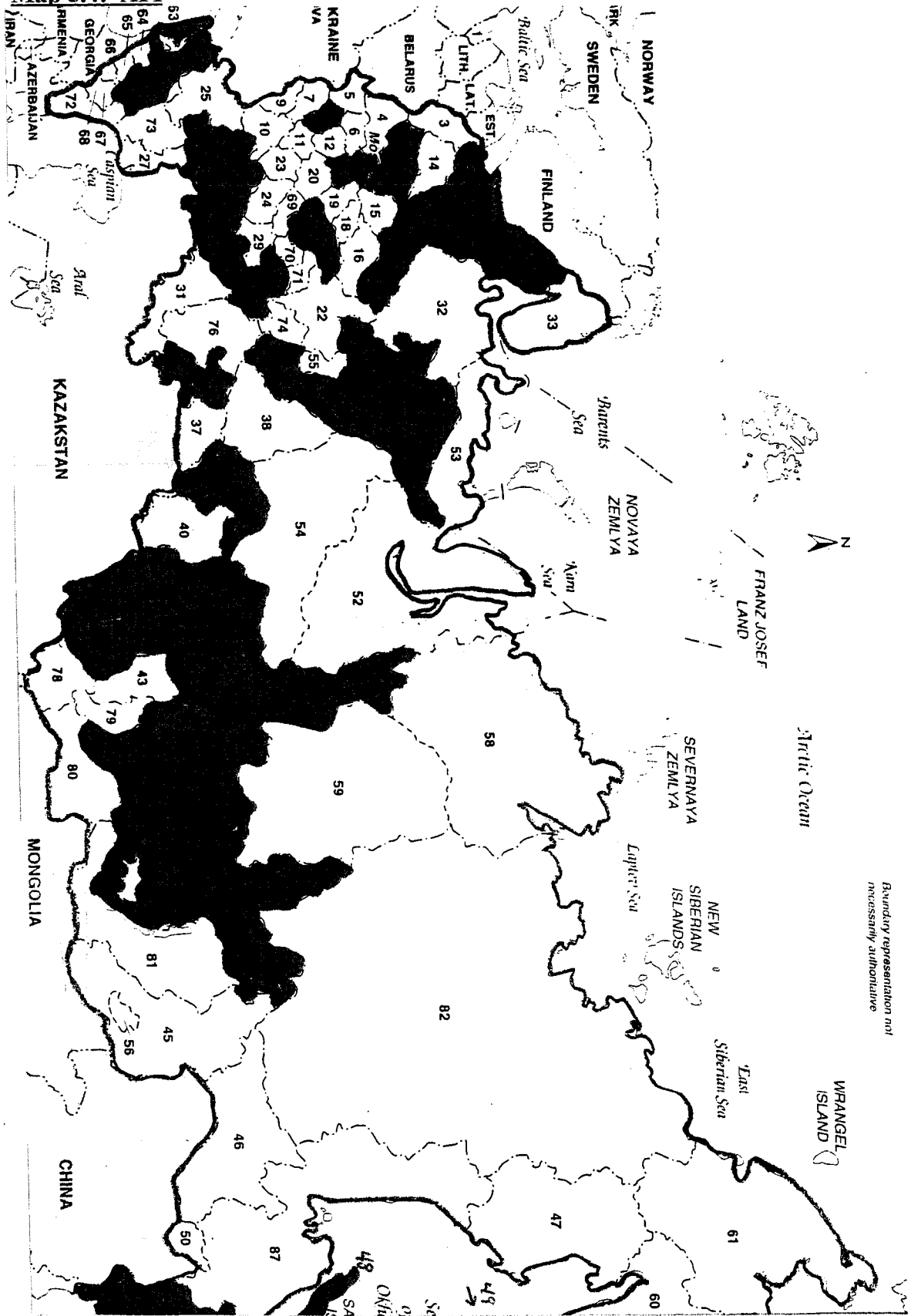


Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative

Selected Regions: Amount of Foreign Investment (AFI)			Republics: 3 Oblast: 16 Krai: 5 City: 2 N=26			
	Population	GRP	AFI	Election Results by Party Plurality		
Republic				1993	1995	1999
Kareliya	785000	8065.3	19498000	rdc	cprf	unit
Komi	1185000	19395.1	33812000	ldp	ldp	unit
Tatarstan	3,760,000	37,829.5	160,640,000	ldp/rdc	ohr	ovr
<b>Krai</b>						
Altai	2,690,000	14,887.6	28,529,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
Krasnodar	5044000	30943.4	26685000	ldp	cprf	cprf
Krasnoyarsk	1571000	15074.1	32801000	ldp	cprf	unit
Primorye	2,255,000	19,290.2	18,828,000	ldp	ldp	unit
Stavropol	2,667,000	18,171.7	19,558,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
<b>Oblast</b>						
Chelyabinsk	3,689,000	33,126.8	17,222,000	rdc	cprf	cprf
Irkutusk	2,795,000	34,301.2	19,790,000	ldp	cprf/ldp	unit
Leningrad	1676000	12507.1	20264000	ldp	cprf	unit
Moscow	6597000	47607.7	205012000	ldp	cprf	ovr
Nizhnii Novgorod	3,727,000	35,172.3	59,837,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
Novosibirsk	2,749,000	23,025.2	58,445,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
Orel	914000	6021.2	18284000	ldp	cprf	cprf
Perm	3,009,000	37,081.0	15,752,000	rdc	ldp	unit
Sakhalin	648000	6929.0	48167000	ldp	cprf	cprf
Samara	3,312,000	45,031.6	69,693,000	cprf/rdc	cprf	cprf
Saratov	2,739,000	20,425.6	18,044,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
Tomsk	1078000	12828.6	44338000	Ldp/rdc	cprf	unit
Tver	1651000	11618.3	67212000	ldp	cprf	unit
Tyumen	3,170,000	108,885.1	102,580,000	ldp	cprf	unit
Volgograd	2,704,000	19,629.8	17,341,000	ldp	cprf	unit
Vologda	1350000	19326.8	20004000	ldp	ldp	unit
<b>City</b>						
Moscow	8,664,000	144,370.3	1,312,396,000	rdc	ohr	ovr
St. Petersburg	4,801,000	47,011.6	154,727,000	rdc	yab	unit
<b>Total</b>	<b>75,230,000</b>	<b>828,556.1</b>	<b>2,609,459,000</b>			
<b>Average</b>	<b>2,893,461.5</b>	<b>31,867.5</b>	<b>100,363,807.7</b>	<b>ldp</b>	<b>cprf</b>	<b>unit</b>
<b>% Of Federal Total</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>93%</b>			



Map 5.4: AFI



**Table 5.5**

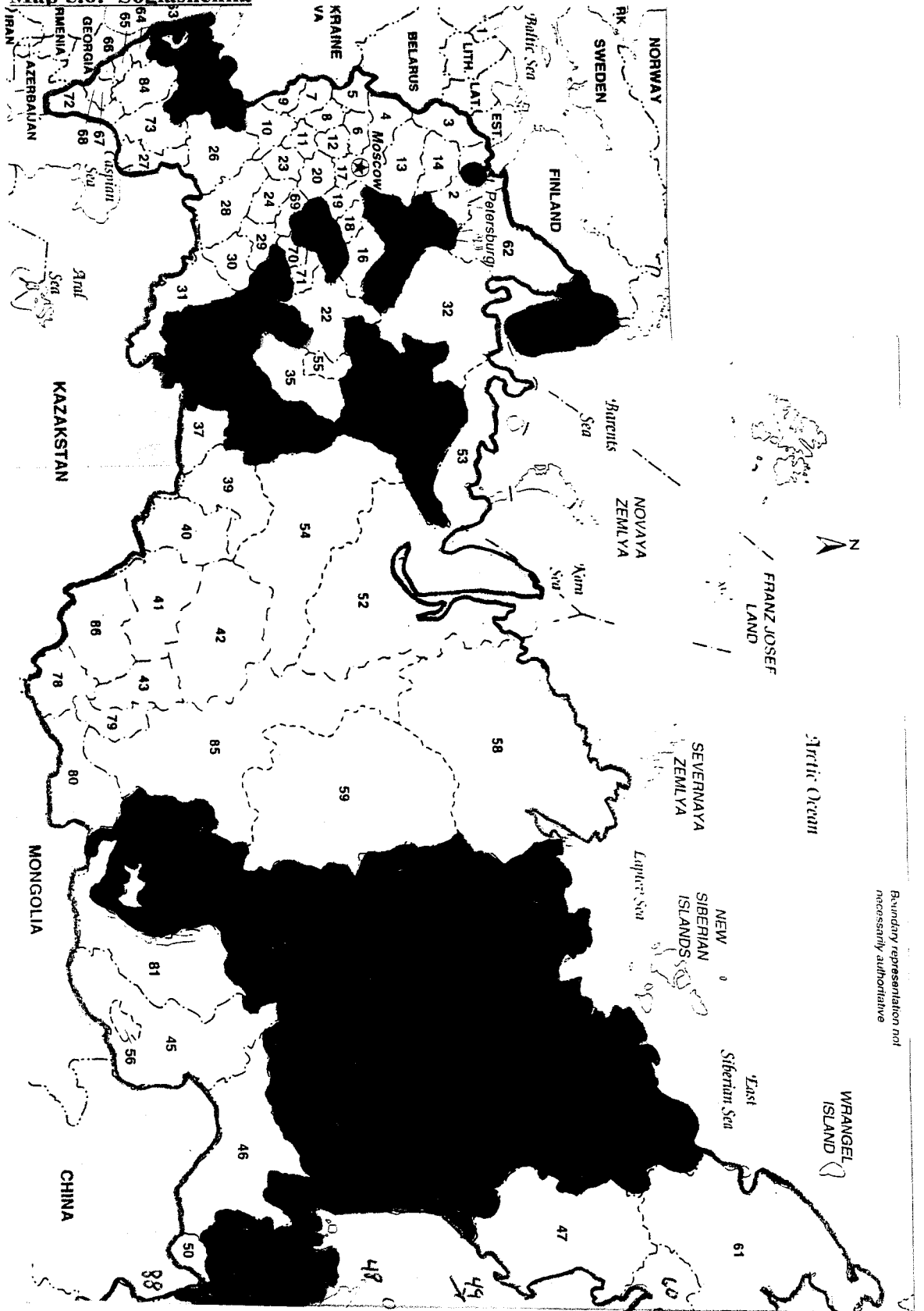
<b>Selected Regions: Lowest Gross Regional Product (LGRP)</b>		<b>Republics: 14 Krais: 0 N=29</b>		<b>Oblasts: 15 Cities: 0</b>	
	<b>GRP</b>	<b>Election Results by Plurality Party</b>			
<b>Republic</b>		<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>	
Adyega	1840.5	cprf	cprf	cprf	
Altai	906.1	ldp	cprf	unity	
Buryatiya	7737.3	ldp	cprf	cprf	
Chuvashiya	7518.6	ldp	cprf	cprf	
Dagestan	4148.2	cprf	cprf	cprf	
Ingushetiya	562.7	dem	ohr	ovr	
Kabar.-Balkariya	2627.1	cprf	ohr	cprf	
Kalmykiya	890.2	ldp	cprf	unity	
Cherkessiya	1701.7	cprf	cprf	cprf	
Khakasiya	5094.0	ldp	cprf	unity	
Mari-El	3927.2	ldp	ldp	cprf	
Mordoviya	54012.0	ldp	cprf	ovr	
North Osetiya	2329.0	cprf	cprf	cprf	
Tyva	1087.9	pru	ohr	unity	
<b>Oblast</b>					
Astrakhan	5746.6	ldp	cprf	unity	
Bryansk	7801.5	ldp	cprf	cprf	
Ivanovo	6442.7	ldp	ldp/cprf	unity	
Kaliningrad	5258.2	ldp	cprf	unity	
Kamachatka	5415.2	ldp	yab	unity	
Kostroma	5918.2	ldp	cprf	unity	
Kurgan	6342.5	ldp	cprf	cprf	
Magadan	3373.7	ldp	ldp	unity	
Novgorod	4407.9	ldp	cprf	unity	
Orel	6021.2	ldp	cprf	cprf	
Penza	7475.3	ldp	cprf	cprf/unity	
Pskov	4618.3	ldp	cprf	unity	
Sakhalin	6929.0	ldp	cprf	cprf	
Smolensk	7848.2	ldp	cprf	cprf	
Tambov	6547.8	ldp	cprf	cprf	
<b>Total</b>	<b>135528.8</b>				
<b>Average</b>	<b>4,673.4</b>	<b>ldp</b>	<b>cprf</b>	<b>cprf</b>	
<b>% Of Federal Total</b>	<b>.08%</b>				



**Table 5.6**

<b>Selected Units:</b>		<b>Republics: 5</b>			<b>Oblasts: 8</b>		
<b>Soglasheniia</b>		<b>Krais: 2</b>			<b>Cities: 1</b>		
		<b>N=16</b>					
		<b>Population</b>	<b>GRP</b>	<b>AFI</b>	<b>Results by Plurality Party</b>		
<b>Republics</b>	<b>T</b>				<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>
Bashkortostan	1	4,097,000	39,345.9	2,485,000	cprf	cprf	ovr
Komi	4	1,185,000	19,395.1	33,812,000	ldp	ldp	unit
Sakha	2	1,023,000	20,334.0	5,255,000	ldp	cprf	unit
Tatarstan	2	3,760,000	37,829.5	160,640,000	ldp/rdc	ohr	ovr
Udmurt	2				ldp	cprf	unit
<b>Krai</b>							
Khabarovsk	2	1,571,000	15,074.1	32,801,000	ldp	cprf	unit
Krasnodar	1	5,044,000	30,943.4	26,685,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
<b>Oblast</b>							
Chelyabinsk	2	3,689,000	33,126.8	17,222,000	rdc	cprf	cprf
Irkutsk	5	2,795,000	34,301.2	19,790,000	ldp	cprf/ldp	unit
Murmansk	3	1,048,000	14,3577.7	3,025,000	ldp	ldp	unit
Nizhnii Nov.	1	3,727,000	35,172.3	59,837,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
Rostov	1	4,425,000	26,338.6	99,000	cprf	cprf	unit
Sverdlovsk	6	4,686,000	58,097.9	8,386,000	rdc	ldp	unit
Vologda	1	1350000	19326.8	20004000	ldp	ldp	unit
Yaroslavl	1	1,451,000	14,763.1	395,000	ldp/rdc	cprf	unit
<b>Cities</b>							
St. Petersburg	10	4,801,000	47,011.6	154,727,000	rdc	yab	unit
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>46,291,000</b>	<b>457,870.9</b>	<b>551,221,000</b>			
<b>Average</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>2,893,187.5</b>	<b>28,616.93</b>	<b>34,451,312.5</b>	<b>ldp</b>	<b>cprf</b>	<b>unit</b>
<b>% Of Federal Total</b>		<b>31%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>20%</b>			

**Map 5.6: Soglasheniia**



Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative



Table 5.7

Regions With No Soglasheniia But Included On HGRP Selected List			Republics: 0 Krais: 3 N=12	Oblasts: 8 Cities: 1	Election Results by Plurality Party	
	Population	GRP	AFI	1993	1995	1999
<b>Krai</b>						
Altai	2,690,000	14,887.6	28,529,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
Primorye	2,255,000	19,290.2	18,828,000	ldp	ldp	unit
Stavropol	2,667,000	18,171.7	19,558,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
<b>Oblast</b>						
Archangel	1,521,000	14,263.1	2,723,000	ldp/rdc	cprf	unit
Kemerovo	3,063,000	36,371.7	1,359,000	ldp	cprf	unit
Moscow	6,597,000	47,607.7	205,012,000	ldp	cprf	ovr
Novisibirsk	2,749,000	23,025.2	58,445,000	ldp	cprf	cprf
Omsk	2,176,000	20,762.4	1,528,000	rdc	ldp/cprf	cprf
Perm	3,009,000	37,081.0	15,752,000	rdc	ldp	unit
Samara	3,312,000	45,031.6	69,693,000	ldp/rdc	cprf	cprf
Tyumen	3,170,000	108,885.1	102,580,000	ldp	cprf	unit
<b>City</b>						
Moscow	8,664,000	144,370.3	1,312,396,000	rdc	ohr	ovr
<b>Total</b>	<b>43,444,000</b>	<b>544,821.7</b>	<b>1,869,204,000</b>			
<b>Average</b>	<b>3,620,333.3</b>	<b>45,401.8</b>	<b>155,767,000.0</b>	<b>ldp</b>	<b>cprf</b>	<b>unit/cprf</b>
<b>% Of Federal Total</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>67%</b>			

**Map 5.7: No Soglasheniia but on HGRP**

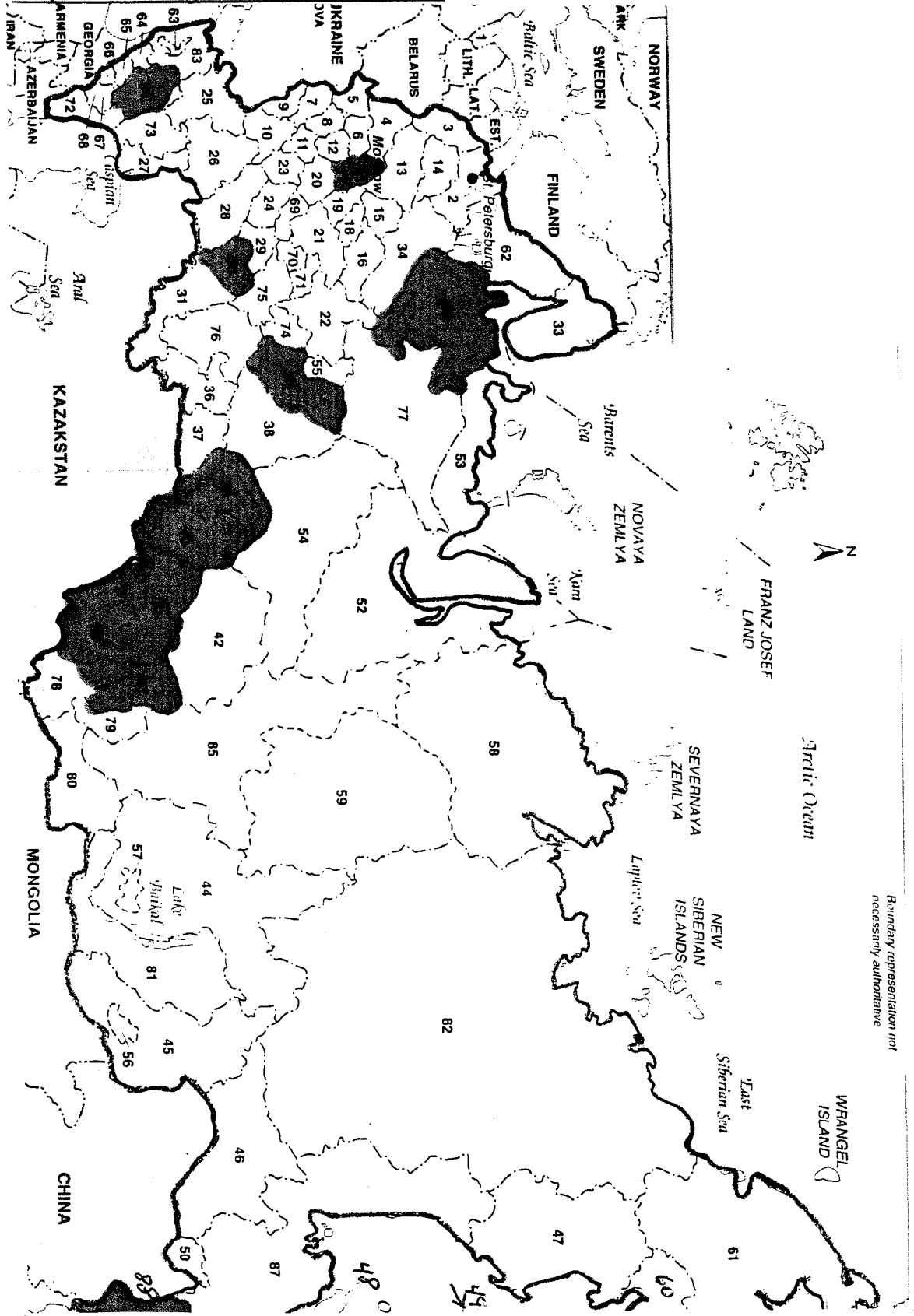


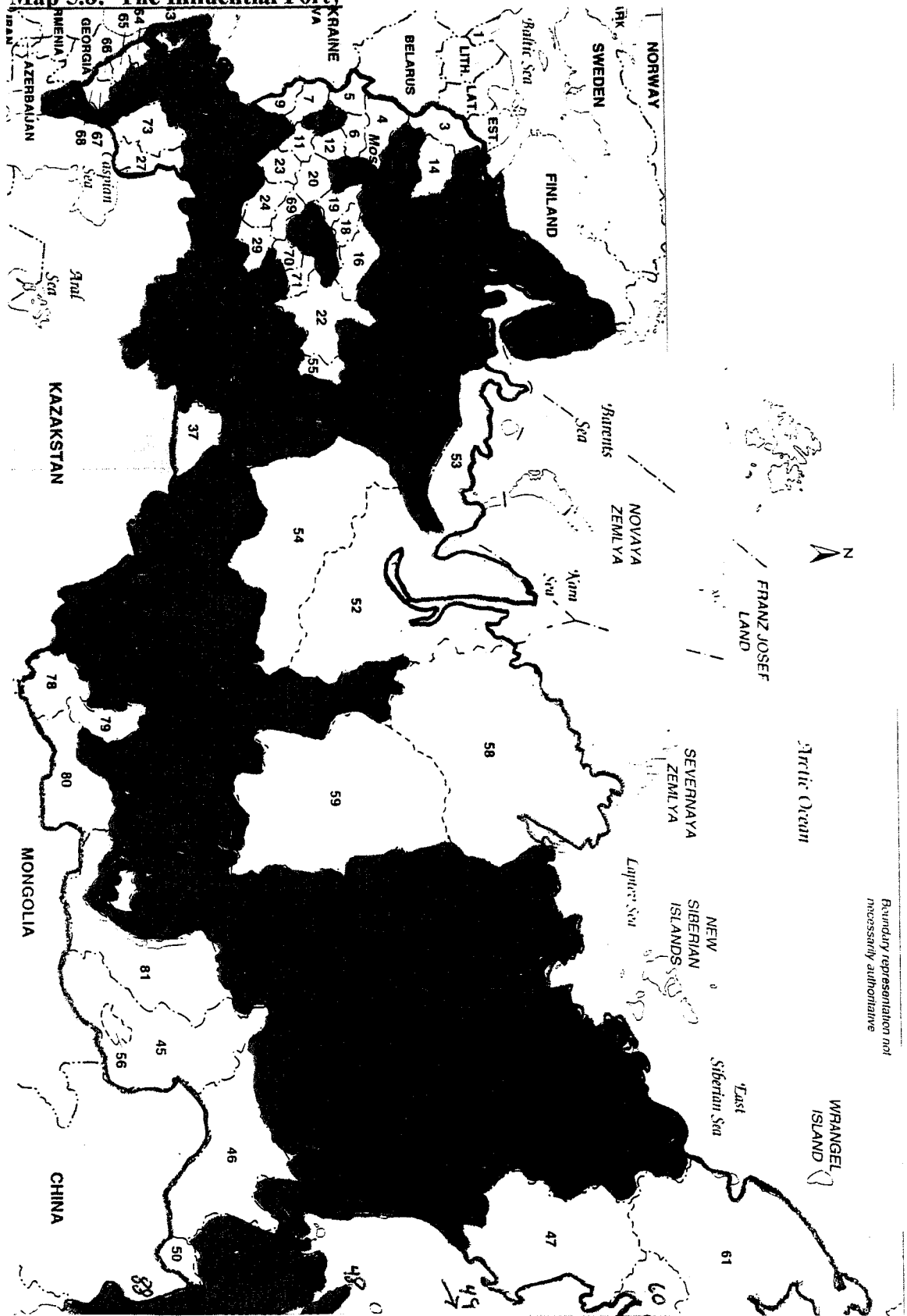


Table 5.8

	1993				1995				1999				+/- oth
	cprf	ldp	rdc	93 oth.	cprf	ldp	ohr	95 oth.	cprf	unity	ovr	99 oth.	
Bashkortostan	15	13	8	64	25	5	15	55	24	15	36	25	-39
Dagestan	54	3	2	41	44	1	13	42	38	29	28	5	-36
Kareliya	7	21	22	50	15	14	11	60	14	32	9	45	-5
Komi	7	24	22	47	13	17	13	57	17	32	6	45	-2
Sakha	10	15	13	62	18	7	14	61	23	27	10	40	-22
Tatarstan	9	22	22	47	15	5	29	51	19	17	42	22	-25
Udmurt	11	18	16	55	15	9	6	70	19	37	8	36	-19
Altai	10	28	11	51	26	16	5	53	37	24	4	35	-16
Khabarovsk	12	20	19	49	16	12	4	68	21	28	5	45	-4
Krasnodar	17	25	12	46	24	15	7	54	37	28	5	30	-16
Krasnoyarsk	9	31	14	46	19	13	9	59	26	28	4	42	-4
Primorye	9	23	14	54	18	20	3	59	23	28	6	43	-11
Stavropol	12	38	9	41	29	13	6	52	32	29	7	32	-9
Archangel	6	22	22	50	14	11	8	67	16	28	8	48	-2
Chelyabinsk	7	20	24	49	15	10	8	67	23	20	9	48	-1
Irkutusk	9	21	17	53	16	16	8	60	24	34	5	37	-16
Kemerovo	10	29	14	47	48	13	3	36	29	34	5	32	-15
Leningrad	8	30	16	46	19	8	11	62	18	31	10	41	-5
Moscow	11	27	20	42	22	5	14	59	20	10	28	42	0
Murmansk	6	24	23	47	11	12	11	66	13	32	8	47	0
Nizhnii Nov.	12	20	14	54	19	12	10	59	25	20	7	48	-6
Novisibirsk	11	26	12	51	21	18	7	54	29	21	6	56	+5
Omsk	5	8	14	73	16	16	6	62	30	21	7	42	-31
Orel	26	32	10	32	45	9	5	41	43	27	4	26	-6
Orenburg	13	23	13	51	24	12	12	52	31	24	7	38	-13
Perm	7	15	27	51	11	15	10	64	14	20	10	56	+5
Rostov	17	10	12	61	27	10	5	58	29	31	7	33	-28
Sakhalin	9	15	10	66	25	15	4	56	25	23	5	47	-19
Samara	16	12	16	56	22	12	12	54	27	20	5	48	-8
Saratov	15	27	12	46	28	15	8	49	31	23	8	38	-8
Sverdlovsk	6	18	25	51	8	9	8	75	12	26	7	55	+4
Tomsk	10	22	22	46	19	10	9	62	17	19	6	58	+12
Tver	12	25	14	49	27	7	8	42	24	30	8	38	-11
Tyumen	11	21	13	55	15	11	9	65	20	28	5	47	-8
Volgograd	14	28	12	46	28	15	9	52	30	29	6	35	-11
Vologda	5	30	16	49	12	14	11	63	15	31	7	47	-2
Vorenezh	14	31	12	43	27	14	7	52	30	33	5	32	-11
Yaroslavl	8	22	22	48	14	10	9	67	16	31	8	45	-3
Moscow City	11	13	35	41	15	2	19	64	12	7	42	39	-2
St. Petersburg	8	18	27	47	13	3	13	71	14	18	16	52	+5
<b>Average %</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>50.1</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>58.0</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>40.5</b>	

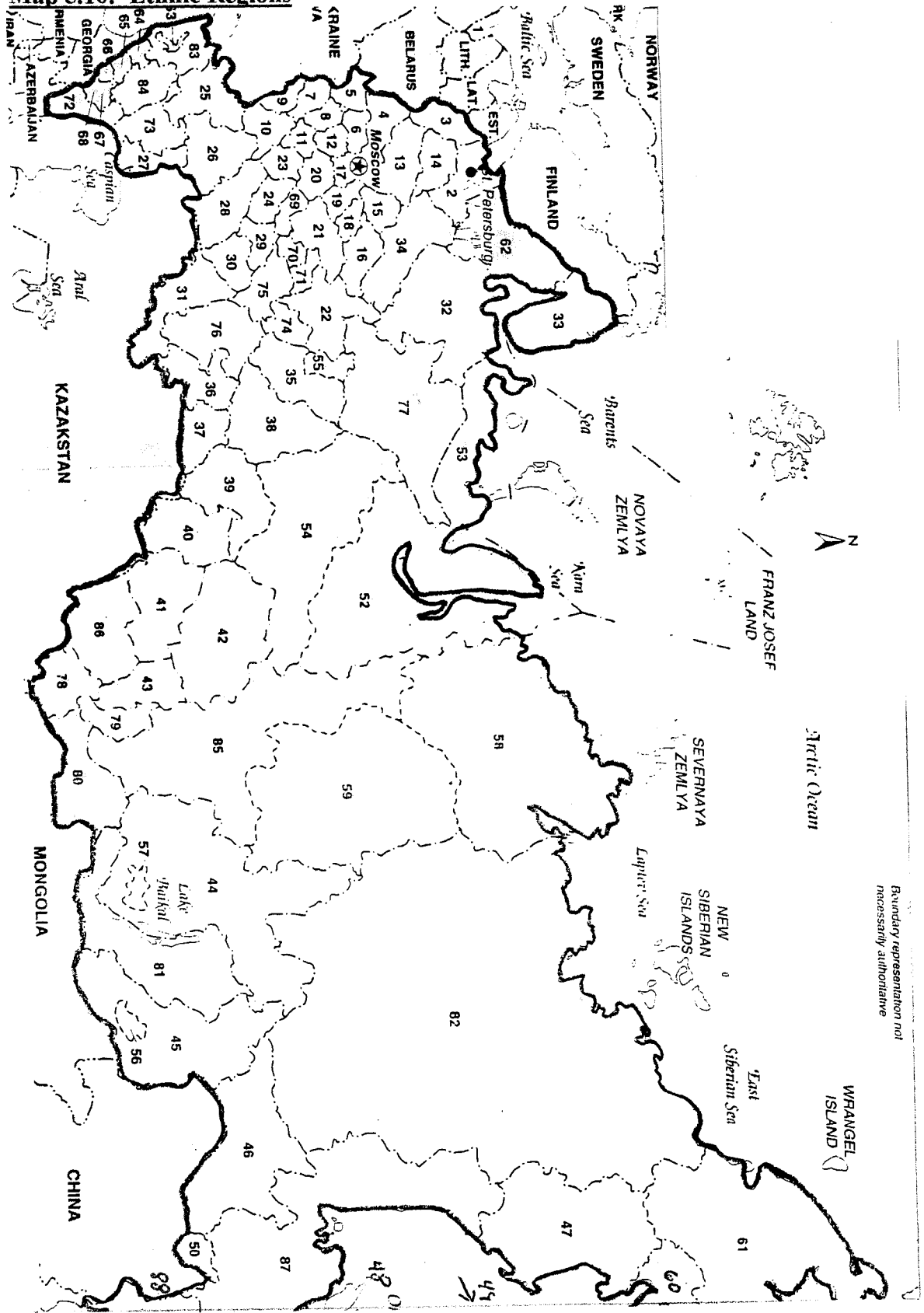


**Map 5.8: The Influential Forty**



<b>Table 5.10</b>			
<b>Ethnic Regions</b>	<b>Republics: 19*    Okrugs: 10</b>		
	<b>Oblast: 1</b>		
<b>N=30</b>			
<b>Election Results by Party Plurality</b>			
<b>Republics</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>
Adygeya	cprf	cprf	cprf
Altai	ldp	cprf	unit
Bashkortostan	agr	cprf	ovr
Buryatiya	ldp	cprf	cprf
Chuvashiya	ldp	cprf	cprf
Dagestan	cprf	cprf	cprf
Ingushetiya	Dem	ohr	ovr
Kabardino -Balkariya	rua	cprf/ohr	ovr
Kalmykiya	ldp	cprf	unit
Cherkessiya	cprf	cprf	cprf
Kareliya	ldp/ohr	cprf/ldp	unit
Khakasiya	ldp	cprf	unit
Komi	ldp	ldp	unit
Mari-El	ldp	ldp	cprf
Mordoviya	ldp	cprf	ovr
North Osetiya	cprf	cprf	cprf
Sakha	ldp	cprf	unity
Tatarstan	ldp/rdc	ohr	ovr
Tyva	rua	ohr	unity
Udmurt	ldp	cprf	unity
<b>Okrug</b>			
Aga-Bryat	agr	agr	ovr
Chukchi	ldp	ohr	unit
Evenk	ldp	cprf/ldp	unit
Khanty-Mansii	rdc	ohr/ldp	unit
Komi-Permyak	ldp	ldp	unit
Koryak	ldp	ldp	unit
Nenets	ldp/rdc	ldp	unit
Taimyr	rdc	ldp	unit
Ust-Orda	agr	cprf	unit
Yamal-Nenets	ldp/rdc/wor	ohr	unit
<b>Oblast</b>			
Jewish Oblast	ldp	cprf	cprf

**Map 5.10: Ethnic Regions**

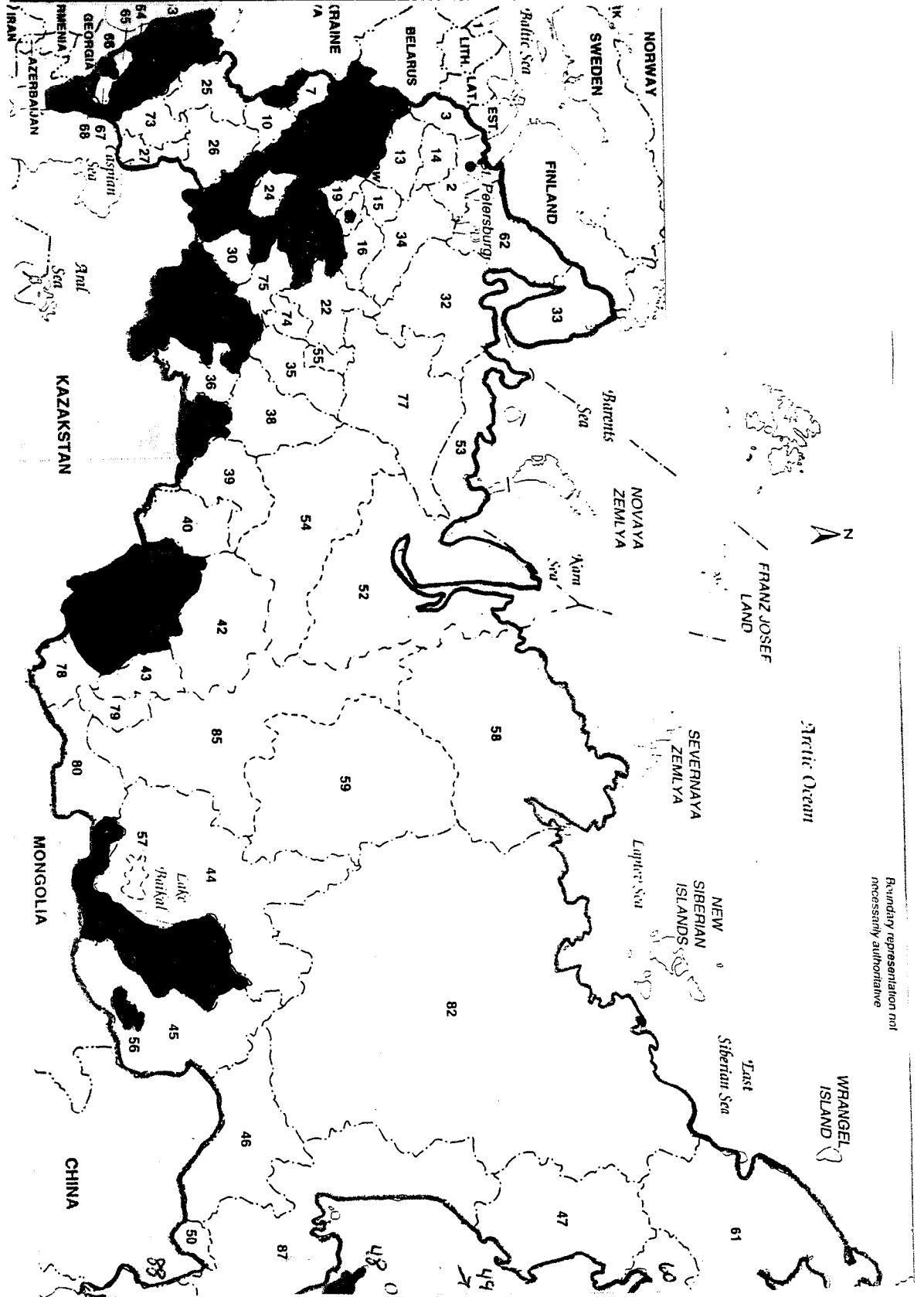


Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative

Table 5.11

Never Cast a Party List Pro-Government/Pro-Reform Plurality Outcome*				Republic: 9 Oblast: 17 Krai: 3 City: 0 Okrug: 1 N = 30				
	Pop.	HGRP	AFI	Sog.	LGRP	1993	1995	1999
<b>Republic</b>								
Adyega					yes	cprf	cprf	cprf
Bashkortostan	yes	yes		yes		cprf	cprf	ovr
Buryatiya					yes	ldp	cprf	cprf
Cherkess					yes	cprf	cprf	cprf
Cherish					yes	ldp	cprf	cprf
Dagestan	yes				yes	cprf	cprf	cprf
Mari El					yes	ldp	ldp	cprf
Mordoviya					yes	ldp	cprf	ovr
North Osetiya					yes	cprf	cprf	cprf
<b>Krai</b>								
Altai	yes	yes	yes			ldp	cprf	cprf
Krasnodar	yes	yes	yes	yes		ldp	cprf	cprf
Stavropol	yes	yes	yes			ldp	cprf	cprf
<b>Oblast</b>								
Belgorod						ldp	cprf	cprf
Bryansk					yes	ldp	cprf	cprf
Kaluga						ldp	cprf	cprf
Kurgan					yes	ldp	cprf	cprf
Lipetsk						ldp	cprf	cprf
Moscow	yes	yes	yes			ldp	cprf	ovr
Nizhnii Nov	yes	yes	yes	yes		ldp	cprf	cprf
Novosibirsk	yes	yes	yes			ldp	cprf	cprf
Orel			yes		yes	ldp	cprf	cprf
Orenburg	yes					ldp	cprf	cprf
Ryazan						ldp	cprf	cprf
Sakhalin			yes		yes	ldp	cprf	cprf
Saratov	yes	yes	yes			ldp	cprf	cprf
Smolensk					yes	ldp	cprf	cprf
Tambov					yes	ldp	cprf	cprf
Tula						ldp	cprf	cprf
Ulanovsk						ldp	cprf	cprf
<b>Okrug</b>								
Aga-Bryat	--	--	--	--	--	ldp	cprf	ovr

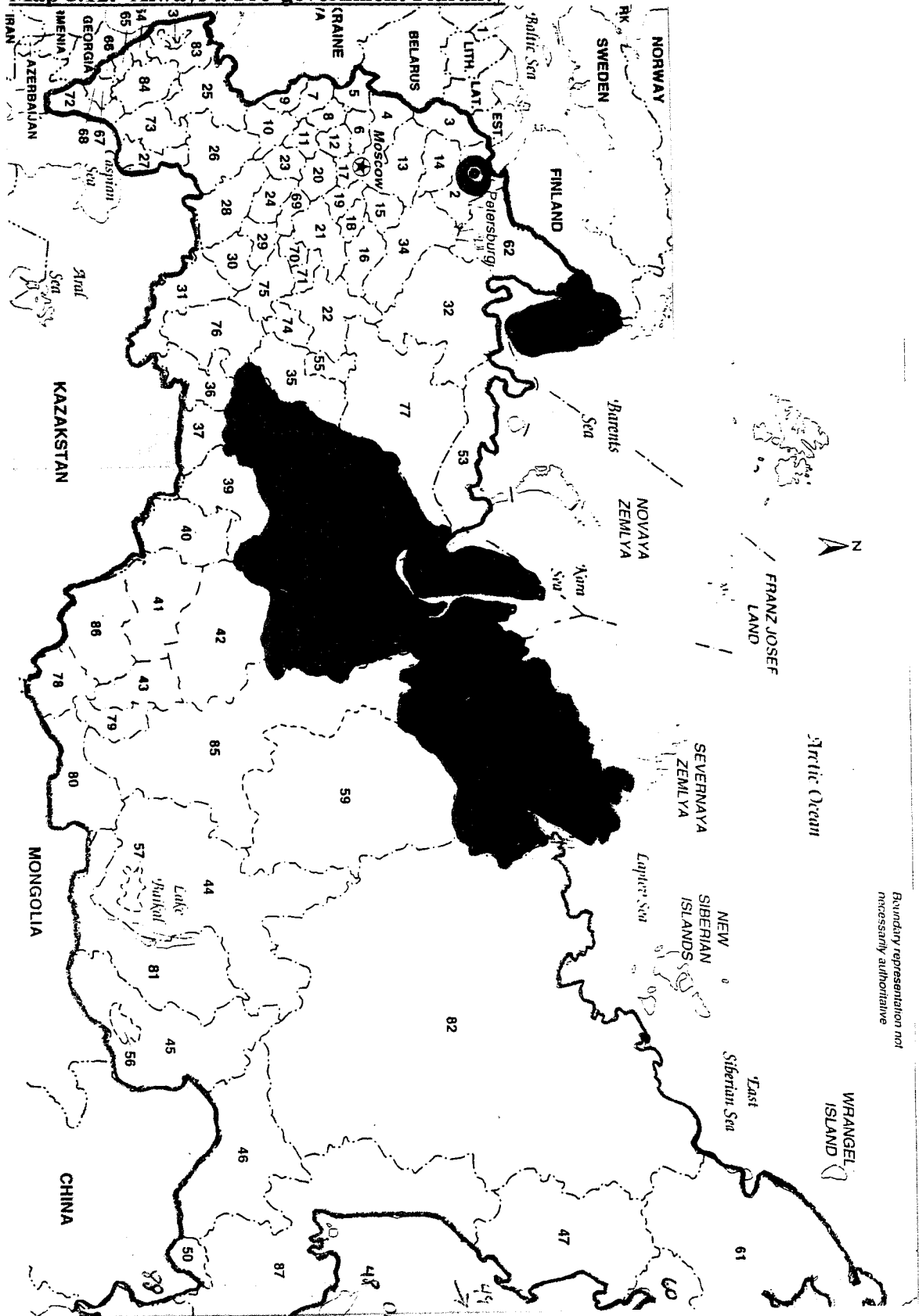
**Map 5.11: Never a Pro-government PL Plurality**



<b>Table 5.12</b>				
<b>Always a Pro-Government Vote</b>			<b>Republics: 0</b>	<b>Krais: 0</b>
			<b>Oblast: 2</b>	<b>City: 1</b>
			<b>Okrug: 3</b>	<b>N = 6</b>
	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>Total Change</b>
	<b>(plurality %)</b>	<b>(plurality %)</b>	<b>(plurality %)</b>	<b>+ or -</b>
St. Petersburg	rdc (27)	ohr (13) -14	unit (18) +5	+9
Khanty-Mansii Okrug	rdc (24)	ohr *(14) -10	unit (29) +15	+5
Taimyr Okrug	rdc (28)	ohr *(14) -14	unit (36) +22	+8
Yamal-Nenets Okrug	rdc (19)	ohr (23) +4	unit (20) -3	+1
Murmansk Oblast	rdc (23)	ohr *(11) -12	unit (32) +21	+9
Sverdlovsk Oblast	rdc (25)	ohr *(8) -17	unit (26) +18	+1
<b>Average</b>	<b>rdc (24.3)</b>	<b>ohr (13.8) -10.5</b>	<b>unit (26.8) +13</b>	<b>+5.5</b>

\* Indicates a split vote

**Map 5.12: Always a Pro-government Plurality**



Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative

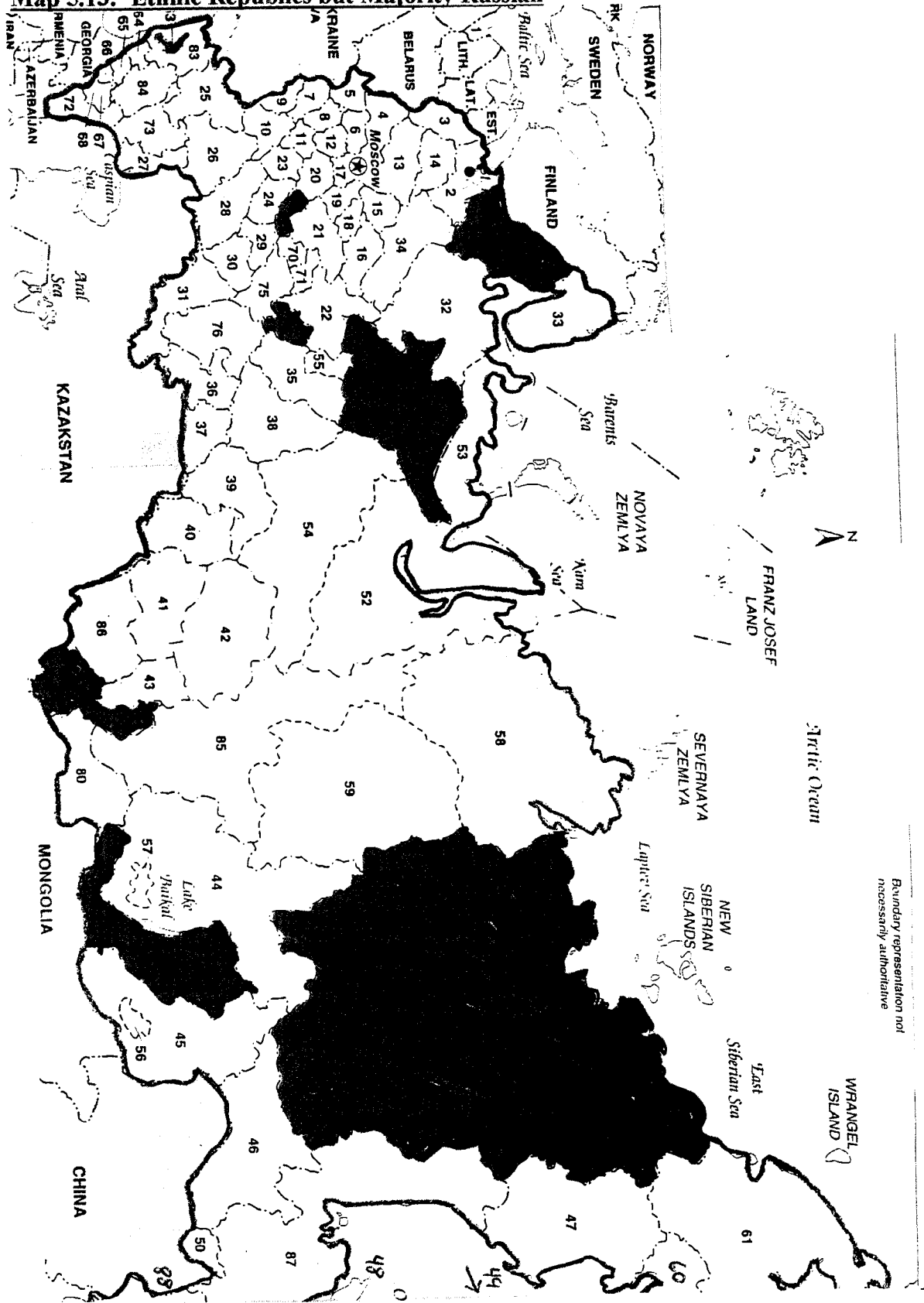
**Table 5.13****Ethnic Republics With a Majority Russian Population**

N=9

Region	Percentage	Election results by Party Plurality		
		1993	1995	1999
Adygea	68%	cprf	cprf	cprf
Buryatia	70%	ldp	cprf	cprf
Gorno-Altay	60%	ldp	cprf	unit
Karelia	74%	ldp/ohr	cp/ldp	unit
Khakassia	80%	ldp	cprf	unit
Komi	58%	ldp	ldp	unit
Mordovia	61%	ldp	cprf	ovr
Sakha (Yakutia)	50%	ldp	cprf	unit
Udmurtia	59%	ldp	cprf	unit



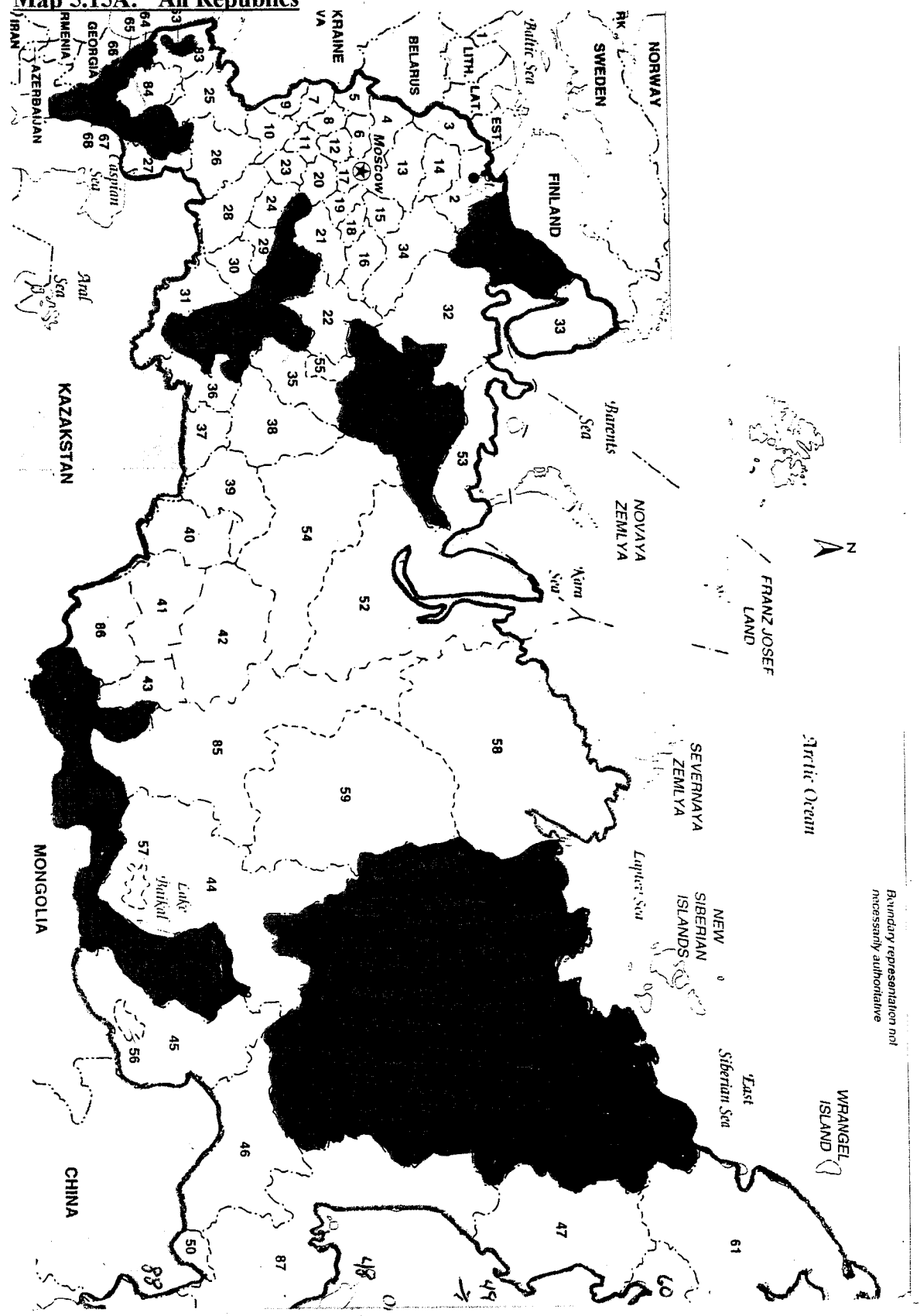
**Map 5.13: Ethnic Republics but Majority Russian**



Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative

<b>Table 5.14</b>		<b>Republics: 9</b>	<b>Krai: 1</b>
<b>Randomly Selected Region Group</b>		<b>Oblast: 13</b>	<b>Okrug: 1</b>
		<b>N=24</b>	
<b>Republic</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>
Bashkortostan Republic	cprf 15	cprf 25	ovr 36
Cherkessiya Republic	cprf 38	cprf 40	cprf 42
Chuvashiya Republic	ldp 22	cprf 33	cprf 37
Dagestan Republic	cprf 54	cprf 44	cprf 38
Gorno-Altay Republic	ldp 17	cprf 26	unit 28
Kalmykiya Republic	ldp 20	ohr 24	unit 36
Kareliya Republic	ldp/rdc 22	cprf/Ldp 15	unit 32
Sakha Republic	ldp 15	cprf 18	unit 27
Udmurtia Republic	ldp 18	cprf 15	unit 37
<b>Krai</b>			
Krasnodar Krai	ldp 25	cprf 24	cprf 37
<b>Oblast</b>			
Astrakhan Oblast	ldp 17	cprf 24	unit 33
Bryansk Oblast	ldp 27	cprf 35	cprf 41
Kemerovo Oblast	ldp 29	cprf 48	unit 34
Kostroma Oblast	ldp 26	cprf 20	unit 35
Kurgan Oblast	ldp 24	cprf 22	cprf 30
Kursk Oblast	ldp 33	cprf 28	unit 32
Lipetsk Oblast	ldp 32	cprf 29	cprf 40
Murmansk Oblast	ldp/rdc 23	cprf/ldp/ohr 12	unit 32
Penza Oblast	ldp 33	cprf 37	cprf/unit 30
Pskov Oblast	ldp 43	cprf 23	unit 39
Rostov Oblast	cprf 17	cprf 27	unit 31
Tomsk Oblast	ldp/Rdc 22	cprf 19	unit 19
Yaroslavl Oblast	ldp/Rdc 22	cprf 14	unit 31
<b>Okrug</b>			
Chukchi Okrug	ldp 23	ohr 17	unit 44

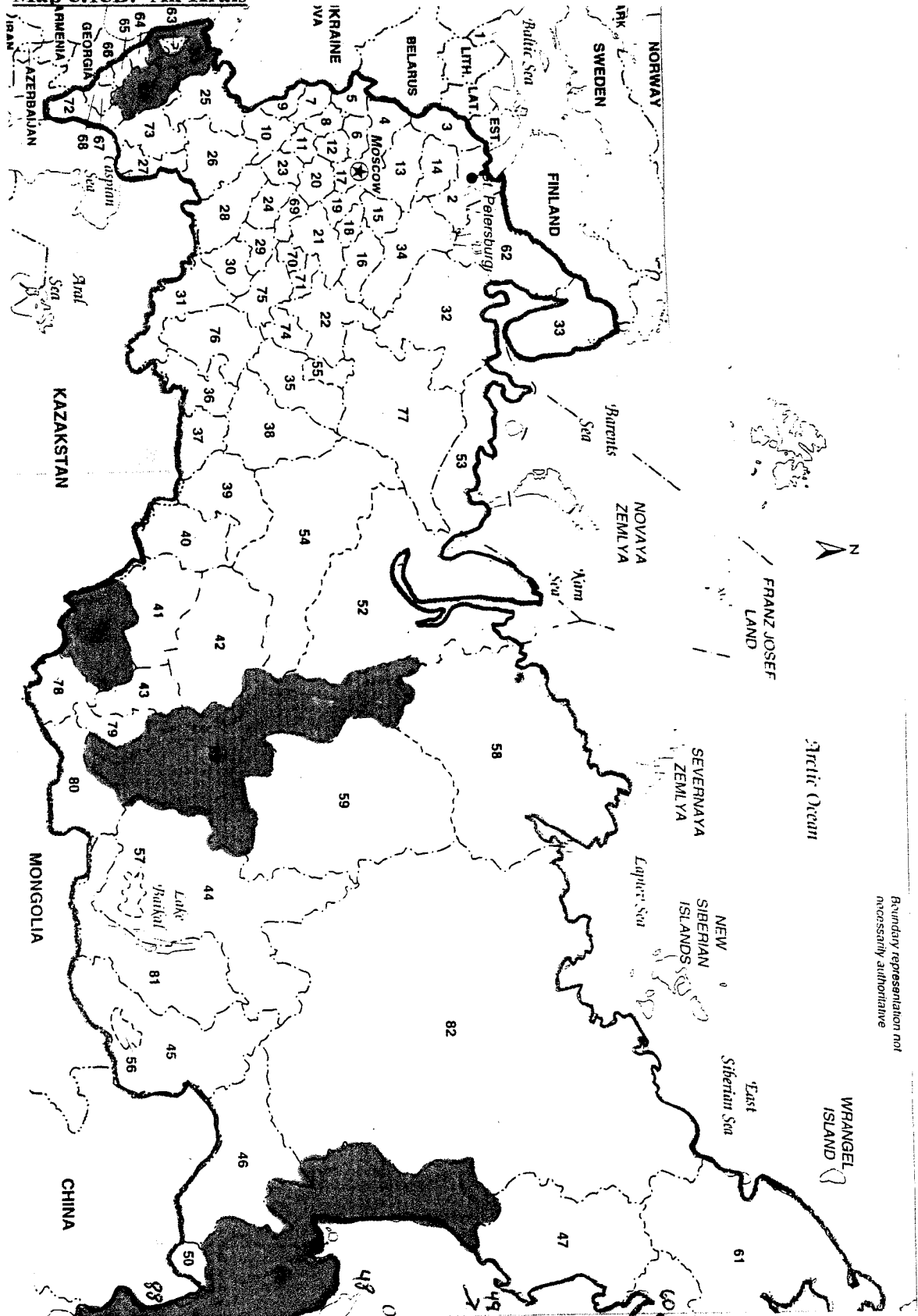
**Map 5.15A: All Republics**



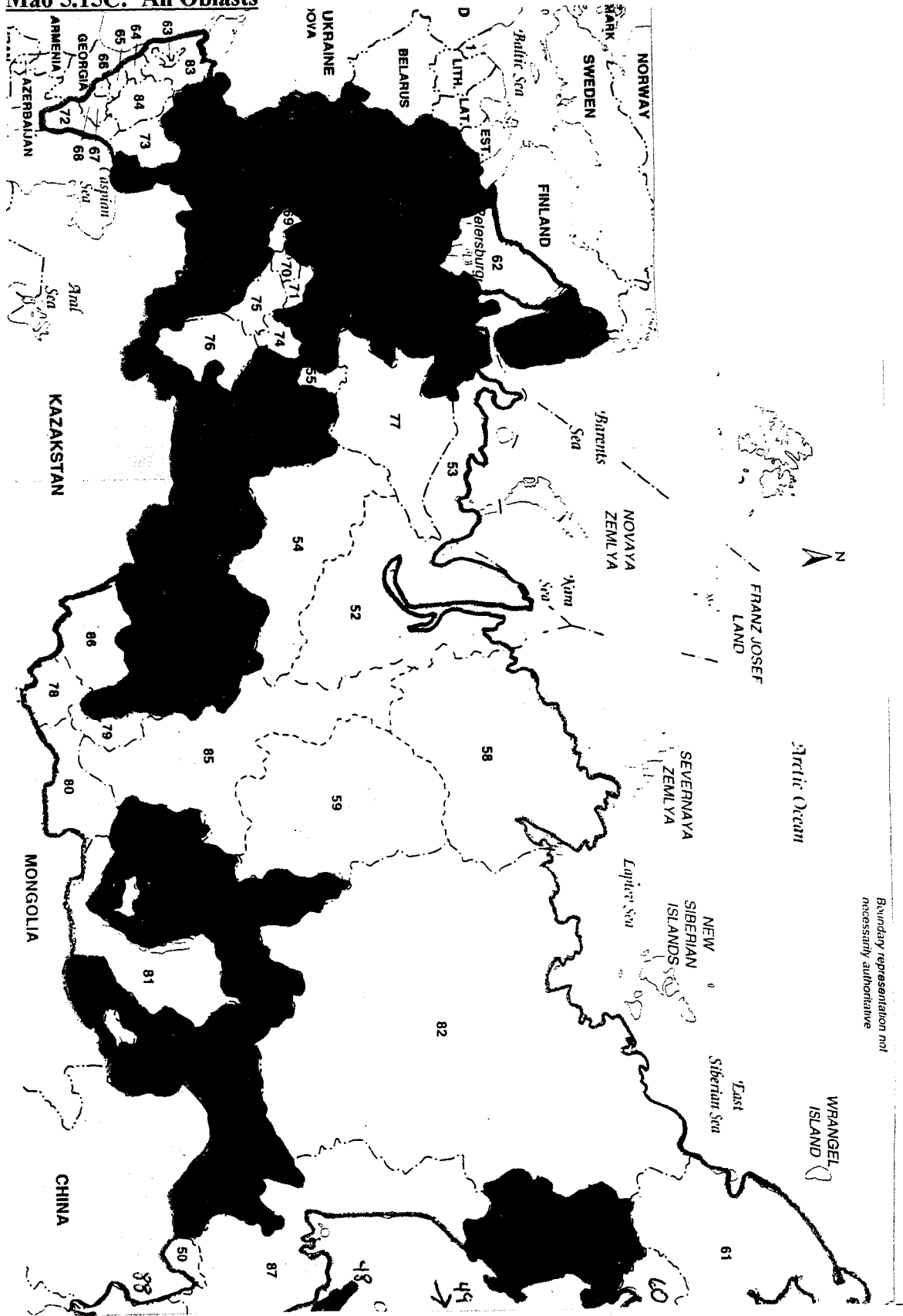
Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative



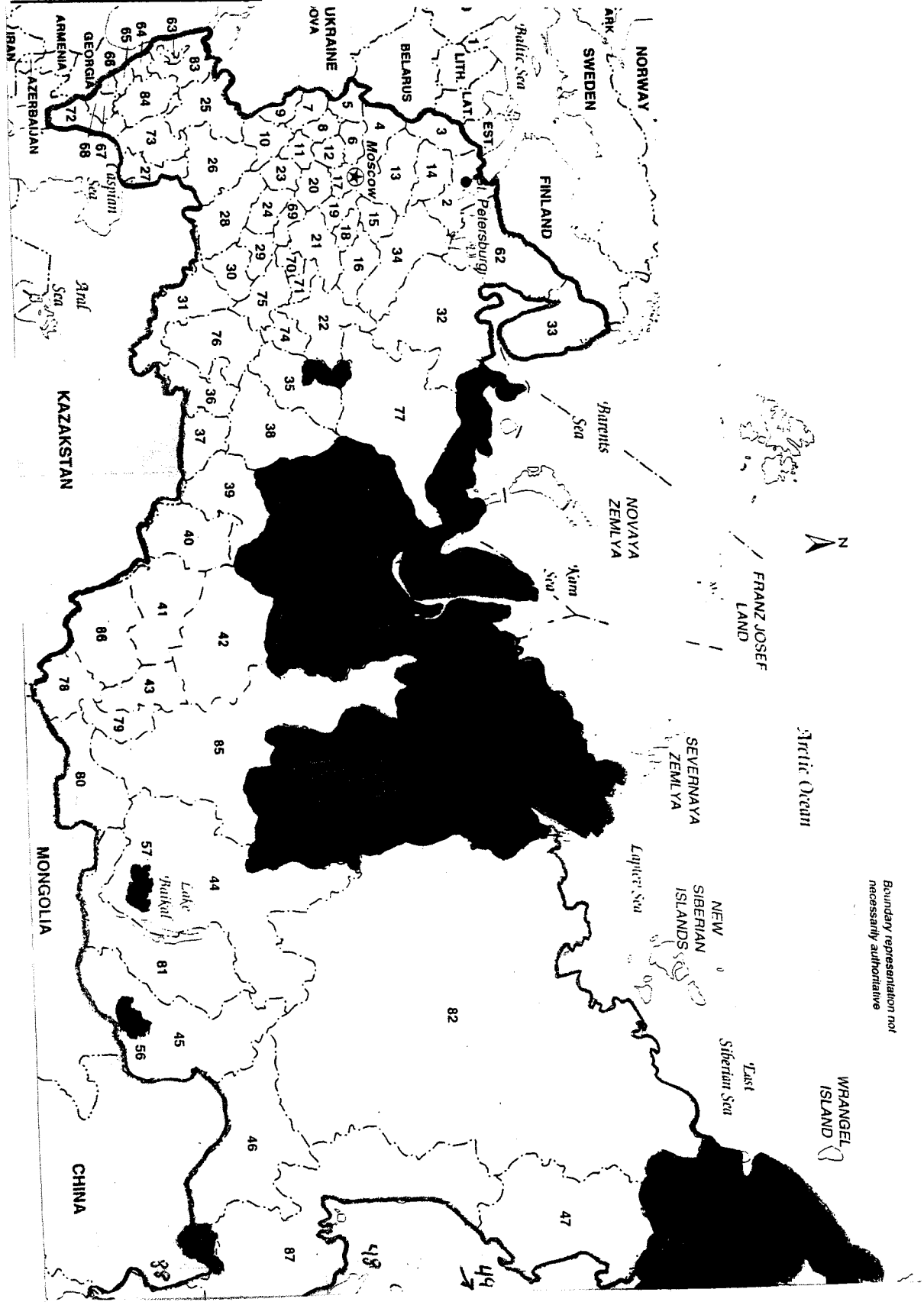
**Map 5.15B: All Krai**



**Mao 5.15C: All Oblasts**



**Map 5.15D: All Okrugs**



<b>Table 5.16</b>				
<b>Influential Anti-Government Regions (IAGR)</b>		<b>Republic: 1    Oblast: 7 Krai: 3    City: 0 N=11</b>		
	<b>1993 (plurality %)</b>	<b>1995 (plurality %)</b>	<b>1999 (plurality %)</b>	<b>Total Change + or -</b>
<b>Republic</b>				
Bashkortostan	cprf (15)	cprf (25) +10	ovr (36) +11	+21
<b>Krai</b>				
Altai	ldp (28)	cprf (26) -2	cprf (37) +11	+9
Krasnodar	ldp (25)	cprf (24) -1	cprf (37) +13	+12
Stavropol	ldp (38)	cprf (29) -9	cprf (32) +3	-6
<b>Oblast</b>				
Moscow	ldp (27)	cprf (22) -5	ovr (28) +6	+1
Nizhnii Nov.	ldp (20)	cprf (19) -1	cprf (25) +6	+5
Novisibirsk.	ldp (26)	cprf (21) -5	cprf (29) +8	+3
Orel	ldp (32)	cprf (45) +13	cprf (43) -2	+11
Orenburg	ldp (23)	cprf (24) +1	cprf (31) +7	+8
Sakhalin	ldp (15)	cprf (25) +10	cprf (25) 0	+10
Saratov	ldp (27)	cprf (28) +1	cprf (31) +3	+4
<b>Average</b>	<b>ldp (25.1)</b>	<b>cprf (26.2) +1.1</b>	<b>cprf (32.2) +6</b>	<b>+7.1</b>

Map 5.16 IAGR

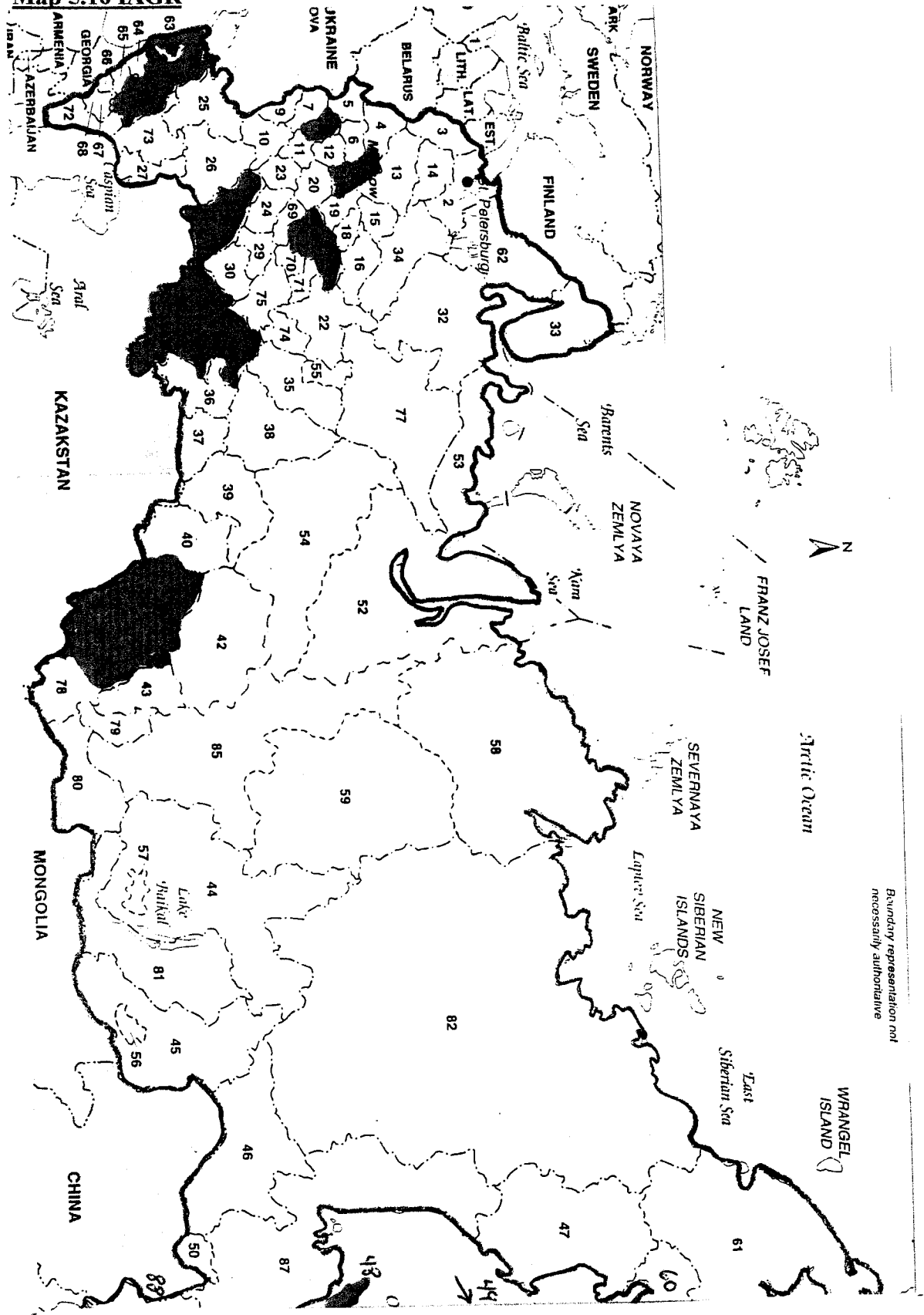




Table 5.17  
Page 1

All Regions: Duma Election Results 1993, 1995, 1999					Republics: 21		Krais: 6		Oblasts: 50		Okrgs: 10		Federal Cities: 2 N = 89	
[<-----1993----->]					[<-----1995----->]					[<-----1999----->]				
	cprf	ldp	rdc	1993 other	cprf	ldp	ohr	1995 other	cprf	unity	ovr	1999 other	+/- other	
<b>Republics</b>														
Adygeya	29*	18	8	45	41*	10	4	45	40*	23	8	29	-16	
Altai	11	17*	9	63	26*	16	5	53	26	28*	11	35	-16	
Bashkortostan	15*	13	8	64	25*	5	15	55	24	15	36*	25	-39	
Buryatiya	15	17*	13	55	28*	9	6	57	28*	26	10	36	-19	
Chechnya	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	
Chuvashiya	20	22*	9	49	33*	12	5	50	37*	14	15	34	-15	
Dagestan	54*	3	2	41	44*	1	13	42	38*	29	28	5	-36	
Ingushetiya	6*	5	2	87	5	2	34*	59	2	1	89*	8	-79	
Kabard-Balk.	21*	9	7	63	24*	3	25*	48	24	21	35*	20	-43	
Kalmykiya	14	20*	10	56	18	10	24*	48	27	36*	11	26	-30	
Karac-Cherkess	38*	20	4	38	40*	7	13	40	42*	15	16	27	-11	
Kareliya	7	21*	22*	50	15*	14*	11	60	14	32*	9	45	-5	
Khakasiya	11	27*	15	47	22*	14	4	60	25	32*	5	38	-9	
Komi	7	24*	22	47	13	17*	13	57	17	32*	6	45	-2	
Mari-El	12	24*	11	53	18	21*	5	56	32*	22	9	37	-16	
Mordoviya	19	35*	8	38	23*	20	20	37	31	16	34*	29	-9	
North Osetiya	36*	17	8	39	52*	10	6	32	43*	18	18	21	-18	
Sakha	10	15*	13	62	18*	7	14	61	23	27*	10	40	-22	
Tatarstan	9	22*	22*	47	15	5	29*	51	19	17	42*	22	-25	
Tyva	8	10*	6	76	11	5	28*	56	9	73*	3	15	-61	
Udmurt	11	18*	16	55	15	9	6	70	19	37*	8	36	-19	
<b>Krai</b>														
Altai	10	28*	11	51	26*	9	5	60	37*	24	4	35	-16	
Khabarovsk	12	20*	19*	49	16*	12	4	68	21	28*	5	45	-4	
Krasnodar	17	25*	12	46	24*	15	7	54	37*	28	5	30	-16	
Krasnoyarsk	9	31*	14	46	19*	13	9	59	26	28*	4	42	-4	
Primorye	9	23*	14	54	18	20*	3	59	23	28*	6	43	-11	
Stavropol	12	38*	9	41	29*	13	6	52	32*	29	7	32	-9	
<b>City</b>														
Moscow	11	13	35*	41	15	2	19*	64	12	7	42*	39	-2	
St. Petersburg	8	18	27*	47	13*	3	13*	71	14	18*	16	52	+5	
<b>Okrug</b>														
Aga-Bryat	10	14*	9	67	18*	9	4	69	21	22	38*	19	-48	
Chukchi	7	23*	14	56	11	13	17*	59	11	44*	3	42	-14	
Evenk	7	21*	15	57	14*	13*	7	66	12	41*	6	41	-16	
Khanty-Mansii	4	21	24*	51	8	15*	14*	63	16	29*	8	47	-4	
Komi-Permyak	7	19*	18*	56	12	22*	10	56	18	28*	8	46	-10	
Koryak	7	24*	15	54	10	13*	7	70	12	44*	4	40	-14	
Nenets	6	19*	20*	55	11	17*	8	64	14	20*	14	52	-3	
Taimyr	5	17	28*	50	6	15*	14*	75	8	36*	4	52	+2	
Ust-Orda	12	14*	10	64	23*	7	9	61	26	37*	8	29	-35	
Yamal-Nenets	4	20*	19*	57	6	15	23*	56	14	20*	7	59	+2	

Table 5.17  
Page 2

All Regions: Duma Election Results 1993, 1995, 1999													
	<-----1993----->    <-----1995----->    <-----1999----->												
	cprf	ldp	rdc	1993 other	cprf	ldp	ohr	1995 other	cprf	unit	ovr	1999 other	+/- other
Oblast													
Amur	16	25*	12	47	35*	13	4	48	25	37*	3	35	-12
Archangel	6	22*	22*	50	14*	11	8	67	16	28*	8	48	-2
Astrakhan	17*	17*	14	52	24*	16	12	48	27	33*	5	35	-17
Belgorod	16	37*	10	37	32*	15	7	46	29*	28*	11	32	-5
Bryansk	20	27*	13	40	35*	20	6	51	41*	26	4	29	-11
Chelyabinsk	7	20	24*	49	15*	10	8	67	23*	20	9	48	-1
Chita	12	30*	11	47	22*	21*	4	53	30*	31*	3	36	-11
Irkutusk	9	21*	17	53	16*	16*	8	60	24	34*	5	37	-16
Ivanovo	9	28*	17	46	17*	17*	7	59	24	27*	10	39	-7
Kaliningrad	10	30*	20	40	19*	11	8	62	20	34*	8	38	-2
Kaluga	14	28*	17	41	26*	10	9	55	30*	21	13	36	-5
Kamachatka	5	27*	15	53	11	16*	7	66	18	30*	6	46	-7
Kemerovo	10	29*	14	47	48*	13	3	36	29	34*	5	32	-15
Kirov	9	28*	12	51	15	17*	6	62	23	34*	5	38	-13
Kostroma	10	26*	15	49	20*	11	9	60	21	35*	6	38	-11
Kurgan	13	24*	12	51	22*	20	7	51	30*	27	6	37	-14
Kursk	20	33*	11	36	28*	6	5	61	33*	32*	6	29	-7
Leningrad	8	30*	16	46	19*	8	11	62	18	31*	10	41	-5
Lipetsk	14	32*	13	41	29*	12	8	51	40*	19	8	33	-8
Magadan	6	29*	14	51	13	22*	8	57	19	43*	2	36	-15
Moscow	11	27*	20	42	22*	5	14	59	20	10	28*	42	0
Murmansk	6	24*	23*	47	11*	12*	11*	66	13	32*	8	47	0
Nizhnii Nov.	12	20*	14	54	19*	12	10	59	25*	20	7	48	-6
Novgorod	9	30*	13	48	18*	12	10	60	19	32*	6	43	+5
Novisibirsk	11	26*	12	51	21*	18	7	54	29*	21	6	56	+5
Omsk	5	8	14*	73	16*	16*	6	62	30*	21	7	42	-31
Orel	26	32*	10	32	45*	9	5	41	43*	27	4	26	-6
Orenburg	13	23*	13	51	24*	12	12	52	31*	24	7	38	-13
Penza	19	33*	9	39	37*	11	5	47	29*	30*	8	33	-6
Perm	7	15	27*	51	11	15*	10	64	14	20*	10	56	+5
Pskov	9	43*	10	38	23*	21	6	50	24	39*	5	32	-6
Rostov	17	10	12	61	27*	10	5	58	29	31*	7	33	-28
Ryazan	14	31*	12	43	31*	11	7	51	30*	23	12	35	-8

Table 5.17

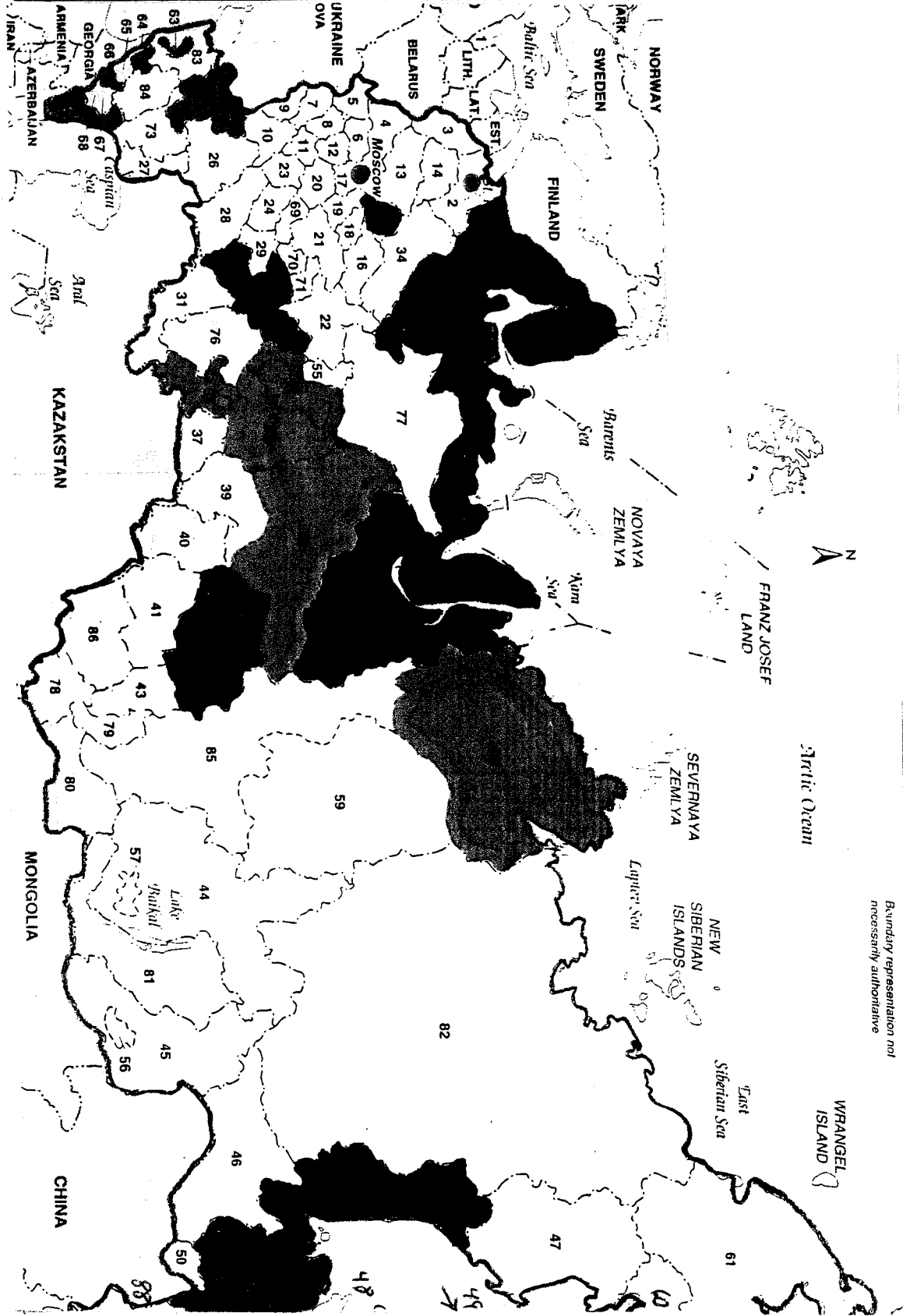
Page 3

**All Regions:  
Duma Election Results  
1993, 1995, 1999**

	<-----1993----->				<-----1995----->				<-----1999----->				
	cprf	ldp	rdc	1993 other	cprf	ldp	ohr	1995 other	cprf	unit	ovr	1999 other	+/- other
<b>Oblast Cont.</b>													
Sakhalin	9	37*	10	66	25*	15	4	56	25*	23	5	47	-19
Samara	16*	12	16*	56	22*	12	12	54	27*	20	5	48	-8
Saratov	15	27*	12	46	28*	15	8	49	31*	23	8	38	-8
Smolensk	16	33*	11	40	32*	20	5	43	32*	27	7	34	-6
Sverdlovsk	6	18	25*	51	8*	9*	8*	75	12	26*	7	55	+4
Tambov	17	35*	9	39	40*	12	5	43	33*	25	6	36	-3
Tomsk	10	22*	22*	46	19*	10	9	62	17	19*	6	58	+12
Tula	12	30*	15	43	22*	13	10	55	30*	22	9	39	-4
Tver	12	25*	14	49	27*	7	8	42	24	30*	8	38	-11
Tyumen	11	21*	13	55	15*	11	9	65	20	28*	5	47	-8
Ulyanovsk	17	25*	12	46	37*	13	5	45	34*	24	9	33	-13
Vladimir	10	29*	17	44	21*	15	12	52	24	26*	10	40	-4
Volgograd	14	28*	12	46	28*	15	9	52	30*	29*	6	35	-11
Vologda	5	30*	16	49	12	14*	11	63	15	31*	7	47	-2
Vorenezh	14	31*	12	43	27*	14	7	52	30	33*	5	32	-11
Yaroslavl	8	22*	22*	48	14*	10	9	67	16	31*	8	45	-3
Jewish Oblast	12	25*	15	48	23*	12	5	60	35*	21	6	38	-10

**Map 5.17A: 1993 Outcomes**

**Regional Party** ■ **Pro-Government** ● **CPRF** ● **Split** ●

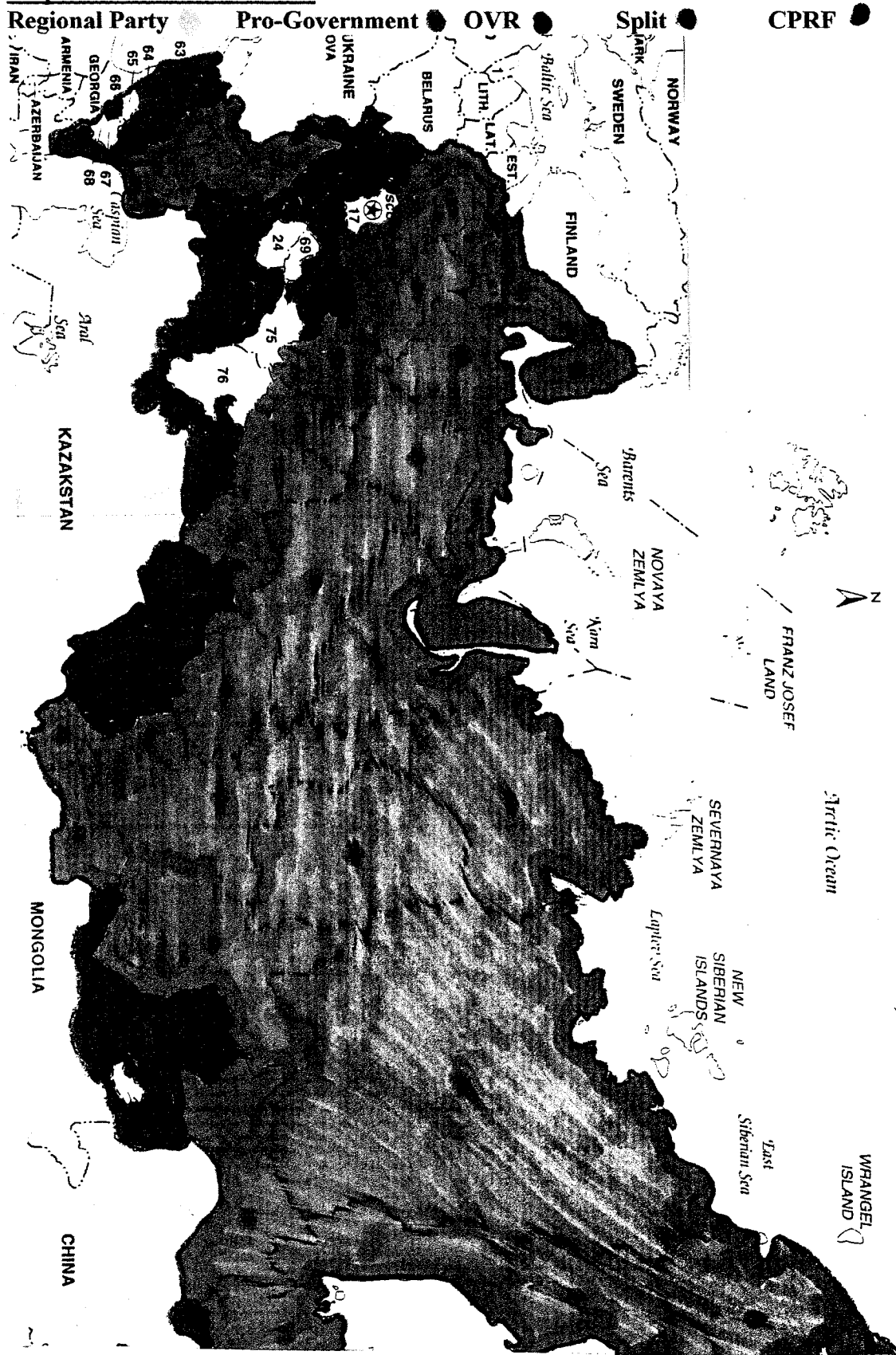


Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative





**Map 5.17C: 1999 Outcomes**



*Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative*



**Table 6.1, Page 1**

<b>All Regions: Turnout and Plurality Victor</b>						
	93 Turnout (54.3)	93 Plurality (27.4)	95 Turnout (64.4)	95 Plurality (23.7)	99 Turnout (61.7)	99 Plurality (33.4)
Adygeya Rep.	61.7	cprf (29)	64.2	cprf (41)	61.6	cprf (40)
Aga-Bryat	63.2	ldp (14)	71	cprf (18)	69.5	ovr (38)
Altay Krai	54.2	ldp (28)	60.4	cprf (26)	65.8	cprf (37)
Altay Rep.	61.7	pru (26)	75.5	cprf (26)	71.1	unit (28)
Amur	56.8	ldp (25)	67.4	cprf (35)	62.4	unit (37)
Archangel Obl	58.2	ldp/rdc(22)	65	cprf (14)	62.4	unit (28)
Astrakhan	51.4	ldp/cp (17)	62.2	cprf (24)	61.2	unit (33)
Bashkort. Rep	63.7	agr (25)	73.8	cprf (25)	73.5	ovr (36)
Belgorod	67	ldp (37)	75.5	cprf (32)	66.8	cprf/unit (29)
Bryansk	65.9	ldp (27)	69.4	cprf (35)	63.7	cprf (41)
Buryatia Rep	56.2	ldp/pru(17)	63.8	cprf (28)	56.9	cprf (28)
Chechen Rep	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Chelyab. Obl	51.4	rdc (23)	62.8	cprf (15)	60.7	cprf (23)
Cherkess Rep	71.9	cprf (38)	61.6	cprf (40)	41.9	cprf (42)
Chita	49.3	ldp (30)	64	cprf/ldp(22)	59.2	cprf/unit (31)
Chukchi	54	ldp (23)	66.8	ohr (17)	68.9	unit (44)
Chuvash Rep	63.6	ldp (22)	61	cprf (33)	59.9	cprf (37)
Dagestan Rep	57.6	cprf (54)	72.4	cprf (44)	76.5	cprf (38)
Evenk	59.6	ldp (21)	62	cp/ldp (14)	62.1	unit (41)
Ingushet. Rep	46.1	dpr (71)	57.2	ohr (34)	67.9	ovr (89)
Irkutsk	50.4	ldp (21)	58.4	cprf/ldp (16)	54.4	unit (34)
Ivanovo	57.8	ldp (28)	67	cprf/ldp (17)	62.1	unit (27)
Jewish Obl.	48.4	ldp (25)	63.9	cprf (23)	59.9	cprf (35)
Kab. Balkar Rep	58.7	pru (31)	68.1	cprf/ohr (25)	78.1	ovr (35)
Kaliningrad	59.8	ldp (30)	63.8	cprf (19)	56.7	unit (34)
Kalmyk. Rep	57.8	ldp (20)	67.4	ohr (24)	64.3	unit (36)
Kaluga	63.7	ldp (28)	68.2	cprf (26)	62.7	cprf (30)
Kamchatka	44.1	ldp (27)	60.9	ldp (16)	59.6	unit (30)
Kareliya Rep	54.7	ldp/rdc(21)	63.4	cprf/ldp (15)	61.5	unit (32)
Kemerovo	50.8	ldp (29)	61.1	cprf (48)	55.2	unit (34)
Khabarov. Krai	46.1	ldp/rdc(19)	64.4	cprf (16)	58.1	unit (28)
Khakassia Rep	45.6	ldp (27)	57.6	cprf (22)	57.2	unit (32)
Khanty-Mansii	38.9	rdc (24)	54.7	ldp/ohr (15)	59.4	unit (29)
Kirov	58.6	ldp (27)	68.8	ldp (17)	64.9	unit (34)
Komi Rep	47.3	ldp (24)	55.9	ldp (17)	59.2	unit (32)
Komi-Permyak	56.4	ldp (19)	62.3	ldp (17)	62.8	unit (28)

**Table 6.1, Page 2**

<b>All Regions: Turnout and Plurality Victor</b>						
	93 Turnout (54.3)	93 Plurality (27.4)	95 Turnout (64.4)	95 Plurality (23.7)	99 Turnout (61.7)	99 Plurality (33.4)
Koryak	56.7	ldp (24)	65.9	ldp (13)	69.1	unit (44)
Kostroma	59.7	ldp (26)	68.6	cprf (20)	66.3	unit (35)
Krasno. Krai	56.7	ldp (25)	60.5	cprf (24)	58.4	cprf (37)
Krasnoy. Krai	52.2	ldp (31)	64.6	cprf (19)	55.6	unit (28)
Kurgan Obl.	61.2	ldp (24)	69.6	cprf (22)	65.5	cprf (30)
Kursk	64.7	ldp (33)	71.6	cprf (28)	63.1	cpsu/unit (33)
Leningrad	50.4	ldp (30)	61.8	cprf (19)	49.8	unit (31)
Lipetsk	59.9	ldp (32)	65	cprf (29)	61.4	cprf (40)
Magadan	46.9	ldp (29)	60.3	ldp (22)	57.3	unit (43)
Mari El Rep	46.8	ldp (24)	66.5	ldp (21)	64.4	cprf (32)
Mordovia Rep	62.1	ldp (35)	67.2	cprf (23)	74.4	ovr (34)
Moscow City	53.5	rdc (35)	62.8	ohr (19)	64.4	ovr (42)
Moscow Obl.	54.8	ldp (27)	63.2	cprf (22)	59.0	ovr (28)
Murmansk	51	ldp/rdc(24)	60.9	cp/ldp/ohr(12)	60.2	unit (32)
N. Osset. Rep	59.8	cprf (36)	63	cprf (52)	53.7	cprf (43)
Nenets	63	ldp/rdc(19)	74.7	ldp (17)	73.9	unit (20)
Nizhni Novgo.	52.9	ldp (19)	62.4	cprf (19)	57.5	cprf (25)
Novgorod	58.1	ldp (30)	67.2	cprf (18)	63.9	unit (32)
Novisibirsk	51	ldp (26)	66.7	cprf (21)	64.1	cprf (29)
Omsk	56.7	wor (21)	68.4	cprf/ldp (16)	62.1	cprf (30)
Orel	65.7	ldp (32)	70.5	cprf (45)	70.8	cprf (43)
Orenburg	56.1	ldp (22)	65	cprf (24)	63.3	cprf (31)
Penza	62.6	ldp (33)	70.5	cprf (37)	63.3	cprf/unit(30)
Perm	46	rdc (27)	58.6	ldp (15)	57.9	unit (20)
Primorye Krai	50.4	ldp (23)	62.2	ldp (20)	59.5	unit (28)
Pskov	68.3	ldp (43)	73.4	cprf (23)	66.2	unit (39)
Rostov	56.5	cprf (22)	67.5	cprf (27)	64.9	unity (31)
Ryazan	66.2	ldp (31)	70.2	cprf (31)	62.1	cprf (30)
Sakha Rep	59.4	ldp (15)	65.9	cprf (18)	63.9	unit (27)
Sakhalin	49.7	ldp (37)	57.8	cprf (25)	53	cprf (25)
Samara	53.4	cp/rdc (16)	63.6	cprf (22)	61.8	cprf (27)
Saratov	59.4	ldp (27)	68.1	cprf (28)	68.9	cprf (31)
Smolensk	65.1	ldp (33)	68.5	cprf (32)	59	cprf (32)
St Petersburg	52	rdc (27)	60.5	cp/ohr (13)	54.1	unit (18)
Stavrop. Krai	63.8	ldp (38)	67.2	cprf (29)	59.5	cprf (32)



**Table 6.1, Page 3****All Regions:****Turnout and Plurality Victor**

	93 Turnout (54.3)	93 Plurality (27.4)	95 Turnout (64.4)	95 Plurality (23.7)	99 Turnout (61.7)	99 Plurality (33.4)
Sverdlo. Obl.	50.1	rdc (25)	53.1	ldp/cp/ohr(9)	52	unit (26)
Taimyr	58.5	rdc (28)	59.7	ldp/ohr(15)	60.3	unit (36)
Tambov	64.2	ldp (35)	68.3	cprf (40)	61.4	cprf (33)
Tatarstan Rep	13.4	ldp/rdc (22)	59.2	ohr (29)	74.2	ovr (42)
Tomsk	46	ldp/rdc (22)	62.9	cprf (19)	58.4	unit (19)
Tula	60.8	ldp (30)	67.9	cprf (22)	61	cprf (30)
Tver	63.9	ldp (25)	71	cprf (27)	65.4	unit (30)
Tyumen Obl.	48.2	ldp (21)	61.2	cprf (15)	59.4	unit (28)
Tyva Rep	58.4	rua (48)	65.6	ohr (28)	69.2	unit (73)
Udmurt Rep	44.2	ldp/rdc (16)	57.6	cprf (15)	61.7	unit (37)
Ulyanovsk	58	ldp (24)	66.3	cprf (37)	63.5	cprf (34)
Ust-Orda	69.7	agr (25)	70.1	cprf (23)	68.2	unit (37)
Vladimir	60.5	ldp (29)	66.4	cprf (21)	58.8	unit (26)
Volgograd	53.5	ldp (28)	65.1	cprf (28)	58.7	cpsu/unit (30)
Vologda	60	ldp (30)	64.2	ldp (14)	63.6	unity (31)
Voronezh	59.9	ldp (31)	68.1	cprf (27)	63.5	unity (33)
Yamal-Nenets	46.9	ldp/rdc (19)	61	ohr (23)	59.7	unity (20)
Yaraslovl	59.3	ldp/rdc (22)	68.3	cprf (14)	68.5	unity (31)

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