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From Competition to Monopoly: Establishing Party Dominance in Post-Communist Russia

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From Competition to Monopoly: Establishing Party Dominance in Post-Communist Russia

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From Competition to Monopoly: Establishing Party Dominance in Post-Communist Russia

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What explains dominant party emergence and strength and opposition party weakness in Russia? Important structural underpinnings of party dominance, namely a weak party system, were present in Russia even in the 1990s, but it was not until the 2000s that a genuine dominant party emerged, despite Yeltsin's attempts to fashion a successful party of power of his own prior to United Russia. I focus on a weak party system as a factor contributing to dominant party emergence, using extensive empirical analyses drawn from original fine-grained data from the case of Russia. I contend that a combination of contingent factors, namely leadership by an individual with political clout, favorable economic developments that allow for patronage politics, and a security situation that allows for centralization of power, as well as decisive structural factors, specifically electoral-geographic conditions ripe for machine politics in the countryside and areas with dense populations of ethnic minorities, have buttressed the dominant party and frozen out the opposition in Russia. My dissertation leverages new dataset that combines fine-grained, county- and region-level data, including county-level election results from five Russian parliamentary elections—1995, 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011—and county-level census data on sociodemographic indicators, as well as data on regional contextual characteristics, such as gross regional product and resource dependence, to examine patterns of electoral support for various parties.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The evolution of competitive authoritarianism in Russia across the 2000s and 2010s has coincided with United Russia's meteoric rise to power in the 2003 parliamentary elections and consolidation thereafter. In the 2003 election, the first election United Russia contested after the merger of the two potential parties of power that created it, United Russia displayed its electoral prowess, capturing almost 40% of the party list vote. In 2007, the rapidly maturing party quickly dispatched its opponents in classic dominant party fashion and shattered its previous performance with almost two-thirds of the vote. Finally, in the most recent election to the State Duma, United Russia again scored electoral windfalls with nearly half of the vote. United Russia's success is unprecedented, given the track record of pro-government parties in Russia's rather short post-communist history. In 1993, democratically oriented leaders who were the chief architects of Yeltsin's reforms, namely "privatization tsar" Anatoly Chubais and former acting Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar, created a pro-government party called Russia's Choice, but it experienced only limited success. The ultra-nationalist LDPR trounced Russia's Choice by more than seven percent in the snap election, despite the latter's overwhelming advantages in terms of ideational capital (Hale 2006). Two years later in 1995, President Yeltsin largely abandoned Russia's Choice because of its poor performance and created yet another party of power, Our Home is Russia, that ultimately failed miserably as well. In fact, Our Home is Russia performed even worse than Russia's Choice, marking the end of Yeltsin's experiments in party building. While United Russia's success is remarkable objectively, it becomes even more so when compared to its predecessors in the 1990s. Thus, two distinct stories emerge: in the 1990s, there was not one party that dominated legislative elections and a kind of wild east chaos prevailed in a weak party system; in the 2000s, there was a dramatic shift to one-party dominance under Vladimir Putin's tutelage, a remarkably recent development in Russia's short post-communist history.

The principal question animating this inquiry is: what explains dominant party emergence and strength and opposition party weakness in Russia?

Like the well-studied cases of the PRI in Mexico or the LDP in Japan, Russia offers another case of dominant party emergence, but the Russian case is particularly puzzling precisely because of the timing of United Russia's birth. As outlined by Huntington (1970), existing theories of dominant party emergence focus on homogenous class structures in some societies, the need to establish a counterweight to the "fissiparous tendencies of a heterogeneous society" (10) or the "efforts of a political elite to organize and to legitimate rule by one social force over another" (11) in a society bifurcated profoundly by class, race, religion, or ethnicity in the wake of social revolution, decolonization, or a war of liberation, which produced significant periods of nation building (Duverger 1954; Tucker 1961; Huntington and Moore 1970; Blondel 1972; Arian and Barnes 1974; Sartori 1976; Pempel 1990; Brooker 2000; Cheng 2001). However, this body of research travels poorly into the present, a time when widespread decolonization and revolution, for example, are comparatively rare. The majority of more recent scholarship on dominant parties has focused primarily on the mechanics of survival and failure, explicitly treating the initial emergence of party dominance as exogenous (Magaloni 2006; Scheiner 2006; Greene 2007).

Important structural underpinnings of party dominance, namely a weak party system, were present in Russia even in the 1990s, but it was not until the 2000s that a genuine dominant party emerged, despite Yeltsin's attempts to fashion a successful party of power of his own prior to United Russia. Existing scholarship has attributed the maladies manifest in the party system in the 1990s to overly weak political parties, while explaining pernicious developments in the 2000s by stressing an overly strong dominant party that engages in corruption and widespread electoral manipulation using its vast resource endowment. My dissertation bridges the currently bifurcated literature by connecting the weak party system in the 1990s to the emergence of the dominant party in the 2000s: the fragmented party system was far from orthogonal to the development of dominant party politics in Russia, but rather created conditions necessary for the emergence of United Russia during the Putin era.

The answer to this question is also important from a practical perspective: United Russia, as the vehicle through which all of Putin's authoritarian reforms have been codified in law, is the linchpin of authoritarianism in Russia. With its stable and substantial majority in the legislature, United Russia has played an instrumental role in advancing the executive's agenda and authoritarianism more broadly by dramatically reconfiguring the political arena to the benefit of current power holders. Legislatively, the party swept through the abolition of direct elections for regional executives in 2004, subjecting them instead to executive appointment and hence increased central control, which further crystallized the institutionalization of the 'power vertical' under the Russian president (Gelman and Ryzhenkov 2011). It also shepherded comprehensive reform of the electoral system that made it significantly more difficult for opposition parties to gain representation in parliament. Lacking as powerful of a party in the legislature, the Russian political system might be wholly different. Examining the dynamics that precipitated United Russia's emergence and the conditions undergirding its continued strength can therefore shed light on the future course of Russian politics quite broadly.

What explains dominant party emergence and strength and opposition party weakness in Russia? My dissertation contributes to the extant scholarship on dominant parties by focusing on a weak and fragmented party system as a factor contributing to dominant party emergence, using extensive empirical analyses drawn from original fine-grained data from the case of Russia. The weak party system in Russia in the 1990s transformed dramatically into a dominant party system in the 2000s, in the absence of the key factors highlighted in established theories about dominant party emergence. The case of Russia thus offers an ideal laboratory for examining dominant party emergence and an empirically rich environment within which to uncover new dynamics and yield theoretical discoveries of broader comparative interest.

As I will discuss later in more detail, I contend that a combination of contingent factors, namely leadership by an individual with political clout, favorable economic developments that allow for patronage politics, and a security situation that allows for

centralization of power, as well as structural factors, specifically electoral-geographic conditions ripe for machine politics in the countryside and areas with dense populations of ethnic minorities, have buttressed the dominant party and frozen out the opposition in Russia. Collectively, these factors explain why dominant party politics in Russia emerged only during the Putin era, and not before.

A distinctive brand of political leadership has proven essential to the rise and subsequent consolidation of a dominant party in Russia. Vladimir Putin, with an extensive background in the security services, favors ruling with a strong hand in domestic political affairs and is hostile to the competitive multipartism that is part and parcel of democratic governance. His firm commitment to building a successful dominant party, in contrast to his predecessor, and willingness to engage in electoral machinations to achieve overwhelming victories across the 2000s have shored up United Russia's position at the expense of the opposition.

My explanation of the emergence and subsequent consolidation of a dominant party in Russia moves beyond largely monocausal accounts of a successful autocrat building a ruling party to undergird his political power by emphasizing auspicious political and economic factors that converged during the 2000s and, importantly, structural conditions that United Russia has exploited in election after election. Favorable economic conditions have paved the way for party dominance in Russia by keeping United Russia's war chest flush with patronage resources. The party has presided over a protracted economic boom due to the combination of skyrocketing natural resource prices and the partial or complete strategic renationalization of oil and natural gas concerns, which forged the Russian petrostate and underwrote United Russia's performance in legislative elections. A vast resource endowment has provided United Russia with the wherewithal to engage in electoral manipulation, particularly in ethnic republics, that showcases its electoral prowess.

The security situation in Russia since the early 2000s, the final of the contingent factors, has created conditions ripe for the centralization of power under Vladimir Putin and United Russia: domestic security has been compromised repeatedly by terrorist

attacks occurring across the country, giving rise to a permanent crisis mentality among the populace that demands increased control, chiefly at the level of the federal government. National security emergencies have provided crucial pretexts for the reconfiguration of political power and the rules pertaining to national elections that have heavily tilted the playing field toward the dominant party.

Structural conditions, namely ethnicity and urbanization, have played an indispensable role in undergirding dominant party strength and opposition party weakness in Russia and therefore form the heart of my empirical analysis. Areas with dense concentrations of ethnic minorities and those in the countryside have furnished arenas for patronage-based voter mobilization and various electoral machinations that have become the hallmark of dominant party politics in the 2000s. Especially in the context of ethnic federalism, ethnicity is politicized and ethnic-based political machines can be leveraged as a strategic resource by the central government in exchange for patronage goods at election time. The latent or real threat of ethnic-based secessionist conflict creates powerful incentives for the federal government to signal its political supremacy and deter potential challenges to its authority in these areas by ensuring overwhelming vote shares. As more votes translate into more seats in Russia's proportional representation system, capturing nothing less than staggering vote shares in areas with geographically concentrated ethnic minorities helps catapult the dominant party to the top in election after election. In addition to areas with dense populations of ethnic non-Russians, the countryside has served as another venue for voter mobilization and hence electoral windfalls channeled to the dominant party at the exclusion of all other parties. Residents in rural areas are frequently organized around their employment in large-scale agricultural enterprises and employers in these one-company towns can exert immense organized pressure to vote. Under the threat of job loss, employees can be easily coerced into voting according to the preferences of their employer, who face powerful incentives to churn out votes for the dominant party based on their own dependence on the federal government for continued operation. As already noted, the contingent factors discussed above also exacerbate the structural conditions: for example, Vladimir Putin's

firm predilection for political control and the tense security situation, particularly in the restive ethnic republics, incentivizes the federal government to fully penetrate and dominate ethnic areas, while a booming economy provides the wherewithal to carry out patronage-based voter mobilization there.

This study is primarily quantitative in orientation and leverages an original and unique dataset that combines fine-grained, county- and region-level data, including county-level election results from five Russian parliamentary elections—1995, 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011—and county-level census data on sociodemographic indicators, as well as data on regional contextual characteristics, such as gross regional product and resource dependence. In contrast to the vast majority of existing research on Russian parties and elections that relies heavily on regional level data, I utilize data at the level of the raion, roughly equivalent to U.S. counties and the smallest geographic unit in Russia for which there is available data. This increases the number of observations from roughly 80 regions to approximately 2,700 sub-polities in each election. More importantly, my dataset captures the great variation on the independent variables and outcome of interest: decisive structural conditions, specifically ethnicity and urbanization, are both measured at the lowest level of analysis, as well as the dependent variable, i.e. electoral strongholds for various parties. I also draw on in-depth interviews with Russian political party leaders, activists and observers that I conducted during fieldwork at the time of the most recent Duma election in 2011. These elite interviews strongly corroborated my overarching argument and uncovered nuanced party system dynamics that contextualized my quantitative findings.

The remainder of the dissertation unfolds as follows. Chapter 2 analyzes the state of the current literature pertaining to conceptualizing party dominance, macro-level top-down and bottom-up explanations of dominant party strength and opposition party weakness, and micro-level explanations of electoral support for various parties. Chapter 3 discusses the selection of the Russian case, furnishes my argument, and discusses the research design and empirical setup of the study. Chapters 4 through 8 form the empirical core of the dissertation and analyze each Russian legislative election in turn, beginning

with 1995 and culminating with the most recent election in 2011. Each election supplies a crucial component of the story of how the dominant party emerged initially and why it rose to power in the 2000s, rather than the 1990s. In each chapter, I examine systematically the profile of electoral support for each party focusing on ethnicity, the urban-rural cleavage, regional geographic and socioeconomic indicators, and electoral manipulation. The analysis provides the extent of strongholds and showcases the distinct zones of expansion or contraction. Strongholds provide a unique empirical index that capture party strength by measuring unusually high vote shares for each party in each election under examination. In contrast to alternative indices, such as regional or national level party vote share, strongholds are assessed at the raion level and therefore maximize variation on the outcome of interest. Raion-level party strongholds are ideal indicators of the success of various parties relative to their own performance at the national level and facilitate the geographic pinpointing of that success, both within and across elections.

Chapter 4 examines the 1995 legislative election, which furnished opposition parties with their best chance at electoral success due to the competitiveness of the election and the relative vulnerability of the Kremlin's party of power, Our Home is Russia. The 1995 election showcased Russia's weak party system to the full extent: before the emergence of a successful dominant party, the party system was not defined by a few major parties, but rather by dozens and dozens of minor parties and electoral blocs that made narrow appeals to exceedingly limited electorates. No less than 43 parties competed in 1995 and, as a consequence, nearly half of the votes cast were wasted on parties that failed to cross the threshold for legislative representation. The extreme fragmentation in the party system, exemplified by the 1995 election, created the conditions ripe for party dominance in the 2000s.

Chapter 5 turns to the final contest to the State Duma in the 1990s that included two competing potential parties of power, Fatherland-All Russia and Unity, the latter publicly supported by then Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. Although the 1999 election roughly marks the inception of the Putin era in Russian politics, the overall competitiveness of the contest allowed opposition parties an opportunity to fortify

pockets of support established in the mid-1990s and expand their budding constituencies by carving out new strongholds. The two elections in the 1990s will provide the basis for comparison with those in the 2000s and 2010s to assess whether patterns of electoral support for various parties hold under conditions of contracted competition.

Chapter 6 concentrates on the 2003 election, the first in which United Russia competed and flaunted its electoral prowess as the emerging dominant party, capturing nearly 40% of the party list vote. Unlike the two in the 1990s, 2003 (as well as 2007 and 2011) is treated as an uncompetitive election. The 2003 contest thus acted as a crucial test for opposition parties as to whether they would wither under the weight of United Russia or live to fight another day.

Chapter 7 focuses on the final election of the 2000s, in 2007. In the new purely proportional representation system, United Russia fully displayed its strength and dynamism, securing a firm chokehold on the political system and harvesting almost two-thirds of the vote, while opposition parties stagnated on the whole. It was in this election that the dominant party in Russia reached the height of its political power.

Chapter 8 analyzes the most recent legislative election that was held in 2011 and revealed signs of opposition party inroads as well as both dominant party durability and decay. Large-scale public movements against the dominant party before the election was held urged voters to vote for "any party but United Russia" and even larger mass protests occurring after the results were announced called into question the durability of the dominant party. Finally, the conclusion evaluates the overall findings and discusses recent developments that will likely impact the future of the Putin regime and its party apparatus, as well as those parties in the opposition.

Chapter 2: The State of the Literature

In this chapter, I begin by assessing the state of existing scholarship on the conceptualization of party dominance and situate the Russian case within recent research. I then turn to macro-level explanations of dominant party strength and opposition party weakness, focusing on top-down and bottom-up analyses, and conclude by evaluating micro-level explanations of electoral support for various parties specific to the Russian case.

Conceptualizing Party Dominance

The existing literature on dominant party conceptualization can be roughly bifurcated into two broad categories: relatively abstract definitions and more empirically grounded characterizations. Abstract definitions rely on perceptual qualities of party hegemony and categorize a party as such when it is "identified with an epoch […] Domination is a question of influence rather than of strength: it is also linked with belief. A dominant party is that which public opinion *believes* to be dominant" (Duverger 1963: 308-309). However, this type of vague conceptualization may result in a methodologically challenging disjuncture between publically perceived dominance and the empirical degree of influence or strength that the party possesses in the government. Abstract conceptions are thus exceedingly difficult to operationalize because they lack essential definitions, e.g. of epoch, influence or belief, and thus provide scant empirical criteria by which to identify and measure the degree of party dominance.

Conceptualizations that are empirically oriented gain significant analytic leverage over abstract characterizations because they provide quantifiable criteria for identifying party hegemony. Frequently, empirical identifications include longevity thresholds (Sartori 1976; Pempel 1990; Cox 1997; Magaloni 2006; Greene 2007) based either on a number of years in power, e.g. 20 years, or a number of consecutive legislatures, e.g. four legislative periods. A variety of longevity thresholds have been proposed, from the most relaxed measure of one election to one of the most restrictive measure of 50 years (Coleman 1960; Cox 1997). Although longevity thresholds are appropriate in many cases of enduring party dominance, such as Mexico or Japan, even the most frequently

employed "one-generation" standard severely discounts theoretically important dominant party regimes by arbitrarily excluding cases of consolidating dominance. Magaloni (2006) avoids this concern by proposing a longevity threshold of more than 20 years, and therefore formally excluding cases of proto-dominance, e.g. Russia and Uzbekistan in the mid-2000s, but subsequently arguing that her theory applies to cases of consolidating hegemony as well.

Alongside a longevity threshold, a power or influence criterion has been frequently proposed as an additional factor identifying party dominance. For example, dominant parties have been identified as surpassing power thresholds in terms of legislative seats (Sartori 1976; Pempel 1990; Brownlee 2007; Greene 2007). This condition for identifying party hegemony is more empirically useful for application to emerging and consolidating dominant party regimes, such as Russia, where the ruling party has not yet established dominance temporally, but has retained a majority of legislative seats in all but one legislative election, i.e. 1999, since its formal establishment in 1999 (Hale 2004a). Other criteria based on influence, such as a dominant bargaining position or indispensability in terms of creating governing coalitions, are similarly useful for application to new cases of dominance based on the dominant party's role in the government as the fulcrum of the legislative process (Colton and McFaul 2003; Greene 2007).

Macro-level Explanations of Dominant Party Strength and Opposition Party Weakness

Top-Down Analyses

In a variety of regional contexts and temporal waves, scholars have explored the durability of dominant parties and the concomitant weakness of the opposition. Existing research seeking to identify the factors that influence electoral support for political parties does so by focusing either on macro-level party-system dynamics, such as the relative strength of the party of power vis-à-vis the opposition or persistent coordination problems that plague ideologically similar parties, or by concentrating solely on micro-level individual-oriented determinants of party support, such as personal economic welfare, age, education, and gender.

Analyses of electoral support conducted in the context of other dominant party systems, i.e. Mexico under the PRI or Japan under the LDP, and from the macro-level perspective locate casual import primarily in vast resource asymmetries between the incumbent party and political challengers, whether those incumbency resource advantages manifest through the use of administrative resources, state-owned enterprises, or electoral manipulation, or flow through widespread clientelist channels (Greene 2007; Scheiner 2006; Cox 1997; White 2007). According to this literature, both dominant party democratic regimes (DPDRs) and dominant party authoritarian regimes (DPARs) use patronage resources and clientelist networks, facilitated by numerous state-owned enterprises to undergird the ruling party's dominance and weaken potential challenges to their political power (Scheiner 2006; Magaloni 2006; Greene 2007; Levitsky and Way 2010; Brownlee 2007; Arian and Barnes 1974; Smith 2005; Schedler 2002; McElwain 2008; Oversloot and Verheul 2006; Gelman 2005; White 2007; Riggs and Schraeder 2005; Smyth 2002; Sakwa 2005). For example, research has demonstrated that dominant parties use state ownership over the economy as a source of patronage in the form of appointments, public jobs, and public works projects, which are distributed on a discretionary and highly politicized basis (Greene 2007; Magaloni 2006; Scheiner 2006).

The literature on the role of patronage in dominant party systems highlights the two primary groups that are targeted to receive these political rents: key constituencies among the electorate offering the dominant party either a new basis of support or continuing loyalty, or the ruling party's own leaders as a mechanism to deter defection to opposition parties or encourage promising politicians to affiliate with the dominant party to secure access to hyper-incumbency advantages (Scheiner 2006; Magaloni 2006; Greene 2007). While acting as the primary vehicle for rent distribution, dominant parties reinforce their political power by controlling the cost of opposition activity for both specific constituencies and party elites alike. For party insiders, the cost of defection rises because deserters lose privileged access to assorted administrative advantages under the ruling party's exclusive control. Similarly, various geographic constituencies may lose large public works projects that aid local economic development and provide jobs for

residents of the community (Magaloni 2006; Scheiner 2006). Therefore, vast patronage resources and dense clientelist networks raise the cost to both politicians and the electorate of supporting alternative parties, thus contributing to opposition party weakness since outsider parties are likely unable to make significant inroads in the dominant party's electoral territory without comparable resource endowments (Greene 2007).

This strand of research has also emphasized that patronage resources are particularly important to these types of regimes because they may reduce the necessity of pursuing more costly forms of political repression to undercut opposition party activity that may spawn domestic unrest or attract unwanted international scrutiny. In the Mexican context, Greene (2007) and Magaloni (2006) argue that dominant parties rely on hard coercion only as a secondary strategy when patronage-based resources decline due to economic downturn or when the party becomes electorally vulnerable for other reasons, such as repeated public scandals involving corruption within the state bureaucracy (see also Diamond 2002). Compared to hard coercion or repression, significantly less political risk is involved in weakening opposition parties through the distribution of economic resources and vote-buying strategies and, for that reason, these practices provide a vital foundation on which the power of dominant parties frequently rests (Greene 2007; Scheiner 2006).

Nevertheless, the literature specifying the mechanisms through which dominant parties maintain power highlights both soft and hard methods of manipulation used to damage electoral support for opposition parties (Greene 2007; Magaloni 2006; Scheiner 2006; Levitsky and Way 2010; Schedler 2002; Brownlee 2007). As in the case of patronage resources, dominant parties, especially in the context of authoritarian regimes, have used hard coercion against specific constituencies that tried to frustrate the goals of the dominant party, or against opposition leaders and activists who tried to overthrow the dominant party using electoral avenues (Greene 2007; Magaloni 2006; Brownlee 2007; Levitsky and Way 2010). For example, after vote-buying strategies failed during the Aleman administration, the PRI in Mexico engaged in waves of repression against labor,

a relatively militant constituency which the PRI feared may be able to create a broad left-wing opposition party against the dominant party (Greene 2007). Similarly, UMNO in Malaysia detained opposition activists from the Communist Party (CPM) and physically harassed candidates from other opposition parties, such as the Islamic Party of Malaysia (PAS) and the Democratic Action Party (DAP), as a way of reducing political threats to the regime (Greene 2007; Brownlee 2007). Although the cost of repression may be prohibitive in a general sense, hard coercion is a tool that DPARs leverage to contain the activities of opposition parties when deemed necessary.

Although the extent of hard forms of repression, such as jailing opposition party leaders and activists or raiding opposition party headquarters, depends on the level of political competition tolerated by the regime, the literature on DPDRs and DPARs suggests that soft coercion is typically utilized in both political environments to keep opposition parties at bay. In Japan, the LDP's financial intimidation of local politicians provides an example of soft coercion frequently replicated in other counties. Under the dominant party system, Diet members were aware of the number of votes available in their district and punished local politicians by withholding financial support and major public works projects if they were unable to mobilize the necessary votes (Scheiner 2006). In more authoritarian dominant party settings, soft coercion commonly involves lesser intensity political intimidation of the opposition, and the dominant party's use of state agencies to investigate opposition candidates and those individuals who provide them with financial support (Greene 2007; Hale 2006).

Similar to patronage resources and types of soft coercion, the literature on dominant parties underscores how the manipulation of the electoral system, at both the micro and macro level, provides an additional instrument that dominant parties across regime types can utilize to contain or weaken opposition party electoral success. The strategic manipulation of electoral formulas and rules is made possible by the fact that dominant parties hold legislative majorities and therefore unilateral control over the policymaking process (Magaloni 2006). Dominant parties in numerous countries have revised electoral rules to institutionalize their advantage by weakening opposition parties'

ability to capture new voters (McElwain 2008). For example, the LDP repeatedly altered particular features of the Japanese electoral system, such as severely restricting electioneering activities to the effect that lesser known opposition candidates would be unable to significantly increase their visibility among the electorate through television and radio advertisements (McElwain 2008; Scheiner 2006). Likewise, the Mexican PRI also manipulated rules pertaining to elections and political parties, such as registration requirements for new parties by requiring them to become national organizations with an adequate distribution of members across the states before they were eligible to compete in elections (Magaloni 2006). At the macro level, the manipulation of electoral rules affects how votes are converted into representation at the national level (McElwain 2008). The PRI manipulated the electoral system itself by instituting a mixed electoral system for the Chamber of Deputies in order to reinforce the ruling party's power while fragmenting the opposition and mitigating incentives to coordinate (Magaloni 2006). Various micro- and macro-level changes to electoral law have not guaranteed the universality of application with regard to the new rules, and various dominant parties have used electoral laws as an administrative lever that is applied on a discretionary basis to engineer the party system according to the dominant party's advantage and suppress opposition party electoral success (Wilson 2006).

With regard to manipulation practiced during elections, common to macro-level theories of dominant party survival generated outside the Russian context is the presumption that electoral manipulation plays only a secondary role in sustaining these parties over time (Greene 2007; Sartori 1976). In dominant party regimes, ruling parties are assumed to have "w[o]n elections before election day. As a result, fraud is typically unnecessary and is considered only when other pre-election mechanisms fail and elections are predicted to be close" (Greene 2007: 14; Magaloni 2006; Diamond 2002). Therefore, these analyses fall short when empirical facts demonstrate that electoral fraud conducted on behalf of the dominant party was comparatively widespread in elections that the ruling party would have easily won without such costly resource mobilization and coordination among many levels of government. More recent research examining

why parties manipulate elections shows that ruling parties may engage in excessive and blatant electoral manipulation in elections that they would have won anyway to deter challengers to their political power and signal dominance (Simpser 2013). Another disconnect between existing theories and empirical realities arises when theories expect that the fraud that does crop up to occur when resource advantages decline but facts on the ground in particular cases indicate otherwise (Greene 2007; Magaloni 2006).

In the Russian context, since the emergence of United Russia, investigations have focused almost exclusively on top-down explanations of dominant party strength and opposition party fragility based on various forms of manipulation and repression practiced by the regime (Wilson 2006; Sakwa 2005; Riggs and Schraeder 2005; White 2007; Oversloot and Verheul 2006; Ross 2007; Jack 2004; Shevtsova 2003). Paralleling the mechanisms of dominant party maintenance employed outside of Russia, these arguments stress United Russia's disproportionate resource endowment generated by increasing state ownership in the economy, frequent employment of soft and hard coercion against opposition candidates and activists, and the systematic manipulation of the electoral playing field under Putin's leadership in favor of the dominant party. Resource-based arguments of United Russia's maintenance of power and corresponding opposition party failure highlight the increasing discretionary control over the economy since 2000 through the renationalization of important economic sectors, such as energy, transportation and communication (Levitsky and Way 2010). Given that the state's share of oil production increased from 16 to 50 percent between 2000 and 2007, and coupled with sharply increasing oil worldwide prices, these economic resources have helped consolidate United Russia's political position and expand the party's patronage system by capturing new constituencies and geographic pockets of support (*Ibid*). United Russia has also mobilized the regional political machines in the ethnic republics and tapped into those pre-existing clientelist networks to solidify the supply of party resources (*Ibid*).

A common focus of the Russia-specific literature is United Russia's frequent reliance on soft and hard coercion to maintain power, such as denying secret balloting by eliminating individual voting booths in polling stations, or detaining opposition campaign

workers and impounding their campaign materials (Wilson 2006). Since 2000, the party of power has also undertaken an aggressive campaign against independent media with the aim of quelling political opposition and preventing opposition parties' access to outlets to promote candidates and broadcast campaign appeals. Most notably, the television stations ORT, NTV, and TV-6 were all taken over by the state, effectively eliminating all independent television at the national level (Levitsky and Way 2010). With the eradication of independent sources of information, opposition parties' access to media was drastically reduced, severely weakening their electoral potential (Levitsky and Way 2010). These repressive measures have significantly raised the cost for opposition candidates and activists and deterred the formation of new and significant challengers to the dominant party.

Institutionalist arguments in the Russian context focus on the strategic manipulation of the electoral system to United Russia's advantage that has been especially frequent since 2000. Similar to electoral reforms undertaken by the PRI in Mexico to weaken geographic pockets of political opposition, the 2001 Russian law "On Parties" essentially prohibited regional parties from participating in elections, requiring that parties have electoral bases in at least half of Russia's over 80 regions to register (Wilson 2006). This law concerning political parties, coupled with federal reforms introduced in 2000 recentralizing political power, reinforced the dominant party's power by preventing or eliminating regional centers of power that could develop into full-fledged challenges to the regime (Ross 2007). Furthermore, the law explicitly excludes specific types of parties from electoral activity, such as those founded on a professional, racial, national or religious basis (Wilson 2006). The institutionalist strand of research on the Russian party system post-2000 thus highlights how recent changes to electoral law made by the dominant party have curtailed the formation and activities of opposition political parties and systematically weakened their ability to compete in elections (Wilson 2006; Ross 2007).

In contrast to research conducted outside the Russian context, explanations of United Russia's continued success have identified electoral fraud as a key mechanism.

Extant scholarship has concentrated chiefly on the detection of electoral fraud by using multifarious methods, such as aberrant distributions of regional-level turnout or testing of vote counts based on the second-digit Benford's Law (2BL) distribution, and has shown that electoral manipulation not only occurs, but is also highly clustered in ethnic regions (republics, autonomous okrugs and the autonomous oblast) and predominantly non-Russian and rural raions (Myagkov and Ordeshook 2008; Reisinger and Moraski 2008 and 2009; Myagkov et al. 2009; Mebane and Kalinin 2009 and 2010; Goodnow et al. 2012). Collectively, these analyses suggest that electoral malfeasance occurs in dominant party authoritarian regimes even when elections are not predicted to be close, and that nefarious practices on election day play a crucial role in preserving party hegemony in Russia. However, these investigations frequently posit that United Russia performs well only under conditions of grave electoral falsification, dismissing instances in which it performs well in areas that do not display obvious signs of manipulation.

Generally, theories explaining dominant party strength and opposition party weakness, whether particular to the Russian context or elsewhere, based solely on top-down factors face two shortcomings. First, implicit in these theories is a presumption that ruling party strength affects electoral outcomes for opposition parties uniformly, rather than irregularly, because these strategies are directed against the opposition in the aggregate. From this perspective, dominant party methods are aimed at the opposition as a whole, instead of designed strategically to target specific parties. Thus, the political opposition is frequently considered a unitary actor in these analyses, rather than disaggregated into its constituent parts (Sartori 1976). However, dominant party methods may affect opposition parties unevenly, owing to party-specific characteristics and constituencies. Whether or not opposition parties are uniformly affected by party strength is more appropriately considered as an empirical question to be explored and answered, rather than assumed. Only by disaggregating the opposition are the potentially diverse electoral trajectories of these parties explainable. Therefore, the treatment of opposition parties as a collective causes current scholarship to fare poorly when the electoral trajectories of opposition parties differ greatly from one another empirically.

Second, scholars have rarely tested the validity of these top-down theories by comparing opposition party electoral support and its determinants *prior* to the emergence of a successful dominant party and *thereafter*. Research in this vein often presumes that opposition parties were stronger before the dominant party's rise and that incumbent resource advantages are the key causal factor explaining opposition party emasculation. However, these largely monocausal arguments may offer a presentist account of electoral outcomes when party weakness preexisted the formation and consolidation of the dominant party. In such an instance, opposition party fragility is likely not attributable to one causal factor alone. Although this research has succeeded in identifying the mechanisms undergirding dominant party survival, it can only partially explain variation in opposition party support because it does not engage in the type of explicitly comparative and longitudinal analysis necessary to evaluate the full range of potentially causal variables.

Arguments oriented from a top-down vantage may incorporate opposition parties in a less systematic manner, folding opposition dynamics into the analysis only to illustrate missed opportunities in the context of an economic downturn or persistent failures to coordinate against the hegemonic party. Rather than focusing exclusively on the dominant party, I concentrate on *both* Russian opposition parties and the dominant party, which productively shifts the focus of analytic inquiry and creates a new frontier of research in dominant party systems through a multifaceted approach that contrasts with that common of the existing literature (Colton and McFaul 2001; Hale 2004a; Boxer and Hale 2000; Fish 2005). The dual analytical strategy proposed here helps fill existing lacunae in the literature regarding the systematic and rigorous treatment of opposition parties in dominant party systems generally, and electoral outcomes specific to the Russia case. Furthermore, I disaggregate the opposition and differentiate between characteristic types of opposition parties and their associated electoral trajectories (Sartori 1976). Therefore, this research will move considerably beyond the current literature by shedding light on why particular opposition party strategies can foster the conditions ripe for a

dominant party in the first place, as well as why specific types of opposition parties flounder when a hegemonic party becomes more consolidated.

Bottom-Up Analyses

Other avenues of inquiry have utilized a bottom-up approach, rather than focusing on the top-down relationship between the party of power and opposition parties, in the period before the emergence of United Russia in the early 2000s. For example, scholars have argued that Russian political parties have been persistently weak and failed to monopolize the political arena since the collapse of communism due to the pervasiveness of regional political machines and other nonparty organizations that fully penetrated the polity during the communist era and supply the goods and services the electoral market demands (Hale 2006). Other scholarship has shown that within-party cohesion and opposition parties' ability to forge connections to the electorate has been comparatively low in Russia compared to other post-communist states due to clientelist linkages that reduce the necessity of creating strong parties and programmatic platforms on which to contest elections (Kitschelt and Smyth 2002). Aside from contending with competing nonparty-based networks, the bottom-up literature on the Russian party system in the 1990s underscores that the enduring weakness of opposition political parties, especially those promoting liberal ideological orientations, was caused by intra-party factionalism regarding important programmatic issues, such as security and the conflict in Chechnya, high barriers to entry for new members and candidates, and various organizational and strategic problems that contributed to the parties' poor showings in repeated elections (Hale 2004 and 2006). Additionally, a tendency towards personalistic parties and weak programmatic platforms obstructed consolidation into stronger parties rooted in societal interests and a stable electorate (Reddaway 1994). A free-floating party system emerged as a result, which was characterized by an erratic and frequently shifting supply of parties, many of which did not participate in more than one election (Rose 2000). Thus, these arguments explain opposition party electoral outcomes and persistent underinstitutionalization based on intra-party dynamics, short political time horizons on

behalf of would-be party builders, and the inability to overcome and replace parallel social-economic structures, namely clientelist networks, with party-based alternatives.

Bottom-up explanations of opposition party failure from the 1990s, however, are difficult to reconcile with the de facto emergence of a dominant party in the early 2000s because, according to this scholarship, opposition parties were unsuccessful in the absence of a dominant party and there was no viable competition in the party system from the perspective of the ruling elites. Therefore, bottom-up theories would not expect dominant party formation because a party mechanism was not necessary to win elections or effectively advance a political agenda. Indeed, even without a ruling party at times during the 1990s, especially after the disastrous failure of the party of power in 1995, President Yeltsin was reasonably successful at advancing his political agenda by ruling by decree.

Micro-level Explanations of Electoral Support for Various Political Parties

A competing school of thought to macro-oriented research in the Russian context explains variation in parties' electoral support by focusing almost exclusively on individual-level determinants, such as economic well-being, age, gender, and education, using nationwide surveys of the voting age population at electoral junctures (White, Rose and McAllister 1997; McAllister and White 1995; White, Wyman and Kryshtanovskaya 1995; Wyman 1996 and 1997; Rose, Tikhomirov and Mishler 1997; White, Wyman and Oates 1997; Whitefield and Evans 1999). Collectively, this research has found various parameters of the vote for different parties: rural and poorer areas are associated with support for the Communists; the nationalists perform best in areas populated by ethnic Russians, located in the countryside and those that are economically disadvantaged; finally, the liberals succeed in urban centers, wealthier areas and those populated by ethnic Russians (White, Rose and McAllister 1997; McAllister and White 1995; White, Wyman and Kryshtanovskaya 1995; Wyman 1996 and 1997; Rose, Tikhomirov and Mishler 1997; White, Wyman and Oates 1997; Whitefield and Evans 1999; Brader and Tucker 2001; Colton and McFaul 2003).

Previous survey-based analyses have often evaluated the salience of structural cleavages on electoral support but have reached disparate conclusions, especially with regard to social distinctions following ethnic lines. Ethnicity at the individual level is frequently included in survey instruments, but is often considered in broad brushstrokes in the form of dichotomous Russian, non-Russian distinctions (Rose, Tikhomirov and Mishler 1997; White, Rose and McAllister 1997; Brader and Tucker 2001; Colton and McFaul 2003; Hale 2006). Operationalized as such, scholars have found that ethnicity both is and is not an important predictor of the party-list vote (Colton and McFaul 2003; Hale 2006; White, Wyman and Oates 1997). White, Wyman and Oates (1997) indicate that ethnic cleavages clearly manifested and produced associations that were more than trivial in the 1995 legislative election (Cf. Rose, Tikhomirov and Mishler 1997). Other investigations leave ethnicity largely unexplored, either because the ethnicity of the respondent was not requested or because it was presumed to be minimally important (White, Wyman and Kryshtanovskaya 1995; McAllister and White 1995; Rose, Tikhomirov and Mishler 1997). For example, Rose, Tikhomirov, and Mishler (1997) argue that ethnic cleavages should not be pertinent to electoral outcomes in post-communist Russia because Russians are "by far the largest nationality in the Federation, and other nationalities are relatively small and fragmented" (805). This line of research thus holds that "the effects of structural cleavages on voting behaviour are relatively insignificant. It is hard to identify the stable societal bases of several parties […] among certain social groups" (Gelman 2006: 548; Rose, Tikhomirov and Mishler 1997; Colton and McFaul 2003; Hale 2006).

Leaving these critical distinctions concealed, however, also leaves unexplored patterns of electoral support between these groups, which may differ significantly. Endemic to survey-based scholarship is the epistemological assumption that electoral support for political parties can be explained almost exclusively by individual-level characteristics. Maintaining the individual level-of-analysis to pinpoint the sociodemographic and spatial distribution of parties' unique pockets of support critically

underestimates or neglects the role that raion- and regional-level contextual factors may play at election time.

Scaling up from the individual level of analysis and paying greater attention to contextual correlates of electoral support, scholars using reported social and economic data rather than survey results have showcased the import of sub-national and sub-regional factors in voting patterns (Clem and Craumer 1997 and 1998; Moraski and Reisinger 2003; Reisinger and Moraski 2008; A. White 2013). For example, this scholarship has consistently shown that the urban-rural divide "separates the [Russian] population along political lines perhaps more distinctly than any other single factor" (Clem and Craumer 1997: i; see also Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Cf. Gelman 2006). Russia's urbanization occurred swiftly, generating stark contrasts between urban centers and the countryside, especially in income, age, education, and occupation (Clem and Craumer 1998). The level of urbanization may also act as a rough proxy of geographical location because the north is significantly more industrialized that than the south, which is predominantly agricultural (*Ibid*). Prior research holds that pro-reform opposition parties, notably Yabloko, performed the best in urban settings, while the Communists and nationalists competed for support in the countryside, as rural inhabitants conventionally voted either left or right in support of anti-reformers (Wyman 1996 and 1997; Rose, Tikhomirov and Mishler 1997; White, Wyman and Oates 1997; Clem and Craumer 1998; Colton and McFaul 2003).

Although some analyses examining the explanatory power of socioeconomic welfare on patterns of electoral support in legislative elections suggest that economic distinctions do not produce a clear cleavage, such as McAllister and White (1995), the preponderance of extant literature indicates that economic differences have a discernible impact (White, Wyman and Kryshtanovskaya 1995; Wyman 1996 and 1997; Rose, Tikhomirov and Mishler 1997; White, Wyman and Oates 1997; Whitefield and Evans 1999). Regional economic differences may influence support for parties by conditioning the impact of either ethnic composition or rurality. For example, rural areas situated within wealthier regions may produce different responses to political parties than rural

areas located in poorer regions, as regional economic wealth may translate into higher individual incomes (Clem and Craumer 1998). Wealthy rural areas may therefore be more supportive of reform parties and less willing to vote for the Communists (*Ibid*). Thus, economic contextual variables may modify the effects of demographic and geographic correlates at the county level (*Ibid*).

Variation in regional economic affluence may also directly impact electoral support for various parties. Regional wealth, especially in the form of abundant natural resource endowments, may benefit liberal parties that support free trade policies and the growth of the market economy because extraction and energy industries are highly export-dependent. Regions with abundance in specific sectors enjoy a comparative advantage over others that makes them well equipped to compete in the free market: cheaper input costs create cheaper products that are more competitive in the market, allowing these industries to benefit from competition. Therefore, regions endowed with natural resource reserves, and regions that otherwise benefitted in the economic transition guided by the Yeltsin administration, may be more likely to support pro-reform parties because they hope to further enhance their economic fortunes (*Ibid*). Furthermore, regions with energy resources in private hands may support liberal parties because their political platforms and ideological orientations do not threaten regional economic drivers with re-nationalization, as clearly advocated by the Communists. Prior scholarship firmly substantiated that the liberal Yabloko excelled among the wealthy, while the Communists and nationalists made sizable inroads in poorer and underprivileged constituencies (White, Wyman and Kryshtanovskaya 1995; Wyman 1996 and 1997; Rose, Tikhomirov and Mishler 1997; White, Wyman and Oates 1997; Whitefield and Evans 1999).

Analyses of county- and regional-level contextual effects, such as levels of relative urbanization or economic development, have yet to be examined across all legislative elections and across parties to determine whether and to what extent urban-rural differences, as well as other social or economic cleavages, persist in conditioning electoral outcomes across time. In seeking to establish the geographic bases of political parties to uncover the links between opposition party weakness and dominant party

strength, I adopt an approach different from individual-oriented survey research and one that follows previous, contextual-oriented scholarship. Tackling the influence of regional factors, as well as cross-level interactions between the county- and regional-level, on varying electoral outcomes in legislative contests, enhances understanding of electoral support for a range of parties in the post-communist period. My approach thus adds much-needed contextualization and systematization to existing macro- and micro-oriented research.

Chapter 3: The Argument and Setup of the Study

In this chapter, I explain the rationale behind the selection of Russia as the singular case in my examination of dominant party strength and opposition party weakness. Subsequently, I set forth my argument, which concentrates on influence of the weak party system and highlights the contingent components of political leadership, favorable economic conditions, and a permissive security environment, as well as structural factors, namely ethnicity and urbanization. I then outline the election-by-election framework that structures the research and reveals the distinctive essence of each of the five legislative elections from 1995 to 2011. Finally, I discuss the new and original data employed to carry out this investigation.

Case Selection

I challenge the conceptual orthodoxy and overcome conceptual voids in the existing literature on dominant parties by focusing exclusively on a party-based regime that, in all areas other than longevity, clearly resembles a dominant party authoritarian regime, rather than examining a case of established hegemony that conforms to standard longevity thresholds. The current system in Russia underscores that dominant party regimes can be identified and measured according to a variety of relevant criteria, and a highly restrictive set of conditions may artificially eliminate cases that are theoretically important to the study of both hegemonic party systems and hybrid regimes. At present, United Russia is comparable to other dominant parties because it clearly surpasses power thresholds for party dominance, if not longevity hurdles, as the incumbent controls the presidency and enjoys an absolute majority of Duma seats, thus "determin[ing] social choice" (Greene 2007: 15).

Existing research on party change in hegemonic party systems has primarily examined how greater electoral competition, manifest through opposition party success, can pose genuine challenges to a dominant party regime (Greene 2007; Magaloni 2006). However, considerably less attention has been paid to the opposite trajectory, i.e. relatively competitive electoral systems evolving toward a hegemonic party system. Furthermore, unlike other potential cases, such as Mexico or Japan, Russia provides a

unique opportunity to examine a hegemonic party system under construction and the specific strengths and weaknesses of such a regime during the initial phases of party hegemony, across multiple years and election cycles, instead of examining such a party post hoc. Insights on dominant party survival in Russia are in fact most fruitful at this juncture because United Russia has not fully consolidated as a dominant party, according to standard longevity thresholds established in existing scholarship: examining a case of crystallizing party dominance can uncover new dynamics regarding the conditions under which dominant parties thrive and opposition parties are able to gain more or less electoral support in the context of a comparatively more fluid political environment than those cases of established dominance (Sartori 1976; Pempel 1990; Cox 1997; Magaloni 2006; Greene 2007).

Moreover, at this time in United Russia's development, opposition parties are theoretically more capable of making specific inroads into support for the dominant party or, conversely, more susceptible to its various tactics, such as electoral manipulation. Understanding the dynamics of opposition party success or failure can help assess the implications of how a competitive political system can transform into a monopolistic environment, or conversely, how emerging partisan competition poses legitimate challenges to the ruling party (Greene 2007). Dominant party authoritarian regimes (DPARs) are of particular importance because the mode of transition to a more competitive political system likely occurs gradually, e.g. through opposition party-building and strategy, rather than through abrupt changes occurring in the wake of a political or economic breakdown, which is the common focus of much of the democratization literature (Greene, 2007; O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986; Karl and Schmitter, 1991; Schedler, 2006). The Russian case thus offers an empirically rich environment in which to study dominant party durability and opposition party fragility and fully captures the importance of electoral politics and party-based instruments of political control in contemporary competitive authoritarian regimes.

In addition to its theoretical significance, Russia is "among the world's largest and substantively most influential hybrid regimes" (Colton and Hale 2014: 5). Russia has

played a key role as a "resister state—one which actively seeks to halt or contain the spread of democracy in order to preserve its own autocratic political system" (Ambrosio 2007: 233), and clearly the diffusion of democracy to its near abroad is by far the most threatening. Under the leadership of Vladimir Putin and United Russia, Russia has become an "exporter of regime practices" to other countries that similarly lack dense linkages to the West and are largely free from Western leverage that would otherwise exert strong democratizing pressures on those regimes (Colton and Hale 2014: 5; Levitsky and Way 2010). By insulating itself from the so-called orange plague, bolstering authoritarianism in Belarus, and undermining democracy in Ukraine in the aftermath of the Orange Revolution, Russia actively seeks to cripple the process of diffusion both at home and abroad (Ambrosio 2007: 233). Russia has also cultivated strong ties to the near abroad, especially with authoritarian regimes in Central Asia, and Putin has "warn[ed] fellow autocrats in surrounding countries of the dangers" of Western influence, offering "parallel forms of assistance, through election monitors and political consultants," to help them resist such undue meddling (Carothers 2006: 57). Moreover, some of United Russia's most notorious practices during elections may spread to other countries, whose leadership is in search of effective methods of maintaining control in the context of their competitive authoritarian or dominant party regimes. One potential example known in Russia is the so-called "'Bashkir technology,' that is, the disqualification of viable challengers from running" (Golosov 2012: 8). With Russia rather than the West functioning as their center of orbit, authoritarian countries in Russia's own neighborhood and perhaps others around the world look to Putin and United Russia, reinforcing Russia's importance vis-à-vis its authoritarian counterparts and the West, which consistently tries to exert countervailing pressure. Therefore, investigating the dynamics that foster regime durability and opposition fragility in Russia may contribute to a greater understanding of the regimes that seek to emulate Russia's example.

Leveraging Variance Within the Russian Case

The case of Russia provides significant empirical leverage over my research question and offers crucial longitudinal variation based on national differences, namely

the relative strength of a dominant party, across time. This research incorporates an extended time dimension, between 1995 and 2011, that includes both the Yeltsin and Putin/Medvedev administrations and a number of interesting episodes in party politics. Compared to parliamentary elections in the 2000s and 2010s that were marked by a remarkably capable and successful dominant party in United Russia, the elections in 1995 and 1999 occurred in drastically different electoral environments at the national level: the first characterized by an anemic, ineffective and unpopular party of power in Our Home is Russia, and the second characterized by two competing parties of power in Unity and Fatherland-All Russia, which ultimately merged in 2002 creating United Russia after Fatherland-All Russia was defeated**.**

I examine dominant party strength and opposition party fragility by pinpointing the party of power and opposition parties' strongholds in legislative elections, which offers an optimal laboratory to assess how the opposition fared in the absence of an effective party of power in the mid-1990s and under a remarkably successful one in the 2000s and 2010s. The elections in the 1990s offer an opportunity to assess the contours of opposition party support in environments most conducive to their success based on the presence of an especially vulnerable party of power, while subsequent chapters examining the elections in the 2000s and 2010s provide the opposite. Thus, Russia offers both an example of an unsuccessful party of power and a successful one within a single case. These three distinct time portholes provide exceptional variation in the dependent variable, i.e. electoral outcomes for various parties.

In addition to highlighting variance *between* elections based on party system competitiveness, a detailed study of five legislative elections—1995, 1999, 2003, 2007, and 2011—leverages variation *within* elections based on cross-sectional differences at the regional and raion level (roughly equivalent to U.S. counties and the smallest geographic unit in Russia for which there is available data). I utilize the substantial sub-national variation of key independent variables – electoral manipulation, important structural cleavages and socioeconomic factors such as ethnicity, urbanization, and economic development – to explain sub-national variation in various parties' strength. Research at

the lowest level of analysis available also avoids potential inferential errors, such as ecological fallacy, by validly drawing inferences about sub-national phenomena using sub-national ecological characteristics. County-level research also increases the number of observations from roughly 80 regions to thousands of raion sub-polities and therefore maximizes variation on the independent variables and the outcome of interest. From a theoretical perspective, the examination of party politics within thousands of raions can also inform macro-level questions regarding the extent of competition under various political systems since the collapse of communism, and also project the likely course of political competition into the near future (Moraski and Reisinger 2003).

Variation within elections also manifests across political parties, particularly those in the opposition. Within each of the three unique time portholes, the electoral outcomes of opposition parties varied greatly. For example, the KPRF was able to withstand the entry of two potential parties of power in 1999 by engaging in competitive electoral manipulation, while Yabloko found itself edging closer than ever before to the threshold for parliamentary representation as a result of a party system crowded with more formidable challengers. In more recent Duma elections, Yabloko has shown itself unable to consolidate the electoral gains it scored in the 1990s, confining it to the political wilderness as a non-parliamentary party, while the Communists and nationalists have adapted comparatively well to drastic changes in the party system as a result of United Russia's accession and subsequent consolidation.

Between 1995 and 2011, important changes to the electoral system were introduced: between 1995 and 2003, half of the Duma's 450 seats were allocated through party-list proportional representation with the remaining half allocated through single-member districts but the electoral system shifted in 2005 to pure party-list proportional representation system. Electoral rules allowed political parties a legal monopoly on access to the ballot in the proportional representation tier under the mixed system, furnishing a rich environment in which to study their varied electoral trajectories under conditions of competitive and contracted contestation (Robertson 2011). Although the potentially complex interactions between the two distinct tiers of legislative elections in

the 1990s and early 2000s are not considered here, a concentrated focus on the proportional representation tier facilitates comparisons between elections even after reform of the electoral system. The analysis will thus focus on elections to the lower house of parliament, the State Duma, and specifically the proportional representation tier, because such contests are the one sphere in which parties actively operate in Russia (McFaul 2004).

Argument

Weak Party System

A weak and fragmented party system created conditions ripe for the emergence of a dominant party in Russia. In the 1990s, the Russian party system was characterized by a plethora of political parties and electoral blocs: no less than 43 organizations contested the 1995 legislative election, dozens of which were so-called "apartment parties," i.e. the party's supporters could all fit into a single Moscow apartment. The party system remained splintered throughout the decade, but some of the infinitesimal parties competing in 1995 dropped off the ballot by 1999, leaving 26 parties seeking votes that year. However, the winner of both the 1995 and 1999 election captured less than one-quarter of votes cast in the party-list tier, providing an indication of the extent of the fragmentation.

Despite incentives to cooperate created by the five percent threshold for legislative representation, coordination failure was an enduring feature of the party system throughout the 1990s. Ideological purism and, in many cases, personal political ambitions erected strong barriers to cooperation, since meaningful coordination would have compelled parties to create platforms reflecting all of their constituent parts and high-ranking party leaders may have been forced aside for the greater good if an individual from another party had a higher public profile or experience in government (Riker 1976; Sartori 1976; Pempel 1990; Cox 1997; Magaloni 2006; Hale 2004a). In an interview during the 2011 legislative election, a high-ranking party official of the liberal Yabloko party revealed that, even before the ban on electoral coalitions took effect in 2007, opposition parties in Russia have not coordinated because "they are all for

themselves" (Senior Official in Yabloko's National Organization 2011). Although coordination problems may plague any multiparty system, these obstacles were especially acute in the context of the weak party system because the level and extent of cooperation necessary for parties to surpass the threshold for legislative representation was considerable. Parties and electoral blocs thus emerged at will and elected to "go it alone" with bases of support so limited that the likelihood of gaining legislative representation dwindled to virtually zero.

The maladies manifest in weak party systems, such as the one prevailing in Russia in the 1990s, are partially due to opposition party coordination failure and the sheer number of parties supplied, but, more importantly, are attributable to the types of parties that are supplied, namely niche parties. In the Russian case, opposition parties have advanced niche ideological appeals to exceedingly narrow electorates, prioritizing their desire for autonomous action in the electoral arena and preservation of their undiluted party platforms over the promise of capturing additional pockets of support (Hale 2004a). On the ideological front, these parties' niche appeals have moved them away from the average voter and their dogged determination in retaining their purism ideologically has essentially ceded to the dominant party the centrist ideological space where voters are most heavily concentrated (Greene 2007; Downs 1957). According to one political analyst, "the main problem" that contributed to United Russia's rise was "the ideology of opposition parties" (Senior Political Analyst at INDEM Foundation 2011). For example, the liberal Yabloko targeted its appeals chiefly towards the urban intelligentsia living in the two federal cities, i.e. St. Petersburg and Moscow. Similarly, the ultra-nationalist LDPR concentrated exclusively on capturing the small segment of the electorate composed of xenophobic ethnic Russians. Despite the fact that the ideological center was largely up for grabs in the 1990s due to the absence of a successful and centrist party of power, these parties held fast to their comparatively extreme ideological orientations.

Under conditions of hyper-fragmentation in the party system, a high proportion of votes may be wasted (Cox 1997). For example, voters in party systems fractionalized along ethnic lines, such as those in some African countries, "tend to vote for [parties

representing] their own ethnic group […] even if this entails wasting their vote on losing candidates" (Magaloni 2006: 26; Van de Walle 2006). The party system in Russia in the 1990s epitomizes the phenomenon of wasted votes under conditions of party system weakness. In the mid-1990s, the electorate faced a bewildering roster on the party list ballot and ultimately more than 48% of votes were wasted on parties that did not cross the threshold for representation or were votes against all. An immense floating electorate emerged that was effectively casting about for a major party to channel its votes toward.

The existence and persistence of weak and niche parties created an optimal environment for dominant party emergence because a party that advanced more broad-based appeals with the potential to reach a significant segment of the electorate could fill the lacuna that existed in the fragmented party system. According to one political analyst, people wanted something different than the parties that had been in politics since the 1990s; they "wanted to see someone [and some party] who will be the real leader of Russia" (Senior Political Analyst at INDEM Foundation 2011). Another politician argued in a similar vein: "in the fragmented [political] space after Yeltsin, Putin saw that the ideas of United Russia were stronger and [would] unify people more" than those of the opposition (Politician Formerly Affiliated with United Russia 2011). Political entrepreneurs and then Prime Minister Putin himself identified an opportunity to build a dominant party from Russia's weak party system and harvest the floating electorate that comprised nearly half of all voters. Scores of voters who previously cast their ballots for minor parties, and therefore wasted their votes, were presented with an alternative in United Russia that more closely corresponded to their own ideological positions and had a higher chance of gaining legislative representation due to the party's catchall orientation. After United Russia's rise to power, the proportion of wasted votes dropped precipitously, from nearly half in the first legislative election under examination to merely five percent in the most recent contest to the State Duma. Undoubtedly, the dominant party captured many of the votes that would have been wasted in its absence.

Thus, the conditions that foster the emergence of dominant parties are the mirror image of those that transform dominant party regimes into more competitive systems.

Existing scholarship has demonstrated that dominant party systems become more competitive only when other parties acquire major party status and adopt a catchall character, rather than remaining small and niche (Riker 1976; Greene 2007). For example, in PRI-dominated Mexico, the National Action Party (PAN) and the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) "remained small parties that made niche appeals to minority electoral constituencies and were thoroughly uncompetitive at the polls. It was not until the 1980s and 1990s that they expanded into major parties with a catchall character that could challenge PRI dominance" (Greene 2007: 2). A similar phenomenon occurred in Taiwan under the Kuomintang (KMT): the oppositionist Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) remained ideologically rigid during the majority of the KMT's tenure, affirming ideological and symbolic politics at the expense of appealing to the country's majority that was pragmatic and conservative, and only effectively challenged the KMT after moderating its message and positioning itself closer to the center (Greene 2007). In treating the emergence of dominant parties as exogenous and focusing exclusively on the dynamics of durability and decay, however, these theories critically overlook the role that party weakness can play in the initial rise of ruling parties, well before these parties consolidate and are ultimately challenged at the polls. Structural conditions in the party system that produce party dominance may also contribute, in fact, to its reproduction over time (Cf. Greene 2007).

My theory of dominant party emergence diverges from existing scholarship that concentrates chiefly on significant periods of nation building that precipitated the rise of ruling parties, such as a war of liberation, revolution, or post-war reconstruction in the event of defeat (Duverger 1954; Tucker 1961; Pempel 1990; Brooker 2000). For example, Tucker (1961) argues that party dominance emerges from revolutionary struggle: these parties come to power after the "revolutionary displacement of a pre-existing order, and seek to maintain revolutionary momentum after they come to power" (286). Arian and Barnes (1974) argue in a similar vein, it is "virtually necessary for a party to preside over the establishment of the polity in order for it to achieve the […] identification with the epoch" (594). These theories' focus on cataclysmic events

underestimates the potential for the conditions that create dominance to help sustain it and for party dominance to arise under more prosaic conditions. My theory draws attention to how the character of the party system, in the absence of a revolutionary moment, can lead to the emergence of a dominant party.

A weak party system provides an opportunity for the emergence of a dominant party, but it is a necessary, rather than sufficient, condition. My explanation of dominant party emergence and strength and opposition party weakness in Russia highlights the role of contingent components, namely the character of the political leadership under Vladimir Putin, economic performance and resources, and a permissive security environment, and structural factors, such as ethnicity and urbanization. Each of the contingent components contributes independently, but also serve to exacerbate the effects of structural conditions.

Contingent Factors

Dominant party durability and opposition party fragility is undergirded by a set of contingent factors that bolster a dominant party but also exacerbate salient structural conditions to the ruling party's advantage. The most decisive components in this category are political leadership or the "Putin effect," economic conditions that allow and encourage patronage politics under Putin, and the security environment that permitted a dramatic centralization of power under Putin and his party apparatus, United Russia.

Political Leadership: The "Putin Effect"

A specific type of political leader has paved the way for the construction and maintenance of a dominant party: in Russia, the leadership and political acumen of Vladimir Putin has been indispensable to United Russia from its initial rise to its subsequent consolidation. Putin's unique brand of leadership will be discussed by way of contrast to that of his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin. In the transitional milieu of post-communism in Russia, political leaders have had "unusually broad opportunities to choose the country's direction" and Putin is certainly no exception: his personality and background profoundly shape his ideas about politics and the policies he has pursued

during his political tenure, now nearly a decade and a half in length (Treisman 2011: 242).

Putin learned a series of important lessons from the mistakes of his predecessor that he has sought to correct during his tenure in office, which explains the centralization of power in Russia under Putin, as well as the creation of United Russia and the pervasive electoral manipulation practiced in the 2000s and 2010s. First, Putin believed that projecting the image of, and acting as, a strong leader was essential to govern the country effectively. Yeltsin's "weak and increasingly ineffective leadership" created a "dysfunctional" political system and economy in which the rule of law was not enforced, corruption ran rampant, and Russian citizens suffered (Collins 2005: xiii). Yeltsin also believed that "Russia could only survive if it had a strong president" and sought to increase his power at the expense of his opponents by constantly shuffling his top advisers, including his prime ministers, but was largely unable to achieve prolonged power in the face of strong opponents (Herspring 2005: 6). Despite the sweeping formal powers given to the Russian president, Yeltsin was patently incapable of implementing his own decisions (Shevtsova 2003: 66).

Yeltsin's choice of a "KGB colonel with at most a pragmatic commitment to democracy" for a successor had dramatic implications for the course of Russian democracy (Treisman 2011: 72). Putin's background in the security services, serving as an officer in the KGB for 16 years, the director of the Federal Security Service (FSB), and chair of the Security Council before becoming Prime Minister and the subsequently the President of Russia, contributes to his ruthlessness and predilection for political control at all levels of government. As a *silovik*, that is a member of the security services, Putin's approach to politics is one of "pragmatic authoritarian[ism]": subordination, discipline, order, control, rationality and predictability are emphasized at the expense of "diversity of opinions and interests within the state machinery" (Shevtsova 2003: 188; Colton and McFaul 2005: 15). His distinctive brand of leadership has "promoted his image as a decisive, active, and engaged leader" well equipped to ensure domestic stability and couple up the country to the proper track after the tumultuous Yeltsin years

(Collins 2005: xiii). Through his leadership, Putin "managed to show Russians that Russia is a powerful state" (Politician Formerly Affiliated with United Russia 2011). Part and parcel to engaged leadership a la Putin, is the "desire to […] touch everything personally," ranging from interfering in the conduct of national elections to managing the manner in which the media present him and his agenda to personally monitoring the rebuilding of homes razed by the wildfires that engulfed western Russia during the summer of 2010 (Shevtsova 2003: 81). According to Yabloko's leader, Grigory Yavlinsky, "Boris Yeltsin took mistaken steps in the right direction toward democracy; Putin took correct steps in the wrong direction toward an authoritarian petro state" (Goldman 2008: 172). Putin's beliefs about leadership and the prerogatives inherent in the office of the presidency shape his responses to a variety of domestic circumstances, notably elections and the security situation.

Second, Putin learned that the public approval his predecessor lacked for a variety of reasons was a crucial resource that increased the wherewithal of the president to pursue his desired agenda both domestically and internationally. Voters punished Yeltsin for the state of the economy, although he had little control over the course the economy would take in his initial years, as Gorbachev bequeathed him a "macroeconomic bomb" that had been constructed by reckless money printing, widespread inefficiency inherent in state-led economies, and collapsing oil prices (Treisman 2011: 76). Although Yeltsin could not avoid taking a hit to his and Our Home is Russia's popularity due to the economy, he was also continually haunted by low public approval ratings for reasons in which he retained at least a degree of control. For example, facets of Yeltsin's character, such as his boorishness and his tendency to, according to his own words, "fly off the handle in a stupid way, like a child," caused his popularity to tumble (Treisman 2011: 72). Furthermore, his taste for alcohol produced embarrassing behavior and numerous public blunders that became etched in the collective memory during his tenure in office. Yeltsin's poor health, exacerbated by his alcoholism, "made it impossible for him to focus properly on matters of state" (Goldman 2008: 55). Yeltsin chose to polarize his relationship with the parliament more than compromise, and his ability to push through

reforms that were of vital importance to Russia's dual transition suffered. Clearly, his failure in enacting reforms to the extent required also negatively impacted his popularity. At its nadir in March 1999, Yeltsin's popularity was a pitiful six percent, quite the tumble from its high in late 1990 when it reached nearly 90% (Treisman 2011: 245). Yeltsin and Our Home is Russia's unpopularity were the result of a mix of factors under the Kremlins' control to varying degrees.

Putin sought to project an image of a competent leader who would not fall into personal disarray in front of the public's very eyes. His background in the security services created a strong leader but he recognized that ruling effectively as an autocrat without public support was impossible. Putin cultivated his charismatic appeal by "add[ing] a certain charm to his pallid personality" and learning the art of speaking to various audiences in a manner that resonated thoroughly (Shevtsova 2003: 82). He also reinforced his popularity in December 2000 by restoring the Soviet national anthem music, albeit with new words, which Stalin ordered the composition of during World War II and Yeltsin scrapped during the collapse, introducing the red Soviet flag sans hammer and sickle as the official banner of the Russian armed forces, retaining the tsarist double-headed eagle as Russia's coat of arms, and also preserving the pre-revolutionary tricolor flag. The mix of national symbols, which Putin sought to codify in law per the Russian Constitution, were selected after Putin carefully consulted public opinion surveys to identify those that would be the most popular among the public. Introducing a Russian national anthem with words was especially popular because the former tune decreed by Yeltsin lacked a song, and Russians were humiliated during the Olympics when Russian medalists were forced to watch awkwardly as the other medalists belted out their home country's national song. In October 2003, Putin also capitalized on public sentiment that had turned sharply against the oligarchs with the arrest of Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the head of the Yukos oil concern.

Putin has recognized that high public approval, his own never falling below 60%, has allowed him considerable leeway in domestic policy: only with the Russian citizenry firmly behind him has Putin be able to push through authoritarian reforms and policies

the most relevant of which have severely constricted the opportunities for political activity in opposition to the Kremlin. Compared to Yeltsin, Putin has been "fantastically free" to pursue his agenda, especially economic modernization and various political reforms, based on consistently high popularity (Treisman 2011: 93). Putin's astronomical approval rating has been largely "frozen, being a talisman against defeat" (Shevtsova 2003: 220). He has capitalized on his high approval ratings to bolster his own authority and the capacity of the state, and thus "belongs to a long tradition of Russian statesmen who have sought change through autocratic action from above to mold society" (Herspring 2005: 5). Putin seems to believe that public tolerance of his non-democratic agenda flows from his popularity, which itself is bolstered by a combination of factors within his control and largely outside of it. Like Yeltsin before him, Putin has not been single-handedly responsible for his popularity: several contingent factors that will be discussed subsequently have played a central role, such as solid economic performance as a result of high natural resource prices across most of the 2000s and an arresting security environment that afforded him the opportunity to act as a strong leader and benefit from a rally 'round the flag effect. Nevertheless, Putin follows public opinion polling assiduously to the point of becoming "hostage" to them, and seeks to build up his popularity to preserve his freedom of action in public affairs (Shevtsova 2003: 161).

Third, Putin developed a strong distaste for multipartism in the lower house of the Russian legislature that contributed to his desire to create and maintain a dominant party in the 2000s and 2010s. Yeltsin's personal support for multipartism during the 1990s resulted in a party system run amok, a sort of wild East kind of chaos typified by parties such as the "Beer Lover's Party" and the "Russian Party of Car Owners" competing in the 1995 legislative election. Yeltsin was fundamentally incapable of building a successful party of power: his feeble attempts at political engineering failed because he was "not persistent" and, consequently, the parties Yeltsin invested in lost elections by horrendous margins (Shevtsova 2003: 181). A long-serving politician commented, "Yeltsin was not successful with power parties […] Yeltsin had power but he couldn't use this power because he was ill for four years and, before that, he didn't know what he

had to say, to do" (Senior Official in Yabloko's National Organization 2011). Complete support and obedience from the Duma proved elusive throughout Yeltsin's tenure and instead he was forced to battle with the Duma at every turn with disastrous results: the protracted conflict between Yeltsin and the parliament from 1991-1993 culminated with the dissolution of parliament and the president's orders to shell the parliament building; in the late 1990s, the opposition-dominated legislature brought impeachment charges against him for a wide-range of missteps, including provoking the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991; using force inappropriately against the legislature in 1993; initiating the first war in Chechnya in the mid-1990s; subjecting the Russian people to genocide based on social and economic policies; finally, ruining the military (Shevtsova 2003: 159; Dougherty 1999). Before 1999, Yeltsin had escaped no less than five bids of impeachment in December 1992, March 1993, September 1993, July 1995, and June 1998. Without an effective party apparatus and faced with a hostile parliament, Yeltsin resorted to "permanent cadre revolution [as] his major instrument for holding onto power" and his power to rule by decree, which created at most the "illusion of governance" (Shevtsova 2003: 18). By the end of Yeltin's presidency, the time spent passing significant but non-budgetary legislation was two years, lengthening considerably from the six-month average in the early 1990s (Treisman 2011: 253).

When he ascended to the presidency, Putin wanted to prevent what his predecessor faced at all costs: the "messy" multiparty system during Yeltsin's time "interfered with Putin's idea of politics and gave rise to too many irritating little parties that were difficult to control and that might someday cause problems for the 'party of power'" (Shevtsova 2003: 129). Putin believed that pursuing his agenda efficiently and avoiding the type of domestic political strife that Yeltsin struggled with required him to "create and maintain the support of a centrist majority if he were to become an effective political leader of the Russia of the twenty-first century" (Collins 2005: xiii). The architects of United Russia would therefore distinguish the new party of power from its predecessors that failed: the new party project would pursue a more centrist platform than Our Home is Russia, which espoused a liberal ideology despite the fact that "free market

liberalism was never popular in Russia […] no liberal parties […] were popular in Russia in the beginning of the 1990s. If it was a liberal party, it had no chance to win" (Senior Political Analyst at INDEM Foundation 2011). One politician argued in the same vein, "the liberal policy of the government [and Our Home is Russia] was not supported by the society" (Politician Formerly Affiliated with United Russia 2011). United Russia would not make the same mistake of Our Home is Russia in orienting itself out of step ideologically with the majority of the electorate.

Unlike Yeltsin, Putin invested heavily in political engineering and party building, and his increased wherewithal as a leader gave his party of power "every chance of winning" in elections (Shevtsova 2003: 181). The role that Putin has played in United Russia's success is integral, with one politician not affiliated with United Russia commenting, "United Russia [has been] successful first because of the person of Putin" (Senior Official in Yabloko's National Organization 2011). What Kremlin political technologists and Putin envisaged was a party that would "follow the same path as Japan with its Liberal Democratic Party, which spent dozens of years in power" or the Christian Democratic Party in postwar Italy that dominated the legislature for 35 years (Shevtsova 2003: 182; Treisman 2011). The creation of a strong dominant party in United Russia has proven integral to closing the deep chasm between the president and the legislature that existed in the 1990s and imposing dominance in the legislature that Boris Yeltsin was never able to achieve. United Russia has greatly "simplified the management of politics" for Putin because the party passes any and all legislation supported by Putin, rather than the president needing to negotiate for support from various parties on an ad hoc basis (*Ibid*). United Russia ensures that Putin's favored legislation travels seamlessly through the Duma from proposal to enactment. For example, Putin signed legislation shifting from a progressive income tax structure to a 13% flat tax into law only two months after its presentation in the Duma (Treisman 2011: 253). Putin has transformed the Duma from a political cesspool where recalcitrant opposition parties have the numbers to hold the president and his agenda hostage to a situation in which the government and the legislature "work in harmony, as if part of the same organism" (Shevtsova 2003: 140).

Fourth, Putin learned that he not only needed to form a party of power to gain a majority in the Duma that would usher through his legislative agenda, but it was also of paramount importance that his party avoid going the same way as Russia's Choice in 1993 and Our Home is Russia in 1995, i.e. into the dustbin of history. Yeltsin was committed to free and fair elections, indeed, to the point that the party he supported was defeated decisively by the Communists in the 1995 contest, which "made him look like a loser" (Treisman 2011: 59; Shevtsova 2003). Despite Our Home is Russia's "big advantages" in the 1995 Duma election, Yeltsin failed to win (Politician Formerly Affiliated with United Russia 2011). The political system that Yeltsin built put in place all the hallmarks of democracy, allowing Russians more freedom than ever before (and since), and his rejection of or tampering with competitive elections would have been inconsistent at best. To be sure, however, Yeltsin undoubtedly undermined the development of democracy in Russia when he chose to designate his own successor rather than allowing democratic politics to play out fully in the presidential election of 2000.

Putin rejected Yeltsin's attitude toward democracy and elections, endeavoring to ensure that United Russia would succeed at all costs: "when push came to shove, the survivalist ethics were what mattered" (Treisman 2011: 119). Certainly, Putin's background in the security services shaped his views about political contestation. Working in the KGB is a "way of thinking" rather than a profession, and one that cultivated in Putin a deep "hostility toward dissent of any kind, an inability to tolerate variety in the environment, the rejection of everything alien and not easily understandable, an excessive suspiciousness, and a tendency to make decisions in secret" (Shevtsova 2003: 81). Sitting with Yeltsin in August 1999 as the president's heir apparent, Putin said, "I do not like electoral struggle. I really do not. I do not know how to carry it out, and I do not like it" (Colton and McFaul 2003: 171). Putin, an "authoritarian at heart," seems to personally distrust the uncertainty that accompanies free and fair elections as the legitimate essence of democracy that Yeltsin tolerated, and his

personality allows and even encourages machinations in the electoral arena (Shevtsova 2003: 95).

Under the leadership of an autocrat-like individual, the Kremlin utilizes egregious methods of manipulation, such as stuffing the ballot box or changing results, which were considerably less common during Yeltsin's tenure to capture electoral windfalls and send a signal of invincibility. Putin recognizes that voter turnout offers one indication of the public's confidence in the legitimacy and fairness of elections (Alvarez, Hall and Hyde 2008). Putin and United Russia seek to ensure robust turnout as a signaling mechanism to domestic and international audiences alike that the citizenry is politically engaged and supportive of the regime because it provides an important source of legitimacy. However, the regime fears that Russians' low confidence in the fairness and legitimacy of elections may result in low voter turnout if not artificially augmented. Thus, the combination of Putin's incentives to augment turnout in elections and a broadly disengaged citizenry suggests that high voter turnout is a product of illicit regime interference in elections rather than a naturally occurring phenomenon.

Under Putin's leadership, United Russia inflates turnout to improbably high levels to send a powerful signal of invincibility to domestic actors in search of areas of regime vulnerability and international audiences interested in exerting democratizing pressures on the regime. Electoral malfeasance resulting in unbelievably high voter turnout has not concealed by Putin and the central authorities, but rather flaunted conspicuously in a manner that calls into question interpretations of high turnout as a true reflection of citizen interest and political efficacy. The logic of signaling helps explain why United Russia has engaged in electoral manipulation even when elections are not predicted to be close. For a variety of reasons, including its access to the resources of the state and ability to repress the opposition, dominant parties like United Russia essentially win elections before election day and therefore do not need to rely on electoral fraud to produce a victory in an election the party otherwise would have lost (Greene 2007). Moreover, "excessive and blatant" fraud is committed by United Russia "in full view of the public" and is used to send a signal of dominance and immortality stands in stark contrast from

the notion that manipulation ought to be well camouflaged (Simpser 2013: 2). Such egregious manipulation deters voters from supporting the opposition, such as the KPRF, LDPR, or Yabloko, and political elites from joining other parties or even entering the political arena in the first place (Simpser 2013). Excessive fraud also serves United Russia in the post-election aftermath by augmenting the party's bargaining position over other parties and allowing the party to keep a larger share of the "rents and spoils of government" (Simpser 2013: 3).

The systematic inflation of both voter turnout and United Russia's vote shares showcases the dominant party's capacity and control over all aspects of elections; in short, the regime can do as it pleases without consequences, emanating from either domestic opposition groups or international actors. More subtle forms of manipulation, such as patronage-based voter mobilization through political machines, ensure high vote shares for United Russia, but not necessarily high electoral participation. The importance of elections in Russia and other dominant party authoritarian regimes therefore makes "both the level of turnout and the level of electoral support important indicators of the regime's sustainability and consistency" (Mebane and Kalinin 2010: 4). Large-scale electoral manipulation that exaggerates United Russia's vote share and inflates turnout puts on full display the party's monopoly of political power. With more subtle forms of manipulation at work, dominant parties do not need to rely on fraud to win elections repeatedly, but ruling parties like United Russia may nevertheless engage in egregious electoral manipulation to fulfill other valuable political objectives. During the Yeltsin years, particularly in the 1995 election, comparatively limited electoral manipulation was more likely practiced, not as a show of all-encompassing political strength, but to inflate the party of power's vote share in the context of competitive elections in which the Kremlin-backed party could not be confident of winning, let alone a strong showing. Despite Yeltsin's commitment to free and fair elections, the Kremlin's Our Home is Russia needed outcome-changing electoral manipulation to combat its widespread unpopularity, but lacked the resources and type of leadership necessary to carry it out

successfully. In contrast, United Russia's manipulation is chiefly redundant in the sense that the party would have won landslide victories without it.

Putin watched in the 1990s as manipulated raions that held the promise of electoral windfalls were subject to a fierce tug-of-war between parties. During the Yeltsin years, electoral manipulation was associated with electoral windfalls for opposition parties, notably the KPRF in 1995, and Fatherland-All Russia, the KPRF and the LDPR in 1999. Although the Kremlin benefitted from electoral manipulation in addition to opposition parties in the 1990s, "fraud […] served to weaken the Kremlin" because the party of power was unable to monopolize the electoral manipulation that did occur and instead was forced to fight for its position with the KPRF and others (Treisman 2011: 97). In stark contrast to this pattern, an important feature of "Putin effect" that manifested in the early 2000s and continued into the 2010s was the efficiency of fraud in legislative elections: as a charismatic leader with the wherewithal, political clout, and economic resources necessary to engage in effective patronage politics and ruthless strong arm tactics, Putin was able to achieve a high degree of efficiency in the electoral manipulation that occurred and the Kremlin's United Russia became the sole beneficiary of such machinations. Under Putin's leadership, the Kremlin's party not only won elections in manipulated raions, but also won them decisively as opposition parties were cowed. The Putin factor explains part of the difference between the scatterplots detailing the relationship between voter turnout and various parties' vote shares in the legislative elections in the 1990s versus 2000s and 2010s, shown in Figures 3.2-3.6. Putin's style of leadership and personality directly contributed to the efficiency of fraud under his watch, but environmental factors, such as favorable economic conditions, also lent themselves to Putin's machinations.

Finally, Putin learned that the absence of central control in Russia's ethnofederal system led to, at best, extortionist attempts by unruly regions to gain favors from the center and, at worst, intractable secessionist conflict. During Yeltsin's presidency, the central government fought two wars with Chechnya, the first of which occurred from 1994 to 1996 when the central government attempted to regain control of the region after

it declared independence in 1991, and the second of which was launched in 1999 in response to the invasion of Dagestan by Islamic separatists. The federal government expended considerable resources and political capital to subdue the unruly republic during the 1990s and the repeated conflicts laid bare the vulnerabilities of Yeltsin's political power to both domestic opposition groups and the West. Beyond Chechnya, Yeltsin allowed the ethnic republics considerably autonomy, famously offering them to "take as much sovereignty as you can swallow" in 1990 (Petrov and Slider 2005: 239), and consequently, several regions "paid little attention to Moscow. They passed whatever local laws they preferred, even if they ran counter to the Russian constitution" (Herspring 2005: 6).

In large part because of his intractable struggle with the parliament, Yeltsin was forced to negotiate constantly with the regions, especially during elections, dolling out concessions and in many case formalizing such agreements through bilateral treaties (Petrov and Slider 2005). Yeltsin turned to the regional governors for political backing, particularly those presiding over economic powerhouses such as Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and Yakutia, because they were directly appointed, or dismissed, by the president (*Ibid*). Yet the governor's power and bargaining position vis-à-vis the center was greatly enhanced by the fact that, coupled with freefalling economy in the 1990s, the government's lack of administrative capacity prevented it from collecting the taxed required to fund its policies, which in turn forced regional executives to assume many of the responsibilities that had previously fallen within the purview of the federal government (*Ibid*). Yeltsin thus presided over a system of asymmetrical federalism that favored the regions rather than the central government and the result was that Russia in the 1990s appeared "less federal than feudal" (Treisman 2011: 96). Putin witnessed the dysfunction in Russian federalism first-hand in the late 1990s when he acted as the head of the Main Oversight Department in charge of ensuring that regional laws and policies did not contravene those of the federal government (Petrov and Slider 2005).

In contrast to Yeltsin, Putin benefitted from a growing economy, a majority in the State Duma, and astronomical levels of public support that provided a "much stronger

basis to exert leverage" over the regions and fundamentally restructure the federal system (Petrov and Slider 2005: 255). His response reflected his "life experiences and background": just months into his presidency in 2000, Putin issued a decree that fundamentally reformed center-periphery relations and forged a system of vertical power that created a single, unbroken chain of command from the regional level all the way to the Kremlin to ensure potentially unruly regions and those that had become too accustomed to home rule would be kept firmly under the Kremlin's thumb (Petrov and Slider 2005: 254). Central to this system was the creation of seven new federal administrative districts, or "super regions," that added a layer of administration between the regions and the federal government, each with its own head appointed by the president himself. Five out of seven who were appointed to these new administrative positions were *siloviki* themselves (Shevtsova 2003: 91). Expanded oversight of the regions and better coordination of federal agencies in the regions allowed the central government to penetrate the Russian state across the country's expanse to a degree that Yeltsin could have only dreamed of. Within the first year, thousands of regional laws that previously paid no heed to the Russian constitution were "corrected" (Petrov and Slider 2005: 248). Putin also amended the distribution of economic assets from the federal government to the regions in a manner that increased the resources of the former at the expense of the latter: the share of government revenue available to the regions was slashed from 54% in 1999 to 35% once Putin became president (Treisman 2011: 96).

With the regions and their "little tsars" cut down to size politically and economically, the Kremlin became the first among none, rather than the first among equals (Shevtsova 2003: 8). Through these reforms, Putin "demonstrated to everyone that Russia is a one and united state territory […] and completely eliminated the problem of the North Caucasus, that is, Chechnya and Dagestan" (Politician Formerly Affiliated with United Russia 2011). In short, "the direction of politics had changed" under Putin: with a package of legislation reigning them in, the regional governors, who in the 1990s had flaunted their independence vis-à-vis the center and ran against the Kremlin's party in 1999, became "one of the foundations of the pyramid [of control] under Putin" and

United Russia (Senior Official in Yabloko's National Organization 2011). With the regional governors cowed into submission, Putin could exert overwhelming influence over these executives and "use the governors and mayors to build United Russia," a dominant party with an immense regional reach (*Ibid*).

Although Putin succeeded in pacifying the Caucasus militarily, the Kremlin has exchanged such strategies for alternative mechanisms of political control, such as patronage-based relationships, that signal dominance during elections and ward off political challenges by showcasing the regime's thorough penetration of possibly rebellious regions. Through these mechanisms, Putin has been able to purchase loyalty and deference to the Kremlin from these regions without resorting to hard repression. United Russia performs a key role in this system because regions' deference to the Kremlin manifests concretely, through electoral results delivered in legislative contests, rather than through abstract rhetoric (Golosov 2012). United Russia's vote share is thus the barometer used to gauge the Kremlin's dominance over these regions during each election to the State Duma.

Economic Conditions

In addition to the "Putin effect," dominant party strength has also been fueled by auspicious economic conditions that contributed to the ruling party's popularity and kept the party's patronage reserves well stocked. Putin and United Russia have sought to ensure that the tide of economic growth keeps flowing through proactive policies. Russia's macroeconomic policy in Putin's first two terms as president had been "among the most responsible in the world" (Treisman 2011: 147). Across most of the 2000s, United Russia presided over a protracted economic boom: the federal government ran budget surpluses for back-to-back years, real wages and disposable income increased significantly (to the tune of 12% a year between 2000 and 2007 pertaining to the latter), and unemployment ticked downward continually (Treisman 2011: 101; World Bank 2005; Hale et al. 2004). Actual economic growth far exceeded official government forecasts year after year. In the early 2000s, Putin insisted that the government set "more ambitious goals" for economic growth: rather than the 2003 projection of four percent

growth, he wanted between 9 to 11% (Shevtsova 2003: 229). Sweeping reforms that had been blocked or abandoned during Yeltsin's tenure were passed in a flurry, such as a 13% flat tax rate for personal income in lieu of progressive taxation, reductions in taxes on profits from 35 to 24% and payroll from 36 to 26%, and a decrease in the value added tax from 20 to 18% (Treisman 2011: 93). The introduction of the flat tax alone hiked revenue collection by 50% (Shevtsova 2003: 215). The nonpayment of wages and pensions that had become depressing hallmarks of the Yeltsin years ceased. Rather than spend tremendous natural resource profits in the initial years, the government socked away windfalls into a stabilization fund that buffered the economy against the seemingly uncontrollable free fall experienced in other countries when the global financial crisis struck in the late 2000s. Adopting a prudent fiscal policy before the onset of the crisis allowed the government to actually increase pensions by 11% in 2009 and by an additional 13% at the start of 2010 (Treisman 2011: 161).

Overall, Putin and United Russia have been largely credited with economic growth and modernization when it was, in fact, developments prior to 2000 that set the economy on a better track, which then allowed the Kremlin to pursue its economic and political agenda more easily. To be sure, Putin and his team did not do anything to encumber economic growth, but robust economic performance under United Russia and Putin is more the product of high world oil prices throughout the 2000s and beyond Russia's control than a result of deliberate planning and management by the Kremlin (Millar 2005; Treisman 2011; Goldman 2008). United Russia rose to power and has preserved its position due to a favorable economic situation, which provided "greater budgetary resources that could be used to pay off past debts[,] finance federal institutions," and increase social spending when the going got tough in the late 2000s (Petrov and Slider 2005: 255).

When Putin assumed the presidency, traditional industries had become more competitive and real wages fell as a result of the ruble devaluation in 1998, a year before Putin even became Prime Minister: the sectors that managed to survive the 1990s were energized as other enterprises were finally ravaged and the domestic market was

insulated because Western goods became more expensive (Treisman 2011: 234). In fact, economic improvement began to take hold when Yevgeny Primakov was still Prime Minister in early spring of 1998; as such, Primakov rather than Putin presided over the initial uptick in the economy immediately following the financial crisis (Goldman 2008: 96). The Russian economy was boosted by international demand for energy that was higher than the capacity of Russian producers at the time, but they reacted quickly by accelerating production (Goldman 2008: 14). The devaluation thus sparked the much-needed shedding of inefficient enterprises and initial economic growth that Russians subsequently attributed to current power holders. With the ruble losing value, foreign imports became more expensive for Russian consumers, which incentivized them to purchase goods made in Russia rather than abroad; as a result, the Russian manufacturing sector benefitted from the less competitive market domestically (Goldman 2008: 171).

In addition to the positive effects of the ruble devaluation, Russia's recovery from the 1998 financial crisis was also due to the high price of oil exports that played a more integral role in the process than the Prime Minister, regardless of who was in office at the time (Millar 2005; Goldman 2008). The economic recovery that followed the catastrophe would have buoyed any current power holders, including Yeltsin, had he not resigned abruptly as president at the end of 1999. In the wake of the 1998 crisis, the price of Urals crude, Russia's primary oil blend, skyrocketed from $15.2 per barrel on average in 1999 to $27.2 in 2003 (World Bank 2005: 16). In 2000, fuel and metals accounted for an "estimated 65 percent of value added in industry" (Tompson 2005: 340). With an estimated 40% of the central government's budget coming from oil and natural gas production, the federal budget and Russian economy at large benefitted from a protracted windfall (Hale et al. 2004; World Bank 2005). In the year immediately preceding and following the 2003 Duma election, the dominant party benefited considerably from climbing oil exports and increased oil extraction that surged by 32% in 2002-2004: oil wealth triggered demand for services and a range of consumer goods, and manufacturing went into high gear to meet the demands of the oil sector expensive (Treisman 2011: 234). As a share of export earnings between 2002 and 2003, oil, gas and metals increased

from a 60% share to 75%, equivalent to over 30% of GDP, indicating an intensifying reliance on natural resources under Putin and United Russia (Fish 2005: 258; Tompson 2005: 340).

Oil has played an "important if not crucial role in Russia's economic and political life": the rise of the Russian petrostate has fueled the Kremlin's capacity to shore up United Russia in election after election (Goldman 2008: 11). In the 2000s, the Kremlin sought to ensure that natural resource windfalls accrue directly to the state, rather than the Russian oligarchs, by establishing direct control over the primary sector, either by acquiring controlling stakes in various producers or via wholesale renationalization. The Kremlin's agenda of economic revanchism has stripped the oligarchs of the jewels of their crowns, in many cases acquired illegally in the corrupt loans-for-shares privatization scheme adopted, and essentially reversed the wave of privatization that occurred in the mid-1990s.

During the 1990s, Yeltsin eagerly privatized oil and metal industries on the cheap, which is surprising, given that the government was "not even able to tax them effectively"; nevertheless, the political leadership "surrender[ed] these spectacular rents without a fight" (Tompson 2005: 351). But Yeltsin presided over a weak regime, which forced him to try to secure the political backing of the Russian oligarchs by privatizing the country's most valuable assets during his 1996 re-election bid and ensure that, even if he was not successful, "his opponents would face powerful opposition to any attempt to reverse course in economy policy" (*Ibid*). Political expediency combined with a weak regime demanded that Yeltsin relinquish these most prized state assets. The influence that Yeltsin allowed the oligarchs, however, also cost him dearly in terms of his party of power's prospects: "Yeltsin was not successful with power parties because he was connected with the oligarchs and they said, 'you must do this and this.' Yeltsin allowed businesses too much influence" (Senior Official in Yabloko's National Organization 2011). Thus, although the oligarchs backed Yeltsin for his re-election, their close involvement in politics also jeopardized Our Home's chance of becoming a successful party of power.

In contrast to his predecessor, Putin's political position, and that of his party, has been more secure throughout his tenure and he also operates according to a different political logic, one that views direct control over the primary sector as part and parcel to his continued political power. Putin's own thesis, fulfilling part of the requirements for the Candidate of Sciences degree in economics at the St. Petersburg Mining Institute he pursued in the late 1990s, charts a comprehensive course for Russian economic development based on mineral resources that were to be renationalized or otherwise controlled by the state (Balzer and Putin 2006). Beginning in the early 2000s, Putin embarked on a campaign to reassert state control over natural resource industries, chiefly oil and gas, but also metals. According to one political analyst, "Putin has victimized all aspects of economy" since taking power in 2000 (Senior Political Analyst at INDEM Foundation 2011). The Kremlin stripped the Yukos oil concern of its assets and transferred them to state-owned Rosneft in 2003, as well as acquired a controlling stake in the Gazprom natural gas monopoly two years later, multiplying the state's capacity to appropriate resource rents. Before Rosneft's purchase of additional shares in Gazprom in the mid-2000s, the state had held only 35-40% of the company (Goldman 2008: 101). But the process of positioning Gazprom for state takeover began much earlier in Putin's tenure: in May 2001, Putin leveraged the state's share in Gazprom to force out the CEO and, having already fired former Prime Minister Chernomyrdin as the chairman of the company's board of directors, duly installed Alexei Miller and no other than Dmitry Medvedev to replace those atop the Gazprom giant. As a result of Rosneft's purchase in the mid-2000s, the proportion of crude oil production accounted for by state-dominated companies rose from a paltry 16% in 2000 when Putin assumed the presidency to nearly 50% by 2007 as he prepared to transfer his presidential powers to Dmitry Medvedev (Goldman 2008: 99).

Due to the increase in controlling stakes or complete renationalizations, the ruling party has been buoyed by record-setting oil and gas prices: over his second term as president, Putin and the rest of Russia witnessed the price for Russian Urals crude, Russia's chief oil blend, skyrocket from $33 a barrel to $94, which boosted demand

across the economy (Treisman 2011: 235). Paralleling the recovery from the 1998 crisis, the price of oil also rebounded quickly in the late 2000s, from below $35 a barrel in the beginning of January 2009 to more than double that figure by the end of that year (Treisman 2011: 161). The initial economic recovery after 1998 and consistently high oil prices throughout the 2000s generated higher tax revenues and expanded social spending and the Kremlin's patronage reserves, which in turn bolstered the perception of Putin and Untied Russia as effective leaders and increased their public support, permitting the Kremlin the leeway to forge an authoritarian system (Treisman 2011). Although the Kremlin socked a portion of the natural resource windfalls away into a stabilization fund, they also distributed part of the surplus to the population at critical junctures, perhaps in direct response to public opinion polls that showed the public strongly supported spending the surpluses created by high oil prices on social welfare provisions and pensions (Tompson 2005: 347). Indeed, beginning with the 1999 election, made possible at that time due to increasing world oil prices and the positive effects of the ruble devaluation, the Kremlin consistently rolled out new social spending packages at election time, in "nakedly political move[s]" that leveraged the Kremlin's influence over the economy to deliver the goods to voters (Colton and McFaul 2003: 57). The policy of economic revanchism and rents derived from the exploitation of resources have created a valuable stockpile of patronage resources for the Kremlin and allow the political leadership to pursue "politically rational ends" with an eye toward both "enrich[ing] itself and […] entrench[ing] itself" (Tompson 2005: 348, 355). Thus, the rise and consolidation of United Russia has tracked closely the rise and consolidation of the Russian petrostate.

A booming economy has allowed United Russia to exploit the structural conditions discussed in the subsequent section. For example, the improving economy furnished Putin with the wherewithal to "reestablish Moscow's dominance over some of Russia's restless regions," namely the ethnic republics (Goldman 2008: 95). In areas with geographically concentrated ethnic minorities, United Russia relies on the distribution of economic and political benefits to targeted regions in exchange for votes delivered by regional authorities during elections and economic boom times build up the Kremlin's

war chest to leverage at election time. The Kremlin and regional elites have made a grand bargain that ensures United Russia's continued dominance in the legislature and guarantees regional elites continued political power and resources from the Kremlin. By enforcing the primacy of federal over regional law and subjecting the governors to presidential appointment, regional executives have been brought in line under Putin's leadership, but retain enough political clout to make trouble for the Kremlin at election time if carrots do not also accompany the sticks. Upon his ascension to the presidency, "Putin came to understand that without preserving Yeltsin's policy of deal making in the regions, he would not survive"; advantageous economic conditions coupled with high popularity ratings have enabled Putin and the ruling party to offer extraordinarily attractive deals to regional elites, effectively underwriting United Russia's performance in elections (Shevtsova 2003: 126).

To recapitulate, United Russia's strength has been bolstered by high oil prices and other propitious conditions that helped stabilize and grow the economy, facilitate the provision of social services to the citizenry and the management of political elites and specific constituencies alike using patronage. Without the currency devaluation occurring before Putin's time in office and consistently high oil prices that the Kremlin has captured windfall rents from during his tenure, United Russia would have almost certainly traveled a path more akin to Russia's Choice and Our Home is Russia than the LDP in Japan or the Christian Democrats in Italy, as the citizenry would have punished the party of power for economic underperformance and elites would have at least entertained the thought of jumping ship to a more promising political vessel. For their part, powerful regional elites would have enjoyed their choice of patrons, as a range of political actors from the Communists to the ultra-nationalists would have competed with the Kremlin to vie for their political support. The political topography may have resembled that which prevailed in the 1990s, when the powerhouse republics were split in elections between the Kremlin's Our Home is Russia and the Communist opposition because the Kremlin lacked the economic and political resources necessary to buy off the regional elites en masse.

Historically, citizens' evaluations of Russian presidents have tracked closely their perceptions about the state of the economy, which themselves mirrored objective economic indicators such as the unemployment rate and average wages and pensions: when the economy is booming, Russians report higher presidential approval than in times of downturn (Treisman 2011: 249). Accordingly, Yeltsin's approval rating plummeted along with the economy in the 1990s and Putin's has remained high owing to the opposite, the product of pure luck based on when he became Prime Minister and then Presidents. One political analyst argued that due to the "economic crisis that started at the end of the 1980s and continued through the end of the 1990s, any ruling party that would have had power in that time would be unpopular, it was inevitable" (Senior Political Analyst at INDEM Foundation 2011). It is "without doubt" that Our Home is Russia would have been more popular had the economy been better at the time (*Ibid*). It is thus difficult to overestimate the influence of auspicious economic conditions in undergirding United Russia, from its initial rise through its consolidation. It has been a "factor of luck" that United Russia has been in power during economic good times, but Putin and United Russia might have won anyway because of his personal leadership skills (Politician Formerly Affiliated with United Russia 2011). Nevertheless, while favorable economic conditions may have ensured high public approval and the loyalty of political elites, such conditions are underdetermining in the sense that another leader or party may have leveraged economic growth and stability, and the accompanying approval ratings, to erect strong democratic institutions rather than entrenching authoritarianism through a dominant party (Treisman 2011).

Security Environment

United Russia and Putin have undoubtedly benefitted from a security environment conducive to the centralization of political power at the expense of democratic institutions and governance. While high economic performance has created an environment ripe for additional modernization and bolstered the ruling party's popularity based on economic deliverables and expanding patronage reserves, the security situation provided a crucial window of opportunity for Putin and United Russia to act with an eye

toward putting the political system in order to the benefit of current power holders. In short, the Kremlin has leveraged the continual crisis environment that has prevailed in Russia since the late 1990s to centralize power.

When Putin became Yeltsin's new Prime Minister in early August 1999, he took the lead role in managing the renewed outbreak of conflict in the Caucasus: Islamist Chechen separatists invaded the neighboring republic of Dagestan, triggering feelings of vulnerability and widespread fear of yet another protracted secessionist conflict that had the potential to derail Russia's recovery from the 1998 financial crisis. Just one month after the invasion, several apartment buildings in Moscow, Volgadonsk and Buynaksk were blown up, killing nearly 300 people and injuring over 600. Additional bombs were located and defused in Moscow and Ryazan, although authorities commented that the bomb identified in Ryazan was part of a training exercise, prompting speculation that the government was also responsible for those bombs that ultimately detonated in an attempt to justify military action in Chechnya and generate a rally 'round the flag effect (Treisman 2011; Shevtsova 2003). Central authorities connected the chain of apartment bombings to Chechens, before a formal investigation was opened and despite a lack of evidence, and the Kremlin moved tanks and troops into Chechnya to annihilate those fomenting state disintegration (Treisman 2011). Putin leveraged the "war to rally the country to fight what he saw as a potentially disastrous terrorist threat": he quickly mustered a strong hand to calm the hysterical citizenry, promising that the government would track down the terrorists without mercy (Goldman 2008: 172; Treisman 2011). Speaking to the Duma, Putin framed the security situation as one in which "bandits" were "blowing up the state" and "undermining authority;" Putin's duty was to "defend the population" from terrorists (Shevtsova 2003: 37). Russians rallied behind Putin: he was the type of resolute leader who could restore order amid chaos, protect them from dangers emanating from the Caucasus that had spread to their very own doorsteps, and finally set the country on the right track after the prolonged catastrophe that was the Yeltsin administration. According to Yeltsin, Russians believed that Putin, "personally,

could protect them. That's what explain[ed] his surge in popularity" (Treisman 2011: 248).

Putin was catapulted to the highest levels of Russian government at a time when the security situation created an environment desirous of the kind of strong hand that he, with his background in the security structures, was well equipped to provide. Putin's hawkish response to the invasion of Chechnya and the subsequent apartment bombings caused his popularity to skyrocket and the Kremlin's pick in the 1999 legislative elections to secure a surprise second-place finish, just months after the party's creation, by riding Putin's coattails. The counterfactual scenario, in which the Caucasus remained relatively tranquil, thus depriving Putin the opportunity to shine as Prime Minister immediately preceding the Duma contest, may have produced an overwhelming Communist victory or resulted in a more even distribution of votes among the largest parties in 1999 rather than thrusting Unity into the political spotlight. Yet with a national security emergency transpiring, the Kremlin's party clearly benefitted from its association with Putin and Sergei Shoigu, the Minister of Emergency Situations. In fact, the invasion of Dagestan was a pivotal moment for Putin as an individual because he believed that it threatened the whole country's territorial integrity, which "overrode his temperamental aversion to mass politics and electioneering" (Colton and McFaul 2003: 172). The national security emergency that began in the Caucasus and leapt to the capital not only animated the electorate behind Putin and Unity, but also provided a compelling rationale for Putin to enter the political fray despite his initial aversion. Thus, the war in Chechnya "helped Putin build a party" because the people wanted the federal government to win (Politician Formerly Affiliated with United Russia 2011).

Into his presidency, national security emergencies that had opened a window of opportunity at the outset of Putin's tenure as Prime Minister largely remained in place, buttressing United Russia's popularity in the 2003 legislative election and Putin's in the 2004 presidential race. In October 2002, dozens of Chechen rebels who supported the Islamist separatist movement in their home region seized the Dubrovka Theater in central Moscow and took 850 people hostage, promising to blow up the building if their

demands, chiefly the Russian withdrawal from Chechnya and an end to the war there, were not met. Elite Russian forces raided the building after introducing a chemical agent that was ultimately responsible for killing all of the 130 hostages that died. Although the administration was criticized for its handling of the theater hostage crisis, Russians again witnessed as the conflict in the Caucasus came to the capital, and Putin again leveraged the crisis to centralize power. Putin likened Russia's struggle with Chechen separatists to America's struggle against Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda and framed the events at Dubrovka as the work of individuals belonging to an international network of terrorists (Shevtsova 2003: 255). Putin had "decided to use the crisis to make the regime more authoritarian. Manipulated from above, military hysteria and xenophobia had created the ground for an increased role for the security services and more macho rule. Frightened Duma deputies immediately endorsed restrictions […] apparently ready to endorse anything to please the president" (Shevtsova 2003: 256). Two years after the events at the Dubrovka Theater, dozens of armed rebels who were later identified as Islamic separatists held over a thousand hostage, including more than 750 children, in a school gymnasium mined with explosives in Beslan, North Ossetia. Mirroring the government's response to Dubrovka, Russian security forces stormed the school and exchanges of gunfire and explosions continued for days, leaving over 300 dead, of which 186 were children, and over 800 wounded. Russia's deadliest terrorist attack was cited as the pretext for comprehensive political and electoral reform aimed at shoring up the power vertical: fundamental restructuring of all levels of government was required to create a single system of authority and prevent state fragmentation or wholesale collapse (White and Kryshtanovskaya 2011).

During Putin's tenure as president, "each terrorist attack prompted a further […] centralization of political power," and he ultimately "centralized power more than some would have" (Treisman 2011: 110, 108). In contrast to the course of action that other leaders might have pursued, Putin elected to capitalize on domestic security events that were well beyond his control, but also lent themselves to Putin's machinations. Putin transformed into a "wartime leader with astronomic popularity" based on a string of

terrorist attacks during his tenure as Prime Minister and then President: Russia was shaken by the apartment bombings in three cities in 1999 that killed more than 200, the Moscow theater hostage crisis in 2002 in which more than 120 perished, a suicide bombing at a military hospital in North Ossetia in 2003 that killed 50, an explosion in a train in southern Russia that killed 46 just five months after the suicide bombing, another suicide bombing that killed about 40 in the Moscow metro in 2004 just two months after the train explosion in the south, an attack on an interior ministry building in the republic of Ingushetia in 2004 in which 92 perished, a simultaneous attack on two Russian commercial airliners that killed 90 three months after the events in Ingushetia, and, finally, the worst terror attack that Russia has experienced, the Beslan school hostage crisis in 2004 that killed over 300 people, mostly children (Treisman 2011: 93).

The public already stood firmly behind Putin and United Russia due to high economic performance and because they feared for their personal security and believed current power holders were the best equipped to protect them, but the Kremlin also sought to enact changes that essentially institutionalized United Russia's position in the legislature and the center's dominance over the regions, which also reinforced the ruling party's strength. Putin leveraged the security situation to achieve domestic political objectives that fortified his own personal power and that of United Russia. For example, in the wake of the apartment bombings, the Kremlin introduced the law "On Political Parties" and other associated reforms that were sweeping in content and far ranging in their effect on political parties and the party system. Membership requirements pertaining to political parties were substantially increased and the regional distribution of party branches essentially prohibited regional parties from participating in elections. Regional governors were thus prevented from creating niche parties at the sub-national level that could be used to establish an independent base of power from the Kremlin. State financing of parties was introduced contingent on how well they performed in legislative elections, a reform undoubtedly designed to augment the position of Russia's largest parties, namely United Russia (Hale 2006).

After Beslan, the Kremlin traveled farther down the road of political centralization by leaps and bounds with two reforms, one aimed at bringing the regional governors into line and another that fundamentally altered the electoral system governing legislative elections. Regional governors were no longer to be appointed by direct election, but would instead be subject to presidential appointment, and dismissal. This significantly curtailed the power of regional executives and, coupled with changes to the electoral system, provided strong incentives for them to bandwagon with United Russia rather than risk their political power by supporting the opposition. Dramatic changes to the electoral system included the increase in the threshold for legislative representation from five to seven percent and the introduction of a purely proportional representation system for populating the State Duma. With parties monopolizing access to seats in the Duma through the party-list electoral formula, regional elites were no longer able to run as independents and challenge the Kremlin once in the legislature, but were instead forced to affiliate with national parties under the watchful eye of the Kremlin or remove themselves from national politics altogether.

Undoubtedly, other leaders would likely have reacted to the Beslan school hostage crisis differently: perhaps they would have been content with soaring presidential popularity and the ruling party's dominant position in the legislature and elected to merely tinker around the edges rather than pursue sweeping changes. Where other leaders may have seen repeated tragedy in the apartment bombings and hostage crises, Putin saw a political opportunity structure that progressively widened. He was resolute in his determination to shape the public narrative regarding the national security emergencies that occurred away from the idea that the country was actually less safe under his watch and toward the notion that a strong hand was needed from leaders with the political leeway necessary to successfully combat the enemies of the state and ensure the safety of the population. Paradoxically, each terrorist attack augmented Putin and United Russia's position rather than weakening it, which can be credited to Putin's political shrewdness in particular, indicating the degree to which Putin as a person critically shaped the Russian political system at several critical junctures. United Russia has therefore preserved its

strength due to auspicious circumstances owing to the economy and the security situation that provided a critical window of opportunity for the political leadership to act in ways that further reinforced United Russia's popularity and position.

The security environment intensified the effects of structural conditions, especially concerning ethnicity, on the strength of United Russia. Renewed conflict in the powder keg of Russia that had also spread into the heartland on several occasions created an environment ripe for Kremlin control and manipulation. The public's support of a strong hand, as evidenced through numerous public opinion surveys, provided the central authorities with a firm mandate to bring the Caucasus, and ethnic republics in general, back into line using virtually any means necessary. When legislative elections rolled around, the Kremlin leveraged the center's increased penetration of the ethnic republics as a result of the precarious security environment to capture electoral windfalls through political machines organized around shared ethnicity and methods of manipulation to signal political dominance. With each terrorist attack that the Kremlin links to the Caucasus, the Kremlin enjoys a renewed rationale for political intervention on behalf of the ruling party during elections.

In addition to the seemingly unending string of terrorist attacks during Putin's tenure, color revolutions in bordering countries, namely Georgia in 2003 and Ukraine in 2004, encouraged the centralization of power and shaped the regime's repressive response to political opposition. A high-level politician argued, the "color revolutions have influenced Russian politics because Putin saw that [the] possibility existed [for] him to lose power. What happened in Ukraine and Georgia allowed Putin to clamp down more. The regime became stronger and stronger [through] the Law on Parties and the election law" (Senior Official in Yabloko's National Organization 2011). The color revolutions in particular reinforced Putin's desire to build a dominant party, which could be used as an instrument to increase political control and marginalize the opposition, mitigating incentives to organize against the regime. The combination of domestic terror attacks and color revolutions occurring in Russia's backyard galvanized the already highly motivated Putin to "build a pyramid of power with controls [operating] at a high

place. Only he himself controls all areas of our lives, he and his people around him, […] and United Russia is an instrument of this" (*Ibid*). Without a robust ruling party, Putin's regime would be more vulnerable to overthrow via a popular uprising and, as a result, Putin has invested considerable resources in United Russia to ensure that his regime does not go the way of Shevardnadze's in Georgia.

Structural Conditions

United Russia leverages structural conditions to the party's benefit by engaging in subtle but systemic and widespread forms of manipulation involving the politics of ethnic minorities and the countryside using patronage-based relationships and organized pressure to vote. The contingent factors discussed above therefore exacerbate structural conditions. The ability of the party of power in Russia to maintain its strength hinges on controlling areas with geographically concentrated ethnic minorities and those in the countryside exclusively, and that strength is compromised when it is unable to monopolize these avenues, either due to insufficient capacity and resources or other domestic political contingencies.

Ethnicity

Like dominant parties in other authoritarian regimes, United Russia has maintained a toolbox containing various instruments that can be employed to preserve power, key among them are engaging in forms of manipulation carried out by local political machines through patronage-based voter mobilization (Schedler 2002). Vast resource endowments bolsters ruling parties' capacity to engage in reliable patronage-based relationships, in which the party delivers political and economic benefits in exchange for the delivery of electoral support. Various resources of the state, such as administrative capital and hyper-incumbency advantages, are leveraged to achieve partisan ends by allowing the dominant party to engage in widespread clientelism targeted at specific social groups (Greene 2007).

In the context of ethnic federalism, ethnic minorities may be predisposed to engage in patronage-based arrangements because the ruling party may fear ethnic-based autonomy movements or challenges to their political control from these areas. Enshrined

through ethnofederalism, ethnicity is prioritized and politicized, and when given such pride of place, demands from ethnic groups may increase and ultimately result in secessionist conflict (Snyder 2000). Sweeping autonomy from the center increases the administrative and infrastructural capacity of ethnic regions or states, as well as bargaining position vis-à-vis the central government, allowing local elites to make more credible threats of secession or conflict on a lesser scale because potential seceders have extensive experience with home rule (Treisman 1997). Examples of secessionist conflicts in the presence of ethnofederal structures have occurred in Nigeria, Ethiopia, Myanmar and Russia (Deiwiks 2011). For these reasons, ruling parties face strong incentives to inflate electoral support in specific areas as a demonstration of political strength against potential challenges (Simpser 2013; Goodnow, Moser and Smith 2012). Dominant parties can exploit vote shares, "far beyond the victory threshold and in excess of any plausible safety margin," secured in potentially unruly areas, in other words those least likely to support the dominant party genuinely, as a credible threat to other truculent regions or states (Simpser 2013: 1). Unbelievably high vote shares communicate to others crucial information about the party's capacity, for example, the resources at the party's disposal to either reward supporters or punish defectors (Simpser 2013). In areas with geographically concentrated ethnic minorities, dominant parties may seek to "maximize votes rather than treating votes as simply being instrumental to winning […] by winning with huge margins of victory the [party] is more capable of creating an image of invincibility" (Magaloni 2006: 231). From the perspective of the dominant party, an image of invincibility is achieved most powerfully when the party's vote shares in these areas reach levels that cannot be mistaken for genuine support. Therefore, the dominant party faces strong incentives to inflate electoral support to implausibly high levels, rather than merely padding their vote share by a few percentage points.

Ethnic minorities in various countries and regions are frequently organized around deeply embedded and widespread ethnic networks and heavily influenced by local ethnic elites, better positioning them to carry out voter mobilization. Hierarchical social organizations headed by co-ethnics in the form of tribal chiefs, village elders, or clan

leaders prescribe loyalty and deference from co-ethnics in exchange for the distribution of resources to group members, augmenting the power and influence of local elites in everyday affairs as well as during elections. For example, in exchange for the dispensation of jobs, promotions, contracts, living supplies, and so on, from powerful co-ethnic patrons or "bosses," members of such ethnic networks will return the favor at election time by voting for the party specified by the local ethnic elite. The dominant party and ethnic elites in these areas make a grand bargain that ensures the party's continued dominance in the legislature and guarantees ethnic elites continued political power and economic resources in exchange. The state may therefore prioritize ethnicity due to the role of political machines in ethnic areas.

Ethnic minorities are an especially important "constituency" for dominant parties because local ethnic elites can mobilize and pressure large swaths of voters at election time using and make a credible promise to deliver votes exclusively to the ruling party. Although other local elites may wish to curry favor with the dominant party to gain access to the vast resources at its disposal, more horizontal forms of social organization prevent these political actors from making similarly credible promises. One political analyst argued that such electoral machinations are "easy" to carry out in "such regions like the Caucasus, like some so-called national republics, Mordovia, Bashkortostan, Tatarstan, and so on. But in Moscow, in St. Petersburg, in Nizhny Novgorod, Omsk, Novosibirsk, even Stavropol or Krasnodar, it is much more difficult," chiefly because the population is comprised primarily of ethnic Russians (Senior Political Analyst at INDEM Foundation 2011).

Clearly, voter mobilization increases turnout, but not necessarily to levels that would provoke suspicions of electoral manipulation in and of itself. The primary effect of voter mobilization through political machines is thus that the votes are channeled to one party rather than scattered across many, while the effects on turnout vary according to the capacity of the machines. For dominant parties, support from ethnic minorities has a multiplier effect because the party channels resources accrued through its cozy relationship with the state through the most effective mechanism for churning out the

vote or engaging in clientelism, i.e. ethnic-based social organizations. Political machines in these areas thus multiply the effects of the dominant party's distribution of resources. Therefore, while dominant parties have the will to ensure high levels of support from ethnic minority areas, local ethnic elites have the way.

Political machines may be important electoral resources for dominant parties when "a form of proportional representation is employed [because] more votes […] translate into more seats" (Magaloni 2006: 231). Since dominant parties "seek to control constitutional change and to set the basic rules of the game," ruling parties often need "oversized" legislative majorities in order to amend the constitution without constructing coalitions with opposition parties (*Ibid*). Political machines entrenched in various local communities can thus augment the dominant party's national vote share considerably and help the party either attain or preserve its constitutional majority by delivering large numbers of votes to the party at election time. However, in cases where the party would have won a sizable majority even in a clean vote, the ruling party's genuine aim may not be collecting votes to reach the promised land of a constitutional majority in the legislature, but rather to signal political supremacy "to deter and preempt potential challenges to their rule—to nip opposition in the bud, so to speak" (Simpser 2013: 5). Whether political machines are used to achieve a constitutional majority or to signal dominance depends on where they operate and the likelihood that the ruling party will reach an overwhelming majority in the election without their assistance.

Urbanization

Similar more subtle forms of manipulation, notably organized pressure to vote, operate in the countryside and further undergird dominant party strength. Rather than following ethnic lines, those living in rural areas are often organized around their employment in large-scale farms or other agricultural enterprises, the owners and managers of which control future employment, job promotions, and access to basic provisions and social services that may be difficult to acquire outside urban centers. Many rural areas, especially in transitional economies, are essentially "one-company towns, characterized by the presence of a large employer in a local labor market. In spite

of their name, one-company towns are not […] urban agglomerations […] In all cases, the company accounts for a substantial share of the jobs in the town and those who […] work for the company depend on it to make a living. If the company were to cease its operations, the one-company town could easily become a ghost town" (Rama and Scott 1999: 185). Due to lack of education, low skills, low wages, and geographical impediments, workers in the countryside are relatively immobile, making them highly vulnerable to employer influence (Rama and Scott 1999: 194). Presumably, employer influence increases as the size of the company increases relative to that of the town. Especially in countries with a history of state-led planning and state ownership, one-company towns are more widespread and are found in relatively isolated areas, compared to their industrial counterparts (Rama and Scott 1999: 186). Company towns that were fostered as a result of central planning are typically "inefficient and overstaffed," making these enterprises significantly more dependent on the central government for continued operation (*Ibid*). The ruling party can threaten company towns with closure if votes are not delivered in massive quantities at election time and employers are well positioned to pressure workers to vote accordingly. In short, the countryside is "dependent on [the federal] chiefs" and therefore votes for the ruling party are concentrated there (Senior Political Analyst at INDEM Foundation 2011).

Furthermore, dominant parties pursue electoral windfalls via organized pressure to vote in rural areas due to a lack of oversight. Particularly in large countries, political parties and international election observation missions frequently lack the resources and personnel necessary to conduct widespread observation outside of urban centers and ensure rural workers are not coerced to vote collectively for a specific party. Because of limitations on observers, dominant parties are free in the countryside to conduct elections as they always have, making its control of rural votes one of its "greatest electoral advantages" (Brooker 2009: 240). A close observer of Russian politics commented with regard to the possibility of United Russia harvesting high vote shares from urban areas compared to the countryside: "the more [located] in the city, the more difficult it is to do" because of the presence of election monitors (Senior Political Analyst at INDEM

Foundation 2011). Some political parties and international agencies have "enough people who are able to control elections in cities and towns, not in [the] countryside, but in cities and towns without any doubts" (*Ibid*). Therefore, dynamics prevailing in the countryside allow these areas to be leveraged to the exclusive advantage of the dominant party.

Research Design

Election-by-Election Framework

I engage in an in-depth analysis of each Russian legislative election from 1995 through 2011 to investigate dominant party strength and opposition party weakness. A discrete analysis allows for full consideration of the unique aspects of each election and reveals the arc of United Russia's electoral trajectory in the 2000s and 2010s. Although important continuities endured across elections, notably the two elections in the 1990s under Yeltsin and the three contests in the 2000s and 2010s under Putin, equally important differences within the Yeltsin and Putin eras manifested and may be concealed if the elections were consolidated. Table 3.1 displays the discrete essence of each election.

Table 3.1: Distinctiveness of Russian Legislative Elections, 1995-2011

Election Year	Overarching Picture of Election
1995	Competitive, but Chaotic
1999	Transitional
2003	Birth of United Russia
2007	United Russia's Apex
2011	Dominant Party Decay

To highlight some of the most significant characteristics distinguishing each election: the 1995 election was the first conducted according to the constitutionally-stipulated schedule and occurred in the absence of an effective party of power, thus offering opposition parties the best chances at electoral success. The party system was incredibly weak and fragmented, as 43 parties and electoral blocs vying for seats in the Duma in the

party-list tier. Opposition parties benefitted from the fact that the 1995 election was the most competitive in Russia's short post-communist history.

The 1999 election differed from 1995 because it was a transitional contest that bridged the Yeltsin and Putin eras and included two potential parties of power, Fatherland-All Russia and Unity, the latter publicly supported by Putin. This contest thus roughly demarcated the beginning of the Putin era from that of Yeltsin in the Russian political arena. Additionally, aside from the fact that there were two parties competing for the party of power prize, the outcome of the final election in the 1990s was far from a foregone conclusion because, as the landslide winner of the 1995 election, the Communist Party (KPRF) remained a formidable opponent to both Fatherland-All Russia and Unity. Ultimately, despite widespread predictions of a Fatherland or Unity triumph, it was neither potential party of power that won the 1999 election, but the KPRF.

The 2003 election marked the first occasion that the newly formed United Russia entered the electoral fray as the clear frontrunner after Fatherland-All Russia and Unity merged immediately following the 1999 contest. United Russia demonstrated its electoral prowess with a stunning victory and opposition parties were forced into submission under the weight of the quickly consolidating dominant party.

United Russia reached its apex in the 2007 election by capturing electoral windfalls in areas that previously served as opposition party strongholds and engaging in widespread electoral manipulation. The dominant party won close to a two-thirds vote share in the new purely proportional representation system in 2007.

The most recent Duma election in 2011 witnessed a reversal of the trend of increasing dominant party vote shares in legislative contests: United Russia's vote share declined to roughly half of all votes cast and opposition parties made some inroads into dominant party territory, challenging United Russia's near universal dominance that had prevailed in the previous election. Thus, treating each legislative contest separately rather than grouping elections together by era enhances variation between elections within the same era.

Data and Variables

To investigate dominant party strength and opposition party fragility by pinpointing the party of power and opposition parties' strongholds in legislative elections, I leverage an original dataset combining fine-grained, raion-level and region-level information to investigate dominant party strength and opposition party fragility by pinpointing the geographic strongholds of various opposition parties and the party of power in five legislative elections.

Parties of Interest

This study is limited to parties that contested each of the five elections examined, except for substitution in the parties of power, and crossed the threshold for legislative representation in each election year, except for Yabloko in the 2000s and 2010s. Despite the party's failure to gain representation in the three most recent legislative elections, as the archetypal liberal party in post-communist Russia, Yabloko's political trajectory is integral to the development and evolution of the party system, especially given its disappearance from the political scene once United Russia rose to power. In 1995, electoral support for the following parties is analyzed: the KPRF, LDPR, Yabloko, and Our Home is Russia. In 1999, the core party troika (KPRF, LDPR, and Yabloko) remains and the failed party of power from the previous contest, Our Home is Russia, is replaced by the two competing parties of power, Unity and Fatherland-All Russia. In the 2003, 2007 and 2011 elections (after Unity and Fatherland-All Russia's merger), the core party troika is analyzed alongside the dominant party, i.e. United Russia.

Dependent Variable: Electoral Strongholds

The dependent variable is electoral strongholds at the raion level for opposition parties and the party of power or dominant party competing in the 1995, 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 legislative elections. Party strongholds have been measured in myriad fashions in various regional contexts: partisan candidates winning every election in a given constituency for a decade (Keefer and Khamenei 2009), winning one election with a clear majority (Erdmann 2007), or winning at least 70% in the previous two contests (Wantchekon 2003) under a single-member district formula. However, measures of party strongholds formulated in single-mandate contexts travel unsuccessfully to electoral

systems employing proportional representation because it is more relevant the districts where each party performed unusually well, relative to its performance elsewhere, than which party (or parties' candidates) "won" a given district across multiple elections.

Since I am interested in political parties rather candidates and Russian elections to the State Duma are currently governed by pure proportional representation, I measure party strongholds based on high vote shares at the raion level, operationalized dichotomously. Rather than using more arbitrary electoral performance thresholds to identify party strongholds, such as 70 or 80% vote shares, empirically-grounded measures of the dependent variable are employed and capture different degrees of raion-level party strength based on unusually high vote shares. I exercise two distinct measures of party stronghold in the statistical analysis for each party. First, a raion is classified as a stronghold for a particular party when the party's vote share is at least one standard deviation above the party's raion-level national average. This threshold ensures that support for the party was sufficiently strong compared to its average level of support, and that an adequate number of strongholds exist in the data to secure meaningful and robust results. Second, a raion is classified as a stronghold for a particular party when the party's vote share is at least two standard deviations above its raion-level national average. Compared to the lower threshold, this higher measure is significantly stricter and requires truly extraordinary electoral success in a given raion. Although the strict threshold reduces the number of strongholds, employing a second measure of the dependent variable is essential because it facilitates the evaluation of the sensitivity of the results to different measures of the dependent variable. The statistical models are specified first using the relaxed threshold, and then re-specified using the strict measure. Raion-level electoral results from the five legislative elections under investigation were collected from the Central Election Commission of Russia's website.

There are several advantages to examining party strongholds, rather than leveraging party vote share in its continuous form. First, strongholds are assessed at the raion level and therefore offer a unique avenue of inquiry into Russian elections that are most frequently examined at the national and regional level of analysis. Strongholds thus

provide a novel and more fine-grained instrument with which to investigate various contours in Russian elections. Second, strongholds are well-suited indicators of the relative success of different parties and allow for the geographic pinpointing of that success. Rather than simply charting and explaining levels of success for various parties at the national or regional level across legislative elections, strongholds facilitate the identification of the diverse locations of opposition parties' success relative to their own performance at the national level. Third and related, strongholds reveal more fully the variance within smaller parties that fail to cross the threshold for legislative representation, e.g. the liberal Yabloko party that remained afloat in the 1990s but was woefully incapable of surpassing the threshold in 2003, 2007 and 2011 and was thus confined to the extra-parliamentary political wilderness. Although Yabloko received comparatively minuscule vote shares at the national level, strongholds highlight how the party's ability to preserve their pockets of support changes over time and help identify where the party could reap a better harvest in future elections. Moreover, strongholds reveal the variance within the more formidable opposition parties and can explain where and when long-standing constituencies were preserved or, conversely, lost irreparably to other parties, e.g. the large-scale dealignment of the countryside from the Communists in favor of United Russia in the 2000s. The analytical utility of strongholds is thus wide-ranging and leveraged fully in this investigation of Russian legislative elections.

Independent Variables: Explaining Variation in Electoral Outcomes for Various Parties

Ethnic Composition

To examine the contours of support for the aforementioned parties, I use raion- and regional-level data. At the raion level, data on ethnic composition are available through the 2002 All-Russian National Census, the first conducted in post-communist Russia. Ethnic composition is measured in three continuous variables: first, with an aggregate measure of percent ethnic minority, and, second and third, with two disaggregated variables that refine the percent minority variable by measuring percent titular minority and percent other minority. Percent other minority measures non-titular

minority populations, such as Indo-Europeans or other small ethnic groups, the Avars, Dargins, and Kumyks in Dagestan, for example.

Urbanization

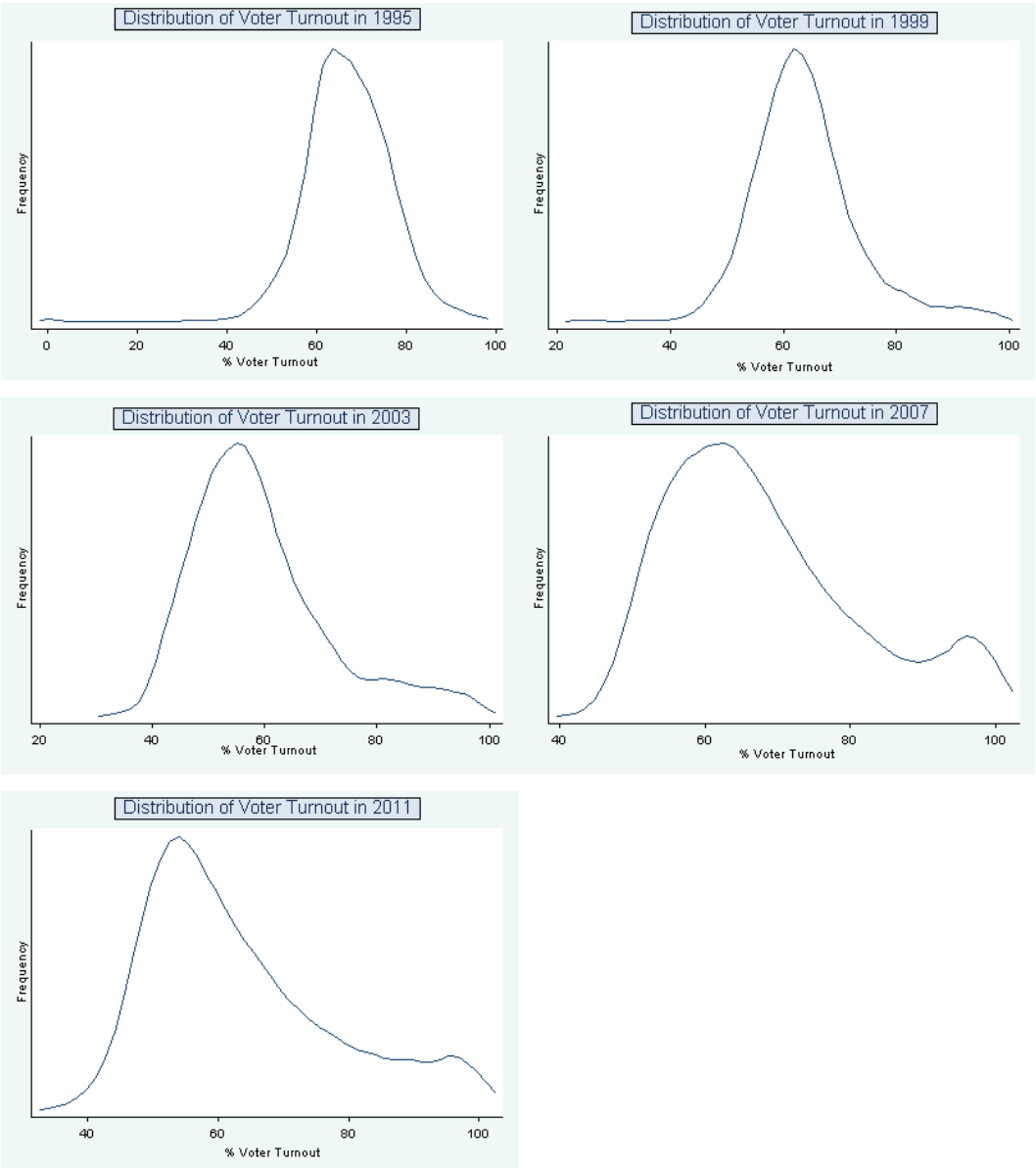
Raion-level urbanization data are available from the Russian Federal Service of State Statistics (Rosstat) and measure the percentage of the rural population in each raion.

Electoral Manipulation

My data include a raion-level dichotomous variable measuring the occurrence of electoral manipulation indirectly by assessing whether the reported turnout at the raion level was at least one standard deviation above the raion-level national turnout average. This threshold for suspected manipulation ensures that positively coded raions were outliers in electoral participation. Coding suspected fraud at the lowest level of analysis can expose meaningful patterns that might be concealed if assessed only at the sub-national level. Despite the competitiveness of the elections in the 1990s, the fraud variable is included in the quantitative analysis to preserve continuity in model specification across elections. Measuring electoral manipulation based on reported results is suitable for my purposes because turnout data are available across all legislative elections, facilitating the investigation of cross-sectional differences at the raion and regional level within elections and as well as different forms of variation across elections. Furthermore, reported results offer a more systematic method of operationalization, particularly when compared to relying on potentially biased grievances filed by private citizens and reporting from election observers, who are unevenly spread throughout the country (Lehoucq 2003; Moser and White 2013). Admittedly, using reported results does not capture all forms of electoral manipulation, such as denying opposition parties ballot access based on questionable legal reasoning or flooding government-controlled media with favorable coverage of the party of power's party-list candidates. Nevertheless, using data collected from official results offers the most appropriate avenue to evaluate how the general pattern of electoral manipulation maps onto the geographic and social distribution of party strongholds because reported results do not suffer from obvious partisan bias that may cause instances of electoral malfeasance to be severely over- or under-reported.

In adopting this strategy of measuring fraud indirectly, I follow examples provided by recent scholarship on electoral fraud in Russia, such as those supplied by Myagkov, et al. (2009), Mebane and Kalinin (2009, 2010) and Goodnow, Moser and Smith (2012). Unrealistically high voter turnout may be an indirect indicator of electoral malfeasance, such as ballot stuffing or machine politics-based voter mobilization, especially in the absence of mandatory voting (Myagkov, et al. 2009, Reisinger and Moraski, 2002, 2008). Accordingly, augmented turnout "would be expected to be a more significant potential factor in [elections] in countries where voting is voluntary, or where compulsory voting laws are […] weakly enforced" (Nichter 2008: 29). Figure 3.1 compares the distributions of voter turnout in the 1990s with the 2000s and 2010s. Although the distribution of voter turnout across raions ought to follow a normal or Gaussian distribution if the data are roughly homogenous and outliers are the result of uncorrelated or random factors, the distributions from those elections that occurred in the United Russia era reveal suspiciously elongated right tails and distinct peaks, or local maxima, large enough to produce virtually bimodal distributions, strongly suggesting inflated turnout. (Myagkov, et al. 2009: 31).

Figure 3.1: Comparison of the Distribution of Voter Turnout in the 1990s with the 2000s and 2010s



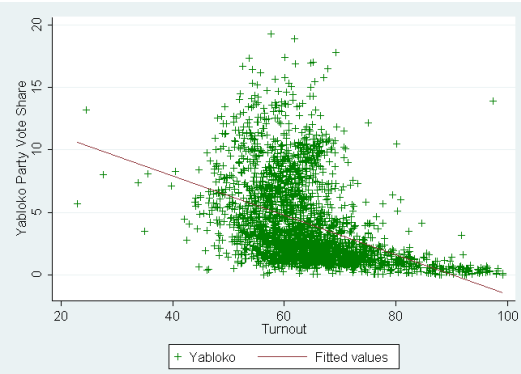
Clearly, using high voter turnout to measure electoral manipulation does not take into account similar types of malfeasance that may have the opposite effect, i.e. depressing rather than inflating turnout (Cox and Kousser 1981). Although the secret ballot allows political parties to reward voters who support opposing parties to abstain from voting, a dominant party faces significantly stronger incentives to inflate turnout for reasons

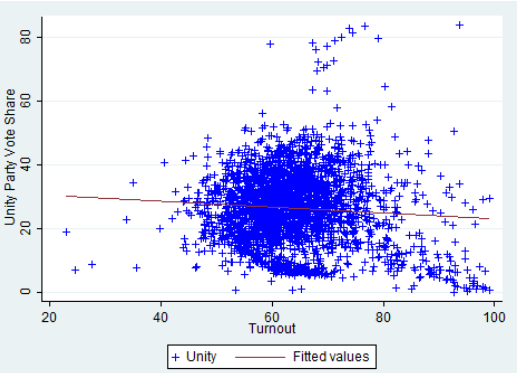
previously cited. Additionally, if voter turnout were deflated en masse, suspicious fat tails and peaks on the left sides of the distributions of voter turnout would be observable in Figure 3.1.

As noted by Myagkov, et al. (2009), the association between turnout and a party's share of the electorate ought to be "logical": with other conditions remaining equal, increases in turnout should not drastically revise parties' vote shares, or at least specific parties should not suffer from higher participation (31). If more voters go to the polls, the distribution of voters supporting each party should not change in the absence of nefarious practices driving only selected segments of the electorate to the voting booths in droves and presuming something akin to the law of large numbers operates (Myagkov et al. 2009: 83). But in the Russian case, particularly since 2000, "numerous cases of ballot stuffing [and] falsification of results" has coincided with the soaring "number of localities and regions with implausibly high turnout and support for the incumbent, and the distributions of results [shown in Figure 3.1] have become quite bizarre from a statistical point of view" (Treisman 2011: 348). As demonstrated in Figures 3.2-3.6, comparatively high turnout disproportionately benefitted the parties with the most robust organizational infrastructures and capacities for patronage, while other parties' vote shares either remained stable or precipitously declined with increases in turnout. Disproportionate electoral gain from high voter turnout strongly suggests methods of manipulation were practiced, such as ballot stuffing or the illicit changing of results protocols, especially given that other raions in the same country or even the same region reported much more limited turnout (Moser and White 2013).

Figure 3.2: Voter Turnout and Party Vote Shares in 1995

Figure 3.3: Voter Turnout and Party Vote Shares in 1999





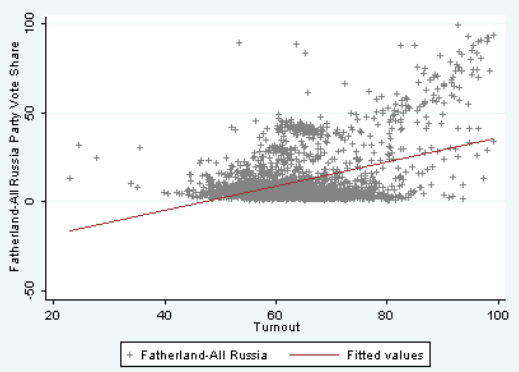


Figure 3.4: Voter Turnout and Party Vote Shares in 2003

Figure 3.5: Voter Turnout and Party Vote Shares in 2007

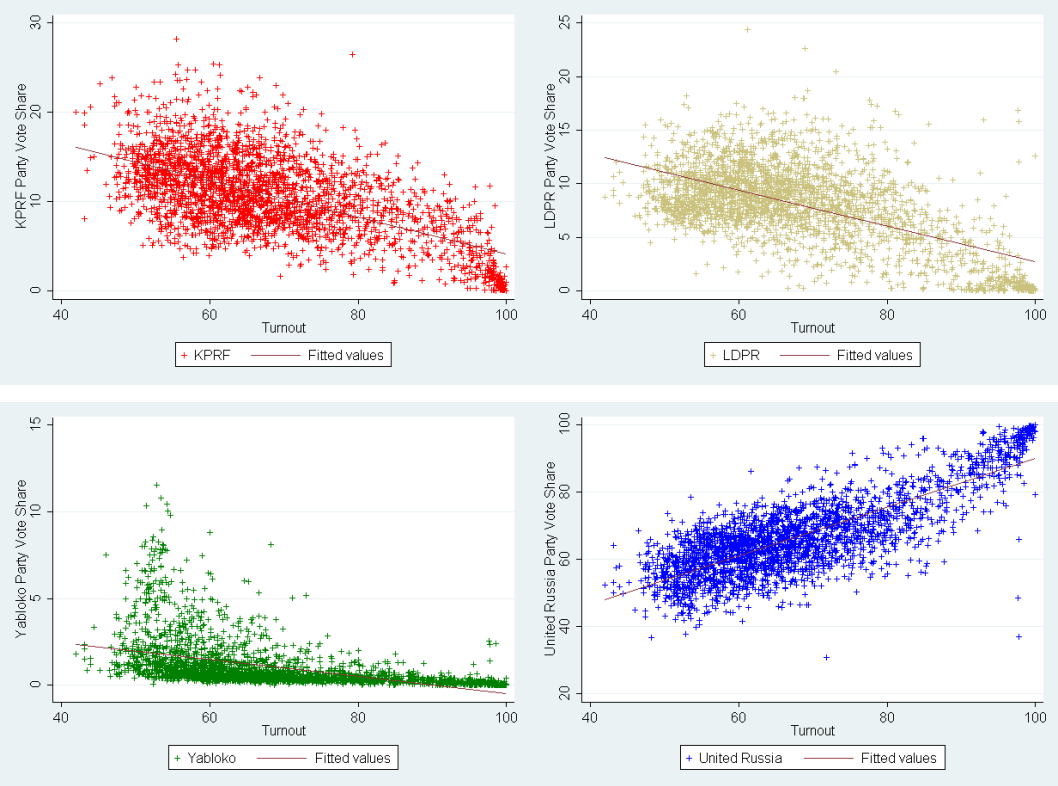
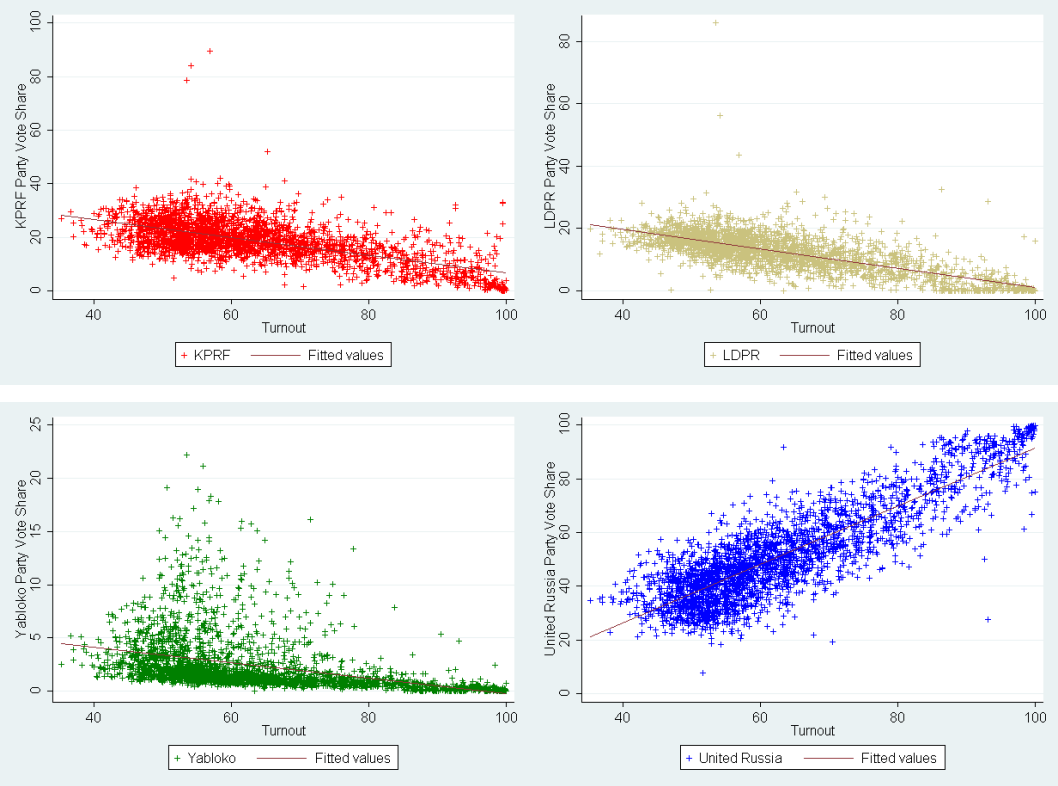


Figure 3.6: Voter Turnout and Party Vote Shares in 2011



Evaluating the impact of fraud, even in the context of the generally competitive elections in the 1990s, allows me to test arguments suggesting that opposition parties are uniformly affected by incumbent party strategies. It is crucial to assess whether, and to what extent, opposition parties were disadvantaged by electoral manipulation well before the rise of a successful dominant party engaging in widespread fraud. Moreover, the relationship between party strongholds and suspected malfeasance during the Yeltsin era necessitates elucidation to determine whether even a comparatively weak party of power benefitted from unusually high turnout. The extent of both illicit electoral activity and the advantage gained by the party of power in the 1990s are expected to be comparatively limited in relation to legislative elections under United Russia in the 2000s.

Ethnic Republic Status

Supplementing the three raion level independent variables are a variety of regional-level variables highlighting contextual characteristics. A region's status as

federal ethnic republic as opposed to a Russian federal region is indicated. Russia's ethnofederal structure divides its 83 subjects or regions as follows: 46 oblasts, nine krais, two federal cities (Moscow and St. Petersburg), 21 republics, four autonomous okrugs and one autonomous oblast. The 26 subjects named after a non-Russian ethnic group are drawn from the republics, autonomous okrugs and the Jewish Autonomous Oblast. Thus, the oblasts and krais have predominantly ethnic Russian populations while primarily ethnic minorities populate the republics and autonomous okrugs.

Muslim Region

A refinement of the ethnic republic status variable is included that indicates whether an ethnic republic has a majority-Muslim population.

Location in the Caucasus

A third dichotomous variable assesses whether a region is located in the Caucasus.

Economic Development and Resource Dependence

A region's level of economic development is evaluated by gross regional product. Additionally, regions are classified as resource regions based on the percentage of regional economies based on natural resource exports, as provided by Bradshaw (2006). Together, these two variables provide an indirect measure of socioeconomic welfare. Raion-level data on socioeconomic indicators, such as income, unemployment or occupation, are not readily available for analysis, but gross regional product and resource dependence serve reasonably well for the purpose of pinpointing the general socioeconomic contours of party support.

Analysis

To analyze opposition party and dominant party (or party of power) support, I specify a series of multilevel logistic models, using maximum likelihood estimation, that relate the varying proportions of ethnic and rural populations at the raion level and contextual characteristics at the regional level to the probability that a stronghold will occur for the given party under consideration. A multilevel model is well-suited for this analysis, given Russia's federal structure and the corresponding hierarchical properties of

the data. There are two levels of analysis considered: raion (level-1), and region (level-2); thus, raions are nested within regions. As mentioned, the level-1 predictors of electoral support are ethnicity (measured in three variables), urbanization and electoral manipulation, and the level-2 predictors are ethnic republic, Muslim region, Caucasus location, gross regional product and resource region. The number of level-1 units is approximately 2,700, but may be fewer in some elections due to missing data and some redistricting over time. Although raion boundaries are relatively static geographically, some redistricting is evident in the data, as demonstrated by raion name changes. To ensure comparability and maintain the continuity of raions across legislative elections, raions that were apparently subject to redistricting measures have been omitted from the analysis. Thus, only raions that preserved the identical name and therefore the same geographic definition across the five legislative elections under analysis are included. At level-2, there are 89 regional units in 1995, 1999 and 2003. Since 2005, a series of mergers have left 83 regions in toto: Perm Oblast and the Komi-Permyak Autonomous Okrug merged to create Perm Krai in 2006; in 2007, Taimur and Evenk Autonomous Okrugs were absorbed by Krasnoyarsk Krai, and Kamchatka Oblast and Koryak Autonomous Okrug merged to form Kamchatka Krai; finally, one year later, the Ust-Orda Buryat Autonomous Okrug was incorporated into Irkutsk Oblast, and Zabaikal Krai was formed via the merger of the Aga-Buryat Autonomous Okrug with Chita Oblast (Petrov 2011: 68). I employ a random intercept multilevel model, which allows the intercept to vary across the level-2, or regional, units. In this model, each region may have a different level of party support. I am therefore able to elucidate relationships between variables measured at different levels of a hierarchical structure and test their varying impact on the outcome of interest. The inclusion of cross-level interaction variables allows me to assess how the macro regional context affects the influence of a variable at the more micro raion level.

The following model, presented below in system-of-equations form, is specified for the first type of region, ethnic vs. non-ethnic, using the aggregate percent minority variable:

Level 1: $logit(Pr(Y_{ij} = 1)) = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}(\text{percent minority})_{ij} + \beta_{2j}(\text{percent rural})_{ij} + \beta_{3j}(\text{electoral manipulation})_{ij} + r_{ij}$

Level 2: $\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{10}(\text{ethnic region})_j + u_{0j}$

$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} + \gamma_{11}(\text{ethnic region})_j$

$\beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20} + \gamma_{21}(\text{ethnic region})_j$

$\beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30}$

Above, the left side of the equation is the probability that the dependent variable is equal to one rather than zero for the party under consideration, indicating a party stronghold for a raion *i* at level-1 located within region *j* at level-2. β_{1j}, β_{2j} and β_{3j} are the coefficients for percent minority, percent rural, and electoral manipulation, respectively. These coefficients indicate the effect that a one percent increase in the minority and rural population, and the change from membership in the reference group to the indicator group of electoral manipulation, has on the log-odds of an opposition party stronghold. The error is divided into the variability between raions within a region (r_{ij}) and between regions (u_{0j}). In other words, u_{0j} is a random effect that accounts for the random variation at level-2, while r_{ij} is the level-1 error (Guo and Zhao 2000).

To avoid difficulties in interpretation that may arise when using untransformed coefficients in logistic regression, I have exponentiated the regression coefficients so that the independent variables influence the odds of the dependent variable, rather than retaining the logged odds format. Substantively, a coefficient of one represents even odds of a party stronghold, while a coefficient greater than one increases the odds and a coefficient less than one decreases the odds. Like the electoral manipulation variable at level-1, four out of five of the level-2 variables are dichotomous, i.e. ethnic republic, Muslim region, Caucasus location, and resource region; again a one-unit increase in these variables compares the odds of the indicator group (coded as 1) to the reference group (coded as zero).

In addition to the model presented above for each party of interest in each legislative election, I specify four other models that account for the remaining region-level independent variables, i.e. Muslim region, Caucasus location, economic

development, and resource region. I also re-specify the aforementioned series of models leveraging the more refined ethnic composition covariates, i.e. percent titular minority and percent other minority. For each model, I present multiple model fit indices, specifically, the likelihood ratio (LR) test statistic, the AIC and the Wald statistics. The multilevel model results for each party in each election are located in the Appendix.

Chapter 4: The 1995 Parliamentary Election: Fertile Ground for Opposition Party Success in a "Normal" but Chaotic Competitive Election

The 1995 election to the State Duma was the first to occur according to the constitutionally stipulated schedule, rather than as a political exigency following parliamentary dissolution, as was the case in 1993. The election occurred in the context of a relatively competitive party system, before the contours of the party system were largely determined by dueling potential parties of power in Unity and Fatherland-All Russia in the 1999 election, or evolved toward a hegemonic party system in the early 2000s with the emergence of United Russia. Despite the fact that the Kremlin's party of power, Our Home is Russia, was ineffectual compared to the remarkably successful United Russia in the 2000s and 2010s, the absence of an effective party of power did not engender a party system with several major parties, but rather one that was competitive but also highly fragmented and chaotic: 43 parties contested the legislative election and ultimately nearly half of the votes cast in the party list tier went to parties that failed to meet the threshold for legislative representation. Notwithstanding the gross proliferation of parties, this election furnished opposition parties with their first opportunity to compete in a "normal" election in post-Soviet Russia and also their best chance of establishing their respective niches in the electorate.

The 1995 election provides an optimal laboratory to assess how the opposition fared in a state with a vulnerable governing party by pinpointing the geographic strongholds of both the opposition and the party of power. A detailed examination of electoral support for numerous political parties in the most competitive context can shed light on why the character and strength of the opposition can foster the conditions ripe for a dominant party in the first place, as well as why specific types of opposition parties flounder when a hegemonic party becomes more consolidated. Furthermore, it is possible to assess whether an ineffective party of power, Our Home is Russia, initially sowed the seeds of dominant party strength that emerged in the 2000s with United Russia.

The 1995 Legislative Election in Context

The 1995 election proved a critical stepping-stone along the path of political development and democratization in post-Soviet Russia for numerous reasons. First, the election resulted in the first "constitutional transfer of power from one freely elected legislature to another," which helped consolidate the fledgling democracy because the winners took up their new positions in the Duma and the losers peaceably waited until the next opportunity in 1999, rather than attempting to overturn the results via extra-constitutional measures (Belin and Orttung 1997: 5).

Second, and related to the first, the 1995 elections were not postponed or cancelled, against the demands of numerous sitting Duma deputies who argued that a delay would give the legislature sufficient time to pass the necessary electoral laws before the upcoming contest (Bershidsky 1994). Other analysts believed that Yeltsin might postpone or cancel the contest because the prospects for pro-government parties appeared grim and a delay might allow reformist parties to wait out the nationalist fervor that emerged after the 1993 election (OSCE 1996). Thus, the fact that the elections occurred as scheduled signaled that political reform was progressing and the instability surrounding the 1993 elections would not reappear in 1995.

Third, the second legislative election since the collapse of the Soviet Union was free and fair. Numerous parties, many have argued too many, were permitted to compete and were at liberty to criticize the government and the party of power, Our Home is Russia. Although the KPRF's surprise first place finish was far from the result desired by supporters of continued reform and Western governments, the positive evaluation of the election itself by observation delegations suggested that the fledgling democracy was capable of conducting free and fair elections (*Ibid*). Surprisingly high voter turnout reversed the trend of declining participation in previous national elections, indicating that Russian society was not turning away from the political process en masse and that Russia's nascent democratic institutions were ripening gradually (*Ibid*).

Fourth, the elections to the State Duma acted as a dress rehearsal for the presidential contest in June 1996, just six months later, and thus served an important political purpose aside from electing the lower house by revealing Yeltsin's major

opponents, all of whom were Duma deputies (Belin and Orttung 1997). In this way, the legislative elections functioned akin to a presidential primary and signaled that the presidency was "up for grabs" (OSCE 1996: 12). Ultimately, the Communist victory in the 1995 elections catapulted KPRF-leader Zyuganov to the top of the presidential contenders list, calling into question the prospects for Yeltsin's reelection, and therefore also the possibility of continued political and economic reform. Nevertheless, the legislative election allowed Yeltsin an opportunity to assess the mood of the electorate prior to the presidential election and make explicit overtures to segments of society and opposition parties in an attempt to win their support the following June. Thus, the stakes of the 1995 election were extraordinarily high from a variety of perspectives.

Prior to the 1995 election, conflict was rife within the nascent Russian democracy. In the early 1990s, relations between the reformist President Yeltsin and the anti-reformist, Communist- and nationalist-controlled Congress of People's Deputies became increasingly fractious and produced a prolonged political standoff, culminating in President Yeltsin's order to dissolve parliament and use military force against the Russian White House in 1993, effectively ending the First Russian Republic. President Yeltsin used this decisive political victory to announce snap legislative elections and a popular referendum on his new draft constitution that thoroughly redistributed power within the constitutional framework towards the president, at the expense of the legislature. Leading up to the 1995 election, the political milieu combined the certainty of Yeltsin's bloody victory over the parliament and the codification of his 1993 draft constitution establishing a democratic form of government and multipartism, with the uncertainty produced by the unexpected nationalist victory in the 1993 snap elections, sparking fear of an emergent Weimar Russia that could capitalize on growing disillusionment with the reform process (Yanov 1995; Hanson and Kopstein 1997; Ryavec 1998). Indeed, the LDPR's unexpected success in the first post-communist election signaled that the emergence of anti-system parties and the strength of the protest vote should not be easily dismissed, as it was frequently during the emergence of Hitler's movement in Weimar Germany (Hanson 1998).

There was comparable uncertainty in the economic sphere, with the economy continuing to contract and eventually falling "below half the level of economic activity that had been recorded in the last years of communist rule" (White, Wyman and Oates 1997: 768). Inflation continued spiraling out of control and reached levels of upwards of a thousand percent, effectively eliminating individuals' savings accounts due to currency devaluation and price increases. Additionally, unemployment and the non-payment of wages affecting up to twenty percent of the population reinforced an environment of pervasive insecurity that spread throughout the country (White, Wyman and Oates 1997). Adjusted for inflation, average wages were merely 57% of the 1985 level and approximately $120 per month (Ingwerson 1995). The real GDP growth rate indicated severe economic shrinkage in 1995, with a reported figure of less than negative four percent (Wolf and Lang 2006). Furthermore, a prime mover in the economy and a main source of government revenue, Russian oil production was at an all-time low in 1995; the country produced just over six million barrels per day in the mid-1990s, compared to nearly ten million four years earlier (Cooper 2009).

The breadth and depth of both political and economic uncertainty framed the 1995 legislative election as a fundamental choice between staying the course of arduous economic reforms and the jump towards the free market, or jumping ship and embracing either a return to the past led by the Communists, or a new fascist future envisioned by the extreme nationalists (Wyman 1997). Despite Yeltsin's victory over the anti-reformist parliament in 1993, ideological polarization between reformers and anti-reformers continued to plague Russian politics and elections. The 1995 legislative election was therefore critical because the results would settle decisively the debate between these two opposing camps.

The new electoral law governing the 1995 election required each party and electoral bloc seeking votes in the parliamentary election to register with the Ministry of Justice six months prior to election day, a stricter waiting period than the zero waiting period operable two years prior in the snap election. In addition, each party needed to collect 200,000 signatures to register, in which no more than seven percent of signatures

could be from any one of the regions or republics. Compared to the previous regulations in place, these rules were substantially more stringent because they doubled the signature threshold and halved the requisite geographic distribution in the new law, which were intended to consolidate the party market by ensuring that only those parties with truly national presences would be able to contest the elections (Marsh 2002). Prior to the Duma settling on the 200,000-signature threshold, the KPRF had advocated for an even more demanding 500,000-signature requirement, hoping to leverage the regional infrastructure the party had acquired from the CPSU (Belin and Orttung 1997). The increased signature requirement had the unintended effect of creating a market for signatures, in which professional signature collectors would sell lists to parties. The price of signatures varied widely, between 500 and 14,000 rubles, or approximately ten cents to $3, based on how far in advance of the October deadline they were collected (Belin and Orttung 1997:59). Indeed, 16 of the 43 parties registered by the CEC received fewer than 200,000 votes on Election Day itself, strongly suggesting that their signatories were not genuine supporters (Marsh 2002). If the signatures were collected without the assistance of professional collectors, only twelve parties would have been represented on the ballot, according to one analyst (Belin and Orttung 1997).

The dizzying supply of parties that were seeking votes in the 1995 election led many to criticize the Ministry of Justice for registering the lot: the head of the Central Electoral Commission, Nikolai Ryabov, commented that the Ministry was "making a mockery of the system by allowing 'groups of rock-climbers and beekeepers'" to compete (Belin and Orttung 1997:56). Echoing CEC Chairman Ryabov's complaints concerning the number of parties in the competition, numerous politicians argued that the electoral law required amendment to bring the threshold for parliamentary representation down, lest the new Duma represent only the minority of the electorate (Belin and Orttung 1997). The fear was that the Duma's public legitimacy would be called into question if it represented a minority of voters and, on top of that, Yeltsin could leverage the fact that the legislature was unrepresentative to either dissolve the Duma or cancel the June presidential election (*Ibid*).

Another important innovation of the electoral law was that it enforced a limit on the proportion of candidates residing in the capital that were eligible to populate the party-lists, save for the top twelve candidates (Marsh 2002). This stipulation forced parties to cultivate ties with local politicians across dozens of regions rather than populating their party lists solely with capital dwellers. Save for the top 12 candidates, which constituted the "federal" part of the party list, the remaining candidates were to represent specific regions as part of the "regional" list, allowing for more regional influence in the party-list tier than might otherwise have been the case with predominantly Moscow-based political parties (Belin and Orttung 1997). Each party list was permitted to name up to 270 candidates in toto. Puzzlingly, the electoral law did not oblige candidates populating the regional portion of the party list to reside in the areas they claimed to represent and, subsequently, many regional candidates were found to live in the capital rather than in their "home" region (*Ibid*).

The voter turnout threshold was the subject of debate as well: Yeltsin favored increasing the 25% minimum turnout threshold that validated the 1993 snap elections to 50% but the Duma balked at the idea because the deputies were frightened that a citizenry uninterested in politics would invalidate the elections, providing Yeltsin with additional leverage to institute direct presidential rule (Belin and Orttung 1997: 26). Ultimately the Duma won the negotiation over the turnout threshold and the 25% minimum was preserved.

Campaign finance requirements obliged parties set up a temporary election account in the Russian Federation State Bank through which to transact all campaign expenditures, and the creation of an auditing service to monitor those accounts (OSCE 1996). Furthermore, restrictions on campaign finance and donations were established: parties were permitted to spend up to the equivalent of 100,000 minimum salaries in Russia, approximately $1.3 million, and a range of actors were prohibited from contributing to political parties, including foreign nationalist, local governments, charitable and religious organizations, military institutions, and state-owned enterprises (OSCE 1996: 5).

Continuity in the electoral law from 1993 to 1995 was maintained by preserving the five percent minimum threshold for parliamentary representation. The five percent hurdle was intended to consolidate the party system by either weeding out nonviable contenders or encouraging mergers between smaller parties into more cohesive electoral blocs. Although individuals were able to contest the election in the single-mandate tier, many politicians created their own parties to guarantee their personal success, which ultimately proved counterproductive for the agenda they purportedly supported and the party system writ large by grossly inflating the supply of parties (Belin and Orttung 1997:10).

Moreover, other changes concerning equal and free media time had a detrimental effect on party system consolidation. Governmental media outlets were required to provide free and equal airtime to all registered political parties by devoting two hours each day to political parties, with each party receiving an equal share (*Monitoring the Media Coverage of the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections Final Report,* 1996; OSCE 1996). Parties were, however, allowed to purchase additional media time in state-owned outlets (*Monitoring the Media Coverage of the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections Final Report,* 1996). State-owned media were prohibited from giving preference to any candidate, party, or political movement in their coverage of the campaign and election (*Ibid*).

Finally, each party received 115 million rubles (approximately $25,000) from the state to spend on the campaign, which encouraged parties with little or no chance of crossing the threshold for representation to throw their hats into the ring (Belin and Orttung 1997: 59). With free media time and public financing available to all, parties elected to go it alone rather than forming coalitions with other like-minded electoral blocs (Belin and Orttung 1997). Thus, various reforms concerning the media and the public financing of parties counteracted the potentially positive affect of the five percent hurdle for representation on party system consolidation. As mentioned, numerous parties and movements entered the political fray in 1995; the Central Election Commission ultimately registered 43 parties (up from 13 that competed in the 1993 snap election) to

compete for State Duma seats in the proportional representation tier of Russia's mixed electoral system. Collectively, the 43 parties fielded a total of 5,675 candidates on their lists (White, Wyman and Oates 1997).

Collectively, the registered parties offered a full spectrum of political ideologies and interests, stretching from far-right nationalists to hardcore leftist Stalinists and Communists. Following Belin and Orttung (1997), White, Wyman and Oates (1997), and Marsh (2002), I classify the emergent party system's developing ideological core in 1995 using a four-party taxonomy. I specifically highlight those parties featured in my quantitative analysis, i.e. the KPRF, the LDPR, Yabloko, and Our Home is Russia.

First, the communist-agrarian left offered the most orthodox array of parties in the post-Soviet context, of which the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF) was the most prominent. The KPRF boasted the well-developed organizational infrastructure and was the only party with a membership base of over half a million, both largely inherited from the former Communist Party of the Soviet Union (White, Wyman, and Kryshtanovskaya 1995). Indeed, the party's network of 20,000 branches at the regional and sub-regional level helped it collect the 200,000 signatures required for registration in only one week (Belin and Orttung 1997: 43).

The 1995 legislative elections offered the Communists their last opportunity to run on a largely rejectionist program because numerous policy platforms articulated by the party would become moot over the course of time; for example, the likelihood that the Soviet Union would be refashioned dwindled rapidly and economic recovery would eventually take hold under the leadership of the reformist camp (Sakwa 1998). Domestically, the KPRF sought to reverse market-oriented reforms, reestablish the state's active involvement in the economy by renationalizing vital economic sectors, such as natural resources, and guaranteeing social services for workers. Although the party advocated for a greater role of the state in the national economy, the KPRF alleged to support a type of mixed economy (OSCE 1996). The KPRF targeted appeals at those who had lost in the course of drastic economic reform leading to a market economy and were concerned about corruption resulting from the botched privatization process and the

unbridled confusion that permeated society at the time (OSCE 1996). Surprisingly though, the party did not devote significant attention to workers' rights, although it firmly established its support of Marxism in its policy platform (Oates 1998). The party's decision to trim the attention paid to workers in its platform and broaden its concentrated emphasis on narrow class interests was a deliberate attempt to court the majority of the Russian people, rather than electoral niches (Sakwa 1998). The KPRF also harnessed popular nostalgia for the past, which manifested as a direct consequence of the Yeltsin administration's aggressive agenda for political and economic reform and produced widespread tumult (Marsh 2002). Internationally, the party was the most pro-Slavic, seeking to eliminate Western influence in domestic and international affairs, to pursue a Russophilic foreign policy, and to restore the former Soviet Union in some fashion and "by voluntary means" (OSCE 1996: 6). Restoring the Soviet Union would proceed by annulling the Belavezha Accords, which dissolved the Soviet Union, and then gradually re-integrating the former constituent republics (Belin and Orttung 1997). The KPRF's "true" platform, intended exclusively for party-member consumption rather than the electorate writ large, revealed more extremist plans if the Communists regained control: banning "speculation," introducing controls on prices, re-nationalizing the state savings bank Sberbank, and keeping a watchful eye over the mass media to prevent it from "foster[ing] public acceptance of murder, violence, and nationalism or propagate 'distortions of the truth' about developments in the county" (Belin and Orttung 1997: 44).

The party was led by Gennady Zyuganov, who articulated a unique vision for Russia that was based on the country becoming a great power once again, which would subsequently pave the way for Moscow to reemerge as the Third Rome (Hanson 1998). Zyuganov worked in ideology and propaganda during the Soviet Union, and played an essential role in shaping the KPRF's ideology of nationalist socialism after the collapse of communism (Hale 2006). But to signal that the KPRF was no longer a dogmatic party and was open to moderates, the third spot on the party list was given to Aman Tuleev, a deputy of the Federation Council and the head of the legislature in Kemerovo Oblast, but not a party member (Belin and Orttung 1997). The party's revival is largely credited to

the KPRF's addition of nationalist and patriotic overtones during the campaigns, as this strategy helped retain the KPRF's core group of supporters, who longed for the former Soviet system, but also attract new constituencies, most notably supporters of the LDPR and the Agrarian Party of Russia (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 684).

The KPRF was the first-place finisher in 1995, but the party's triumph may have represented a protest against the Yeltsin regime and current conditions more than an indication that the electorate craved a return to Communism (Marsh 2002). Many observers argued that the KPRF had won the contest "not because they [were] right, but because their opponents [were] not right" (Belin and Orttung 1997: 113). Nevertheless, the KPRF's victory in the party list tier and its over 20% vote share established the party as the stalwart leftist opposition to the country's reformist trajectory. Indeed, the Communists were the only party that saw their vote share increase, in nearly doubled in fact, from the 1993 snap elections. The KPRF's resurgence was remarkable: Yeltsin had banned the Communists after the failed coup in 1991, declaring victoriously to a joint session of the U.S. Congress three and a half years before the 1995 contest, "Communism, which spread everywhere social strife, animosity, and unparalleled brutality, which instilled fear in humanity, has collapsed. It has collapsed never to rise again. I am here to assure you, we will not let it rise again in our land" (The New York Times 1992). Considering the KPRF was only reinstated when the Constitutional Court overruled Yeltsin's decree in November 1992, the party's performance in the election sent a clear signal that it was a force to be reckoned with in post-Soviet Russia and that a return to communist may not have been as inconceivable as Yeltsin defiantly claimed.

Second, the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia best represented the nationalist-patriotic side of the party system. Although the LDPR claimed it was a "centrist" party in campaign materials, the LDPR was neither liberal nor democratic, but rather far right and ultra-nationalist (Belin and Orttung 1997: 61). The LDPR offered a related, yet distinct, political platform from the KPRF. While the two parties shared a desire to reestablish the Soviet Union and pursue a hawkish nationalist foreign policy, the LDPR supported the turn to the market economically based on a noncommunist, non-Gaidar approach, and the

continuation of noncommunist government. Vladimir Zhirinovsky led the LDPR with a highly personalist and charismatic approach to campaigning and politics, capitalizing on growing discontent with the reform process and President Yeltsin himself among ordinary Russians. But, unsurprisingly, the LDPR elected to focus almost wholly on nationalist themes rather than economic policy, which was its weak point (Oates 1998). Zhirinovsky combined policy appeals targeted toward specific constituencies with outrageous antics during the electoral period, such as distributing beer and his eponymous vodka to voters, promising military personnel unrealistically high salary increases, throwing a glass of orange juice over the governor of Nizhny Novgorod on live television, and getting into a brawl with a female Duma Deputy during a televised session of the legislature that culminated in Zhirinovsky pulling her hair and putting her in a headlock (Belin and Orttung 1997: 50-51).

The LDPR was the most expressly anti-Western and harnessed pro-Russian, xenophobic beliefs, even overtly threatening former Soviet states for mistreating ethnic Russians (Oates 1998). Zhirinovsky fear-mongered by declaring that a "plot existed to destroy the Russian people and leave them a minority in their own country by the year 2030" (Belin and Orttung 1997: 82). Accordingly, the Duma elected in the 1995 contest was charged with defending "Russia and all things Russian" (*Ibid*). Party leadership openly forecast an invasion by Turks and Muslims, stating, "Pan-Turkism threatens Russia, for in Russia there are a large number of Turkic-speaking people, of Muslims, of Farsi-speakers—and all of this is a comfortable soil, a good enticement for Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey to rise upwards, to the north, creating a greater Afghanistan, a greater Iran, a greater Turkey" (Hanson 1998: 118). The role of rabid racism in the LDPR's ideology bore a striking resemblance to anti-Semitism in Nazi dogma because it furnished an explanation for the country's degradation and identified a target for ultimate retribution (*Ibid*). But the LDPR also acted upon its anti-Semitic ideology: the number one candidate on the LDPR's party list in the Jewish Autonomous Oblast was the editor of an anti-Semitic newspaper called Russian Resurrection and that candidate had published anti-Semitic diatribes, stating "If a person isn't an anti-Semite, then he is a fool

or a scoundrel…It is the unalienable right of the Russian to kill and rob kikes" (Belin and Orttung 1997: 82). The party's fierce xenophobia gained traction in the populace due to ongoing hostilities in Chechnya, which the LDPR expressly supported as a way to curb corruption and immorality that originated in the south (Hanson 1998: 118). Zhirinovsky excoriated Yeltsin for not engaging in a full-scale war in Chechnya (OSCE 1996).

The LDPR had the most to lose based on its performance in the 1993 snap election because other parties appropriated nationalist rhetoric and themes to adapt to the surge of anti-Westernism in the electorate (Hanson 1998: 118). Despite the commonality of nationalist motifs in the 1995 contest, the LDPR captured second place with approximately 11% of the proportional representation vote, filling out the ideological spectrum on the far right. This result was particularly surprising to observers and analysts, who anticipated the LDPR would fare even more poorly as a result of Zhirinovsky's flamboyant behavior and provocative rhetoric, on top of the numerous explicitly nationalist parties that competed with the LDPR in 1995 (OSCE 1996). Nevertheless, the fact that the KPRF harnessed the majority of the protest vote rather than the ultra-nationalists suggested that Zhirinovsky's party was appealing "not so much to the national idea, but to the national feeling" (Belin and Orttung 1997: 163).

Third, the democratic-reformist ideological space was perhaps the most crowded, with at least 12 parties classified as reformist or tied to the reformist agenda. The Central Election Commission initially refused the registration of the archetypal liberal party in post-Communist Russia, Yabloko, based on procedural violations (Marsh 2002). However, numerous reviews by the Supreme Court, coupled with public protests, encouraged the CEC to overturn the decision and allow Yabloko ballot access (*Ibid*). Yabloko represented the reformist agenda well: the party occupied the center of the pro-market ideological zone and was committed to the reformist agenda but implemented gradually rather than using the shock therapy approach favored by the Yeltsin administration. Yabloko leaders openly criticized Yeltsin and the dual process of political and economic reform, portraying Yabloko as the only genuine reformist party of the bunch (OSCE 1996). The party endured blowback as a result of this strategy because

some believed Yabloko was little more than a "spoiler [that had] split the democratic movement" and all but ensured a Communist victory, in the legislative and presidential elections alike (OSCE 1996: 2).

Under the leadership of economist Grigory Yavlinsky, who had worked with both Gorbachev and Yeltsin, the party's platform was aimed at strengthening the role of the legislature, and focused primarily on democratic reforms, especially civil liberties and support for minorities (Oates 1998). In the 1995 campaign, Yabloko toned down explicitly pro-Western statements that constituted a core campaign message two years prior, which the most notable adaptation the party pursued after the nationalist's unexpected success in the 1993 election (*Ibid*). Nevertheless, Yabloko continued to harp on the themes of democratic governance and freedom, even as other parties moved away from them, either because they understood the complexities of transitioning from authoritarianism or because they feared they would gain little traction in an increasingly nationalist and anti-democratic electorate (*Ibid*). Furthermore, in other policy avenues, the liberal party distinguished itself from other leading parties; for example, Yabloko's platform was the only one that did not include statements on defending "the national way of life" (Oates 1998: 87).

Yabloko pursued a strategy of enlarging their membership by attracting niche constituencies to their cause. Alongside Our Home is Russia, Yabloko enumerated detailed policies targeted at specific constituencies, such as women, young families, and workers, suggesting that the party believed its strength did not lie in the broad themes espoused by the KPRF and LDPR, but rather in the policy preferences of niche electorates (*Ibid*). With KPRF support outpolling that for the government, Yabloko tried to woo potential KPRF voters by using the slogan, "We are not fighting communism, we are fighting poverty," and gaining traction with policies to redress wrongdoings committed during the process of privatization and restoring strong ties with members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) (Belin and Orttung 1997: 73). The campaign strategy of appealing to more niche constituencies may have unintentionally relegated the party to a minor role in the post-communist party system.

Despite the party's narrowly defined constituency, Yabloko was the only undoubtedly liberal party to cross the five percent threshold in the 1995 election with just under seven percent, crystallizing its position in the Russian party system as the "sole liberal standard-bearer" (Hale 2004: 12). Many observers argued that Yabloko's showing was mediocre at best because the party would have performed significantly better had it joined up with other like-minded parties, but intractable factionalism in the liberal camp created the most wasted votes (merely 35% of pro-reform votes were translated into seats), which the KPRF and LDPR directly benefitted from (Belin and Orttung 1997: 125). Indeed, KPRF leader Zyuganov commented before the election, "the democrats are eating each other. We wish them 'bon appetit'" (Belin and Orttung 1997: 123).

An essential feature of the 1995 legislative election, especially when compared to those elections in the 2000s, is the absence of an effective dominant party or party of power. Parties of power can be defined as "coalitions forged before electoral cycles whose intent is to defend the interests of those already in power" (McFaul 2004: 113). More detailed formulations of the concept suggest that a party of power is "profoundly fragmented into various interests and concerns and lacks a sustained social or political base, other than proximity to power itself and the resources it provides for enrichment and 'empowerment'" (Sakwa 1998: 148). With regard to resources, parties of power rely heavily on so-called "administrative resources," a term that was first used in the at the time of the 1995 election and which can be defined as the "'combination of means at the disposal of the directors of enterprises and/or territorial units (districts, towns) to influence the opinion and behaviour of electors' or as the 'organi[z]ational, financial, human, time and other resources of state bodies and the government administration' that could be 'used for the achievement of various political objectives'" (Quoted in White 2011: 534).

The first attempt at constructing a pro-government, centrist party of power was made during the 1993 election cycle with Russia's Choice. Although President Yeltsin never officially endorsed Russia's Choice, the pro-reform party was poised to win the election because key presidential appointees headed the party and organized the most

well financed campaign due to their extensive access to state resources and media outlets owned largely by the federal government (Colton and McFaul 2003). The party was also well positioned to recruit important regional elites who wanted to curry favor with the President after his violent defeat of the anti-reformist legislature (Hale 2006). Furthermore, the abruptness of the 1993 elections reinforced the privileged position of Russia's Choice because key leaders from Russia's Choice were able to quickly marshal the resources of the state and media to concentrate on organizing the most effective electoral campaign, while other parties scrambled for signatures and rushed to complete registration requirements. Thus, these snap elections effectively reduced the number of parties that would be able to compete because they had to organizationally cohere in time to obtain the requisite registration signatures.

After Russia's Choice placed second behind the ultra-nationalist Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) in 1993, Yeltsin lost confidence in the Russia's Choice party project and replaced it with a new right-of-center, moderately reformist party of power, Our Home is Russia, to compete in the 1995 elections. Yeltsin had hoped that the creation, from above, of Our Home is Russia and another party, the Ivan Rybkin Bloc, that would serve as the left-of-center loyal opposition would stimulate the emergence of a two-party system that would crowd out the radical nationalists and other anti-government parties positioned to succeed in the 1995 election (OSCE 1996). Yeltsin had hoped that the Ivan Rybkin Bloc would attract left-leaning elites and specific smaller parties that would resist formally coordinating or coalescing with the explicitly pro-government Our Home is Russia but also balk at supporting more extreme parties such as Zhirinovsky's ultra-nationalist LDPR (Belin and Orttung 1997). The guiding motive for creating both Our Home and the Rybkin Bloc was to bolster the ideological center while hollowing out the extremist wings on either side (*Ibid*). The Rybkin Bloc would also serve a useful purpose for Our Home is Russia by absorbing many influential, and moderate, opposition leaders that may be convinced not to pursue an anti-government stance if they were led by the powerful State Duma Speaker Rybkin (*Ibid*). Although the creation of Our Home and the Rybkin Bloc was intended to reduce the seemingly

uncontrollable supply of parties, efforts to engineer the party system from above ultimately proved counterproductive because "none of the existing parties were willing to join the two new 'centrist' blocs" (Belin and Orttung 1997: 33).

Thus, the final ideological contour of the party system in the mid-1990s was filled out by the pro-government, slightly right of center, Our Home is Russia (NDR). NDR was founded as a political coalition that would later form the basis of President Yeltsin's reelection campaign in 1996. Although the party's leaders publicly rejected political ideology, Our Home's platform espoused individual civil liberties, the continuing growth of the market economy combined with social and welfare services protecting those made vulnerable by the reform process, and the importance of maintaining public order. As the government-backed party, Our Home's message was comparatively more guarded regarding additional expenditures for social services (Oates 1998). The party of power appealed to wide swaths of the electorate by centering on the vague themes of stability and levelheaded leadership and calling for the preservation of the government's overarching policies pertaining to political and economic reform (OSCE 1996). Generally, the party's appeals were designed to attract everyone rather than a core constituency that could be counted on to help propel Our Home into the Duma. Perhaps because of this catch-all strategy, Our Home did the "worst job of defining its principles" (Belin and Orttung 1997: 162).

NDR's platform on specific issues included support for domestic producers and preserving the basic integrity of the county. When Our Home did try to court specific groups of voters, the party did so by leveraging advantages accruing to those already in public office, i.e. the ability to distribute resources from the public budget (Belin and Orttung 1997). For example, leaders of Our Home traveled around Russia and essentially purchased support: the government paid overdue salaries to teachers to obviate the need for a strike, investors who were deceived received compensation, each veteran would receive a plot of land from the government, and veterans' payments would be increased in the beginning of 1996 (Belin and Orttung 1997: 81). Thus, due to the financial resources available to the party of power, promises made by party leaders on the

campaign trail were kept rather than ultimately proven empty, as they argued of their opposition (*Ibid*). Yeltsin and Our Home generally pursued an appeasement strategy to quell the red-brown opposition to reforms, and those voters in support, by pledging to punish those who benefitted from the reform process through corrupt means (OSCE 1996). However, the president and the party of power also explicitly warned voters against the dangers that would accompany a communist victory in the legislative elections, drawing a distinction between "nostalgia [and] the realities of communism and the danger it posed to hard-won freedoms" (OSCE 1996: 4).

The party was led by Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, who previously chaired the colossal state-owned gas and oil monopoly Gazprom from 1989-1992, and enjoyed extensive financial support from the company during Our Home is Russia's 1995 campaign as a result. In contrast to the leaders of extremist parties that might lead the country dangerously off course, Chernomyrdin represented responsible leadership by seasoned professionals that would guide the country safely through the dual political and economic transition. Like its predecessor, Our Home is Russia attracted the most well-known politicians and financiers to its cause, marshaling the support of almost the entire Russian cabinet (Hale 2006). Numerous regional executives supported Our Home and party leaders tried to attract other regions to their cause by publicizing a power-sharing agreement that the central government concluded with the republic of Urdmurtiya and stating a similar agreement was in the works with Orenburg Oblast (Belin and Orttung 1997). Our Home faced considerable difficulty, however, when attempting to absorb smaller political parties due to Yeltsin's explicit support for the party, when his own popularity ratings hovered in the single digits, and the widespread support of the cabinet, when the economy made only negligible advances (Belin and Orttung 1996: 35).

The government-sponsored party ultimately failed to meet widespread expectations that it would be the landslide winner in 1995: it captured a smaller vote share than Russia's Choice had two years prior, securing a paltry 10% in the proportional representation vote, compared to 15.51% for its predecessor (Colton and McFaul 2003: 48). The triumph of the communist and nationalist opposition over Our Home is Russia

was staggering: the KPRF secured over 22% of the votes in the party list elections, while the LDPR finished with over 11%, proving that these two parties were viable even in an extremely crowded party market. The drastic proliferation of parties from 1993 to 1995 may have diminished the party of power's electoral support because numerous parties could be classified as reformist or tied to the reformist agenda, and these parties split the vote amongst them, causing the ideological center to collapse, rather than coalescing around the most workable alternative. In a post-election autopsy of the party's defeat, Chernomyrdin diagnosed Our Home's failure was a result of "excessive self-confidence; extravagance and ineffective use of money; mistakes in personnel policies, including the choice of candidates; and insufficient work with the regions" (Belin and Orttung 1997: 122). Our Home's disastrous showing, coupled with the inability of the Rybkin Bloc to surpass the five percent threshold for representation, decidedly proved that Yeltsin's experiment of installing a two-party system from above had failed miserably.

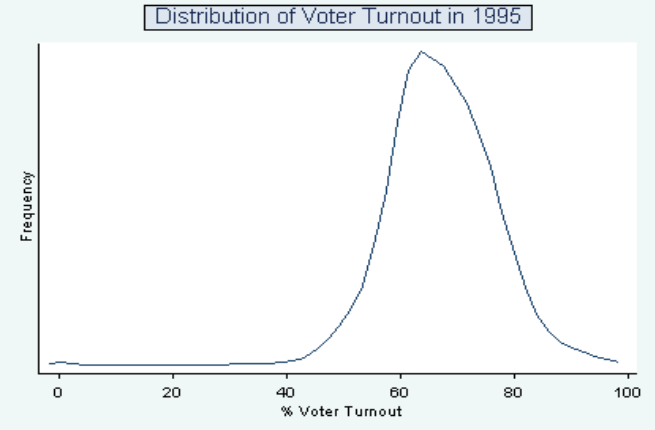
The 1995 Legislative Election as a "Normal" Competitive Election

The 1995 legislative election will be treated as a "normal" competitive election in post-communist Russia. Many scholars of Russia and independent international organizations argue, "by several measures, the 1995 parliamentary elections […] rank as the most competitive, free, and fair elections in Russian history," and that Russian elections in the mid-1990s were "very competitive—critics would argue 'too competitive'" (McFaul and Petrov 2004:40; Rose, Tikhomirov and Mishler 1997:799). Indeed, in contrast to the elections in the 2000s and 2010s under United Russia, it seems improbable that Yeltsin and Our Home is Russia carried out "widespread rigging, since the opposition parties gained control of the Duma" (Belin and Orttung 1997:133). The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Parliamentary Assembly's report concluded that, overall, the 1995 legislative election was carried out in an "overall free and fair manner" (*The First Decade of OSCE PA Election Observation*, 2003). The OSCE observer group "did not witness irregularities or conscious attempts to alter the election count or unduly influence voters" (OSCE 1996: 9). The election observation report from the International Republican Institute corroborates the OSCE's conclusions,

stating that observers "did not witness systematic or deliberate misconduct that would call into question the basic integrity of the process" (*Russia State Duma Election Observation Report, 1995*). Scholars and election observers regard this election as "substantially free" and the "most competitive and consequential in Russia's brief democratic history" due to the sheer number of parties competing in the proportional representation tier, the number of candidates offering themselves in the single-member district portion, and the Central Electoral Commission's September 1995 adoption of detailed procedures for regulating both campaign expenditures and media coverage (Wyman 1996: 277; McFaul and Petrov 2004: 26; Rose, Tikhomirov and Mishler 1997; White, Wyman and Oates 1997). The European Institute for the Media found that the free airtime was "allocated fairly" and conformed to the new regulations (*Ibid*).

Figure 4.1 supplies additional proof that the 1995 contest was competitive, as the distribution of voter turnout better approximates a normal or Gaussian distribution than those contests in the 2000s, when suspicious fat right tails and local peaks around 95-100% turnout emerged.

Figure 4.1: Distribution of Voter Turnout in 1995



Despite consensus that the 1995 legislative election was the most competitive in Russian history, this contest was not an entirely free and fair one by Western standards. For example, the secrecy of the vote was compromised in some instances: the OSCE

reported, "the unwieldiness of the large party bloc ballot, which opened to the size of a tabloid newspaper, made maneuvering into the [voting] booth physically difficult, so many voters simply marked their ballot on a nearby table or windowsill. On the other hand, some couples crowded into one booth" (OSCE 1996: 8). In one area in Tver Oblast, two precinct stations were combined into a single building and an auditorium that was attached was used by voters to engage in "consultative voting," that is by discussing the parties together before casting their vote (*Ibid*). In isolated cases, proxy voting occurred in which family members would attempt to vote for their relatives (Belin and Orttung 1997). In Smolensk, a member of the OSCE delegation was refused registration as an observer and, when a poll worker ultimately registered the observer in accordance with the poll worker's duties, an official threatened him with the loss of his job (OSCE 1996).

The counting of the votes was also marred, albeit to a comparatively limited extent: some alleged that election officials and poll workers colluded to disqualify ballots cast for "undesirable" parties (OSCE 1996: 9). One election analyst claimed that the KPRF vote was artificially augmented in the oblasts of Smolensk, Lipetsk, Tambo, Pskov, Ulyanovsk, Bryansk, Volgograd and Penza, after comparing similar precincts in particular regions and evaluating whether those precincts reported voter turnout and results that approximated or deviated from the regional norm, in this case uncharacteristically higher turnout rates and vote shares for the KPRF (*Ibid*). More than a week passed before the Central Election Commission tabulated all the ballots and made the final tally public, citing poor weather and communications, along with the sheer size of the country as reasons for the delay, although these claims did not quiet suspicion of ballot rigging (Belin and Orttung 1997).

Furthermore, independent monitoring teams found that some parties, notably Our Home is Russia, clearly exceeded the limits on campaign expenditures set by the Central Election Commission and tracked by a financial auditing service that was set up to monitor campaign expenditures (*Monitoring the Media Coverage of the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections Final Report* 1996; McFaul and Petrov 2004: 42). Furthermore, media bias, especially on the partially state-owned Russian Public Television (ORT), was

revealed to favor Our Home is Russia; this was likely because ORT was controlled by Boris Berezovsky, the unofficial chief financial officer of Our Home is Russia and a member of President Yeltsin's inner circle who would later finance his reelection campaign in 1996 (*Monitoring the Media Coverage of the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections Final Report* 1996). A full 30% of editorial time on ORT was dedicated to Our Home is Russia, while the liberal Yabloko party received only one percent (*Ibid*). According to those working in conjunction with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, "there were some problems attaining the standard of impartiality in media coverage on the regional and local levels" (OSCE 1996: 6).

In addition to media bias, suspiciously high voter turnout also suggests imperfect competition in the 1995 electoral contest. McFaul and Petrov argue, "pockets of falsification, including massive irregularities in Chechnya, tainted the electoral results" (McFaul and Petrov, 2004: 42). Such pockets manifested more directly in the raion-level electoral data available from this election. Table 4.1 shows the voter turnout threshold used to gauge suspected electoral manipulation and the amount of raions exceeding that threshold. Raion-level national turnout in 1995 was 67.21% and the corresponding standard deviation was 9.27. Accordingly, approximately 15% of raions met the criteria set in the mid-1990s.

Table 4.1: Manipulated Raions in 1995

Voter Turnout Threshold (1 Standard Deviation Above Raion-level National Turnout)	Number Manipulated Raions	% Total Raions
76.48	397	14.99

Roughly 23% of those raions were located in ethnic republics; approximately 44% were located in majority-Muslim regions, 14% were located in the Caucasus, and 20% were located in resource regions. Compared to western standards for free and fair elections, these considerations put in perspective the actual level of competitiveness in Russia's most competitive election, but also temper claims arguing, "in December 1995 the level of electoral falsification was […] extremely high" (Wilson 2005: 76).

Analysis

The investigation of political parties' performance in the 1995 election to the State Duma includes those parties that crossed the threshold for representation: the KPRF, LDPR, Yabloko and the party of power, Our Home is Russia. Table 4.2 details the two stronghold thresholds for each party under consideration.

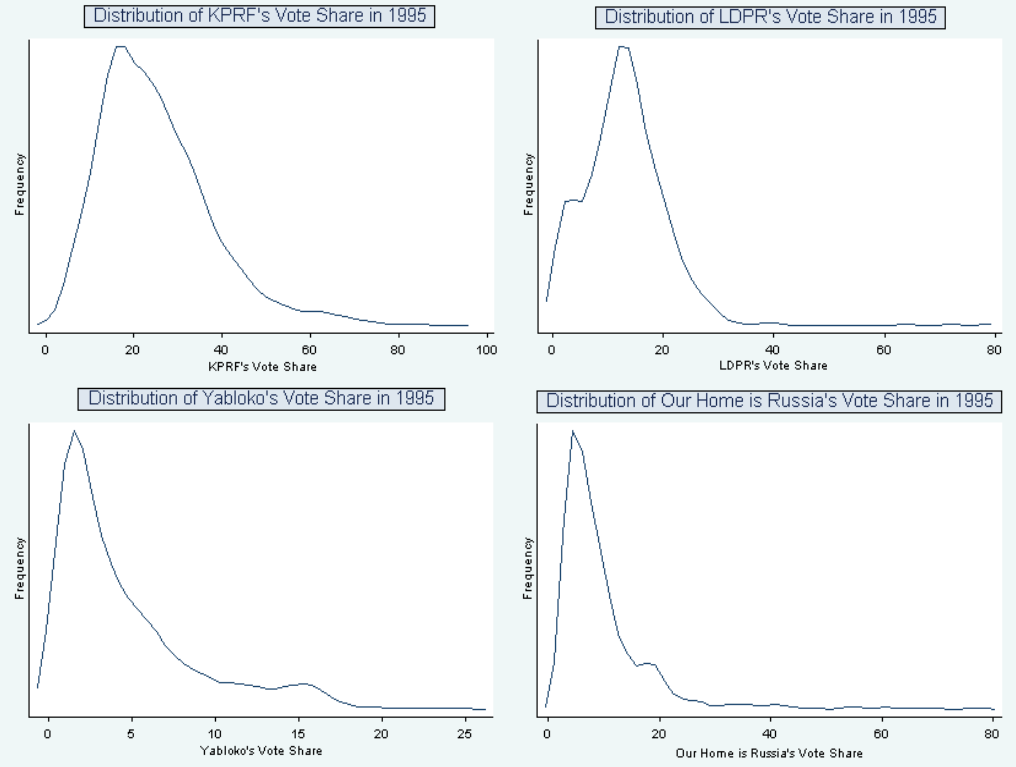
Table 4.2: Measuring the Dependent Variable: Party Strongholds in 1995

	1 standard deviation above party's raion-level national average	# Strongholds	% Raions	2 standard deviations above party's raion-level national average	# Strongholds	% Raions
KPRF	37.52	367	14.03	50.14	113	4.32
LDPR	19.70	371	14.19	26.65	68	2.60
Yabloko	8.94	389	14.88	13.24	183	7.00
Our Home is Russia	18.66	268	10.25	27.61	101	3.86

Figure 4.2 shows the distribution of each party's vote shares, providing a visual sense of where the two stronghold thresholds are set. Each distribution exhibits irregularity to some extent. Compared to the other parties, the KPRF's vote share distribution demonstrated the most spread, with a standard deviation of 12.62. There is a soft bump in the Communists vote share at just past 60%, which may offer an indication of electoral manipulation, given that such vote shares are more than double the party's raion-level national average of approximately 25% and the party possessed the wherewithal necessary to engage in electoral malfeasance to augment its vote share. The LDPR's distribution was nearly twice as clustered around the mean than the Communists', as the standard deviation was 6.95. There is a peculiar bump or step in the nationalists' distribution between zero percent and approximately five percent that resembles the mirror opposite of Our Home is Russia's distribution. Although a more sophisticated analysis, e.g. flow of votes, may be required to determine precisely which parties were denied votes in favor of others when electoral manipulation was practiced, it seems plausible that Our Home is Russia benefitted at the expense of the nationalists, if the similar "steps" in both parties' distributions were not the result of random or uncorrelated

factors, and the distributions from the 1993 snap election did not reveal similar steps in the party of power and the nationalists' distributions. In contrast to the Communists and nationalists, the distribution of Yabloko's vote share was significantly more tightly clustered around its raion-level national average as evidenced by the standard deviation of 4.30. Interestingly, Yabloko's distribution exhibits an elongated right tail and a conspicuous bump, at around a 15% vote share, which looks vaguely similar to United Russia's distributions in the 2000s, albeit to a markedly lesser degree. The bump in Yabloko support, however, was the product of the party's solid showing in the federal cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg, rather than suspected electoral manipulation. Finally, Our Home is Russia's distribution exhibited a fair amount of dispersion with a standard deviation of 8.95. Our Home's distribution reveals a suspicious bump in the right tail, large enough to produce a distinct local maximum, that hovers around 20% vote share, which was, perhaps not coincidentally, precisely double the party's raion-level national mean.

Figure 4.2: Distribution of Parties' Vote Shares in 1995



See Appendix Tables 1-24 (pages 472-519) for Multilevel Model Results.

Ethnicity and Opposition Parties

The multilevel models specified for the 1995 legislative election produce several expected and unexpected results and showcase opposition parties' unique pockets of support with the potential to develop and expand in future contests. Although few opposition parties are expected to be particularly attractive to ethnic minorities, I find ethnicity is an important determinant of party strongholds for various parties across both measures of the dependent variable. The KRPF captured sizable minority support: the percent minority covariate increased the odds of a stronghold by one to four percent in the lower models, and by three to five percent in the models specified using the higher threshold. In the models with refined measures of raion-level ethnic composition, the percent other minority variable increased the odds of a KPRF stronghold by three to four percent in the lower threshold models, and by one to roughly three percent in those with the higher threshold. Save for one lower threshold model, in which the odds diminished

by two percent, the titular minority variable did not exercise a systematic effect on the occurrence of Communist strongholds. These results indicate that primarily other minorities drove the KPRF's electoral support from minorities rather than titular minorities that comprised a constituency already captured to some extent by the party of power. Notably distinct from Yabloko, however, enthusiasm for the Communists drawn from other minorities did not come from those of Indo-European heritage, but rather non-titular ethnic groups that reside in ethnic republics, particularly those regions in the Caucasus. The consistent finding that KPRF strongholds were defined along the ethnic Russian, non-Russian cleavage in the mid-1990s has not been firmly established in existing survey-based research (Rose, Tikhomirov, and Mishler 1997; Colton and McFaul 2003; Hale 2006; Cf. White, Wyman and Oates 1997). Figure 4.3 showcases the inflation of the KPRF's vote share with additional non-Russian and other Russian minorities, as well as stability across varying proportions of titular minorities. Despite the lack of statistical significance identified in the model results from increases in titular minorities, the corresponding scatterplot shows a fair share of purely titular minority raions that registered abundant support for the party. Interestingly, the raions populated almost entirely by other minorities that voted for the KPRF at levels upwards of three times the party's national showing were all located in Dagestan, which houses a sizable population of non-titular ethnic minorities from at least half a dozen different ethnic groups. Together, these raions form a distinct cluster in the scatterplot detailing other minorities' support for the party. The few predominantly non-Russian and titular minority raions that collected in the lower right quadrant of the scatterplot, registering little or no support for the Communists, were found in the ethnic republics of Tuva, Ingushetia, and Chechnya.

Figure 4.3: Non-Russian Minorities and KPRF's Vote Share in 1995

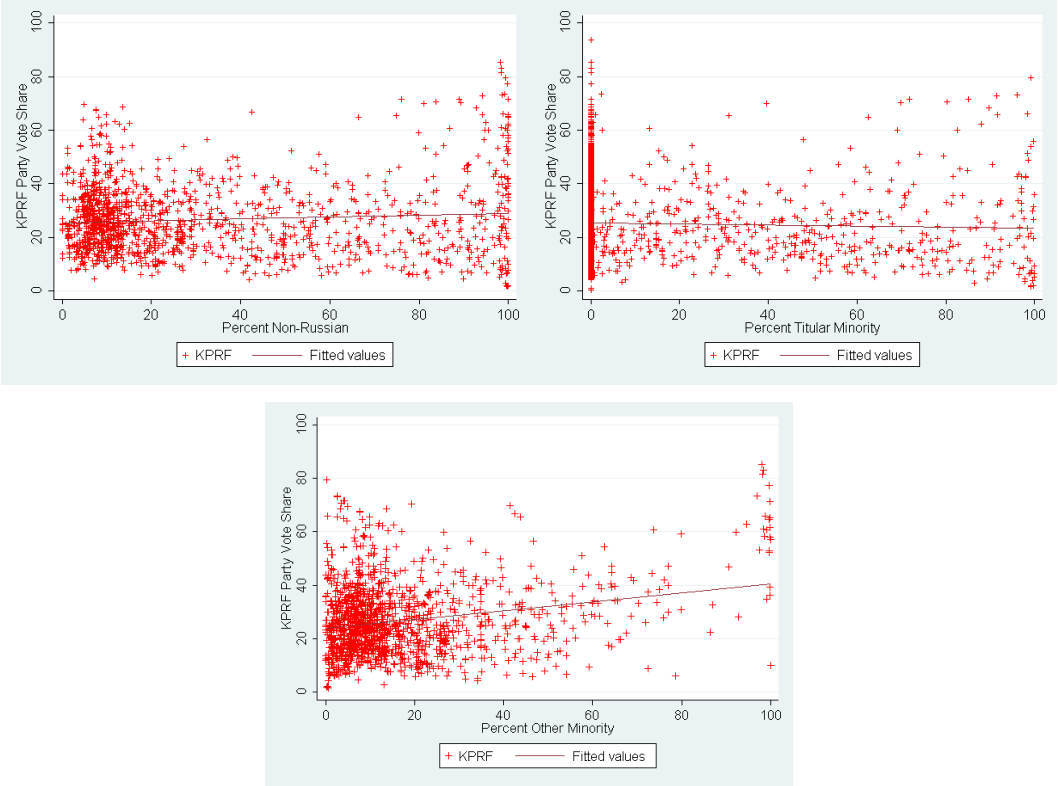
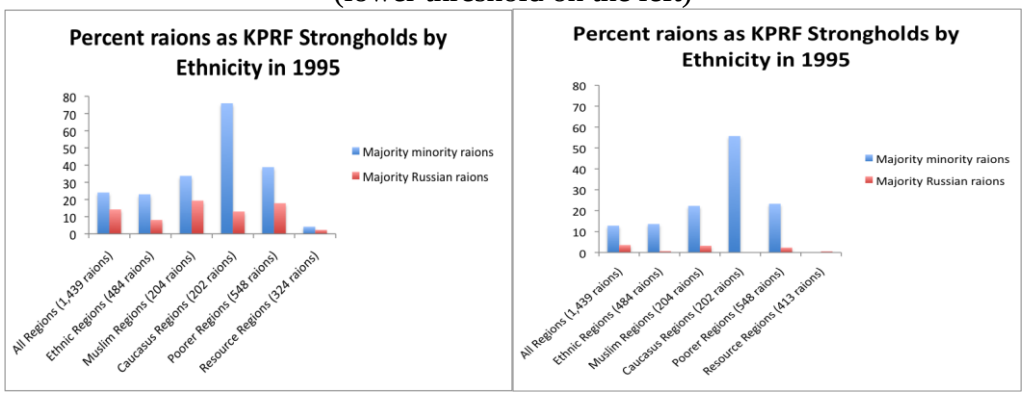


Figure 4.4 breaks down the percentage of KPRF strongholds by regional context and ethnic composition at the raion level, distinguishing between majority-Russian and majority-minority raions. For each dyad, the total number of raions in a given regional context is indicated. The denominator for each red and blue bar, however, is not the total number of raions in a given regional environment, but rather the number of majority-Russian raions and majority-minority raions, respectively, in that specific regional context. The remainder of the bar charts breaking down the percentages of each party's strongholds by ethnicity, as well as urban-rural, was constructed likewise. Clearly, of the majority-minority and majority-Russian raions that were KPRF strongholds in each regional context, the party captured a higher percentage of strongholds in the former than the latter. Of all majority-minority raions across the country, the Communists enjoyed stronghold level support in roughly one-quarter; of the majority-Russian raions, the KPRF had strongholds in approximately 15%. One minor exception to the ethnic

minority pattern of support is found in resource regions according to the higher threshold, in which the KPRF's only strongholds were located in majority-Russian raions. In other words, with the shift from the relaxed to the strict threshold, the balance in percentages between ethnic minority and ethnic Russian strongholds in resource regions switched in favor majority-Russian raions. There is a notable spike in the Caucasus: of majority-minority raions in those regions, nearly 80% churned out high vote shares for the Communists. Close to 50% of majority-minority raions in poorer regions were as enthusiastic as their counterparts in the Caucasus. Majority-Russian bastions of support in the Caucasus vanished when the stronghold threshold was raised.

Figure 4.4: KPRF Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 1995 (lower threshold on the left)



Descriptive statistics from Table 4.3 indicate that ethnic minorities exercised a more neutral impact on KPRF support: the party's average in majority-minority raions was within only one percent of its national vote share. Furthermore, the party's average in ethnic republics was substandard, at almost two percent less than nationally.

Table 4.3: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of the KPRF's Electoral Performance in the 1995 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	24.90	26.48	24.14	29.08	23.13	30.50	33.20	22.30	18.28
Min	.274	.274	.274	.274	.831	.831	.831	.831	1.45
Max	93.66	93.66	93.66	79.48	85.34	85.34	85.34	69.49	50.16
SD	12.62	13.08	13.38	14.17	15.88	15.88	17.33	10.70	8.98

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, 1.11.

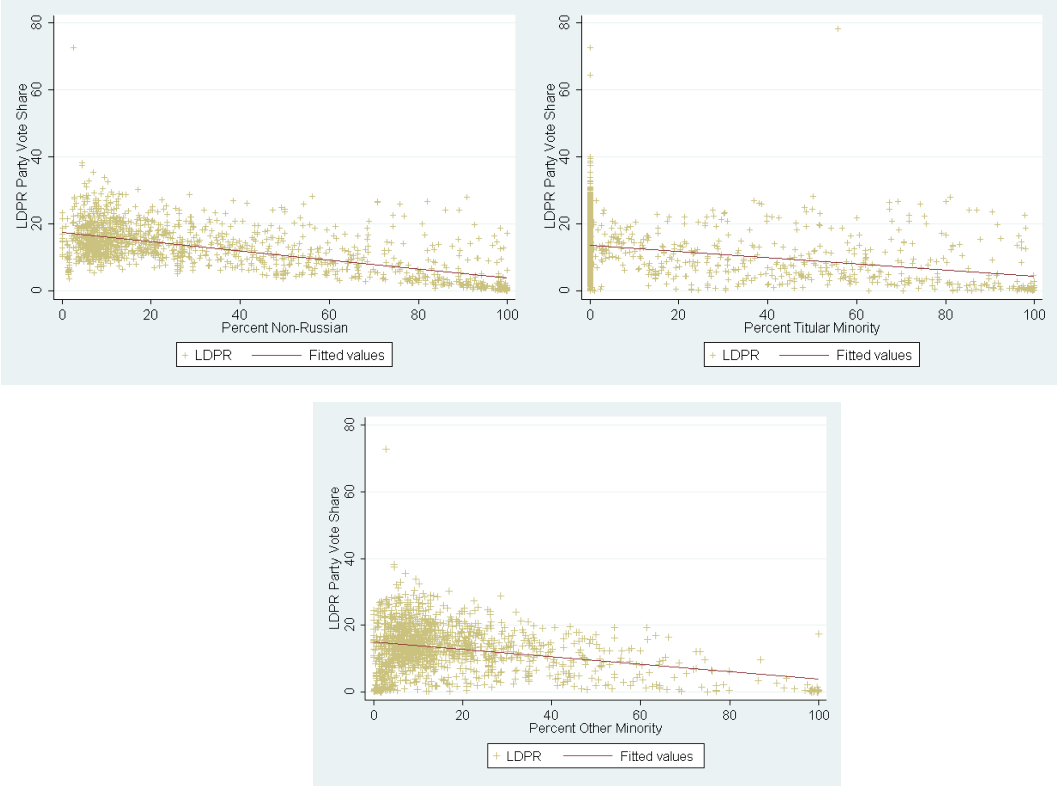
Interestingly though, when the ethnic republic variable achieved standard levels of statistical significance, the shift from raions in Russian federal regions to raions in ethnic republics hiked the odds of a KPRF stronghold by 21 times in an upper threshold specification. Qualitative evidence gathered during interviews in Moscow corroborates this finding: one political analyst commented that the "Communists never had any problems in the ethnic republics in the 1990s, especially in Bashkortostan and Tatarstan, which voted for the Communists" in high numbers (Senior Political Analyst at INDEM Foundation 2011). Indeed, the KPRF harvested one-quarter and two-fifths of its strongholds in ethnic federal regions, as shown in Table 4.4. Regarding Table 4.4 below and the remainder of the tables in this and the subsequent chapters, it is important to note that the various regional contexts are not mutually exclusive (and therefore the percentages do not add up to 100), but rather indicate the relative share of a given party's strongholds in different types of regions. The Communists established a firm presence in ethnic republics when their only genuine competition in those areas was an ineffectual party of power.

Table 4.4: KPRF Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 1995				
	# of KPRF Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (367 Total)	% of KPRF Strongholds	# of KPRF Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (113 Total)	% of KPRF Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	91	24.80	46	40.71
Russian federal regions	276	75.20	67	59.29
Muslim regions	64	17.44	38	33.63
Caucasus regions	78	21.25	44	38.94
Poorer Regions	254	69.21	83	73.45
Natural Resource Regions	11	3.00	1	0.88
Fraudulent raions	90	24.52	34	30.09
Non-Fraudulent raions	277	75.48	79	69.91

One striking finding is the incredibly high odds of a stronghold in predominantly Muslim regions across the KPRF models. The odds ranged from as low as 164 to as high as more than 291 in the relaxed models and from 274 to as high as 2,102 in the strict specifications. These towering odds are corroborated through Table 4.3, which demonstrates that the KPRF's average in Muslim regions was more than six percent higher than the party's raion-level national mean. Nearly one-third and one-fifth of KPRF strongholds were located in Muslim regions, according to the higher and lower threshold measures of the dependent variable. Apparently, in ethnic republics and Muslim regions, region-level dynamics were operable and importantly distinct from those prevailing at the raion level: the titular minority covariate produced a negative effect when it reached standard levels of statistical significance but the regional parameters closely related to ethnicity exercised robust and positive effects. Future research may be able to disentangle the different effects produced in the statistical models by titular minority populations at the raion level and ethnic republic and Muslim region status at the regional level. Nevertheless, the Communists carved out pockets of support in raions and regions with sizable non-Russian populations, particularly those comprised of non-Indo European and non-titular ethnic minorities at the raion level.

The pattern of electoral support for the LDPR also followed ethnic lines in the mid-1990s, but in the direction opposite to that of the KPRF: the percent minority covariate was statistically significant and negative, diminishing the odds of an LDPR stronghold by two to seven percent in the relaxed models, and by three to six percent in the strict specifications. Furthermore, the percent other minority covariate also exerted a negative effect, dwindling the chances of an LDPR stronghold by roughly five percent in the relaxed models and by approximately six to seven percent in the strict ones. Surprisingly, the proportion of titular minorities did not systematically influence the occurrence of nationalist strongholds. The negative influence of ethnic minorities on the nationalist vote was expected because, rather than espousing a message of inclusion and tolerance, the LDPR stirred xenophobic and Russophilic sentiment in its campaign appeals and targeted those appeals specifically toward ethnic Russian constituencies. The multilevel model results indicate that the party succeeded in its mission of collecting pockets of support in raions with larger populations of ethnic Russians. Figure 4.5 clearly depicts the inverse relationship between the LDPR's vote share and the non-Russian, titular minority, and other minority population in a raion. One conspicuous outlier is evident in the scatterplot detailing ethnic minorities' support for the party: a Russian raion located in the Chita region, which borders Mongolia and China, registered a vote share for the LPDR of, astonishingly, almost 80%. An additional exception is found in the scatterplot concerning titular minorities', one more raion reporting a nearly 80% vote share for the party. This most enthusiastic raion was, like the previous outlier just mentioned, located close to the Russian border with Mongolia, but had a population dominated by titular minorities rather than ethnic Russians. The dense grouping of raions that were populated entirely by ethnic minorities and registered no support for the nationalists was found almost exclusively in Chechnya and Dagestan.

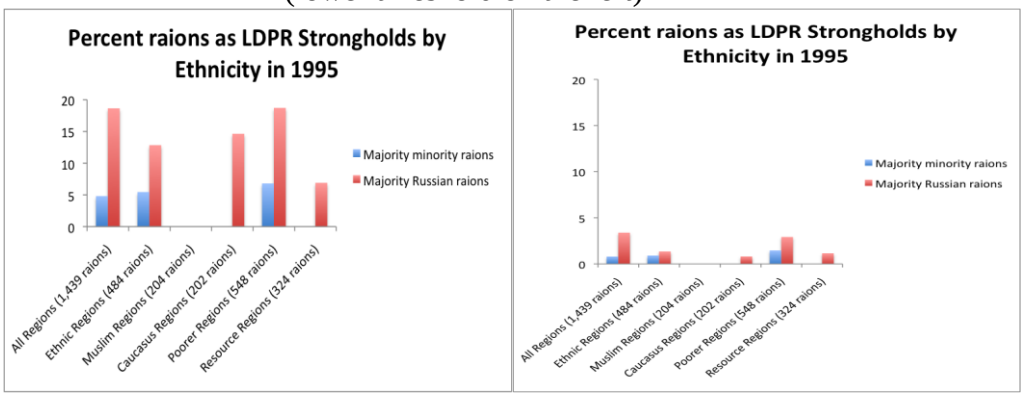
Figure 4.5: Non-Russian Minorities and LDPR's Vote Share in 1995



From a different perspective, Figure 4.6 showcases the balance in percentages between LDPR strongholds in majority-minority and majority-Russian raions in different regional contexts. Unlike the KPRF, the pattern of support for the LDPR is overwhelmingly Russian, with only sporadic support drawn from ethnic minorities. The nationalists performed more poorly in majority-Russian raions than the Communists did in majority-minority raions: of majority-Russian raions in all regions, the LDPR harvested strongholds in nearly 20%, while capturing roughly five percent of majority-minority raions. In the contexts where the LDPR harvested unusually high vote shares in both majority-minority and ethnic Russian areas, a vast imbalance in the percentages is pronounced and favored the latter. Nearly 20% of majority-Russian raions in poorer regions and more than 15% of those in the Caucasus channeled abnormally high vote shares to the nationalists. Of the raions that were LDPR strongholds in the Caucasus and

regions endowed with natural resources, the strongholds were found exclusively in ethnic Russian areas.

Figure 4.6: LDPR Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 1995 (lower threshold on the left)



Furthermore, descriptive statistics from Table 4.5 indicate that the party's average in majority-minority raions was nearly two percent less than its national showing. Raions located in ethnic republics and Muslim regions registered even less support, with average vote shares for the LDPR that were nearly 25% and an astonishing 75% below its national take. Compared to the other raion and regional environments considered, Muslim regions delivered the ultra-nationalists the least amount of support by a large margin: the party's support was so low, in fact, that it did not even reach the threshold for legislative representation in the State Duma, set at a mere five percent.

Table 4.5: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of the LDPR's Electoral Performance in the 1995 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	12.75	12.52	11.04	11.14	9.03	3.71	10.01	12.26	10.80
Min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.524
Max	78.27	78.27	78.27	38.71	78.27	22.67	26.90	38.31	28.68
SD	6.95	7.37	7.24	7.47	7.58	3.36	7.19	6.75	6.00

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, 1.11.

The results from the lower threshold models corroborate the descriptive statistics: the odds of an LDPR stronghold in a raion located within an ethnic republic were one-twentieth to one-tenth the value of the odds for raions located in Russian federal regions. As shown in Table 4.6, only about 15% and 9% of LDPR strongholds were located in ethnic regions by the relaxed and strict measure of stronghold, respectively. Mirroring the effects of ethnic composition at the raion level, the LDPR carved out areas of support in Russian federal regions as opposed to ethnic republics. A preponderance of Muslim inhabitants in a region did not produce statistically significant findings in any of the models, which is an unexpected, considering the LDPR's xenophobic and Russophilic rhetoric and evidence from the descriptive statistics in Table 4.5 suggesting the party performed dreadfully in those regions. Despite the lack of a negative effect, the LDPR had only one raion stronghold located in Muslim regions according to the lower measure and no strongholds according to the higher measure.

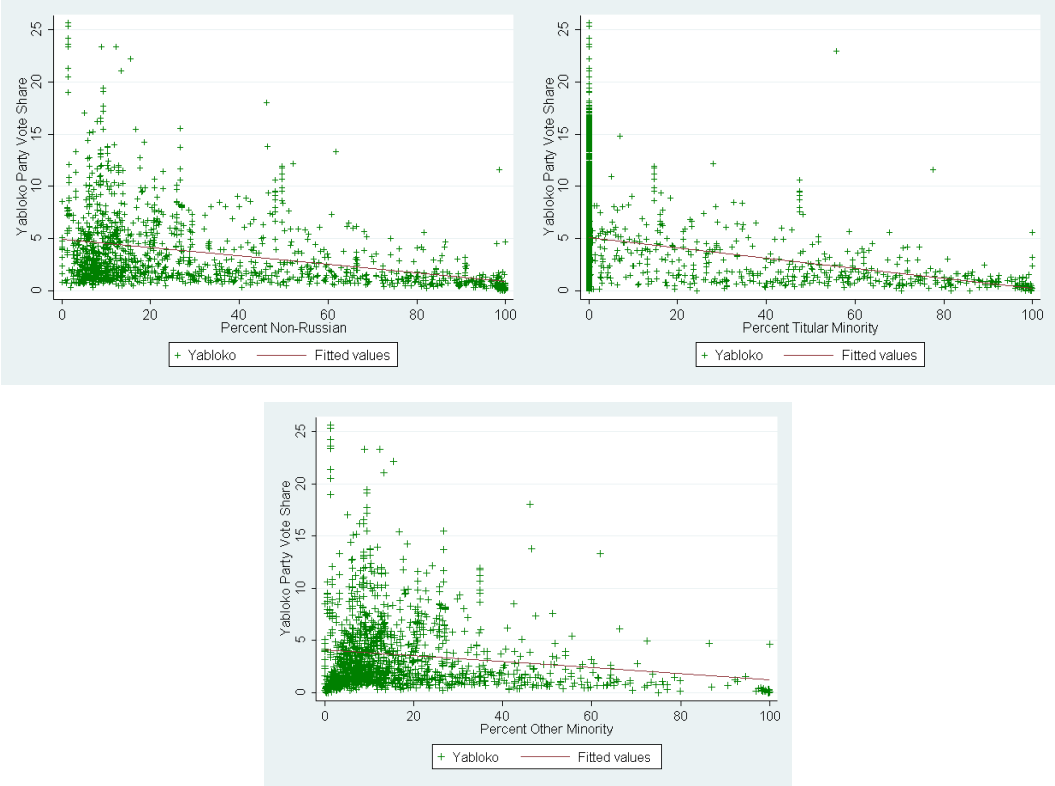
Table 4.6: LDPR Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 1995				
	# of LDPR Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (371 Total)	% of LDPR Strongholds	# of LDPR Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (68 Total)	% of LDPR Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	57	15.36	6	8.82
Russian federal regions	314	84.64	62	91.18
Muslim regions	1	0.27	0	0
Caucasus regions	23	6.20	1	1.47
Poorer Regions	181	48.79	36	52.94
Natural Resource Regions	32	8.63	2	2.94
Fraudulent raions	54	14.56	9	13.24
Non-Fraudulent raions	317	85.44	59	86.76

The contours of electoral support were thus congruent with the LDPR's ideological underpinnings in its early stages that capitalized on the Russian/non-Russian ethnic political cleavage by completely orienting the party toward the ethnic Russian constituency. Paralleling the state of the current literature on the ethnic bases of the KPRF, the majority of existing research has also not yet identified the ethnic Russian contour of LDPR strongholds, e.g. Rose, Tikhomirov, and Mishler (1997) and Hale (2006) (Cf. White, Wyman and Oates 1997). Along the dimension of ethnicity, the first and second place finishers in the 1995 contest, i.e. the Communists and nationalists, focused their efforts on completely different constituencies, but other players challenged both in their respective niches.

Unexpectedly, the percent minority covariate failed to meet standard measures of statistical significance in all of the models specified for Yabloko. The conventional wisdom, established through survey-oriented research, about the nature of Yabloko's constituency holds that it is comprised primarily of ethnic Russians (White, Wyman and Oates 1997). However, the absence of a systematic effect across the models suggests a revision of the common understanding is warranted. The percent titular minority and other minority covariates exercised opposite effects on Yabloko strongholds: higher densities of titular minorities shrunk the odds by six percent in a lower threshold model,

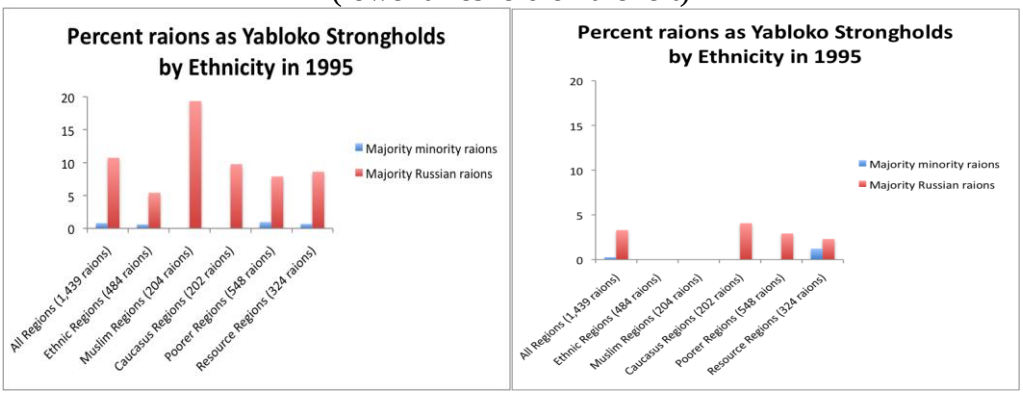
while a higher proportion of other minorities augmented the odds by seven percent in one strict specification. Yabloko was thus the only party in the core party troika to experience any kind of effect from titular minorities. Although the Communists also captured electoral windfalls from raions with large other minority populations, Yabloko's constituency of other minority supporters was likely drawn primarily from Indo-European groups rather than non-titular ethnic groups, as was the case for the KPRF, because of the party's liberal orientation. When, in Figure 4.7, vote share is employed as a continuous variable rather than dichotomous as in the statistical models, an inverse association between Yabloko's vote share and the proportion of non-Russians and other minorities is evident, mirroring that of the LDPR. Yabloko's fanatical raions, located primarily in the upper left quadrant, were nearly all located in ethnic Russian areas, save for one mostly titular minority raion that was geographically proximate to the location of the LDPR's outlier raions. Additionally, nearly all of these most zealous raions were found in Moscow city, Rostov Oblast on the Russian border with Ukraine, and Nizhny Novgorod in Western Russia and bisected by the Volga River. The conspicuous outlier in the scatterplot concerning titular minorities, a majority titular minority raion that recorded a vote share for Yabloko nearly five times higher than its raion-level national average of 4.64%, was located in Agin-Buryat Autonomous Okrug within Chita Oblast on the Mongolia.

Figure 4.7: Non-Russian Minorities and Yabloko's Vote Share in 1995



Like the scatterplots, Figure 4.8 offers a picture of Yabloko strongholds that diverges from the statistical findings but is congruent with the extant literature suggesting that the liberal party performed better in predominantly Russian areas. Of the majority-minority and majority-Russian raions in each regional environment, there is an unmistakably Russian pattern of support, similar to that for the LDPR. Approximately 10% of majority-Russian raions were bastions of support for the liberal party while a minuscule percent of majority-minority raions registered similar vote totals for the party. Unexpectedly, nearly 20% of majority-Russian raions in predominantly Muslim regions and roughly 10% of these raions in the Caucasus were liberal zealots. With regard to the lower threshold, Yabloko's only strongholds in Muslim regions and those located in the Caucasus were in majority-Russian raions. With the shift from the relaxed to the strict threshold, strongholds in ethnic and Muslim regions of either type vanished.

Figure 4.8: Yabloko Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 1995 (lower threshold on the left)



Although the scatterplots and bar charts reveal ethnic Russian contours of Yabloko's support, the party's average in majority-minority areas was, in fact, slightly higher than nationally, as shown in Table 4.7. At the regional level, the shift from raions located in Russian federal regions to those located in ethnic republics sank the odds of a stronghold by more than 90% in one lower threshold model. Yabloko's average showing in ethnic republics was approximately two percent less than its national vote share.

Table 4.7: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of Yabloko's Electoral Performance in the 1995 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	4.64	3.49	4.85	1.61	2.68	2.02	3.20	5.50	3.60
Min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.295
Max	25.62	22.94	22.94	11.93	22.94	11.91	15.51	25.62	16.54
SD	4.30	4.06	4.56	1.52	2.68	2.57	3.33	4.90	2.94

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, 1.11.

Table 4.8 reveals that few of the party's strongholds were found in ethnic regions, approximately five and one percent according to the relaxed and strict measure,

respectively. Raions in Muslim regions recorded even more limited support on average, less than half of Yabloko's national take. Furthermore, only roughly three percent of Yabloko's bastions were housed in Muslim regions according to the lower threshold and none of these bastions recorded support high enough to surpass the higher threshold. Despite Yabloko's poor showing in Muslim regions as evident from the descriptive statistics, the Muslim region variable did not exert a systematic effect on the occurrence of Yabloko strongholds.

Table 4.8: Yabloko Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 1995

	# of Yabloko Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (389 Total)	% of Yabloko Strongholds	# of Yabloko Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (183 Total)	% of Yabloko Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	18	4.63	2	1.09
Russian federal regions	371	95.37	181	98.91
Muslim regions	10	2.57	0	0
Caucasus regions	22	5.66	6	3.28
Poorer Regions	81	20.82	21	11.48
Natural Resource Regions	21	5.40	4	2.19
Fraudulent raions	4	1.03	0	0
Non-Fraudulent raions	385	98.97	183	100

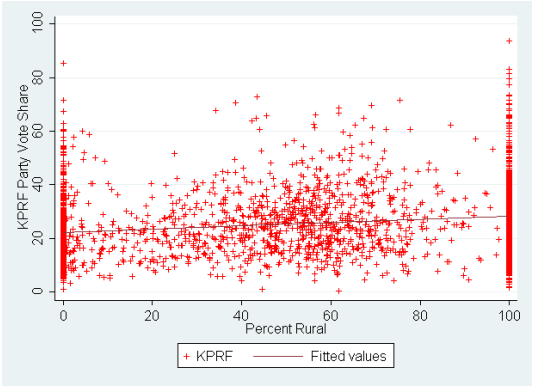
Prioritizing the results from the more systematic statistical analysis, it appears that electoral support for the archetypal liberal party was not driven primarily by ethnic cleavages as generally expected.

The Urban-rural Divide and Opposition Parties

The statistical results indicate that all members of the core party troika successfully captured constituencies defined by the urban-rural divide in Russian politics in the mid-1990s. In addition to minority populations, the KPRF displayed the contours of a party that appealed to the specific constituency of rural residents: a percent increase in the rural covariate resulted in a statistically significant increase by one to two percent in the odds of a raion being a KPRF stronghold across the majority of specifications

using both thresholds. Furthermore, the party's average in rural raions was roughly two percent higher than nationally, as shown in Table 4.3 above. Figure 4.9 clearly shows that additional rural residents elevated the KPRF's vote share. The most zealous "red raions" were located exclusively in republics and oblasts, such as Dagestan, North Ossetia, Ulyanovsk Oblast in the Volga Federal District, and Kemerovo Oblast in southwestern Siberia. Unsurprisingly, the vast majority of these devoted raions were found in the countryside, with a few urban exceptions in Dagestan and Kemerovo. As mentioned, the number three spot on the KPRF list was Aman Tuleev, the head of the legislature in Kemerovo, which explains the party's solid performance in the region.

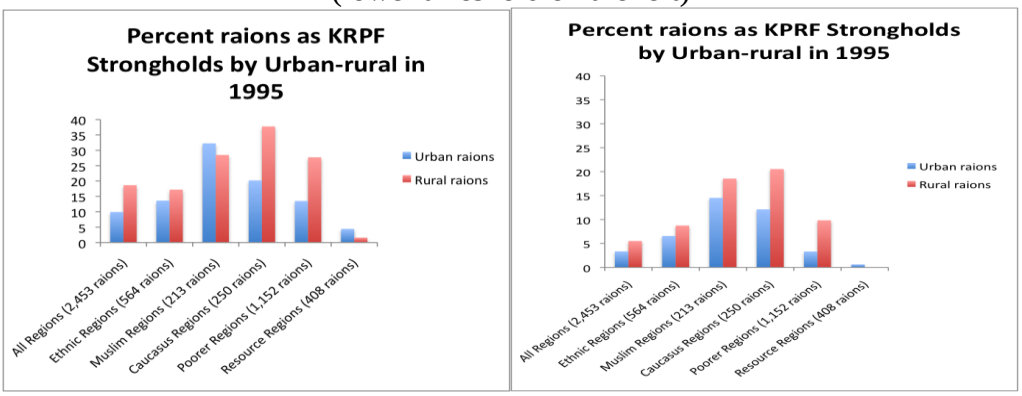
Figure 4.9: Rural Inhabitants and KPRF's Vote Share in 1995



The rural base of the KPRF in the mid-1990s is apparent in Figure 4.10. Nearly 20% of all majority-rural raions delivered high levels of support to the Communists, while half that percentage of mostly urban raions registered comparable enthusiasm. A higher percentage of strongholds were found in majority-rural raions in all but two regional contexts considered. Muslim regions and regions with abundant natural resources revealed a higher percentage of KPRF strongholds in urban raions than those in the countryside, but the balance between urban and rural was relatively even in the case of Muslim regions. In Muslim regions, the Communists carved out strongholds in one-third of majority-urban and close to 30% of mostly rural raions. In the Caucasus, close to 40% of raions in the countryside were devoted to the Communists, while approximately 30%

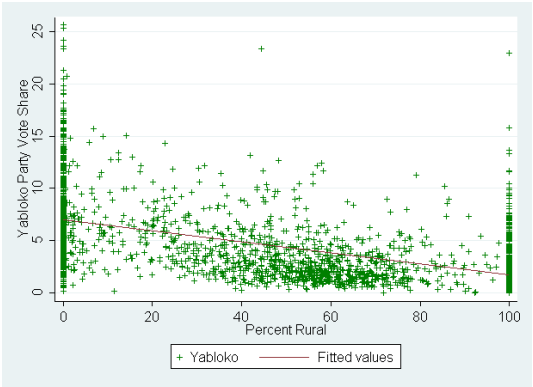
of their counterparts in poorer regions showed similar levels of enthusiasm. With the shift from relaxed to strict threshold, the balance between urban and rural strongholds shifts to favor rural raions in Muslim regions. In contrast, rural strongholds evaporated entirely in resource regions, leaving only urban bastions of support. The party's performance in ethnic republics and Muslim regions was more uniform from the cities to the countryside than in the other contexts considered.

Figure 4.10: KPRF Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 1995 (lower threshold on the left)



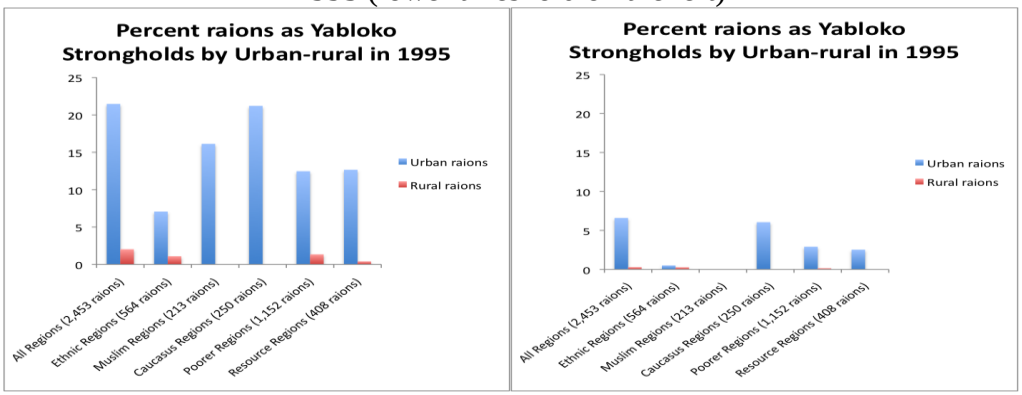
Yabloko's pattern of electoral support was also critically shaped by the urban-rural cleavage in Russian society but in the direction opposite to that of the KPRF: the percent rural covariate was statistically significant and negative across all of the models specified for Yabloko, consistently diminishing the odds of a stronghold by roughly six to ten percent, contingent on the model. As evident in Figure 4.11, Yabloko's vote share precipitously declined as rural residency expanded. Predictably, the majority of raions that were ardent supporters of the liberal party were found in urban centers in the same areas as those outliers from the ethnicity scatterplots, with two exceptions, one partly rural and the other entirely so, located in Rostov Oblast and Agin-Buryat Autonomous Okrug.

Figure 14.11: Rural Inhabitants and Yabloko's Vote Share in 1995



As shown in Figure 4.12, Yabloko's pattern of support was distinctly urban and appears significantly more skewed toward urban areas across all regional contexts than the KPRF's pattern was toward the countryside. Of Russia's most urban raions, the liberal party harvested strongholds in more than 20%, but captured an infinitesimal percentage of their rural counterparts. According to the lower threshold, none of Yabloko's strongholds were found in rural areas nested within Muslim and Caucasus regions, likely because the countryside in these regions was largely already spoken by the KPRF and Our Home is Russia (and the LDPR to a lesser degree). With the countryside generally split between the resurgent KPRF and the party of power and their rival political machines, the more fragile liberal party was simply squeezed out by more formidable opponents. For the same reason, it is surprising that Yabloko was able to make any inroads, even in the urban centers that typically form the party's backbone, in these areas. Indeed, Yabloko carved out strongholds in more than 20% of urban raions in the Caucasus and more than 15% in Muslim regions. According to strict measure, Yabloko's support came exclusively from urban centers in the Caucasus and resource regions.

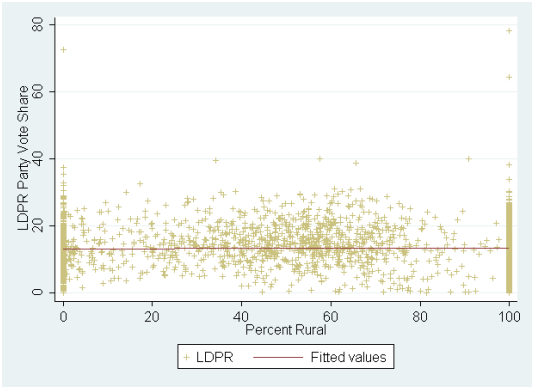
Figure 4.12: Yabloko Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 1995 (lower threshold on the left)



Yabloko's average in rural raions was approximately one percent lower than nationally, as shown in Table 4.7. This finding strongly corroborates the conventional wisdom that Yabloko's constituency is geographically anchored in Russia's biggest cities rather than the countryside.

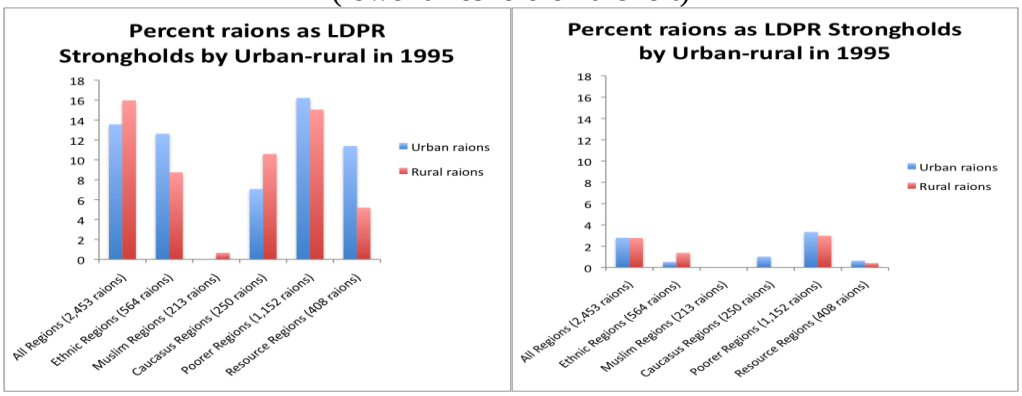
LDPR strongholds were notably distinct compared to KPRF and Yabloko strongholds because they were not as strongly defined on this dimension in terms of the magnitude of the statistical effect. The odds of an LDPR stronghold were slightly higher in more rural areas, but less than one percent, in the minority of the lower threshold models and were not statistically significant across the higher specifications. This finding provides some corroboration to survey-based scholarship suggesting the party performed well in the countryside, yet also indicates, based on the incredibly small effect size, that support for the party from the cities to the countryside was perhaps more balanced than originally presumed (Wyman 1996; Rose, Tikhomirov, and Mishler 1997; White, Wyman and Oates 1997; Cf. Clem and Craumer 1998). Figure 4.13 showcases the relatively balanced effect that increased rurality exercised on LDPR support. The one especially enthusiastic urban outlier was located in Chita Oblast while the two aberrations in the countryside were located in Agin-Buryat Autonomous Okrug, which was formerly surrounded by Chita Oblast, and Bryansk Oblast located in western European Russia, bordering both Belarus and Ukraine.

Figure 4.13: Rural Inhabitants and LDPR's Vote Share in 1995



The bar charts in Figure 4.14 showcase the comparatively varied effect of rurality on LDPR strongholds: the pattern of support is decidedly mixed between majority-urban and majority-rural raions, corroborating to some extent the weak effect size associated with this variable in the statistical results. The nationalists gained strongholds in roughly 16% of all majority-rural raions and just less than 14% of all majority-urban raions. In ethnic republics, poorer regions and those with large resource endowments by the relaxed measure, a higher percentage of LDPR strongholds were found in urban areas, while Muslim regions and those in the Caucasus revealed the reverse. Of urban and rural raions in poorer regions, more than 15% delivered comparatively large vote shares to the nationalists. With the shift from the relaxed to the strict measure, the balance between the cities and the countryside veered in favor of rural zones in ethnic republics, while the opposite occurred the Caucasus. Overall, with regard to percentages, the LDPR captured relatively balanced support between the cities and countryside, favoring rural areas only slightly.

Figure 4.14: LDPR Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 1995 (lower threshold on the left)



Descriptive statistics from Table 4.5 reveal that the LDPR's average level of support in majority-rural raions was within one-half percent of its raion-level national showing. Collectively, these findings suggest that the countryside was not a sure win for the LDPR in 1995 and that the party may have been more versatile in moving from the cities to the countryside than Yabloko and, to a lesser degree, the KPRF as well.

Regional Geographic and Socioeconomic Indicators and Opposition Parties

The level-2 variables accounting for the remaining contexts considered produced diverse results. Alongside the positive effect of ethnic and Muslim regions, location in the Caucasus also boosted the odds of a KPRF stronghold across all but one model, to between 19 and 50 in the relaxed models, and to 61 and 196 in the strict specifications. The KPRF's average in Caucasian raions was more than eight percent higher than its raion-level national average. Moreover, over 20% and almost 40% of the party's strongholds were located in the Caucasus region, according to the lower and higher threshold. Thus, an area literally at war with the government and, by extension, the party of power at the time of the election electorally sustained the KPRF. Antipodal to the KPRF, Caucasus location did not produce statistically significant results for the Yabloko and the LDPR. Descriptive statistics show a slight decline in support based on this determinant: Yabloko's average in raions located in the Caucasus was roughly one and a half percent less than nationally and the LDPR's was approximately three percent less. Yet only about three to five percent of Yabloko strongholds and between one and six

percent of LDPR strongholds were located in the Caucasus, depending on the stronghold measure.

Turning to the variables that together create a measure of socioeconomic welfare, a one unit increase in economic development, as measured by gross regional product, damaged the odds of a KPRF stronghold by approximately 70% in three of the models across both measurements of the dependent variable. The vast majority of KPRF strongholds (69% and 73%, by the lower and higher threshold, respectively) were located in poorer regions, i.e. regions with gross regional products below the median. Furthermore, the KPRF's average in economically developed areas, i.e. regions with gross regional products above the median, was less than two percent below nationally. Higher levels of gross regional product also reduced the odds of an LDPR stronghold by more than 50% in one model. Yet the LDPR's average in economically developed regions was within one percent of its national showing and distribution of the party's strongholds was split relatively evenly between poorer regions and those more well off. While the KPRF and LDPR suffered in wealthier areas, in one-third of the models, Yabloko benefitted from an increase in this variable with odds of approximately two. Save for majority-minority raions, wealthier regions were the only other raion- or region-level context that registered support for the party above its national showing, returning a vote share for the party that was almost one percent higher. Indeed, few Yabloko strongholds (21% and 11% by the lower and higher measure, accordingly) were housed in economically disadvantaged regions. Interestingly, the effect produced from distinguishing the status of a region's economy as resource-dependent generated results that far from simply mirrored the findings from increases in gross regional product.

Unlike distinctions between levels of gross regional product, the resource region variable did not furnish any statistically significant results for the KPRF or Yabloko. Despite the lack of a systematic effect in the statistical models, the KPRF's average in resource regions was almost seven percent less than its national vote share and less than three percent of KPRF strongholds were found in these areas by both stronghold measures. Although Yabloko fared well in economically developed regions, surprisingly,

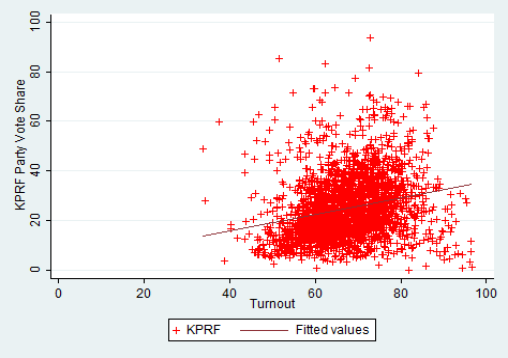
the party's average in resource regions was less than one percent below its national showing and only five and two percent of the party's bastions were located there. In one upper threshold model, the shift from non-resource region to resource-dependence produced a statistically significant and negative effect on the likelihood of an LDPR stronghold, reducing the odds by approximately 80%. Furthermore, the LDPR's average in resource-rich regions was below its national level but the LDPR did not fare as poorly as the KPRF in these areas, with average support hovering at less than two percent under its national level. Roughly nine and three percent of the LDPR's strongholds were nested within resource-dependent regions. Thus, the ultra-nationalist party performed better in regions with more diversified economies.

Electoral Manipulation and Opposition Parties

Finally, and as expected due to the competitiveness of the election, the dichotomous variable capturing suspected electoral manipulation did not systematically affect the occurrence of strongholds in the majority of the models specified for opposition parties. When the variable did achieve standard levels of statistical significance, however, the impact on opposition party strongholds varied. For example, the influence of abnormally high turnout on the odds of a KPRF stronghold was checkered: the shift from the non-manipulated class to the fraudulent category decreased the odds of a stronghold by approximately 40% in the lower threshold models, but increased the odds by one to over two times in the stricter models. An ex ante estimate of electoral manipulation's effect on the occurrence of KPRF strongholds in the mid-1990s would have expected either no systematic effect, because fraud had not yet been transformed into an efficient mechanism for producing high vote shares for a single party as later became the case in the 2000s under United Russia, or would have predicted that electoral manipulation would boost the odds of a stronghold, as found in the strict threshold models, because the KPRF boasted the most robust organizational infrastructure that could be leveraged to engage in electoral manipulation on the party's behalf. Thus, the finding that abnormally high voter turnout actually dampened the odds of a lower-level KPRF stronghold is puzzling and demands further investigation in the future. The results from the strict

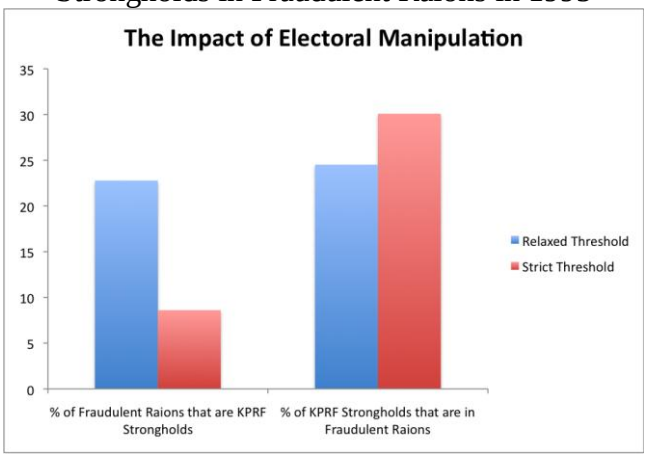
specifications, however, conform to expectation more closely and corroborate previous research indicating that increasing turnout benefitted the Communists (Belin and Orttung 1997: 136; Clem and Craumer 1997). Indeed, after the 1995 election, Yeltsin's cronies argued that the KPRF (and LDPR) engaged in electoral manipulation by using mobile ballot boxes to gather votes illegally, but the administration provided little in the way of proof, citing only a geographical analysis that showed opposition parties performed better in regions that had higher numbers of mobile votes (*Ibid*). Despite the inconsistent findings offered by the model results, other sources of data detailing the relationship between KPRF performance and high turnout areas help elucidate the connection and present a more homogenous picture. Approximately 25% and 30% of KPRF strongholds were located in areas with suspiciously high turnout, according to the lower and higher thresholds of the dependent variable. Furthermore, the party received an average vote share in fraudulent raions that was more than four percent higher than its national take. Furthermore, Figure 4.15 shows that the KPRF's vote share increased with higher levels of turnout. The raions situated at the nexus between unrealistically high political participation and high vote shares for the KPRF were nearly all nested within ethnic republics in the Caucasus, with a few others found in Kemerovo Oblast in western Siberia. The scarcity of raions populating the upper right quadrant is surprising, given that the KPRF's organizational infrastructure far outmatched all other parties and it benefitted from abnormally high turnout according to the results from the strict threshold models. Yet the KPRF tangled head-to-head with the Kremlin-backed Our Home is Russia in these high turnout zones, making a clean sweep far from a foregone conclusion.

Figure 4.15: Voter Turnout and KPRF's Vote Share in 1995



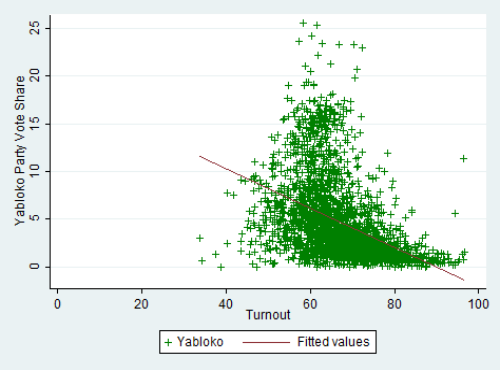
Referenced above and depicted in Figure 4.16, a healthy share of fraudulent raions, indeed more than 20%, were bastions of support for the KRPF by the relaxed measure and still a fair share according to the strict threshold. As the vote share for the KPRF increased with the shift from the lower to the higher threshold, a higher percentage of KRPF strongholds were found in fraudulent raions. Even in the context of a competitive election, certain parties benefitted disproportionately from abnormally high turnout and it was precisely those parties that either had robust regional networks and grassroots operations at the sub-regional level, or, as will be discussed later, were well equipped through close ties to the Kremlin.

Figure 4.16: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are KPRF Strongholds vs. Percent KPRF Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 1995



In contrast to the KPRF, the influence of electoral manipulation on the trajectories of the two remaining opposition parties was more consistent across the statistical results and more descriptive data points. The odds of a Yabloko stronghold diminished substantially in the relaxed models, approximately 70 to 75%, with the shift from the non-manipulated category to the manipulated class. Indeed, only approximately one percent of Yabloko lower-threshold strongholds were located in raions coded positively for suspected electoral manipulation and the party had no strongholds in these raions when the higher threshold was employed. Moreover, Yabloko's vote share in high turnout raions was approximately three percent less than its national take. Figure 4.17 provides additional evidence of the inverse relationship between Yabloko's vote share and turnout levels, which is the reverse of that of the KPRF, except that Yabloko's electoral fortunes plummeted more steeply than the KPRF's surged. Thus, the archetypal liberal party's vote share swelled when voter turnout was sub-average or hovered more closely around the national mean.

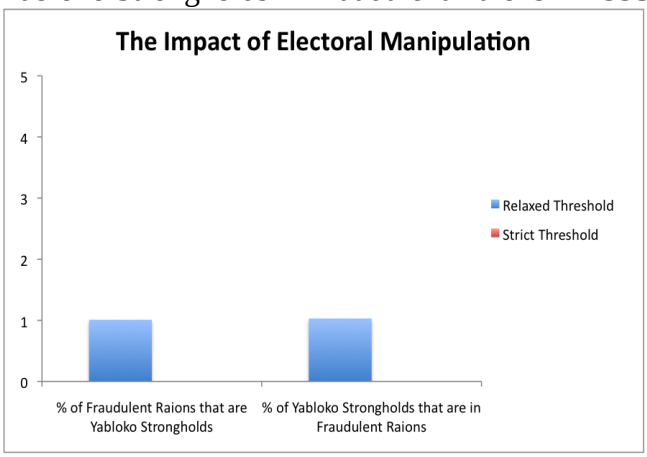
Figure 4.17: Voter Turnout and Yabloko's Vote Share in 1995



From a different angle, Figure 4.18 reveals the extent that Yabloko foundered in raions suspected for electoral malfeasance. As mentioned, the share of Yabloko strongholds in fraudulent raions was exceedingly rare by both measures, and, of fraudulent raions, Yabloko earned strongholds in a mere one percent. The smallest party of the core party troika was incapable of establishing a presence akin to the Communists in these raions

and was simply outmatched when the electoral arena was structured around electoral malfeasance rather than genuine multiparty contestation.

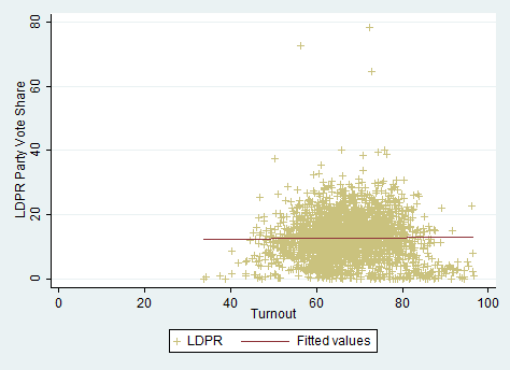
Figure 4.18: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are Yabloko Strongholds vs. Percent Yabloko Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 1995



While the odds of Yabloko's electoral success were damaged substantially by suspected electoral fraud, this variable did not reach standard levels of statistical significance in any of the models specified for the LDPR. It may have been expected that the LDPR would capture electoral windfalls in high turnout zones since it was the runaway winner in the 1993 snap elections and came in second in 1995. However, unlike the KPRF and Our Home is Russia, the LDPR relied neither on Kremlin-backing nor a robust web of regional and sub-regional supporters but the charismatic appeal of its leader, Vladimir Zhirinovsky. Therefore, the LDPR simply lacked the resources necessary to turn electoral manipulation toward its own partisan ends. The finding of a lack of a systematic effect diverges from prior scholarship suggesting that higher turnout benefitted the LDPR, but confirms other research indicating that there was "no noticeable correlation between turnout and support for the nationalists" (Belin and Orttung 1997: 136; Clem and Craumer 1997; Cf. Wilson 2005). Descriptive statistics indicate that LDPR support was affected only slightly, a roughly one percent decline, by high levels of turnout. As illustrated in Figure 4.19, the LDPR was neither discernibly helped nor harmed in high turnout zones. Indeed, the party's vote share remained relatively stable across all turnout

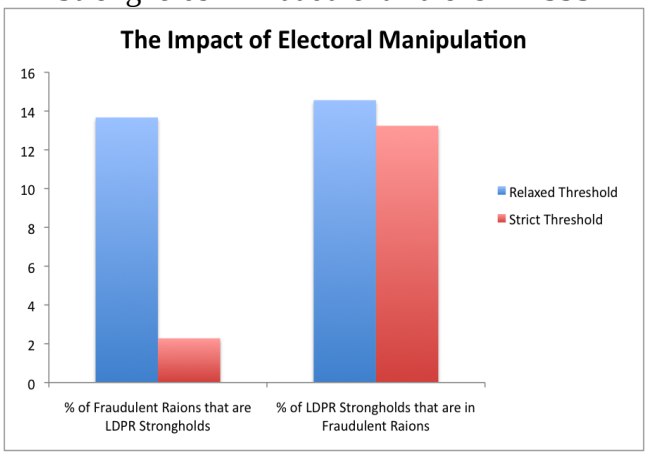
levels, especially compared to the electoral trajectories of the KPRF and Yabloko. As mentioned, the notable outliers were located in Chita Oblast, Agin-Buryat Autonomous Okrug, and Bryansk Oblast; all three raions registering fanatical support for the ultra-nationalists were in the range of average turnout.

Figure 4.19: Voter Turnout and LDPR's Vote Share in 1995



Especially when compared to Yabloko, Figure 4.20 suggests that the nationalists fared decently well in manipulated raions. Despite the lack of a statistical effect, the LDPR seemed to enjoy comparatively robust support in raions with abnormal levels of political participation: approximately 15% of nationalist strongholds were found in fraudulent raions by the lower threshold and the percentage did not contract substantially with the increase in threshold, leveling off at about 13%. Of the total number of fraudulent raions, the nationalists secured stronghold level support in more than one-tenth, but the LDPR's presence waned noticeably with the ramping up of the stronghold threshold.

Figure 4.20: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are LDPR Strongholds vs. Percent LDPR Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 1995



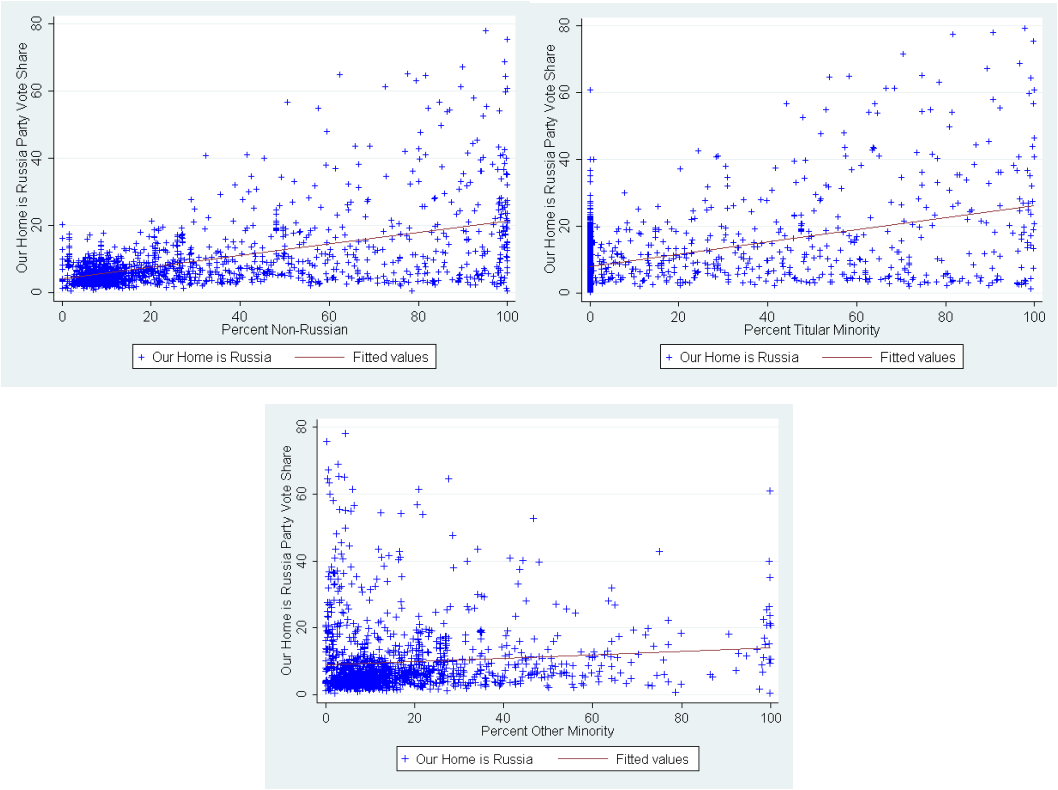
Compared to the liberal Yabloko, the nationalists appeared better able to withstand the potential distortions in party vote shares created by electoral manipulation. These findings provide early evidence that party of power strategies, namely electoral manipulation, affect opposition parties unevenly and, possibly, that specific types of parties are disproportionately impacted. Analyses of future legislative elections will show whether these patterns crystallize or collapse.

Overall, the results pinpoint the social and geographic loci of electoral support for various opposition parties in the absence of a successful dominant party and identify the likely bases for new and continued support in subsequent elections. The KPRF was largely an appeals-based party with genuine geographic strengths, particularly in areas with sizable ethnic minority populations, rural areas, ethnic republics, Muslim regions and those located in the Caucasus. The LDPR also captured an identifiable electorate based on ideological appeals, relying on a core constituency of geographically concentrated ethnic Russians, those living in poorer regions and Russian federal regions, and the countryside to a limited extent. Yabloko, the defining liberal party in post-communist Russia, secured a constituency located in urban centers and in those regions with higher levels of socioeconomic welfare.

Ethnicity and the Party of Power

The multilevel models produced striking results with regard to the party of power, Our Home is Russia. The findings showcase the party of power's basis in minority politics. Unit increases in the percent minority covariate lifted the odds of an Our Home is Russia stronghold by three to four percent in the lower threshold models and by approximately three percent in the stricter models. Similarly, a one percent increase in titular minorities augmented the odds of a stronghold by one to three percent across the models using both measures of party stronghold. Other minorities seemed to exercise a more limited effect, with unit increases lifting the odds of a stronghold by three percent in one lower threshold model but failing to achieve statistical significance in any of the strict specifications. Figure 4.21 shows the unambiguously positive relationship between support for the party of power and concentrations of ethnic minorities at the raion level. Especially in the first two scatterplots concerning ethnic minorities and titular minorities, there are quite a few raions occupying the upper right quadrant, where electoral windfalls for Our Home is Russia are concentrated and comparatively fewer in the upper left, ethnic Russian, quadrant. Those raions in the upper right quadrant were primarily located in ethnic republics, many predominantly Muslim regions, and numerous in the Caucasus, such as Bashkortostan, Tatarstan, Tuva, Dagestan, Kalmykya, Ingushetia, and Mari El in the Volga district.

Figure 4.21: Non-Russian Minorities and Our Home is Russia's Vote Share in 1995



The party of power thus stood apart from the three opposition parties considered in capturing high levels of support from ethnic non-Russians, especially titular minorities. Figure 4.22 corroborates these findings and shows a clear pattern of ethnic minority support for Our Home is Russia across all regional contexts considered. Our Home is Russia harvested high levels of support in roughly one-third of all majority-minority raions, but less than five percent of their majority-Russian counterparts. In each setting, but to a somewhat more limited degree in Muslim regions, the balance was tilted heavily towards majority-minority raions rather than majority-Russian raions and this pattern endured across thresholds. Indeed, in the Caucasus, Our Home is Russia did not capture any bastions of support in majority-Russian areas according to either stronghold measure.

However, in ethnic republics and Muslim regions, the party of power captured a fair percentage of strongholds in ethnic Russian areas. Astonishingly, approximately 50% of majority-minority raions in Muslim regions registered strong support for the party of power and more than 40% of their counterparts in the Caucasus and resource-dependent regions reported similar zealousness. The bar charts concerning the party of power resemble those detailing the ethnic breakdown of the KPRF's strongholds more closely than the other opposition parties', but the KPRF's support did not tilt as heavily toward majority-minority raions as Our Home is Russia's.

Figure 4.22: Our Home is Russia Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 1995 (lower threshold on the left)

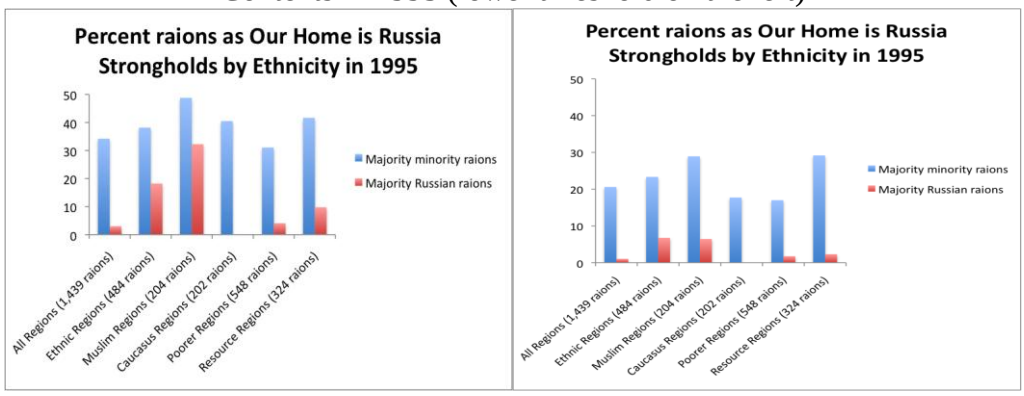


Table 4.9 indicates that Our Home is Russia harvested nearly two percent more votes, on average, in majority-minority raions than across the whole country's expanse. In addition to the boost received from concentrations of ethnic minorities at the raion level, Our Home is Russia captured electoral windfalls in ethnic republics and Muslim regions. Descriptive statistics reveal that Our Home is Russia's average support in these areas was an astonishing seven percent higher than its national showing in the case of ethnic republics and reached its peak in Muslim regions, which registered support that was more than double the party of power's countywide take.

Table 4.9: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of Our Home is Russia's Electoral Performance in the 1995 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	9.71	9.94	11.64	12.02	16.81	23.05	12.11	10.84	14.93
Min	.339	.396	.339	.873	.396	.396	.396	.608	1.36
Max	79.44	79.44	79.44	79.44	79.44	79.44	79.44	79.44	77.97
SD	8.95	10.57	10.45	15.52	15.02	17.73	13.19	9.59	12.87

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, 1.11.

Results from the statistical models shed more systematic light on the relationship between Our Home is Russia strongholds and ethnic context at the regional level. The most striking result was the consistent and sizable increase in the odds of a party of power stronghold for raions located in ethnic regions: a shift from the reference group to the indicator group of the ethnic region variable increased the odds to between 16 and 49 in the case of the lower threshold models, and to between 75 and 659 in the higher threshold models. Incredibly, as shown in Table 4.10, over 97% and about two-thirds of Our Home strongholds were located in raions within ethnic regions, according to the higher and lower threshold of stronghold, respectively.

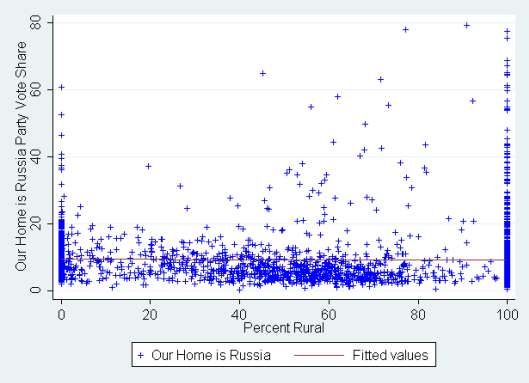
Table 4.10: Our Home is Russia Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 1995				
	# of Our Home is Russia Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (268 Total)	% of Our Home is Russia Strongholds	# of Our Home is Russia Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (101 Total)	% of Our Home is Russia Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	177	66.04	98	97.03
Russian federal regions	91	33.96	3	2.97
Muslim regions	106	39.55	59	58.42
Caucasus regions	42	15.67	23	22.77
Poorer Regions	82	30.60	42	41.58
Natural Resource Regions	90	33.58	48	47.52
Fraudulent raions	70	26.12	47	46.53
Non-Fraudulent raions	198	73.88	54	53.47

These findings contrast with evidence gleaned from in-depth interviews with Russian political analysts, who argued that Yeltsin and Our Home is Russia were "never popular in the North Caucasus and the ethnic republics and so on" (Senior Political Analyst at INDEM Foundation 2011). In addition to ethnic republics, the party of power benefited electorally in Muslim regions across all but one models, with odds as low as 16 and as high as 99 in the relaxed models, and as low as 40 and as high as 83 in the strict models. Approximately 40% and nearly 60% of the party's strongholds were located in Muslim regions by the lower and higher threshold, accordingly. The party of power thus competed head-to-head with the KPRF for support in Muslim regions. These data demonstrate Our Home is Russia's electoral footholds in areas with geographically concentrated minorities, especially titular minorities organized around ethnic networks that can be leveraged to mobilize the vote for a party through patronage-based exchanges. The finding that the party of power's social base was grounded in communities with significant minority populations diverges from existing scholarship suggesting that this cleavage did exercise an influence on Our Home is Russia's support (Rose, Tikhomirov, and Mishler 1997; Colton 2003; Cf. White, Wyman and Oates 1997).

The Urban-rural Divide and the Party of Power

Compared to ethnic minorities, the effect of rurality on Our Home is Russia strongholds produced more mixed results: with unit increases in the rural population, the odds of a party of power stronghold diminished by approximately two percent in some lower threshold models but increased by a slight amount to one percent in others. The strict specifications generated consistent results, lifting the odds by one to two percent in the models for which the variable achieved statistical significance. Although the finding is inconsistent, the result that Our Home received a boost of any kind from rural areas in some models diverges from existing research that indicated the party of power's support was limited to large cities (Wyman 1996; White, Wyman and Oates 1997; Wyman 1997; Belin and Orttung 1997; Clem and Craumer 1998; Colton and McFaul 2003). Descriptive statistics from Table 4.9 show that Our Home is Russia's average in predominantly rural raions was slightly higher than its average showing, albeit still within one percent. Figure 23 shows remarkable stability in the party of power's vote share with movement from city centers to the countryside. The fair number of stray raions in more rural areas and a few in urban centers that recorded high vote shares for the party were all located in ethnic republics, Muslim regions and the Caucasus.

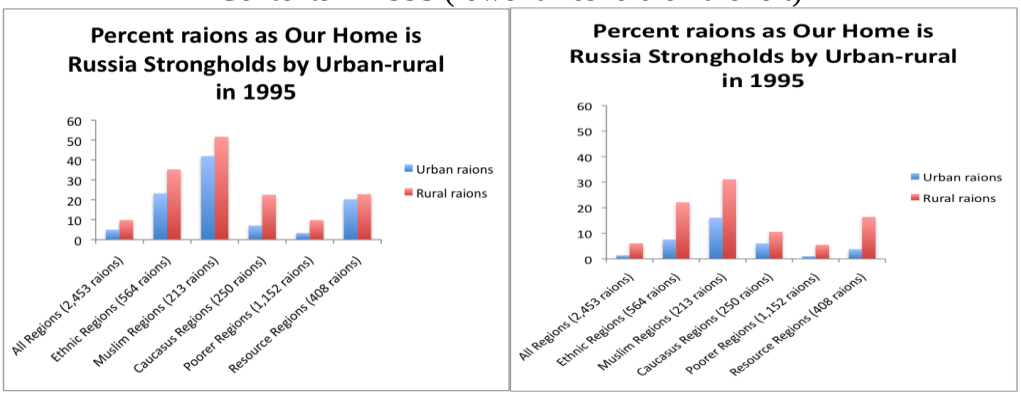
Figure 4.23: Rural Inhabitants and Our Home is Russia's Vote Share in 1995



Assessing the rural dimension of support detailed in the scatterplots, Our Home is Russia resembled the ultra-nationalist LDPR more closely than the KPRF and Yabloko, which

more unambiguously captured support in the countryside and urban centers, respectively. Although Our Home is Russia harvested some rural support, it faced a steep uphill battle to even begin to displace the KPRF from its heartland in the countryside. In some contrast to the model results and Figure 4.23, the bar charts in Figure 4.24 reveal a pattern of rural support across stronghold thresholds. Approximately 10% of all mostly rural raions were Our Home strongholds, while roughly half that percent of mostly urban raions showed similar zealousness. Strikingly, in Muslim regions, more than 50% of rural raions and more than 40% of their urban counterparts were party of power bastions of support. Figure 4.24 also reveals that a significant share of support was drawn from urban areas, contingent on regional context. For example, the balance between strongholds in the city and countryside was more even in resource regions compared to that in the Caucasus or economically disadvantaged regions. Moving from the relaxed to the strict threshold, however, Our Home is Russia strongholds became more rural, as the percentage of strongholds in urban centers dropped disproportionately.

Figure 4.24: Our Home is Russia Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 1995 (lower threshold on the left)



Regional Geographic and Socioeconomic Indicators and the Party of Power

Variables distinguishing different regional environments generated inconsistent results across stronghold thresholds. For example, with the shift from raions located outside of the Caucasus to those within, the odds of an Our Home is Russia stronghold plummeted significantly in one lower threshold model but hiked to between 34 and 99

times in the strict specifications. Ex ante, it could be expected that raions located in the Caucasus would severely damage the odds of a party of power stronghold because of the intractable conflict the central government fought in Chechnya on the one hand, but, on the other hand, raions in this area might have become bastions of support for Our Home is Russia due to numerous bilateral treaties concluded between many of these regions and the federal government but also if the party of power wanted to make a show of strength in the area, perhaps using electoral malfeasance, to deter similar separatist-type activities. Descriptive statistics help clarify the relationship somewhat. Table 4.9 indicates that the party of power's average showing in the Caucasus was more than two percent higher than its national vote share and Table 4.10 shows that approximately 15% and 22% of the party's bastions of support were found in the area. Mirroring the situation in the countryside, two rival parties carved up the Caucasus in 1995, the KPRF and Our Home is Russia, while other opposition parties looked to gain footholds in areas where a larger slice of the electoral pie still remained.

Socioeconomic distinctions also exerted varying impacts on the occurrence of Our Home is Russia strongholds. Unit increases in gross regional product did not produce statistically significant effects in the relaxed models but consistently diminished the odds by between 66% and 82% in the strict specifications. Yet regions with gross regional products above the median level recorded support for the party that was more than one percent higher than its national showing. Our Home is Russia thus closely resembled the KPRF and LDPR on this dimension, as the reds and browns suffered to similar degrees in wealthier regions. Raions located in regions with resource-dependent economies hiked the odds of a stronghold by between 34 to 53 times across the lower threshold models but failed to achieve statistical significance in the upper threshold models. Our Home is Russia harvested an average vote share in these regions that was more than five percent higher than its countrywide take. Moreover, approximately one-third and nearly one-half of party of power strongholds were found in these areas, according to the lower and higher threshold, respectively. The finding that the party of power performed well in resource-rich regions seems to partially substantiate previous research indicating that Our

Home's drew support from regions rich in raw materials (Belin and Orttung 1997: 122). The contours of Our Home is Russia's support were more clearly and consistently articulated on this dimension than the LDPR's, the only opposition party for which this regional economic distinction produced statistically significant results. Our Home is Russia thus stood out with respect to the core party troika in that it was the only party to capture electoral windfalls in raions situated in resource-rich regions.

Electoral Manipulation and the Party of Power

Surprisingly, given the competitiveness of the election and the comparative impotence of the party, Our Home is Russia benefitted from suspiciously high levels of voter turnout that provide an indication of electoral malfeasance. Except for two lower threshold models, the shift from the non-manipulated class to the fraudulent category amplified the odds of an Our Home stronghold by 70% to two times in the relaxed models and the odds of a stronghold hiked by two to three times in all of the stricter models. Although some degree of electoral malfeasance was expected based on anecdotal accounts provided in election observation reports, the consistency of these findings is startling. Furthermore, Our Home's average in raions coded positively for fraud, was more than two percent higher than its national vote share and roughly one-quarter and nearly one-half of the party's strongholds were located in manipulated raions, according to the lower and higher threshold, respectively. Figure 4.25 reveals a discernible boost in Our Home is Russia's vote share as voter participation increased. A considerable number of raions are located in the upper right quadrant of the scatterplot, at the intersection of high vote share for the party of power and high turnout, which were nearly all found in ethnic republics, predominantly Muslim regions, and the Caucasus. Ten raions recorded Our Home support between 60 and 70%, of which 70% were found in Tatarstan and 10% in each Chechnya, Dagestan, Kalmykya and Tuva. Five raions returned a vote share exceeding 70%, 60% of which were located in Chechnya, and 20% in each Tuva and Tatarstan. Many of these zealous Our Home supporters also reported turnout figures that exceeded the threshold for suspected electoral manipulation but there were also a few particularly enthusiastic stray raions recording average or below-average turnout.

Figure 4.25: Voter Turnout and Our Home is Russia's Vote Share in 1995

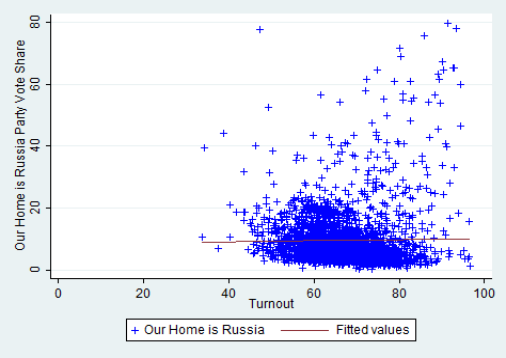
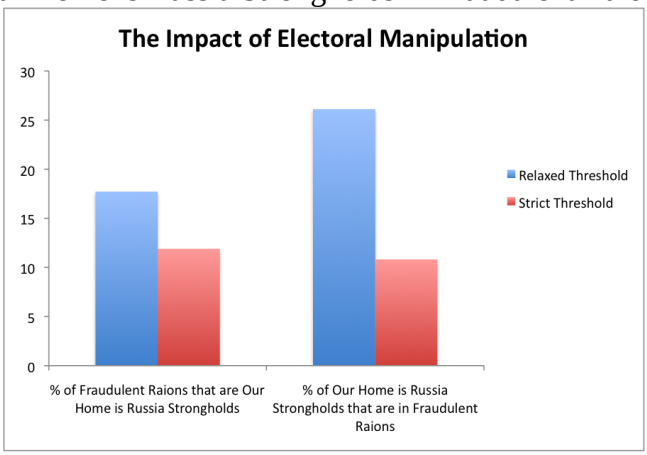


Figure 4.26 shows that a relatively high percentage of Our Home is Russia strongholds were located in manipulated raions, more than one-quarter by the relaxed threshold and still more than 10% by the strict measure. Unlike the KPRF, the party of power had fewer strongholds in fraudulent raions according to the lower threshold than the higher measure. In other words, the percentage of Our Home's strongholds in manipulated raions diminished with the higher threshold, whereas the percentage of the KPRF's strongholds rose with the threshold increase. Combined with the statistical results, these findings indicate that even a comparatively weak party of power contesting the most competitive legislative election benefitted from abnormally high turnout. Moreover, nearly 20% of fraudulent raions were also Our Home is Russia bastions of support by the lower threshold and over 10% by the higher measure. In the mid-1990s it appears that the KPRF and the party of power carved up fraudulent raions rather than a single party completely dominating high turnout areas, as soon emerged as a hallmark of legislative elections in the 2000s and 2010s under United Russia.

Figure 4.26: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are Our Home is Russia Strongholds vs. Percent Our Home is Russia Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 1995



The relationship between party of power strongholds and electoral manipulation in 1995 provides a baseline for later comparison with the considerably more successful United Russia and the significantly more pervasive fraud in the 2000s.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I laid some of the theoretical and empirical groundwork for an explanation of dominant party strength and opposition party weakness by pinpointing the distinct strongholds of political parties in a "normal" competitive legislative election in post-communist Russia. Our Home is Russia rarely dominated any of the areas that became the hallmarks of party dominance in the 2000s and 2010s under United Russia: the utterly ineffective party of power competed head-to-head with opposition parties in areas holding the potential for electoral windfalls, namely majority-minority raions, ethnic republics, Muslim regions, the countryside and raions with exceptionally high voter turnout. Our Home was patently incapable, and unwilling to boot, of driving opposition parties out from its pockets of support and opposition parties, especially the Communists and nationalists, bled the party of power dry as a result. Nevertheless, Our Home is Russia had the same overall profile as United Russia in the 2000s, performing better in areas with geographically concentrated minorities at the raion and regional level, rural areas, and raions suspected for electoral manipulation. Our Home is Russia was simply less institutionalized than its successor and lacked a charismatic leader, like

Vladimir Putin, who was also willing to invest wholesale in party building and winning Duma races. Ironically, the competitiveness of the election also produced competitive electoral manipulation, as the KPRF and Our Home is Russia both leveraged their unique resource endowments, organizational and financial, respectively, to secure high vote shares in raions with unusually high political participation. Therefore, Our Home's failures as a party of power were manifest from various sources. An examination of later parliamentary elections, i.e. 1999, 2003, 2007, and 2011, uncovers how United Russia's remarkable success as a dominant party was built, to an extent, on the weaker pockets of support carved out by Our Home is Russia in the mid-1990s, as well as how a successful dominant party potentially squeezes out other political parties by co-opting their core constituencies.

Evidence from the 1995 election makes clear that the core party troika enjoyed identifiable pockets of support with the potential to develop into a critical mass of support in subsequent elections: the KPRF had genuine geographic strengths in areas with dense populations of ethnic minorities, the countryside, ethnic republics, Muslim regions and those located in the Caucasus; the LDPR relied on a core constituency of ethnic Russians, those living in economically disadvantaged regions and Russian federal regions, and the countryside to a limited extent; finally, Yabloko harvested support from urban centers and in those regions with higher levels of socioeconomic welfare. However, these parties all had relatively narrow constituencies and were niche parties, in general but also in relation to each other. For example, Yabloko was only highly competitive in the two federal cities and the LDPR harvested the most votes from a minor segment of ethnic Russians who possessed a siege mentality. The KPRF had a broader constituency, but one still confined to the countryside and non-Russian federal regions. The Communists were the most successful in 1995 as a result of their broader constituency yet also commanded a powerful political machine inherited, at least in part, by its CPSU predecessor. The KPRF's powerhouse political machine thus compensated effectively for the party's weakness in attracting truly broad-based political support.

At the national level, the election in 1995 was a normal competitive election, but at the raion level, the patterns of opposition party and party of power support were similar, albeit to different magnitudes, as later elections under United Russia. Thus, the conditions for party dominance were present as early as 1995 but additional factors were necessary for a party akin to United Russia to manifest. The more important difference between 1995 and later elections, including even 1999, was the chaotic nature of electoral politics. The contest resembled nothing less than a free for all: in the absence of a successful dominant party, the party system was not defined by a few large parties but was rather highly fragmented and, as a consequence, nearly 50% of votes were cast for parties that did not cross the threshold for representation. Therefore, there was a significant floating electorate dissatisfied with the existing supply of parties that was waiting to be scooped up by new, and presumably less niche, parties with the potential to achieve major party status.

Chapter 5: The 1999 Parliamentary Election: An Opportunity for Opposition Party Fortification and a Battleground for Competing Parties of Power in a Transitional Election

The last parliamentary election of the decade was transitional, bridging the era of the first post-communist president with that of the second. The election also straddled the line between democracy and authoritarianism in Russia because it was the first in which a party publicly supported by then Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, Unity, sought votes. The 1999 contest facilitates an evaluation of how opposition parties fared in a macro electoral environment notably distinct from the mid-1990s, but one that was broadly similar with regard to system level competitiveness. At the end of the decade, opposition parties had an opportunity to fortify strongholds constructed in the mid-1990s and make inroads in new areas to expand their budding political constituencies. However, two new potential parties of power, one with solid Kremlin backing and the other rooted in some of Russia's most powerful regions, jockeyed for control of the legislature and reshaped the electoral environment from four years prior when opposition parties enjoyed their best chance at electoral success due to the absence of an effective party of power. The two party of power hopefuls, Unity and Fatherland-All Russia, challenged each other but also opposition parties that endeavored to preserve and even expand their constituencies amidst increased competition from viable contenders. In retrospect, the 1999 election was especially critical for opposition parties because it was effectively their final opportunity to fortify their respective constituencies in the context of a relatively competitive political system, before the political system contracted sharply with the rise of a remarkably successful party of power in the 2000s.

The outcome of the contest was far from a foregone conclusion, as the runaway winner from 1995, the KPRF, was still alive and well after nearly a decade of post-communism, and the two dueling parties of power were considered heavyweights in the electoral arena due to their vast networks of highly placed administrators at the regional and federal level, and the accompanying stocks of administrative resources. There were reasons to believe that the KPRF's upward electoral trajectory would continue in 1999: it

was the only major political party that increased its vote share from the 1993 snap elections to the 1995 contest. Especially when compared to the Unity and Fatherland-All Russia upstarts, the KPRF's organizational membership and infrastructural might was superior, at least in the so-called red belt, giving it an edge against the two widely perceived frontrunners. Thus, the composition of the Duma and the course of Russian electoral politics more broadly were uncertain in 1999.

The 1999 Legislative Election in Context

The 1999 parliamentary election was the third contest conducted in the transition milieu of post-communist Russia. Although it was only the second election held according to the schedule set forth in the constitution, the fact that it was the third national parliamentary election in one decade is significant intrinsically (Marsh 2002). First, the State Duma elected in 1999 was etched into Russian history as the longest lasting democratically elected legislative organ at the time, but the election proceeded almost prosaically, which was itself remarkable (McFaul and Petrov 1999).

Second, Yeltsin's dismissal of the legislature in October 1993 cast long shadows over the Russian polity throughout the 1990s, as many feared that executive caprice vis-à-vis the legislature and resultant instability would become ossified facets of Russian politics (Marsh 2002). Thus, when the parliamentary election in 1999 proceeded without undue executive interference, it signaled to the populace and political elites alike that the 1995 elections were not a mere perforation in the country's usually turbulent politics, but instead the first elections occurring in the context of political normalcy.

Third, and related, with each election that facilitated a peaceful reorganization of political power within the legislature, Russia's nascent democracy was institutionalized and it was confirmed that democracy was "the only game in town" (Przeworski 1991: 26). Political actors again proved their commitment to democratic governance in the late 1990s when they opted to "pay campaign consultants rather than forming militias" (McFaul and Petrov 1999: 3). In contrast to the 1993 snap election and the 1995 contest, the last legislative election of the decade was not marked by a tenacious struggle over the rules of the game or the political status quo, mostly because the KPRF moderated its

platform significantly and inched away from its position as the intractable nonsystemic opposition (Colton 1999). Indeed, the election settled conclusively the concern that the negotiated settlement arrived at during the transition would be overturned by the ideological successors of the obsolete Communist system via democratic elections (*Ibid*). Another indication that the rules of the game were more fully entrenched in the 1999 election became evident only in the aftermath of the poll: the results produced one of the most resounding defeats in Russia's democratic history, that of one of the two potential parties of power, but the vanquished did not form militias to upend the outcome and seize political control, an option that may have been viable only a few years prior. In short, the aftermath of the contest proved that elections had become the only game in town, a crucial stepping stone for the development of democracy. Thus, Russia's democracy, albeit still fragile and imperfect, performed properly in 1999 (*Ibid*). Finally, the 1999 election effectively linked the first post-communist era, guided by President Yeltsin and the reformers, with the second, controlled by President Putin/Medvedev and those attracted to more authoritarian forms of governance.

In the years immediately preceding the 1999 contest, the Russian government was destabilized by a series of high-level dismissals by President Yeltsin that produced a revolving door of Prime Ministers and created widespread uncertainty about the future of executive leadership. In his second term, President Yeltsin dismissed and appointed anew four Prime Ministers, each sparking executive-legislative battles during the confirmation process. In the late summer of 1999, President Yeltsin appointed, and the legislature confirmed, the fifth Prime Minister of his second term, Vladimir Putin. Alongside frequent cabinet-level shake-ups, President Yeltsin faced five impeachment charges in May 1999 by the opposition-controlled legislature: instigating the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991; using force inappropriately against the legislature in 1993; initiating the first war in Chechnya in the mid-1990s; subjecting the Russian people to genocide based on social and economic policies; finally, ruining the military (Dougherty 1999). None of the charges received the necessary two-thirds support in the Duma to trigger impeachment proceedings.

On the economic front, the 1998 financial crisis complicated domestic politics and resulted in the ruble losing 80% of its value and the government defaulting on domestic debt and ceasing payment to foreign creditors (Colton and McFaul 2003). The majority of Russia's private banks closed as a result of the default, leaving both financial institutions and millions of everyday Russians perilously close to bankruptcy, including none other than Mikhail Gorbachev and the director of St. Petersburg's Marinsky Opera (Goldman 2008: 14, 93). The government's own officially reported GDP and crude oil production for 1998 revealed at least a 40% drop from 1991 (Goldman 2008: 74). Oil prices just two years before the crisis hit nearly $26 a barrel, but hovered around $15 a barrel in 1998, which took a heavy toll on the cash-strapped Russian economy (Goldman 2008: 72). In the span of one year, the Russian stock market essentially collapsed: the Russian Trading System index that had recorded a jaw-dropping high of 571 in October 1997 fell to 39 in October 1998, approximately three months after the devaluation (Goldman 2008: 76).

Prior to the crisis, the Russian economy experienced its first year of positive growth, albeit minimal at 0.8%, since the disintegration of the Soviet Union but a series of speculative attacks on the ruble and falling oil prices wiped out previous economic gains, leaving the economy with a 4.9% deficit in real output by the end of 1998 (Chiodo and Owyang 2002). Inflation increased from 11% in 1997 to over 84% in 1998, severely hurting those subsisting on fixed incomes, such as pensioners (Cooper 2009). In December 1999, one needed an astonishing 1.6 million rubles to purchase what only 100 rubles would have purchased in the same month in 1990 (Goldman 2008: 74). Unemployment and absolute poverty, measured by the national subsistence level, also rose precipitously: unemployment increased from 9.7% in 1996 to 13.3% in 1998 and absolute poverty shifted upwards, from 51% in 1996 to 62% in 1998 (World Bank, *World Development Indicators*; Denisova 2012). The proportion of Russians living below the poverty line skyrocketed from 21% in 1997 to one-third in 1998, an unfortunate record (Goldman 2008: 94). The effect of the 1998 financial crisis on the Russian population was widespread as some 80% of the population experienced a decrease in living standards. In this period, per capita income in Russia fell below Portugal, which was the

poorest European Union country at the time (Goldman 2008: 96). Compounding the already dire situation, those Russians holding government bonds were unable to cash them in when they matured, instead receiving yet another government bond as a replacement, which prevented bondholders from buffering themselves from the hard times (Goldman 2008: 74). Ultimately, the crisis severely undermined Russia's currency, compromised investor confidence for years to follow, diminished living standards across wide swaths of society, and forced the last reformers from office (Shleifer and Treisman 2000).

Yet, by the time of the election to the State Duma, the economy had begun to show signs of improvement: domestic demand for Russian-made products increased as a result of the ruble devaluation, which had made foreign imports more expensive for Russian consumers to buy and sheltered Russian producers from increased international competition, inefficient industries that had limped along throughout the 1990s acquired newfound competitiveness or were finally dispatched, and international demand for energy reached new heights. Despite indications that the economy had begun to recover under Prime Minister Primakov's watch, the rapid recovery in the wake of the 1998 financial crisis was credited to Prime Minister Putin by all accounts, allowing the Kremlin's pick in the legislative contest to benefit by association.

Against the backdrop of recurrent executive-legislative struggles and economic crisis and initial recovery, the second conflict in Chechnya framed the 1999 election as a national security emergency. In late August, Prime Minister Putin revealed his penchant for strong-arm tactics with regard to domestic politics and reopened military operations in the Caucasus region after a three-year armistice in response to the invasion of Dagestan by neighboring Chechen separatists to support a regional Islamic separatist movement. Also fueling the resurgence of hostilities were frequent border clashes and terrorist attacks on Moscow apartment buildings and in Volgodonsk in the south that claimed 300 lives and were attributed to Chechen separatists, albeit with little in the way of evidence of the Chechen's culpability. The inland expansion of violence previously contained in the Caucasus caused an epidemic of hysteria and furnished a pretext for war with

widespread public support. Had Putin not been Prime Minister at the time, it is unlikely that the overwhelming public approval would have materialized, either with regard to the Second Chechen War or the Kremlin's party in the legislative election. Putin exercised strong leadership when the system of Russian federalism was again in crisis and prosecuted the conflict with surgical precision, ultimately subduing the breakaway republic and installing a pro-Russian government in Chechnya. Widespread public support for the central government's reassertion of its authority over the Caucasus allowed pro-government groups to capitalize politically on the security situation in the legislative elections.

While the 1995 election was framed as a referendum on communism and President Yeltsin's vision for Russia's continuing political and economic transition, the 1999 legislative elections "afforded an opportunity to pull off a transition within the Russian transition" by successfully managing the shift from the Yeltsin to the Putin eras and the associated shifts in political and economic policies (Colton and McFaul 2003: 3). Indeed, the 1999 election, and the presidential election shortly after, would define Russian politics for years to come. President Yeltsin capitalized on Vladimir Putin's confirmation as Prime Minister and his skyrocketing popularity, credited to his key role in the conflict with Chechnya, to announce his wish for Putin to succeed him as president in 2000. Despite Yeltsin's personal commitment to democracy, his final act as president was to essentially anoint Prime Minister Putin as the heir apparent rather than allowing the presidential turnover to occur organically as the result of free and fair competition. Widespread anticipation surrounding the forthcoming change in presidential leadership in 2000 shaped the legislative election preceding it as a contest analogous to a presidential primary in the U.S. and a chance for political parties to stake out their places in the legislature before the impending presidential succession.

The electoral rules governing the 1999 election to the Duma maintained the same, equal division of seats allocated by a proportional representation and single-mandate formula as obtained in 1995 and also preserved the five percent threshold for legislative representation. Political parties were again able to secure their position in the national

proportional representation tier of the election by submitting 200,000 petitions endorsed by eligible voters, but the required geographic distribution of those petitions expanded: in the 1995 election, no more than 15% of signatories could be residents of the same region or republic; in 1999, this condition was reduced to seven percent. The complete party list was subject to disqualification if 15% or more signatures on the registration petitions were defective. The federal law governing the election was also different from its predecessor in that it allowed political parties to gain ballot access by financial means, which required a cash deposit of approximately 2.087 million rubles ($82,000) or "25,000 times the minimum wage" (Colton and McFaul 2003; Marsh 2002: 87). The majority of registered parties opted for the financial deposit track while ten others pursued the petition-signatures path to ballot access, and two exceptionally risk-adverse parties elected both (Colton and McFaul 2003).

Although ballot access was relaxed with the introduction of the financial route, other new laws attempted to dissuade extremist parties and organizations from taking part in the election. Indeed, the Central Election Commission was granted substantially more autonomy in officially conducting the election with the implied understanding that it would use its increased agency to rationalize the party system by way of hindering entry (Brudny 2001). Adopting electoral reforms aimed at consolidating the party system before the 1999 election occurred was especially important, given that 43 parties competed in the 1995 election and party fragmentation was an enduring concern. For example, a new law passed prior to the comprehensive June 1999 federal law again extended the waiting period for enrollment with the Ministry of Justice: in 1993, parties and organizations planning to seek votes in the election were able to enroll with the Ministry of Justice with no waiting period imposed; those parties active in the 1995 election faced a 6 month waiting period in order to participate in the contest; in 1999, the waiting period was increased to one year before election day (Colton and McFaul 2003). The increased waiting period between party registration and the election was intended to deter late forming electoral projects and alliances. Furthermore, parties and organizations that qualified for the proportional representation ballot through the cash deposit forfeited

the sum if they received less than three percent of the popular vote, and were required to recompense the government for free airtime on television and radio allocated to the party during the electoral cycle if they received less than two percent (*Ibid*). These new punitive provisions may have bankrupted some of the smaller parties and electoral blocs, but, if not, would likely deter them from contesting future legislative elections (Marsh 2002). Finally, the preservation of the five percent threshold for representation was also aimed at discouraging smaller parties from participating (Brudny 2001).

The package of electoral laws framing the contest produced mixed results: the number of parties and electoral blocs competing decreased from 43 in 1995 to 26 in 1999, but newcomers were able to enter the political fray more easily in 1999 because it was possible to pay for ballot access and avoid the burdensome task of collecting signatures across the territory. Political parties representing each contour of the four-fold ideological taxonomy, i.e. communist left, nationalist right, liberal-democratic and pro-government centrist, decreased overall with the exception that pro-government parties doubled to two in 1999. Among the 26 parties competing, a constant troika of parties that had competed since the 1993 election and received representation in every Duma reinforced the core of the Russian party system: the communist KPRF, nationalist LDPR competing under a different appellation, and liberal Yabloko. Additionally, two parties jockeyed for the role of party of power, Unity and Fatherland-All Russia.

The KPRF continued to represent the communist-agrarian left and was the only party competing in election that enjoyed growing support since 1993: the party received approximately 12% of the popular vote in the 1993 snap election and about 22% in 1995. Ultimately, the 1999 election results continued this trend when the KPRF received approximately 24%. The KPRF viewed the election as an opportunity to remain a major force in the process of legislative decision-making and to finally monopolize the left-wing electorate (Brudny 2001). Despite mounting support in the two prior elections, KPRF leadership altered the party's ideological platform for the 1999 contest so significantly that it amounted to a "truly radical transformation" (Dmitriev 1999). Unexpectedly, the party abandoned its commitment to a state-controlled economy and

shifted to a moderate market-oriented stance, acknowledging the importance of protecting private property and the role of marketplace competition (Oates 2000; Colton and McFaul 2003). With the KPRF's ideological moderation, especially on economic questions, Russia's last threat to the post-communist status quo was effectively removed. Ideological refinements were aimed at attracting new demographic constituencies to its cause, particularly those residing in more urban areas that were drawn to moderate policy positions. Ultimately, attention paid to moderating its position on key economic questions caused the KPRF to fritter away a critical opportunity to capitalize on the recent financial catastrophe that severely impacted their core constituency of the rural poor.

The KPRF did not, however, abandon its support of collective ownership and also preserved its position on state ownership of natural monopolies and operations requiring permanent restructuring (Colton and McFaul 2003). Furthermore, the party clung to the common themes of the Soviet period, industrial successes, and populist messages concentrating on mandatory price reductions of food, transport and energy (*Ibid*). Appealing to ethnic Russians on the foreign policy front, the KPRF espoused nationalist themes by denouncing the United States for conspiring against Russia, recommending bringing allies in the Middle East, e.g. Iran, Iraq and Libya, closer to Russia, and criticizing one of the leaders of the Fatherland-All Russia party for acting as an "accomplice" to the "team of traitors and gravediggers of the Soviet state" (Colton and McFaul: 117). The party conceptualized Russia's restoration as the "unification of Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine to form a solid federal state" but insisted that the process occur peacefully (Chernyakhovsky 1999). On the issue of Chechnya, the party failed to articulate a consistent stance, at once brutally criticizing the Yeltsin administration and agreeing with Prime Minster Putin's handling of the situation and repudiating Chechen independence (Colton and McFaul 2003).

In a replay of the 1995 election, the KPRF again finished first in the party-list tier in 1999 with over 23% of the popular vote. Thus, Zhirinovsky's statement shortly after the 1995 legislative elections was proven wrong four years later: the KPRF's victory in 1995 was not the party's "swan song" but rather just the first act in the KPRF's two-act

tour de force in the 1990s (Belin and Orttung 1997: 161). The KPRF's showing in 1999 led many who had previously assumed the party was on the decline due to its aging constituency to question such presumptions (Clark 2006).

On the far right of the political spectrum, the ultra-nationalist LDPR was denied registration because two of its top three leaders failed to adhere to financial disclosure requirements and were ultimately charged with money laundering. In addition to these leading figures, other candidates on the LDPR's list had established ties to organized crime, including one individual wanted for contract murder (Hale 2006). The Central Election Commission denied the LDPR's registration pursuant to a regulation stipulating that the disqualification of any of a party's top three candidates would cause the party itself to be disqualified. The party quickly regrouped and was re-registered formally as the Zhirinovsky Bloc, but expended a considerable amount of time and resources explaining the name change in various advertising slots on mass media (*Ibid*).

Despite the initial registration setback, the Zhirinovsky Bloc (hereafter, LDPR) pushed ahead with its legislative campaign oriented almost exclusively around its colorful leader, Vladimir Zhirinovsky. The party tapped into its extensive regional organizational network, second only to the KPRF's, and encouraged rank-and-file party members to graffiti the party's acronym anywhere publicly visible with spray paint supplied by the party itself (Lyagushkin 1999). The LDPR's platform articulated specific policies previously unmentioned by other parties, such as amnesty for economic criminals (a thinly-veiled attempt to protect its disqualified party-list candidates and other close affiliates) and government monopoly of sugar, alcohol and tobacco commodities (*Ibid*). In a similar fashion to the KPRF, the LDPR also moved closer to the political center by moderating its ideological message on specific issues: the party lightened its previously staunch anti-Semitism and expansionist foreign policy aims while preserving its brand of ethnic-Russian nationalism, which now appealed to the Russian mainstream because of the renewed conflict with Chechnya. However, the party was not able to profit off nationalist themes and exploit the situation in Chechnya effectively, since it was

largely directed by Prime Minister Putin and benefited the new potential party of power Unity by association.

Ultimately, the LDPR's new ideological positioning did not increase its popularity in the electorate and some believed that the party resembled "a waning force at the end of this electoral cycle" (Colton and McFaul 2003: 13). Compared to the other two core parties competing in 1999, i.e. the KPRF and Yabloko, the LDPR had the murkiest ideological definition and changed its ideological orientation at a breakneck pace, which may explain the party's precipitous decline throughout the 1990s while the other two maintained or even expanded their base of support in the electorate (McFaul 2000). The LDPR's electoral trajectory in the 1990s is the mirror opposite of the KPRF's: the LDPR unexpectedly won the 1993 snap election with more than 22% of the popular vote, its vote share was subsequently halved in the 1995 contest, and halved yet again in 1999, leaving the party with a vote share of approximately 6%.

The democratic-reformist niche was again occupied by Yabloko, but, like the LDPR, faced some initial difficulties involving the Central Election Commission's arbitrary enforcement of electoral rules and regulations. While the Central Election Commission overlooked Grigory Yavlinsky's failure to disclose approximately $3,000 in income and allowed him to head Yabloko's list, the agency disqualified the Minister of Federal and Nationality Affairs for failing to disclose a parking space in Moscow from his enumeration of personal assets (Colton and McFaul 2003).

Yabloko was the only liberal political party not connected to the government to gain Duma representation in every legislative election since 1993 and party leadership believed that its tried-and-true policy platform would again bear electoral fruit in 1999, establishing the party as one pillar in the emerging tripartite multiparty system as co-constituted by the KPRF and the party of power (McFaul 1997; Kuzmin and Ovchinnikov 1999; Hale 2004). Whereas the KPRF and LDPR moderated their ideological orientations, albeit not always to the party's benefit, Yabloko's platform was virtually unchanged from previous elections and reflected a continuing commitment to reformist ideology and rigid defense of principle, which the party's leadership thought a

virtue. The party spiced up its well-worn bundle of socially conscious policies by calling for a ban on government media ownership and tried to tap into popular economic discontent by insisting on pay increases for a variety of groups, such as pensioners, soldiers and students. On economic questions, Yabloko vowed to reduce taxes and create free trade zones to attract foreign investment back to the country after the steep fall off in investor confidence after the 1998 financial crisis (Colton and McFaul 2003). In contrast to the KPRF and LDPR, Yabloko staked out an ill-defined, often contradictory, and ultimately unpopular position on Chechnya: the party's conference in September supported a limited military operation against terrorists in the region, but in November, Yavlinsky went off script by insisting on an immediate halt to the Russian military offensive and renewed negotiations with the Chechen president (*Ibid*). Yavlinsky's oppositionist comments against the conflict damaged Yabloko's chances in the election acutely, given that opinion polls indicated approval of the conflict at 70% (Marsh 2002: 87; Oates 2000). The head of Yabloko's campaign argued that Yavlinsky's unilateral policy declarations on Chechnya cost the party "half of its supporters" in the 1999 election (Colton and McFaul 2003: 151). Aside from going against the public grain on the issue, Yabloko's position on Chechnya was incongruous with its longstanding defense of civil liberties and human rights, leading to widespread confusion that cast a long shadow over the party well into the 2000s (Hale 2006).

Before fissures in the leadership regarding policy toward Chechnya became visible in autumn, polling predicted a party vote share of 12-15% in the election (Colton and McFaul 2003). Even these predictions signified a sea change from a few years prior, when Western observers anticipated that Yabloko would capture most of the 25-30% of the democratic electorate (McFaul 1997). The actual result did not fulfill expectations: although the party cleared the 5% representation threshold safely, it lost approximately one percent from their 1995 showing, which itself was a decline from two years earlier in the snap election. Yabloko's declining electoral trajectory throughout the 1990s broadly parallels that of the LDPR, but support for the liberal party weakened more gradually and it was significantly more vulnerable to total electoral defeat in the 2000s because of its

lower level of voter support at the outset of competitive elections. Thus, Yabloko forfeited an opportunity to firm up its "democratic opposition" nook in the party system in 1999 and the party's prospects for becoming a permanent player in the parliament withered (Kuzmin and Ovchinnikov 1999).

A tenderfoot pro-government potential party of power emerged only a few months prior to the 1999 election and set out to corner that ideological space left gaping after Our Home is Russia's poor performance in the 1995 elections. As yesterday's party of power became a footnote, just as Russia's Choice had even before, a new electoral bloc named Unity stepped into the breach, hoping to capture the segment of the electorate that "always prefer[s] to vote for the active federal executive power and its nominees [and] want[s] to maintain the status quo" (Myagkov and Ordeshook 2001; Petrov and Makarkin 1999: 123). Unity was initially formed to compete directly with the other potential party of power that formed a only few months before Unity, i.e. Fatherland-All Russia, and did so by adopting Fatherland's primary campaign message of political pragmatism as its own and co-opting regional governors and other political luminaries keen to bandwagon with the most likely victors in the legislative and presidential elections (Colton 1999).

While other political parties and electoral blocs positioned themselves as the political opposition to the Kremlin, Unity pledged its support for government policy and made clear its intent to uphold the status quo (Colton and McFaul 2003). From the outset of Unity's campaign, the fledgling party aligned itself with the immensely popular Prime Minister Putin, an overture shortly returned in no uncertain terms by the Prime Minister himself when he commented that he would personally vote for Unity in the upcoming election. Unity departed from timeworn party of power strategies when it stacked its party list with political novices impervious to political attacks about prior policies, such as Sergei Shoigu and Aleksandr Karelin, the Minister of Emergency Situations and a medaled Olympian in Greco-Roman wrestling, respectively, who had never contested elected positions (Marsh 2002). Of paramount importance was that Russian voters did not identify those topping the Unity list as politicians (Petrov and Makarkin 1999).

In framing itself as youth-oriented, Unity hoped to capture new voters and those sans partisan loyalty to any parties in the tried-and-true troika (Marsh 2002). Unity avoided wading too deep into ideological waters and acted upon its commitment to pragmatism rather conspicuously by refusing to deliver a policy platform, a risky political move but one that paid electoral dividends by capturing the support of voters tired with politics as usual (Colton 1999). The party eventually touted a policy package that was generally liberal and interspersed with populist messages about cracking down on corruption that allowed Unity to showcase Aleksandr Gurov's role as the former leader of the organized crime division of the Soviet Union's police ministry (Colton and McFaul 2003). Although Unity's stance on Chechnya was patently nationalist based on Putin and Shoigu's close involvement in managing the conflict, Unity articulated a more multicultural brand of nationalism compared to that of the LDPR that was based on civic Russian, rather than ethnic Russian, patriotism (Colton and McFaul 2003). Indeed, support for Unity was geographically dispersed across Russia's regions, likely due to the prominence of ethnic minority figures atop the party list, e.g. Shoigu is from the ethnic republic of Tuva, located on the Mongolian border (Marsh 2002). Unity boasted support from 13 individuals atop regional government structures, who could influence the vote of approximately 13% of the population, covering the regions of Kalmykya, Tuva, Chukotka, Tver, Rostov, Kursk, Kaliningrad, Primorye, Omsk, Khabarovsk, and Leningrad Oblast (Brudny 2001). Hence, Unity sharply distinguished itself from previous Kremlin party projects by the composition of its leadership, i.e. those atop the Unity list were not from the capital and its active ties to the regions, especially those with majorities of federally-recognized titular minorities. Unity was, like its party-of-power predecessors, well-funded by private individuals and major corporations, such as Gazprom, Lukoil and Sibneft, and benefitted from government largesse based on the party's cozy relationship with the state, as channeled through Prime Minister Putin.

The energetic potential party of power set a goal of capturing 10% of the popular vote in the election, which many thought overly aggressive based on its late entry into the political fray, but the party "spr[a]ng from political nonexistence" to more than double its

goal in the final election tally and finished just one percent behind the KPRF victors (Hale et al. 2003: 291). Unity's success was surprising, as "nobody thought that the Kremlin [was] able to create something that could have any success in elections. This success was very, very unexpected for everybody" (Senior Political Analyst at INDEM Foundation 2011).

Finally, Fatherland-All Russia competed with Unity for the party of power prize and provided the initial impetus for Unity's formation, which was designed to siphon votes off its anti-Kremlin counterpart. Although the party was formed only four and a half months before the election, it earned the party of power appellation out of the gate because of its resemblance to previous pro-regime startups, including its connections to the state apparatus through senior politicians, endorsements by celebrities, notably Mikhail Kalashnikov of weaponry fame, an astronaut, a filmmaker, and an Arctic explorer, and the backing of major corporations and conglomerates, such as Gazprom, Lukoil and Sistema (Colton and McFaul 2003). Additionally, Fatherland's platform in 1999, highlighting "a strong state and great-power grandeur," employed slogans almost directly lifted from Our Home is Russia's manifesto, reinforcing Fatherland's likeness to previous parties of power (Makarenko 1999: 67).

Fatherland-All Russia offered an alternative potential party of power to Unity and distinguished itself by opposing the Kremlin, recruiting leaders with long tenures in government, and cultivating support from the governors of regional economic powerhouses who could deliver the vote by leveraging vast tracts of administrative resources at their disposal. A troika of experienced politicians, Moscow Mayor Yury Luzhkov, former Prime Minister Evgeny Primakov, and the governor of St. Petersburg, Vladimir Yakovlev, headed the party and were together considered the most reliable group to act as the "builders of a post-Yeltsin regime" (Makarenko 1999: 72). Dozens of regional governors and presidents, who could influence the vote of roughly 37% of registered voters, supported the Fatherland-All Russia alliance, including the leaders of Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Karelia, Mordovia, Ingushetia, Udmurtia, Kabardino-Balkaria,

Khanty-Mansi, Irkursk Chelyabinsk, Kirov, Murmansk, Novosibirsk, Nizhny Novgorod, and Yaroslavl (Brudny 2001).

After factions emerged within various parties and electoral blocs, notably the Agrarian Party and Women of Russia, Fatherland-All Russia temporarily absorbed the orphaned groups without ideological restraints in an attempt to court the favor of left-leaning constituencies, but consequently the movement soon resembled an incoherent conglomerate rather than a logical political alliance. Adding to the incoherence was the party's notion of "principled polycentrism," which prevented any one regional leader from becoming the party's head but equally frustrated attempts to find common ground among the diverse group (Makarenko 1999: 64). Unlike Unity that benefited from a plugged-in Kremlin patron and close ties to the federal government, Fatherland's strength lay in its links to those holding the most powerful positions in provincial government and relied heavily on administrative resources at the regional level to keep the movement afloat (Colton and McFaul 2003). Fatherland enjoyed free airtime on regional media outlets, favorable coverage by local commentators, and access to regional administrative structures in the form of office space and printing presses, which could be obscured in the local budget (*Ibid*).

The party campaigned with moderate, non-ideological orientations that championed a market economy with significant social spending and policies governed by pragmatism rather than political ideology. Nevertheless, the campaign depended almost entirely on capturing votes based on their leader's popularity and government experience, but was caught unaware when Unity and the pro-Kremlin media launched a full-scale attack on Fatherland, especially Mayor Luzhkov and former Prime Minister Primakov. Among the accusations leveled against Fatherland's leadership during the campaign were that Primakov was literally unfit to govern due to his advanced age and recent hip surgery and was likened to the inept Leonid Brezhnev, Luzhkov was corrupt and embezzled government money to build himself a luxury estate in the countryside outside Moscow, Fatherland's leaders were in cahoots with the West to undermine Russia and force out

Prime Minister Putin, and, still further, its leaders were plain ugly (Colton and McFaul 2003; Ryabov and Cherkasov 1999).

The onslaught achieved its goal and Fatherland stood by idly, fully capable of mounting a counteroffensive but inexplicably unwilling to do so, as its popular standing plummeted to less than half its original support (Hale 2006). The media blitz exposed Fatherland's greatest vulnerability: the allure of the party leaders was tied inextricably with that of the party itself, hence the savage political kneecappings of Luzhkov and Primakov destroyed support for the party more generally, on top of shattering their own individual reputations irreparably (Colton 1999). Additionally, Fatherland's recruitment of dozens of regional governors may have contributed to its poor performance at the polls: according to one politician not affiliated with the party, "Fatherland didn't work because it was an administrative party with various interests. The governors that were part of it had their own goals" (Senior Official in Yabloko's National Organization 2011). Opinion polls conducted in mid-November revealed Fatherland support at approximately 20% of those intending to vote, but it ultimately captured only 13% of the popular vote, a catastrophic result at best for a party once labeled the new party of power in Russian politics (McFaul 2000).

The 1999 legislative election differed significantly from the 1995 contest because two competing potential parties of power that jockeyed for dominance on the national stage largely overshadowed various ideological contours of the party system. Indeed, the electoral cycle epitomized the notion that "democracy is civil war fought by nonviolent means" and the fierce battle waged between Unity and Fatherland-All Russia frequently caught opposition parties in the crosshairs (Hale 1999: 5). Often, opposition parties' signature themes were effectively absorbed by either Unity or Fatherland-All Russia. For example, Unity was better positioned to capitalize on the nationalist sentiment that historically anchored the LDPR's political platform: the renewed conflict with Chechnya showcased Sergei Shoigu's managerial capacities as the Minister of Emergency Situations and Prime Minister Putin's toughness on regional secessionist movements and ethnic-based terrorism that threatened the territorial integrity of the country and

jeopardized the safety of millions of Russian citizens (Brudny 2001). Similarly, Fatherland-All Russia encroached on the KPRF's well-established ideological space when its leadership suggested that the party would consider renationalizing private enterprises if they were stagnating or it was discovered that the initial privatizations proceeded illegally (Colton and McFaul 2003). However, Unity's more compelling claim to nationalist themes was likely a product of coincidence based on the timing of border skirmishes and terrorist attacks rather than a deliberate attempt to sap the LDPR of support, given that Unity did not perceive the LDPR as a credible threat to their electoral success. In contrast, Fatherland attempted to co-opt a key KPRF issue because the potential party of power, ultimately mistakenly, considered the communists to be its principal opposition (*Ibid*).

The emergence of twin competitors with the ability to strategically exploit other's trademark messages produced a conspicuous convergence towards the center of the political spectrum, which made cleavage issues more difficult to identify (McFaul 2000). In the mid-1990s, parties differentiated themselves on economic questions, including the nature of the economy itself and the proposed pace of future reforms, foreign policy strategies, namely orientation towards the West or reconstitution of the Soviet Union, and the first war in Chechnya. By 1999, however, most parties agreed on the preservation of a market economy and the protection of private property, and continuing Russian military operations in the Caucasus, except for Yabloko, which was the only party to stake out a distinctive position on the issue. As a case in point, the KPRF's economic platform in 1995 rested on reversing widespread privatization with the long-term goal of wholesale renationalization, but, by the late 1990s, the party acted as a moderate advocate for the free market and offered ideas concerning the enforcement of property rights (Dmitriev 1999).

The 1999 parliamentary election produced expected and unexpected outcomes. As in 1995, the KPRF clinched first place with over 24% of the popular vote, again casting doubt upon those predictions of the party's imminent extinction, but the party in fact accomplished little more than retaining its core electorate from previous elections (Colton

1999). Also fulfilling expectations, the LDPR and Yabloko crossed the threshold for representation, albeit with dwindling support. Especially for Yabloko, 1999 was a considerable setback because the party tried to capitalize on the time offered in the off-election years by fortifying the party at the local level, yet its showing was substandard (*Ibid*). While the core troika of the party system received enough support to remain intact, two parties that had not existed six months prior and were liable to "disappear into the dustbin of history before the next scheduled elections" captured nearly two-fifths of the votes (Brudny 2001: 177). Undoubtedly, the most striking result of the poll was the outcome of the battle between competing potential parties of power. Unity's unanticipated triumph and Fatherland's near-total annihilation thoroughly reoriented the gravitational pull of the party system around the new party of power, with Prime Minister Putin at the center.

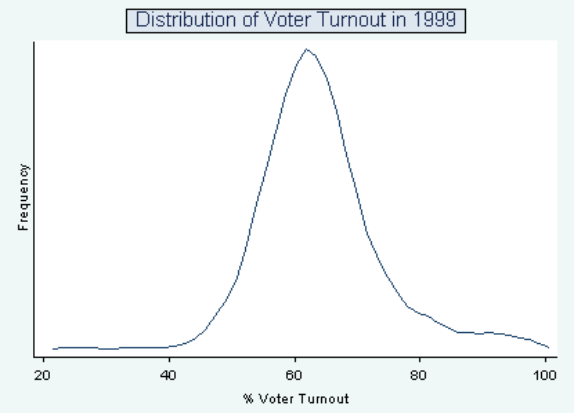
The 1999 Legislative Election as a Competitive Election

Similar to the 1995 parliamentary election, the 1999 election will be treated as a competitive election because the contest was "widely viewed […] as free and fair" (*The 1999 Election to the Russian State Duma: Findings and Recommendations* 2000). The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) Election Observation Mission report concluded that the third election since the culmination of one-party rule in Russia was "competitive and pluralistic" (*International Election Observation Mission* 1999). The International Foundation for Election Systems reported that the legislative elections were conducted in a "manner in which the will of the voters was confirmed" and that, on the day of the election itself, "the election process worked" (*The 1999 Election to the Russian State Duma: Findings and Recommendations* 2000). As in the 1995 elections, numerous political parties and blocs competed in the contest, offering voters a diverse menu of options to select from on December 19. Among the dozens of new parties and electoral blocs, three parties competed for the third time, which indicates further consolidation of Russia's multiparty democracy. Voter turnout of approximately 60% was roughly equal to that in the 1995 contest and suggests continued and widespread commitment to procedural democracy, although domestic and international

interlocutors attributed high turnout to the conspicuous presence of election monitors in the vast majority of polling stations (*International Election Observation Mission* 1999).

Figure 5.1 provides an indication that the 1999 contest was competitive, as the distribution of voter turnout was more similar to that four years prior than four years later. Interestingly though, the right tail of the distribution became discernibly fatter in the late-1990s, suggesting methods of manipulation were practiced, such as ballot-box stuffing or the illicit changing of results protocols that were detailed in election observation reports. The fatter right tail would become even more pronounced in future elections and would emerge as one of the most conspicuous hallmarks of elections under United Russia. Nevertheless, the distribution of turnout suggests that the 1999 election was generally competitive because it lacked the suspicious bumps at high rates of political participation that became common in the 2000s and 2010s.

Figure 5.1: Distribution of Voter Turnout in 1999



The legal framework governing the 1999 electoral cycle was an improvement over that in place during the 1995 cycle and was generally consistent with international standards. Overall, the election law ensured equal entry for political parties, electoral blocs and single-mandate candidates, and established equitable competition via campaign finance regulations and rules governing media access (*International Election Observation Mission* 1999). For example, new ballot access laws were introduced, requiring financial and criminal history disclosures; the work of the Central Election Commission was

conducted publicly; and visible protocols were posted at polling places (*The 1999 Election to the Russian State Duma: Findings and Recommendations* 2000). Additionally, new laws implemented by the Central Election Commission endeavored to diminish the degree and extent of media bias, conspicuous in the 1995 electoral cycle, by preventing the mass media itself from campaigning on behalf of individual candidates, political parties, or electoral blocs (*International Election Observation Mission* 1999). The Central Electoral Commission, under new leadership, fulfilled its regulatory responsibilities during the election with significantly more autonomy than it enjoyed during the 1995 cycle, when the agency was largely under the Kremlin's control (McFaul 2000).

Despite the improved legal framework governing the 1999 electoral cycle, the contest fell short of free and fair due to inappropriate intervention by executive authorities, severely biased media coverage, and suspected electoral manipulation. The 1999 election failed to achieve fully free and fair status because executive authorities obstructed political competition using myriad methods, including preventing opposition parties and candidates from holding public meetings, levying extraordinary administrative fines, and initiating ultimately meritless criminal investigations (*International Election Observation Mission* 1999).

The influence of central authorities was particularly pervasive and conspicuous in state-controlled media that was leveraged to engage in politically-motivated election coverage. For example, majority state-owned ORT and fully state-owned RTR channels focused on Unity's campaign, providing the party with 28% and 24% of the campaign coverage, respectively (Oates 2000). ORT also honed coverage around government authorities that played visible roles in Unity: Prime Minister Putin received 42% and Minister of Emergency Situations Sergei Shoigu received 19% (Oates 2000). In sharp contrast, Unity's competitor for party of power status, Fatherland-All Russia, received considerable airtime as well, but the content of the media exposure was negative and reflected a partisan operation to discredit OVR by introducing "a level of personal invective never before witnessed in a Russian campaign (Colton and McFaul 2003: 36).

Meanwhile, the KPRF was mostly ignored by the mass media, indicating at once pro-government bias and indifference to the party (Oates 2000; Colton and McFaul 2003). The European Institute on the Media reported, with regard to the role of the media, "voters were not given the information necessary to make proper decisions" (Russian Election Watch No. 6, 2000). Indeed, the chairman of the Central Election Commission concurred, stating that he "cannot claim that the electioneering, including media campaigning, was fair" and, further, that the agency had received an "abundance of complaints" (*Ibid*). Furthermore, although election rules required state-controlled television and radio to grant all political parties free time-slots during prime time, these rules were not followed or enforced (Oates 2000). Some parties opted not to use their allocated time once the Central Election Commission announced that parties that did receive at least two percent of the popular vote would be required to reimburse the media outlets (*Ibid*).

Electoral manipulation also calls into question the competitiveness of the 1999 contest: there is "considerable circumstantial evidence" that regional governors and local authorities engaged in electoral malfeasance, such as falsifying election results or coercing voters to support specific political parties or single-mandate candidates (McFaul 2000: 8; Colton 1999). Table 5.1 furnishes more systematic evidence of manipulation pointing to artificially inflated voter turnout. Raion-level national turnout in the final contest of the 1990s was 63.91% and the corresponding standard deviation was 9.22. Thus, the distribution of voter turnout was slightly more tightly clustered around the mean in 1999 than was the case in 1995, when the standard deviation was 9.27, which accounts for the minor dip in the percentage of fraudulent raions in the late-1990s. Nearly 13% of raions reported voter turnout that exceeded the threshold set in 1999.

Table 5.1: Manipulated Raions in 1999

Voter Turnout Threshold (1 Standard Deviation Above Raion-level National Turnout)	Number Manipulated Raions	% Total Raions
73.14	347	12.77

More than one-third of the raions coded positively for suspected electoral fraud were located in the ethnic republics, which have well-documented histories of machine politics and widespread electoral malfeasance (e.g. Hale, 2003, Reisinger and Moraski, 2002, 2008, Myagkov and Ordeshook, 2008, Mebane and Kalinin, 2009, 2010, Golosov, 2011). Furthermore, nearly two-thirds were located in majority-Muslim regions, roughly 19% in the Caucasus, and about 25% in resource-dependent regions. Four years earlier, just fewer than 15% of raions reported turnout that indicated possible electoral manipulation. Approximately 23% of these raions were located in ethnic republics, roughly 44% in majority-Muslim regions, 14% in the Caucasus, and 20% in resource regions. These percentages provide a rough gauge of electoral competitiveness in the 1995 and 1999 elections and showcase a gradual expansion of electoral manipulation, especially in various regional contexts, i.e. ethnic regions, Muslim regions, location in the Caucasus, and those regions with resource-dependent economies. Data from the 1999 election reveal the slow contraction of free and fair political competition in legislative elections, even before a successful dominant party emerged and subsequently consolidated.

Analysis

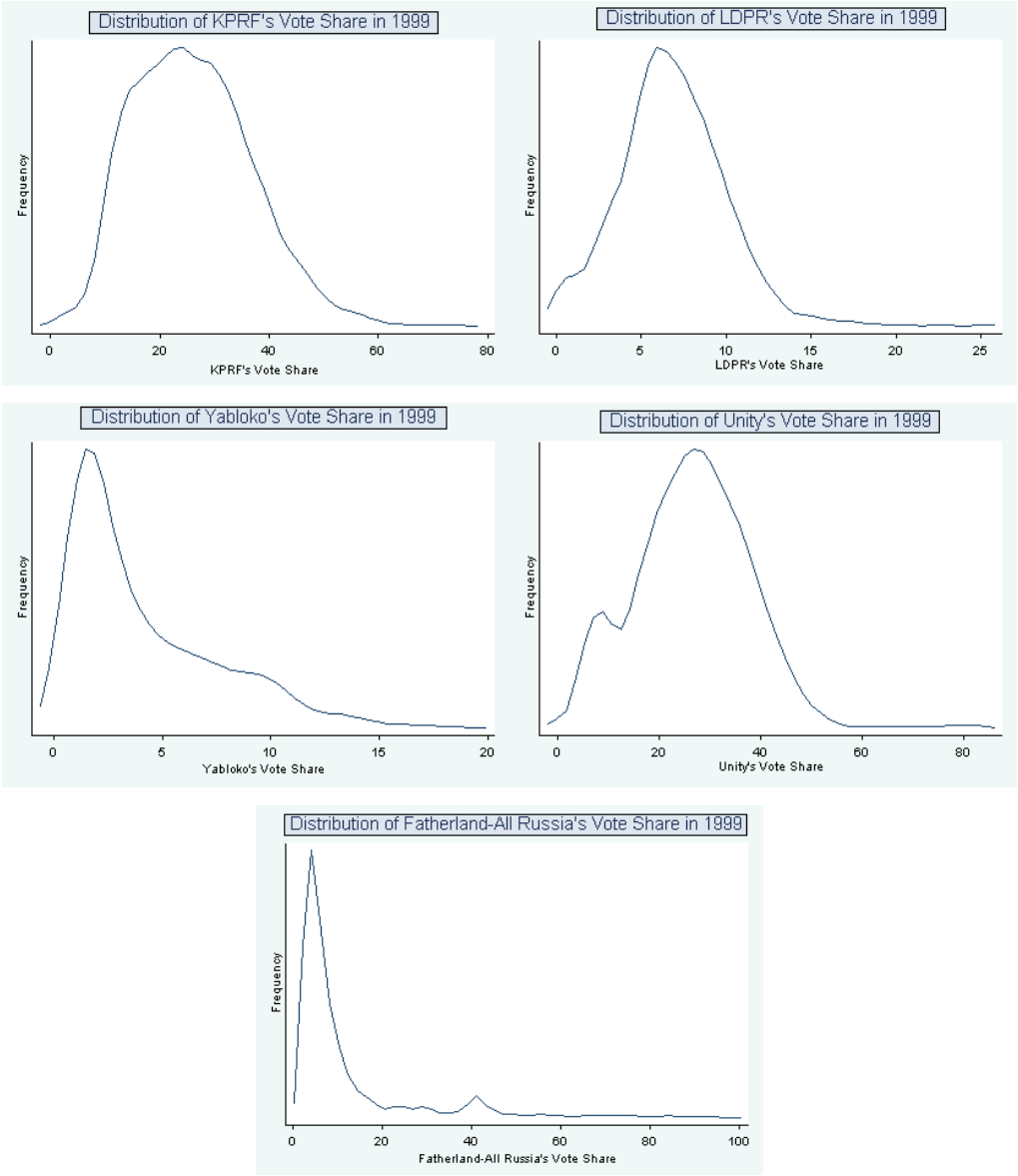
While the analysis of the 1995 parliamentary election included all four parties that crossed the threshold for representation, the investigation of the 1999 election is limited to the three parties forming the core party system troika and the two potential parties of power, Fatherland-All Russia and Unity. The Union of Right Forces is therefore excluded for consistency across elections. Compared to Table 2 from the 1995 election, Table 5.2 below shows that the KPRF and Yabloko both gained lower level strongholds but the number of higher-level bastions dipped and the LDPR experienced the opposite trajectory, capturing two additional higher-level pockets of support while numerous lower level strongholds were shaved off.

Table 5.2: Measuring the Dependent Variable: Party Strongholds in 1999						
	1 standard deviation above party's raion-level national average	# Strongholds	% Raions	2 standard deviations above party's raion-level national average	# Strongholds	% Raions
KPRF	36.80	442	16.26	47.59	83	3.05
LDPR	9.93	391	14.39	13.03	66	2.43
Yabloko	7.63	474	17.45	11.07	128	4.71
Fatherland-All Russia	26.18	332	12.23	40.86	180	6.63
Unity	37.98	403	14.83	49.49	44	1.62

Figure 5.2 details the distribution of each party's vote share and facilitates the identification of stronghold thresholds for each party. Compared to the previous election, the distribution of each opposition parties' vote share was noticeably more clustered around their respective raion-level national means: the standard deviation of the KPRF's distribution narrowed from 12.62 in 1995 to 10.79 in 1999; that of the LDPR diminished from 6.95 to 3.10, and Yabloko's contracted from 4.30 to 3.44. The distributions pertaining to the two new potential parties of power, Unity and Fatherland-All Russia, demonstrated considerably more dispersion with standard deviations of 11.51 and 14.68, respectively, than those in the core party troika in 1999 as well as Our Home is Russia four years earlier. With regards to the distribution of the Communists' vote share, there is a noticeable dip at the top of the distribution at the mean level of voter support. Resembling the shape of the distribution from the previous election, a bump appeared in the left tail of the nationalists' distribution around the null vote share, but was less pronounced than in 1995. Yabloko's distribution again revealed an elongated right tail and a bump at just less than twice the party's raion-level national average due to enthusiastic support in the federal cities. The distribution of the Unity vote shows a conspicuous bump in the left tail at around 10%, or less than half of the party's national mean. Based on Unity's close relationship with the Kremlin, any irregularities in the distribution of the potential party of power's vote share would be expected to be in the right tail, where electoral windfalls are concentrated. Fatherland's distribution conforms more to expectation because, although the distribution lacks a fat right tail, the elongated

tail shows a distinct peak is evident at approximately 40%, or more than triple the party's countrywide mean. The prominence of the bump, coupled with the fact that Fatherland presided over an extensive network of regional elites, particularly in the ethnic republics that controlled patronage-based political machines, suggests that the party's vote share was artificially augmented.

Figure 5.2: Distribution of Parties' Vote Shares in 1999



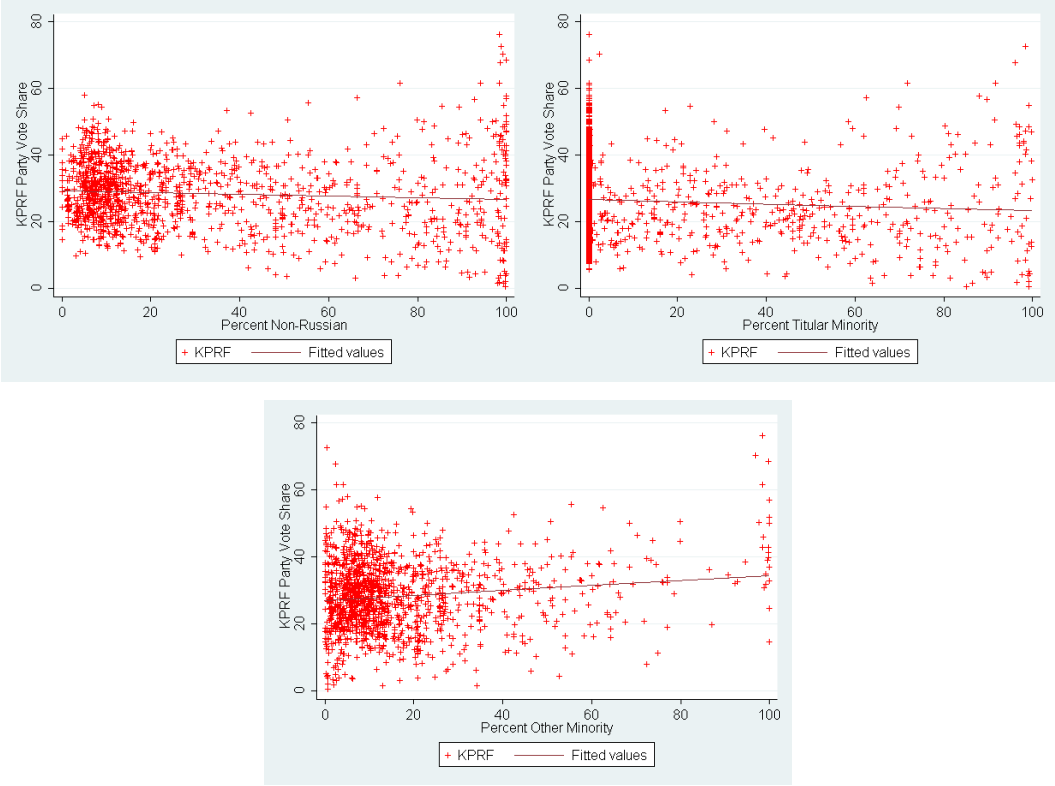
See Appendix Tables 25-54 (pages 520-579) for Multilevel Model Results.

Ethnicity and Opposition Parties

Compared to the 1995 legislative election, the results from the 1999 contest reveal both continuity and change in the electoral trajectories of opposition parties subject to investigation. The KPRF benefitted from increases in the non-Russian population across nearly all models in the mid-1990s, and the trend more or less continued into the late 1990s: the percent minority covariate achieved conventional levels of statistical significance in one lower threshold model and across all upper threshold models, hiking the odds by four to more than seven percent. The magnitude of the positive effect caused by denser populations of ethnic non-Russians was greater in 1999 than 1995, suggesting that the KPRF made deeper inroads in this constituency with more practice in the electoral arena under its belt, even despite the fact that two potential parties of power, both with extensive ties to ethnic minority communities across Russia's regions, competed for the very same pockets of support. Models utilizing the more refined measures of ethnic composition show that the statistically significant and positive effect of other minorities was mostly preserved. With a one percent increase in the other minority population, the odds lifted by one to two percent across the lower threshold models and by four to six percent in the upper threshold models. Investigation into the KPRF's pockets of support drawn from other minorities reveals that the party performed well in raions located in ethnic republics with multitudinous and non-titular ethnic groups, such as the Avars, Dargins, Lazgins, Laks and Tabasarans that comprise nearly three-quarters of the population of Dagestan, rather than in raions with other minority populations of Indo-European heritage. Additional titular minorities in a raion did not achieve conventional levels of statistical significance in the mid-1990s, but decreased the odds of a stronghold by two percent in a relaxed model in 1999. As in 1995, the finding that KPRF strongholds were again defined to any extent by the ethnic Russian, non-Russian cleavage differs from the extant scholarship on the 1999 election, in which this distinction was not statistically significant (Colton and McFaul 2003; Hale 2006). In some contrast to the model results, Figure 5.3 showcases the relatively stable association between support for the KPRF and non-Russian and titular minority inhabitants, and the

slight rise in the party's vote share with higher proportions of other minorities. The especially enthusiastic raions included a mix of predominantly Russian and non-Russian raions, that were mainly located in the republics of Dagestan, North Ossetia and Adygea, and the oblasts and krais of Bryanskaya, Orlovskaya, Krasnodar and Altai, but the highest levels of support were drawn exclusively from ethnic republics.

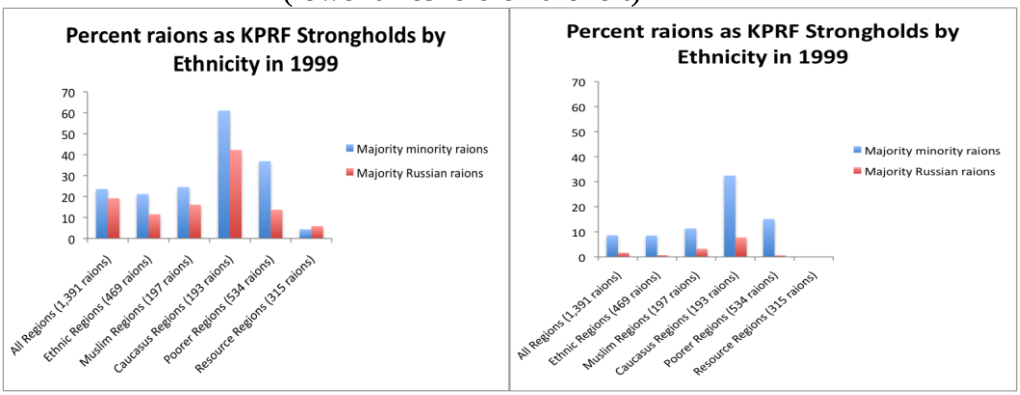
Figure 5.3: Non-Russian Minorities and KPRF's Vote Share in 1999



Like four years prior, the distribution of KPRF strongholds followed ethnic minority lines in 1999, as evident in Figure 5.4. Figure 5.4 breaks down the percentage of KPRF strongholds by regional context and ethnic composition at the raion level, distinguishing between majority-Russian and majority-minority raions. For each dyad, the total number of raions in a given regional context is indicated. The denominator for each red and blue bar is the number of majority-Russian raions and majority-minority raions, respectively, that are in that specific regional context, rather than the total number of raions in a given

regional environment. Of all majority-minority raions, the Communists captured stronghold level support in roughly 25%, closely mirroring the findings from 1995. The KPRF largely preserved strongholds in majority-minority raions and there is also evidence that the Communists gained ground in majority-Russian raions: the proportion of party strongholds in these raions increased from the previous election, from roughly 15% to nearly 20%. Mirroring the bar charts from 1995, there is a conspicuous spike in the Caucasus for both types of raions: astonishingly, more than 60% of majority-minority and more than 40% of majority-Russian raions in the Caucasus were KPRF strongholds. In terms of percentages, the party performed better in majority-minority raions than majority-Russian raions in all regional environments, with the exception of resource-abundant regions. This pattern largely held across stronghold thresholds, save for the fact that the KPRF lost all higher-level stronghold support in both majority-minority and majority-Russian raions in resource-rich regions.

Figure 5.4: KPRF Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 1999 (lower threshold on the left)



Interestingly, Table 5.3 indicates that the KPRF's average showing in majority-minority raions was slightly lower than its national mean, albeit within two percent.

Table 5.3: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of the KPRF's Electoral Performance in the 1999 Legislative Elections									
	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	26.01	27.29	24.33	26.97	23.83	24.98	31.71	24.42	19.92
Min	.060	.060	.060	.060	.060	.060	.060	.060	.060
Max	76.26	76.26	76.26	72.55	76.26	76.26	76.26	58.12	45.17
SD	10.79	11.89	11.50	13.61	12.32	13.51	13.04	10.17	8.39

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, 1.11.

While the shift from raions located in Russian federal regions to those located in ethnic republics produced electoral windfalls for the KPRF in 1995, hiking the odds of a stronghold by more than 20 times, this variable did not reach standard levels of statistical significance in the late 1990s. The KPRF harvested less support on average in ethnic republics, with less than two percent under its national vote share. However, as shown in Table 5.4, a fair share of KPRF bastions were found in these areas: nearly one-fifth and more than one-third, according to the lower and higher threshold, respectively.

Table 5.4: KPRF Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 1999				
	# of KPRF Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (442 Total)	% of KPRF Strongholds	# of KPRF Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (83 Total)	% of KPRF Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	84	19.13	28	33.73
Russian federal regions	355	80.87	55	66.27
Muslim regions	44	10.02	19	22.89
Caucasus regions	102	23.23	34	40.96
Poorer Regions	244	55.20	64	77.11
Natural Resource Regions	17	3.87	0	0
Fraudulent raions	81	18.33	30	36.14
Non-Fraudulent raions	361	81.67	53	63.86

While KPRF strongholds were not systematically affected by ethnic republic status, a shift from the reference to the indicator group of the Muslim region variable again hiked the odds of a stronghold significantly in 1999, by between 34 and 154 times in the higher threshold models. Although the relationship was robust and positive in the late 1990s, the magnitude of the effect withered compared to the results from the mid-1990s, when the odds ballooned to between 164 and 2,102. The descriptive statistics offer a slightly different picture of KPRF support in predominantly Muslim regions from the mid- to the late-1990s. Compared to the 1995 election, average support in Muslim regions dropped more significantly than the other parameters measuring minority support, i.e. majority-minority raions and ethnic republics: the KPRF's mean in Muslim regions was six percent higher than the party's raion-level national average in 1995 but was one percent lower four years later. Of the KPRF's strongholds, roughly 10% and 23% percent were found in these regions. Although there was a discernible dip in the proportion of KPRF strongholds found in both ethnic republics and Muslim regions, the party more or less preserved its position in ethnic minority areas at the raion and regional level, despite the emergence of two potential parties of power that were each shored up by dozens of regional governors in ethnic republics, including Muslim regions, and could mobilize ethnic networks to achieve partisan ends. In 1999, the KPRF proved that it could withstand dramatic changes to the party system that crowded the market with tenacious challengers, particularly in precisely those areas where electoral windfalls were perhaps most likely, i.e. areas with geographically concentrated ethnic minorities.

The contours of support for the LDPR also retained core characteristics from the mid-1990s in the late 1990s with regards to minority populations, as ethnic Russian rather than ethnic minority support again defined nationalist strongholds. Unit increases in all three measures of ethnic minority composition at the raion level consistently damaged the odds of an LDPR stronghold in the lower threshold models: the percent non-Russian covariate shrunk the odds by three to five percent; the percent titular minority variable diminished the odds by two to five percent; finally, the other minority covariate depressed the odds by four to seven percent. Higher densities of titular minorities did not

exercise a systematic effect on the occurrence of nationalist strongholds in the mid-1990s, but the presence of Unity and Fatherland-All Russia clearly damaged the LDPR's prospects among these groups. Figure 5.5 visually confirms that the party's vote share plummeted with additional minority inhabitants of any type and looks strikingly similar to scatterplots pertaining to the previous election. Additionally, the most ardent supporters of the ultra-nationalists were found chiefly in majority-Russian raions located almost exclusively in oblasts, such as Chita, Murmanskaya, Madaganskaya, Novosibirskaya and Sakhalinskaya, and one krai, Krasnoyarsk. The most enthusiastic majority-minority raion, seen in the scatterplot concerning titular minorities, was located in Komi-Permyak Autonomous Okrug, in European Russia on the western slope of the Ural Mountains.

Figure 5.5: Non-Russian Minorities and LDPR's Vote Share in 1999

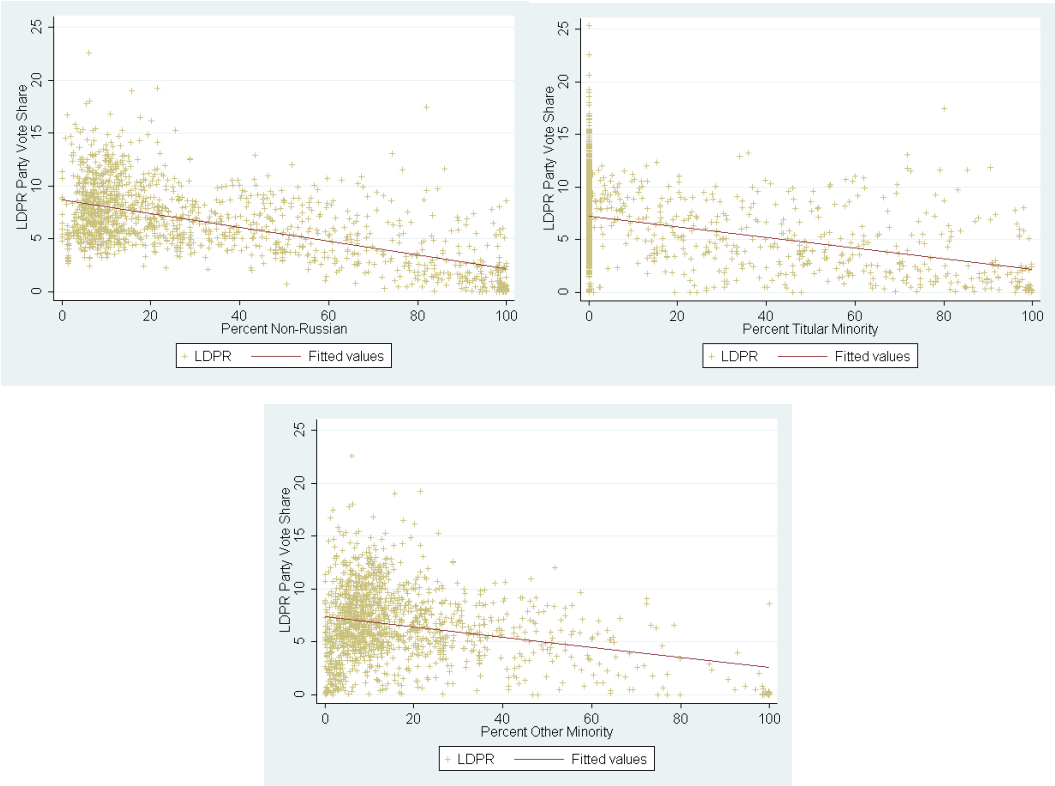
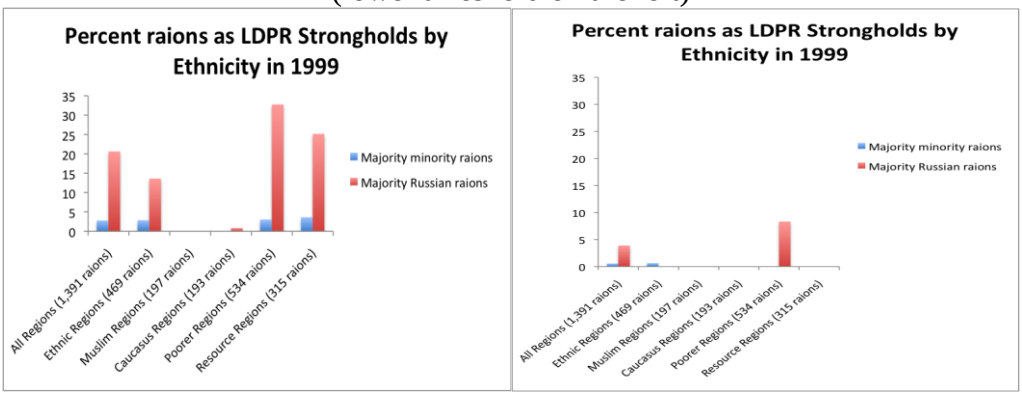


Figure 5.6 confirms that there was a severe disparity between the percentage of LDPR strongholds in majority-Russian and majority-minority raions in each regional setting. Figure 6 indicates that the LDPR expanded its support in majority-Russian raions but lost ground in majority-minority areas: while the nationalists captured strongholds in roughly 20% of majority-Russian raions in 1995, the LDPR's share increased to over 20% in 1999; on the other hand, of all majority-minority raions, the LDPR had strongholds in roughly five percent in 1995 but its share dwindled to half that by late in the 1990s. More than one-third of majority-Russian raions situated in poorer regions and more than one-quarter of those in resource-dependent regions were nationalist strongholds. According to the relaxed threshold, the LDPR's bastions of support were found only in majority-Russian raions in the Caucasus. According to the strict threshold, strongholds were only located in majority-Russian raions in economically disadvantaged regions, but, curiously, were found exclusively in majority-minority raions in ethnic republics.

Figure 5.6: LDPR Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 1999 (lower threshold on the left)



Furthermore, the nationalist's average in majority-minority raions was less than its raion-level national mean, as shown in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of the LDPR's Electoral Performance in the 1999 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	6.83	6.70	6.30	4.76	5.17	3.48	5.05	6.43	6.61
Min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Max	25.31	25.28	25.31	25.31	25.28	25.28	25.28	25.28	25.31
SD	3.10	3.30	3.15	3.99	3.59	3.37	3.47	2.90	3.57

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, 1.11.

These findings are unexpected to at least some extent, considering the LDPR made a concerted effort to moderate its ideological platform during the 1999 campaign, especially by dampening anti-Semitic and Russophilic rhetoric and softening its fiery brand of nationalism. Yet the LDPR also suffered from concentrations of ethnic minorities in the mid-1990s, indicating continuity in LDPR strongholds on this dimension across time. Although the minority covariates were also statistically significant and negative in the 1995 models, this finding that reinforces the ethnic Russian contours of LDPR strongholds in 1999 diverges from previous survey research that found this cleavage was not statistically significant in the last legislative election of the decade (Hale 2006). Further confirmation of the LDPR's failure in ethnic contexts is available from the regional variables. In a strict model, the value for raions nested within ethnic republics was merely two percent the value of the odds for raions located elsewhere. According to Table 5.5, the party's average in ethnic republics was nearly two percent below its national vote share and, per Table 5.6, only four and thirteen percent of LDPR strongholds were located in ethnic republics according to the higher and lower threshold, respectively. The LDPR thus experienced a slight dip from the previous contest in the proportion of its strongholds that were found in ethnic republics, most likely attributable to the accession of Fatherland-All Russia and Unity.

Table 5.6: LDPR Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 1999				
	# of LDPR Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (391 Total)	% of LDPR Strongholds	# of LDPR Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (66 Total)	% of LDPR Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	50	13.26	3	4.84
Russian federal regions	327	86.74	59	95.16
Muslim regions	0	0	0	0
Caucasus regions	7	1.86	1	1.61
Poorer Regions	213	54.48	44	66.67
Natural Resource Regions	77	20.42	3	4.84
Fraudulent raions	35	8.95	11	16.67
Non-Fraudulent raions	356	91.05	55	83.33

Although the distinction between raions in predominantly Muslim regions and those in other locales did not systematically affect the occurrence of LDPR strongholds, descriptive statistics evince weak support among ethnic constituencies. The LDPR's average in Muslim regions was even more dismal than in ethnic republics, as Muslim regions recorded a full three percent less than the party's national showing. Closely mirroring the party's feeble showing in Muslim regions in 1995, the LDPR had no strongholds in regions with a preponderance of Muslims according to both measures of the dependent variable. Thus, the LDPR forged strongholds mainly in areas with concentrations of ethnic Russians in the mid- to late-1990s and tried to distinguish itself as the political party best suited to represent this constituency, while also struggling to broaden its appeal to ethnic minorities by fine-tuning its rhetoric.

Paralleling the LDPR's electoral rout in areas with higher compositions of ethnic minorities, Yabloko suffered consistently with unit increases in each of the three minority covariates using both measures of party strongholds. In the mid-1990s, these variables did not reach conventional levels of statistical significance, contrary to the findings of large-scale survey research that underscored the systematic connection linking ethnic Russian support to Yabloko's success (White, Wyman and Oates 1997). By late in the decade, however, the percent minority variable significantly diminished the odds of a

Yabloko stronghold and consistently so, from four to five percent in the lower threshold models, and from seven to thirty percent in the upper threshold specifications. Increases in titular minorities also caused Yabloko to fare poorly; this covariate decreased the odds by roughly four percent in the relaxed models and by roughly thirteen percent according to one higher threshold specification. Finally, other minority populations, a category that includes Indo-Europeans, may be expected to support the archetypal liberal party in Russia because of familial connections to the West and possibly past experience with more liberal forms of governance as well. However, a one percent increase in other minorities reduced the odds of a Yabloko stronghold by five to eight percent and by 17 to 27%, with the relaxed and strict party stronghold measures. Yabloko's electoral fortunes were buoyed by larger concentrations of other minorities in the previous election but the winds shifted precipitously in 1999. By the end of the 1990s, the liberal party could no longer rely on high levels of support from any group other than ethnic Russians. Previous research demonstrated that Yabloko's bastions of support were located in ethnic Russian areas in the context of the 1995 contest, while other scholarship found that ethnic cleavages did not exert a systematic effect on Yabloko support in the context of the 1999 election (Colton and McFaul 2003; Hale 2006). Therefore, these findings offer a different depiction of the ethnic bases of the liberal party. Figure 5.7 substantiates the statistical results and showcases the similarities between the liberals and the far right nationalists: like the LDPR, Yabloko's vote share plummeted with additional non-Russian residents of any kind. The most fanatical raions were located in the federal cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg and oblasts and krais, such as Omsk, Rostov, Novosibirsk, Tomsk, Chelyabinsk, Sverdlovsk and Primorski. Interestingly, the geographic distribution Yabloko's most enthusiastic raions was not clustered in those majority-Russian raions located in European Russia, but rather revealed a wider diffusion of support across the country's expanse.

Figure 5.7: Non-Russian Minorities and Yabloko's Vote Share in 1999

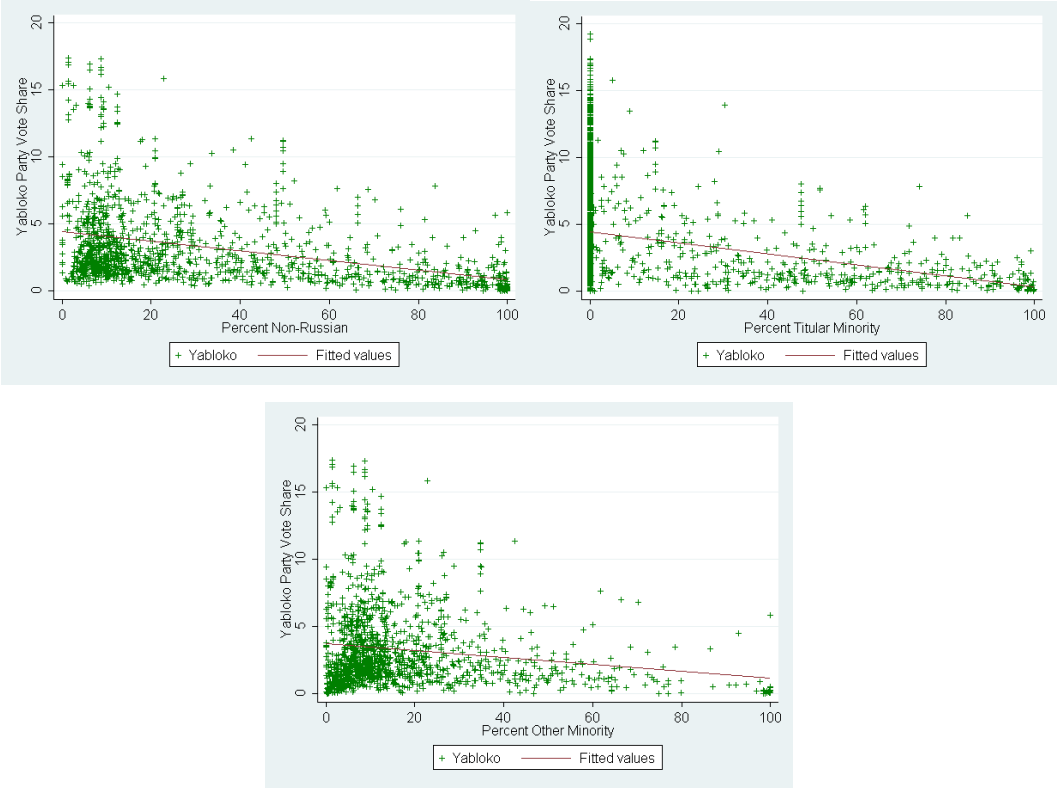
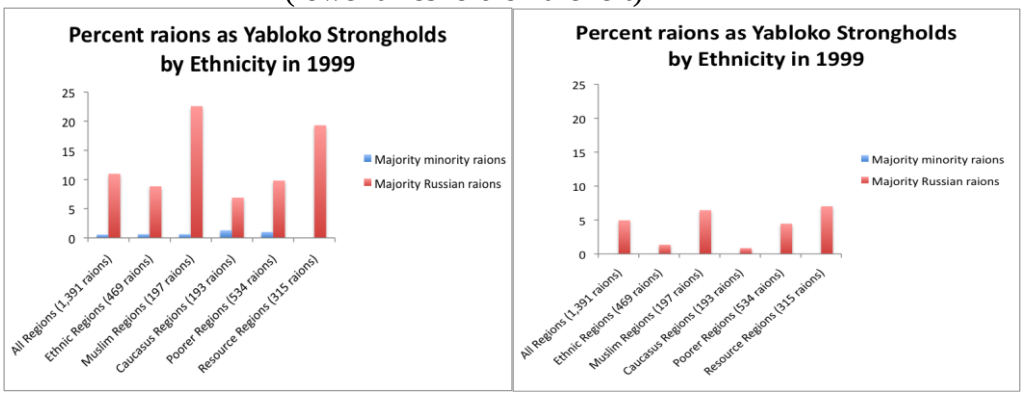


Figure 5.8 sketches the ethnic Russian outlines of Yabloko's support: of the majority-minority and majority-Russian raions in each regional setting, the balance decisively favored majority-Russian raions across both thresholds. Of all majority-minority and majority-Russian raions, Yabloko's percentage of strongholds in both contexts was essentially identical to the mid-1990s. Surprisingly, given the party market crowded with strong competitors, Yabloko enjoyed a small percentage of strongholds in majority-minority raions in ethnic republics, Muslim regions, and those in the Caucasus. In the Caucasus and resource-dependent regions, slightly less than one-quarter and roughly 20% of majority-Russian raions were liberal zealots. In resource-rich regions, however, the party's only bastions of support were found in majority-Russian raions according to the relaxed threshold. With the shift to the strict threshold, Yabloko's already small share of majority-minority strongholds evaporated entirely. Compared to the charts regarding 1995, an additional peak emerged in resource regions in 1999.

Figure 5.8: Yabloko Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 1999 (lower threshold on the left)



The party's average in majority-minority raions was slightly higher than nationally, as shown in Table 5.7, but Yabloko fared worse in ethnic regional contexts: its mean in ethnic republics and Muslim regions were one to roughly one and a half percent lower than its raion-level national average.

Table 5.7: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of Yabloko's Electoral Performance in the 1999 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	4.19	3.16	4.29	1.31	3.10	2.95	3.66	4.79	4.27
Min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.070	.070
Max	19.29	15.36	19.29	13.89	15.82	14.59	14.59	19.29	17.33
SD	3.44	2.96	3.56	1.48	3.17	3.32	3.24	3.70	3.70

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, 1.11.

In the statistical results, the value for raions nested within ethnic republics were one-tenth to one-twentieth the value of the odds for those located elsewhere according to the relaxed threshold and the value according to the strict threshold was minuscule. Four years earlier, ethnic republic status also sank the odds considerably, but the magnitude of

the effect was larger in 1999, plunging the odds to even greater depths. Interestingly though, across stronghold measures, a higher proportion of Yabloko's strongholds were found in ethnic republics, roughly nine percent, in 1999 than in 1995, as shown in Table 5.8. In general, Yabloko preserved its constituency rooted in Russian federal regions, which became more and more essential to the party's survival since it was almost completely frozen out of the ethnic republics once Fatherland-All Russia and Unity entered the political scene. While Yabloko suffered more acutely in ethnic republics in the late 1990s according to the statistical results, location in predominantly Muslim regions again did not exercise a systematic effect on the occurrence of Yabloko strongholds. Few bastions of support were found in Muslim regions, merely two percent at the most, according to both thresholds.

Table 5.8: Yabloko Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 1999

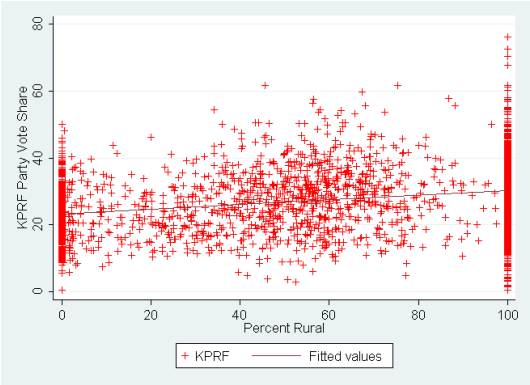
	# of Yabloko Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (474 Total)	% of Yabloko Strongholds	# of Yabloko Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (128 Total)	% of Yabloko Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	44	9.82	12	9.84
Russian federal regions	404	90.18	110	90.16
Muslim regions	9	2.01	2	1.64
Caucasus regions	16	3.57	5	4.10
Poorer Regions	96	20.25	27	21.89
Natural Resource Regions	65	14.51	24	19.67
Fraudulent raions	3	0.63	2	1.56
Non-Fraudulent raions	471	99.37	126	98.44

Yabloko and the LDPR championed divergent policy platforms and occupied different ideological niches, but the contours of their support were both defined crucially by ethnic Russians in the late 1990s. Thus, the core party troika generally consolidated their distinct pockets of support on different sides, in some cases, of the ethnic Russian, non-Russian cleavage.

The Urban-rural Divide and Opposition Parties

Opposition parties fortified electoral gains captured in the mid-1990s by making deeper inroads in the countryside or urban centers, in Yabloko's case, in the late 1990s. In 1995, a unit increase in rural residents augmented the odds of a KPRF stronghold by one to two percent across the board; in 1999, the odds lifted approximately two to three percent across all lower threshold models, and roughly two to four percent in the upper threshold specifications. Thus, the magnitude of the positive effect of rural areas was greater than in the previous election, indicating that the Communists entrenched themselves more firmly in rural communities. In majority-rural areas, the KPRF's mean was more than one percent higher than its countrywide showing. Figure 5.9 corroborates these findings by illustrating the steep incline in the KPRF's vote share as ruralness at the raion level increased. The preponderance of zealous raions were found in mostly rural areas in Dagestan, North Ossetia, Adygea, Orlovskaya, Bryanskaya, Ulyanovskaya, Lipyetskaya, and Altai.

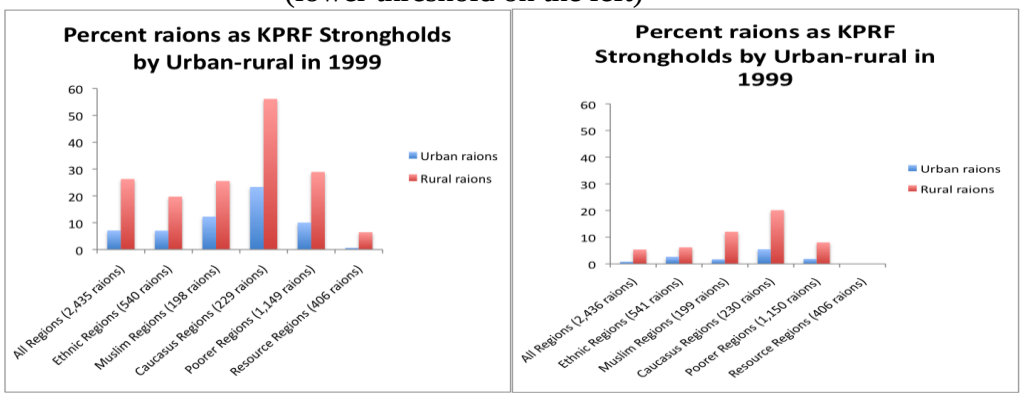
Figure 5.9: Rural Inhabitants and KPRF's Vote Share in 1999



A notably higher percentage of the KPRF's strongholds were found in the countryside rather than urban raions across both thresholds, as evident in Figure 5.10. Compared to the mid-1990s, the Communists markedly expanded their support in majority-rural raions but enthusiasm for the party waned in majority-urban areas: nearly 20% of majority-rural raions were KPRF strongholds in 1995 but by the late 1990s, the percentage jumped closer to 30%; in contrast, of mostly urban raions, the KPRF enjoyed high levels of

support in roughly 10% in the mid-1990s but the party's share dropped noticeably below that level in 1999. The rural pattern of support held across thresholds, with the exception that all strongholds in resource-rich regions dried up when the strict threshold was employed. In the Caucasus, the KPRF captured strongholds in nearly 60% of rural raions and more than 20% of urban raions. Roughly one-third of countryside raions in poorer regions were Communist enthusiasts. Compared to the mid-1990s, when the KPRF harvested a higher percentage of urban than rural strongholds in Muslim and resource-abundant regions, the KPRF's pattern of support followed rural lines without exception in the late-1990s.

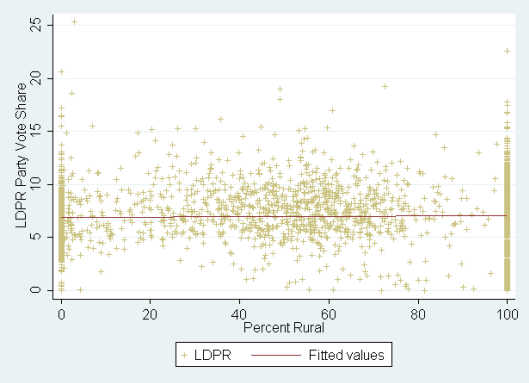
Figure 5.10: KPRF Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 1999 (lower threshold on the left)



The party managed to lock down the rural constituency more securely in the late 1990s, despite enduring new competition in the countryside with the LDPR and the two potential parties of power. The KPRF's robust performance in the countryside was far from a foregone conclusion since the Fatherland-All Russia coalition absorbed most of the Agrarian Party's leadership and members prior to the election, which attracted left-leaning rural voters to the new party project (Marsh 2002). Yet the KPRF likely benefitted from the fact that it had served as the standard-bearer for rural interests in the legislature since the collapse of Communism, while the other parties competing for the rural vote, notably Unity and Fatherland-All Russia, were tenderfoots.

As the KPRF fortified its already robust rural constituency, the LDPR made new electoral inroads in the Russian countryside. The rural covariate exercised a comparatively slight positive effect in the mid-1990s, but, in the late 1990s, lifted the odds by one to two percent nearly across the board in the lower threshold models and by up to one percent in the upper threshold specifications. The strengthening rural contours of LDPR support contrasts with findings from prior research on the 1999 election that indicated community size did not have a systematic effect on the party's electoral support (Hale 2006). In rural areas, the LDPR's average was within one-half percent of its raion-level national mean. Although somewhat more difficult to discern visually, Figure 5.11 displays the positive relationship between the party's vote share and greater degrees of rurality. The most passionate countryside raions were located in Chita, Krasnoyarsk, Novosibirskaya, and Komi-Permyat Autonomous Okrug, and the urban enthusiasts were found in Tverskaya, Murmanskaya, Amurskaya, Sakhalinskaya and Kurganskaya.

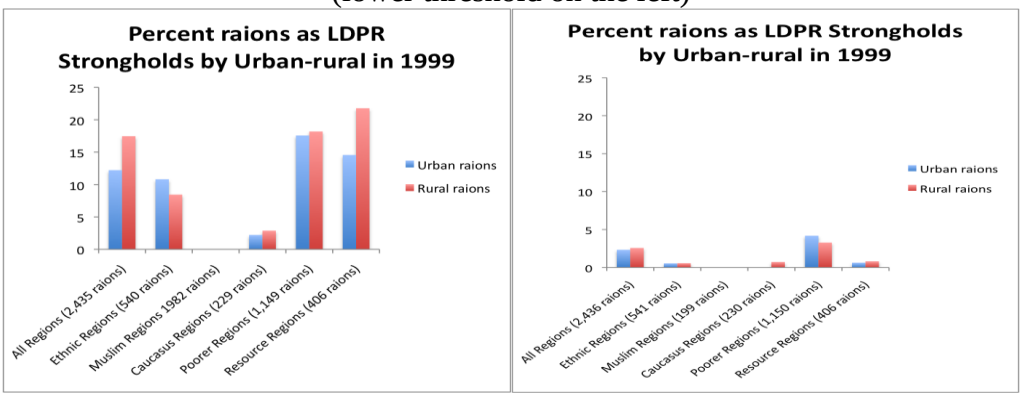
Figure 5.11: Rural Inhabitants and LDPR's Vote Share in 1999



Overall, Figure 5.12 showcases the rural pattern of the LDPR's support. Of majority-rural raions, the nationalists captured a higher percentage of strongholds in these areas in 1999 than in the previous election, although the improvement was slight. In contrast, of raions situated in mostly urban environments, the percentage of LDPR bastions of support dipped by a small amount. A few exceptions are evident in ethnic republics according to the relaxed threshold and poorer regions according to the strict threshold. Surprisingly,

with the shift from the lower to the higher stronghold measure, the balance in percentages between strongholds in the countryside and urban centers in economically disadvantaged regions tilted in favor of urban raions. Nevertheless, of urban raions in poorer regions, the LDPR captured strongholds in nearly 20%, a higher percentage than in any other regional context. Almost one-quarter of rural raions in resource-dependent regions reported high vote shares for the nationalists. Raising the stronghold threshold resulted in urban support in the Caucasus to evaporate. From the mid- to late-1990s, the balance shifted from predominantly urban strongholds to mostly rural bastions in poorer and resource-rich regions and the small percentage of strongholds in Muslim regions that the LDPR captured in 1995 was wiped out in the 1999 contest.

Figure 5.12: LDPR Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 1999 (lower threshold on the left)

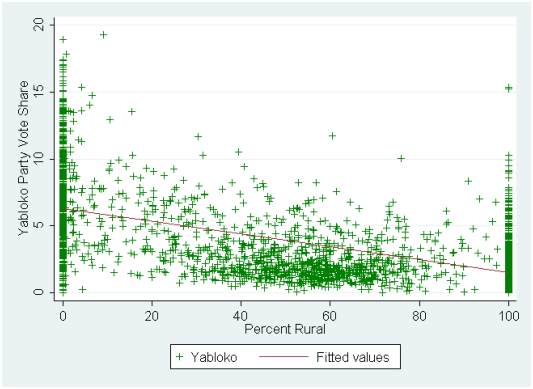


The LDPR's electoral trajectory thus showed signs that the party was rooting itself more firmly in the countryside and emerged as a genuine contender for this constituency with the potential to jeopardize the KPRF's hold on its most staunch supporters. The fact that multiple parties, including two new potential parties of power, competed for support from the countryside resulted in the fragmentation of the rural vote across numerous parties representing the opposition and the Kremlin alike, rather than a winnowing effect where one party, the most likely contenders being Unity or Fatherland-All Russia, dominated at the expense of others. The countryside was up for grabs in the late 1990s and multiple

parties, including the Communists and nationalists, walked away with a piece of the action.

In contrast to the reds and browns, Yabloko's situation in rural areas was as desperate in the late 1990s as four years earlier: the rural variable decreased the odds of a stronghold by three to eight percent across the lower threshold models and by nine to 15% when the stricter threshold was employed. Compared to 1995 and contingent on the model, the magnitude of the negative effect was substantially larger. The liberal party continued to carve out a unique niche in urban centers, where the party market was less crowded, devoid of the Communists, nationalists, and the two potential parties of power. Yabloko's average in rural areas was more than one percent less than its national take. Figure 5.13 reveals the extreme deterioration in support for Yabloko brought about by additional rural inhabitants. Unsurprisingly, the keenest raions were completely urban and found in the federal cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg and regions located in European Russia, such as Rostov Oblast. The most ardent supporters in the countryside were found in Tomsk Oblast in the West Siberian Plain and Irkutsk Oblast in southeastern Siberia.

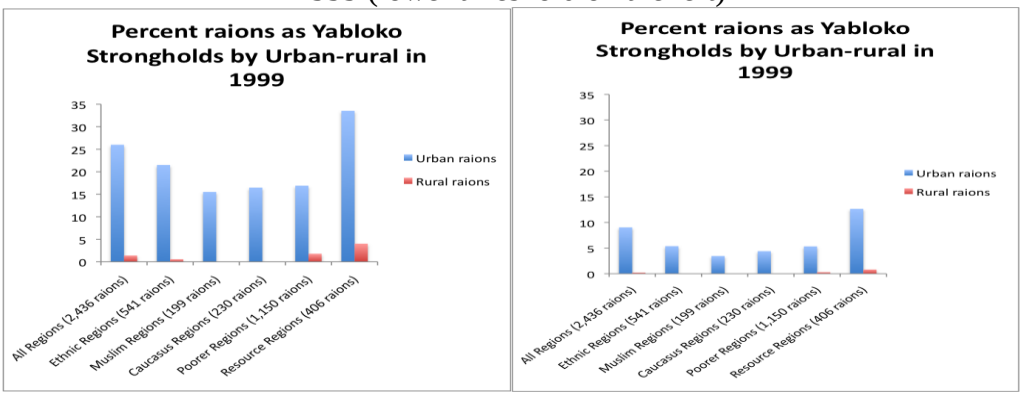
Figure 5.13: Rural Inhabitants and Yabloko's Vote Share in 1999



Yabloko's urban base of support is also conspicuous in Figure 5.14 and appears remarkably similar to the charts pertaining to 1995. Again, there was a stark imbalance in the percentage of urban and rural enthusiasm for the liberals that tilted heavily toward

urban centers. Yabloko made considerable gains in urban raions in 1999 compared to 1995: of these raions, Yabloko harvested strongholds in more than 20% in the mid-1990s but the party's share skyrocketed to more than 25% late in the decade. On the other hand, of majority-rural raions, the share of Yabloko strongholds was as infinitesimal as it was in 1995. Yabloko captured the highest share of majority-rural raions in resource-abundant and poorer regions, albeit the latter to a lesser degree. More than one-third of mostly urban raions in resource-dependent regions were Yabloko strongholds, the highest share of any regional environment by a large margin. The liberals failed to garner any support from predominantly rural raions in Muslim regions or those located in the Caucasus. With the shift from the relaxed to the strict threshold, the percentage of Yabloko strongholds became even more urban: in ethnic republics, Muslim regions, and regions in the Caucasus, Yabloko failed to capture any stronghold-level support from the countryside.

Figure 5.14: Yabloko Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 1999 (lower threshold on the left)



Thus, Yabloko's tentacles penetrated urban areas more thoroughly across the 1990s, likely because electoral competition in cities was fairer than in the countryside. The fragile liberal party benefitted when it was allowed to compete in a comparatively fair fight, as Yabloko did not enjoy the vast resource endowments necessary to engage in electoral manipulation on its behalf and, in any case, the party was committed to free and

fair elections. Recognizing that it did not have a chance in rural areas, Yabloko doubled-down on its efforts to capture votes in the cities.

Regional Geographic and Socioeconomic Indicators and Opposition Parties

Variables differentiating additional regional environments produced results broadly consistent with the 1995 findings. With regards to location in the Caucasus, the KPRF again received an immense electoral boost, with odds of a stronghold hiking to between 16 and 124 in the relaxed models and between 35 and 251 times in the stricter models. Depending on the model, the magnitude of the positive effect was significantly larger in 1999 than 1995. About 40% KPRF strongholds were located in the Caucasus according to the stricter measure, and nearly 25% by the relaxed threshold. Furthermore, the party's average in raions located in the Caucasus was nearly six percent higher than nationally. These results square with the findings concerning other minorities, as the Communists performed well in areas with sizable populations of non-titular ethnic minorities, many of which are located in the Caucasus. The KPRF protected strongholds first built in the mid-1990s against the two potential parties of power that competed to gain electoral footholds in the area. In a repeat of the mid-1990s, when the Kremlin waged a brutal military campaign in Chechnya and parts of Dagestan and Ingushetia, the Communists also likely scored in the Caucasus at least to some extent because of a protest vote against the central government, which reopened hostilities in Chechnya in September 1999. For those in the war-torn Caucasus, the KPRF was a logical choice since it had retained its position as the most formidable opposition to the Kremlin throughout the 1990s. Moreover, the robust Communist presence in the legislature in the mid- to late-1990s gave the party access to resources that could be passed along to voters in areas with clear grievances against the Kremlin, i.e. those looking to cast protest votes. Whether or not the KPRF would be able to preserve its presence in the Caucasus in future elections if the area reconciled with the central government remained an open question.

In contrast to the Communists, the values for raions located in the Caucasus were one percent or less the value of the odds for raions located elsewhere for the nationalists. In the previous election, this variable failed to reach statistical significance. Indeed, only

one percent of LDPR strongholds were located in the area according to the higher measure, and less than two percent by the lower threshold. Descriptive statistics corroborate the LDPR's failure in Caucasian raions: the party's average was almost two percent lower than nationally. The LDPR's conspicuous vulnerability in the Caucasus was expected due to the preponderance of non-Russian ethnic groups, especially titular minorities, which were derided in the party's xenophobic rhetoric. Thus, the fact that the party was not irreparably debilitated in the Caucasus in the mid-1990s is striking by comparison. In contrast to the LDPR, location in the Caucasus produced the same effect across the 1990s for Yabloko. As in 1995, the variable did not reach statistical significance in the multilevel models, but Yabloko's average was once more slightly lower than nationally. Merely four percent of the party's strongholds were located in the area. Unlike dynamics prevailing in the countryside, the KPRF enjoyed a unique advantage vis-à-vis the nationalists and liberals in the Caucasus and carved out a deeper niche for itself in the area from the mid- to the late-1990s, while the LDPR made new inroads in regions located outside the powder keg of Russia.

The variables assessing socioeconomic welfare utilizing gross regional product and resource wealth reveal that opposition parties' trajectories in the late 1990s closely mirrored those in the middle of the decade, and provide evidence of the consolidation of unique pockets of support. Like four years earlier, the KPRF suffered based on a one-unit increase in gross regional product, but the magnitude of the effect was greater in the strict specifications in 1999 than 1995. The odds of a KPRF stronghold plummeted 70% or more across the lower threshold models and by roughly 98% in an upper threshold specification. As anticipated, the majority of the party's strongholds, 55% and 77% by the lower and higher measure, respectively, were housed in economically disadvantaged areas. Furthermore, the party's average in regions above the median level of gross regional product was approximately one and a half percent less than its raion-level national average, comparable to the disparity in 1995. The results reinforce the traditional picture of the KPRF as a party that performed better under conditions of economic deprivation and confirm that a relatively stable constituency was developing in support of

the Communists. Clearly, the Communists benefitted from the misery of the market and the government's inability to pay wage arrears in the immediate wake of the 1998 economic crisis and ruble devaluation. The lifeblood of the Communists throughout the 1990s was in many ways economic problems that continued to dog Russia nearly a decade after the collapse of Communism. The party continued to draw high levels of support from areas that lost the most in the still transitional environment of the late 1990s. Without the economic crisis that brought many of the government's missteps to the forefront of the public mind, the Communists may have fared much worse in poorer areas in 1999, providing substance to claims that the party was withering after the path to the market was not abandoned in favor of a reassertion of state involvement in the mid-1990s.

Paralleling the KPRF, economic advancement also caused the LDPR to fall short, compared not only to other parties in the late 1990s but to the party's own performance in the previous election. With increasing levels of gross regional product, the odds of an LDPR stronghold plunged more than 50% in 1995 but fell even farther four years later, a full 90% drop in an upper threshold model. Over half and two-thirds of the party's strongholds were located in poorer regions, according to the relaxed and stricter measure. However, the LDPR's average in economically developed regions was once more almost on par with its countryside showing. Opposition parties on the far left and the far right of the political spectrum both competed for the same pockets of support in regions that were economically disadvantaged and each showed signs of consolidating that support over time.

The trajectory of final member of the core party troika also roughly followed the lines established in the mid-1990s, but in the direction opposite to that followed by the Communists and nationalists. Yabloko again received a sizable boost as economic development progressed, with odds lifting by approximately 70 to 75%, but the magnitude of the positive effect was considerably less than four years prior, when odds ballooned to two. The party's mean in economically developed regions was again higher than its national yield. In fact, in federal subjects with gross regional products larger than

the median, Yabloko's performance was the best out of any raion or regional environment considered. The party had few strongholds in less well-off regions, roughly one-fifth across both measures. As was true in the mid-1990s, the fact that Yabloko did not succeed to a greater degree in wealthier regions is surprising because the party faced very little competition in these areas, as evidenced by the statistical results for the other parties, including the two potential parties of power, Fatherland-All Russia and Unity. The liberals might have enjoyed a distinct edge in wealthier regions throughout the 1990s, but Yabloko seemingly did not double-down on efforts in these areas to ensure that it harvested more support relative to its performance in 1995. This was perhaps a strategic error in Yabloko's campaign, if the leadership believed that wealthier areas were already locked down sufficiently and decided to focus the party's attention elsewhere.

With regard to the other measure of socioeconomic welfare, the KPRF fared extremely poorly in resource regions: the shift from raions located in regions with diversified economies to those located in resource-dependent regions caused the odds to plummet tremendously. Four years prior, this distinction did not exercise a systematic effect. The KPRF had no strongholds in resource regions by the higher measure of party stronghold, and less than four percent by the relaxed measure. Descriptive statistics indicate that the party's average in resource regions was less than six percent below its national showing, a modest improvement compared to the approximately seven percent drop four years prior. These results generally corroborate those concerning economic development and paint a clear picture of the KPRF as a party with genuine strengths emerging in areas with lackluster regional economies and those comparatively more diversified. Unlike the Communists, a region's reliance on natural resources did not reach statistical significance in any of the models for the ultra-nationalists, as was the case in the mid-1990s. Only four percent of the party's strongholds were located in resource regions according to the higher threshold, and one-fifth according to the lower threshold. The LDPR's average in resource regions was slightly higher than that in economically developed regions, albeit still lower than its national showing. As was the case in 1995, the finding that the nationalists were not negatively impacted based on resource wealth is

surprising, given their long-standing appeals to those suffering serious deprivation. In contrast to the Communists and nationalists, the liberal Yabloko excelled in resource regions: the odds of a stronghold were amplified by three times at the lowest, and by more than five times at the highest. Approximately 20% and 15% of the party's strongholds were situated in resource regions by the higher and lower threshold, respectively. By the end of the decade, Yabloko had firmly distinguished itself from the other two leading opposition parties by establishing a reliable pocket of support in economically advantaged areas, both with regards to gross regional product and natural resource wealth.

Electoral Manipulation and Opposition Parties

The fraud variable produced striking results for opposition parties competing in 1999. In the 1995 election, the KPRF benefitted from high levels of turnout in some models but was harmed in others; at the end of the decade, inflated turnout had a robust and positive effect in the upper threshold specifications, roughly doubling the odds. Furthermore, more than one-third of the KPRF's strongholds were located in raions suspected for electoral manipulation by the higher measure, and almost one-fifth by the lower measure. The KPRF's average vote share in fraudulent raions was approximately one percent higher than its national take. Closely mirroring the figure from 1995, Figure 5.15 again shows that the KPRF's vote share grew as turnout increased, albeit not as sharply as four years prior. The raions in the upper right quadrant, at the nexus of high turnout and high KPRF support, were located almost exclusively in Dagestan, Altai and Orlov. The relationship between voter turnout and the KPRF's vote share in 1999 showed a less steep incline than was evident four years earlier.

Figure 5.15: Voter Turnout and KPRF's Vote Share in 1999

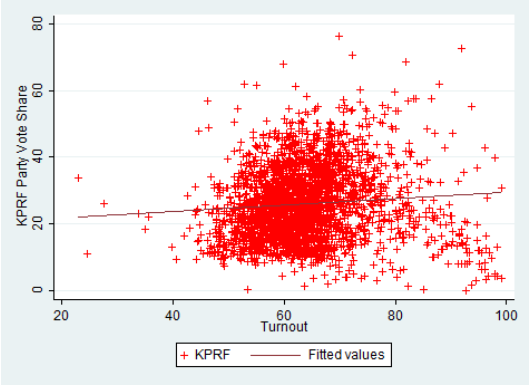
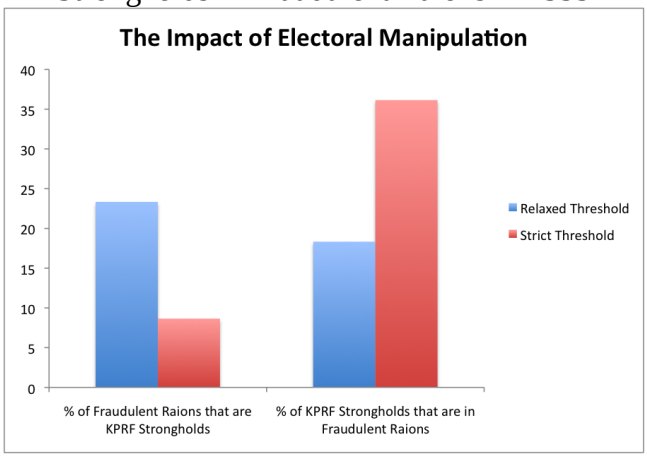


Figure 5.16 shows that a sizable share of KPRF strongholds was found in fraudulent raions in the late 1990s and the percentage increased with the shift in thresholds, as was the case in the mid-1990s. Compared to the previous election, the KPRF captured roughly six percent fewer strongholds in manipulated raions according to the lower threshold but approximately six percent more according to the higher threshold. Thus, the percentage of KPRF strongholds in manipulated areas was less balanced across thresholds in 1999 than 1995, but in both elections, the very highest levels of KPRF support were firmly rooted in fraudulent areas. Of the raions suspected for electoral manipulation, the KPRF harvested bastions of support in nearly 25% and almost 10%, by the lower and higher measure, closely mirroring 1995. That the percent of fraudulent raions that were KPRF strongholds changed only slightly from 1995 to 1999 suggests that the KPRF largely preserved its zones of dominance in fraudulent raions and effectively withstood dramatic changes to the party system involving the disappearance of a weak party of power and the appearance of two more formidable challengers in its stead, each trying not only to beat the other but also the KPRF, the winner of the previous Duma contest.

Figure 5.16: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are KPRF Strongholds vs. Percent KPRF Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 1999



The distinction between non-manipulated and fraudulent raions did not systematically influence the occurrence of LDPR strongholds in the mid-1990s, but the party made new inroads in these zones in 1999. Like the KPRF, the LDPR excelled in raions with inflated turnout levels: the odds of a stronghold were amplified by two to three times in the strict specifications. Interestingly, the party's vote share in fraudulent raions was approximately two percent less than its national showing. When these variables were leveraged in their continuous forms, without controlling for the other variables and treated as dichotomous variables, as they were in the statistical models, the association between voter turnout and the LDPR's vote share appears to be negative, as shown in Figure 5.17. Nevertheless, a considerable number of higher turnout raions reported vote shares for the LDPR in excess of about 10%, which is the lower threshold for LDPR strongholds in 1999. The one conspicuous high turnout raion that recorded fanatical support for the nationalists was found in Arkhangelsk Oblast in northwestern Russia on the White Sea.

Figure 5.17: Voter Turnout and LDPR's Vote Share in 1999

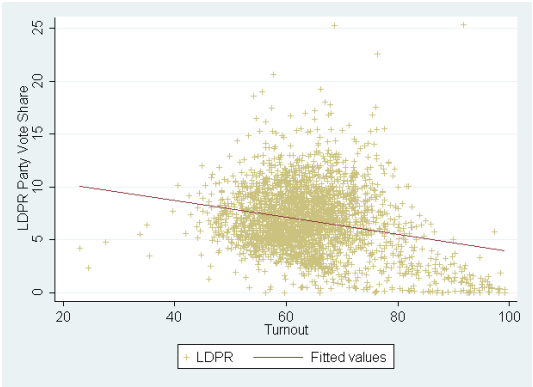
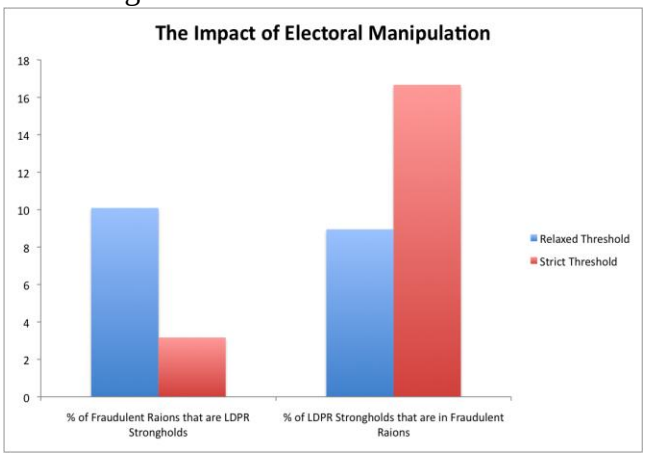


Figure 5.18 shows that, compared to the KPRF, the LDPR enjoyed considerably fewer strongholds in fraudulent raions according to both thresholds. Yet a fair share of the LDPR's strongholds were found in manipulated raions, roughly nine percent by the relaxed measure and roughly 17% by the strict threshold. Of manipulated raions, approximately 10% and only about three percent were bastions of support for the nationalists by the lower and higher measure.

Figure 5.18: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are LDPR Strongholds vs. Percent LDPR Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 1999



Despite these findings, it seems dubious that the LDPR was capable of engaging in electoral manipulation itself because the party lacked the strong infrastructure, regional

networks, and resources necessary to carry out malfeasance on a large scale. When the nationalists benefitted, in fact, from fraud, it is more plausible that other parties engaging in nefarious practices themselves transferred some votes to the nationalists, a party that was more Kremlin-friendly at the time than the intractable Communists, to give the appearance of genuine multiparty competition while denying the real competition, i.e. the KRPF, votes. There is evidence that precisely this occurred in previous elections, most notably the 1993 snap elections: electoral malfeasance committed by the Kremlin benefitted the LDPR to the tune of an extra six million votes, which signaled "covert official approval for the LDPR" (Wilson 2005: 75-76). Yet, it is notable that both the Communists and nationalists received a boost in the statistical models from abnormally high turnout in the late 1990s, even if they did not benefit equally from electoral manipulation. The results, including the positive and robust findings concerning Fatherland-All Russia and Unity discussed subsequently, demonstrate the "full pluralism of falsification," meaning that "every party that ha[d] any support among those holding power anywhere […] engage[d] in it" (Fish 2005: 53). Significantly though, the "pluralism of falsification does not wash out the effects of falsification" and the "chance that [all parties] benefitted equally are remote" (*Ibid*).

In this respect, the bar charts in Figures 16 and 18 are more informative than the statistical results because, while the model results illustrate that both the KPRF and LDPR benefitted from electoral manipulation, the bar charts facilitate comparison between the two parties in terms of the relative impact of electoral manipulation. The relative influence of electoral malfeasance on Communist versus nationalist strongholds suggests that the opposition parties that benefitted from nefarious practices did not profit equally. As the weakest of the core party troika, the liberal Yabloko was hurt by high turnout in the 1995 election, when the odds of a stronghold plummeted drastically by approximately 70 to 75% with the shift from the non-manipulated category to the manipulated class. Surprisingly, in 1999, this variable did not exercise a systematic effect on liberal strongholds across-the-board. Yet few Yabloko strongholds, indeed less than two percent, were situated in fraudulent raions and the liberal party's average vote share

in these zones was roughly three percent less than its national performance. Mirroring the relationship between Yabloko's vote share and turnout levels in 1995, Figure 5.19 again showcases a steep inverse association in 1999. The one raion combining unusually high participation and aberrational support for the liberal party was located in Krasnodar Krai on the Black Sea coast and across the Strait of Kerch from Crimea.

Figure 5.19: Voter Turnout and Yabloko's Vote Share in 1999

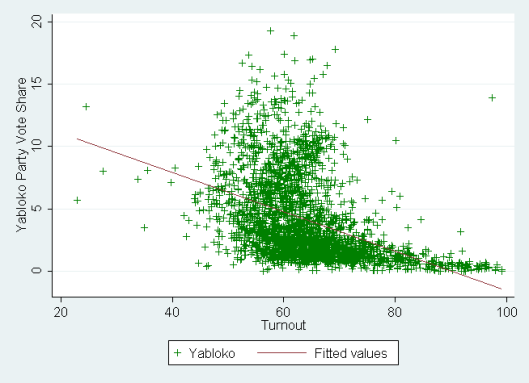
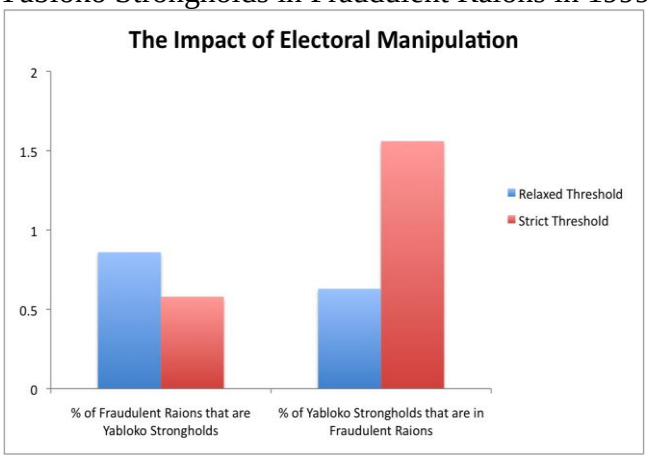


Figure 5.20 throws into sharper relief the distinction between Yabloko and the Communists and nationalists: Yabloko's share of strongholds in fraudulent raions was, by a large margin, the lowest of any of the core party troika by the relaxed measure, but Yabloko bested the LDPR according to the strict threshold. In an interesting parallel to the Communists, the percentage of liberal strongholds in these raions increased with the shift from the lower to the higher threshold. Of the total number of fraudulent raions, Yabloko enjoyed the fewest strongholds of any party, with less than one percent according to both thresholds.

Figure 5.20: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are Yabloko Strongholds vs. Percent Yabloko Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 1999



Yabloko distinguished itself from the other two members of the core party troika because high levels of voter turnout did not exert a robust and positive affect on the occurrence of its strongholds, a finding that conformed to expectations. In comparison, the fact that the Communists and nationalists experienced more rather than less electoral success in fraudulent areas is striking, as conventional wisdom suggests that opposition parties were most well positioned to succeed when free and fair competition prevailed at the local level.

Across the 1990s, opposition parties fortified existing strongholds and endeavored to expand their constituencies with mixed results. The KPRF continued its rural reign and preserved pockets of support in raions with larger populations of ethnic non-Russians, particularly other minorities, those located in the Caucasus, economically disadvantaged regions and those with diversified regional economies, but may have wavered to some degree in Muslim regions, as evidenced by the weaker magnitude of the effect compared to 1995. The LDPR tried but failed to expand its constituency by softening its xenophobic and Russophilic rhetoric, floundering yet again in raions with high concentrations of ethnic minorities. However, the party extended its tentacles deeper into the countryside and in areas outside of the Caucasus for the first time. Although Yabloko was the weakest of the core party troika in both 1995 and 1999, the party established unique and concrete, albeit small, pockets of support that kept it afloat amid shifts in the

party system. The liberal party shored up its strongholds anchored in urban raions, economically privileged and Russian federal regions and primed fresh pockets of support in ethnic Russian raions and those with regional economies dependent on natural resources. In the late-1990s, pockets of support both emerged and crystallized for each opposition party, despite the emergence of two competing parties of power with the capacity to jeopardize their core constituencies.

Ethnicity and the Potential Party of Power (Fatherland-All Russia)

The electoral outcomes of the two potential parties of power, Fatherland-All Russia and Unity, showcase divergent pockets of support and forecast the contours of the far-reaching electoral base backing the dominant party after the two parties merged in the early 2000s. The pre-election favorite to become the new party of power, Fatherland-All Russia, captured significant support from minority constituencies. The percent minority covariate lifted the odds of a stronghold by two to four percent across thresholds. Furthermore, the percent titular refinement of the ethnic composition variable augmented the odds by two to three percent. Considerable minority support, especially from titular minorities, can be attributed to the party's numerous ties to the regions of Russia, especially ethnic republics notorious for political machines with the capacity to devastate challengers. The parameter gauging raion-level population of other minorities also raised the odds by approximately two percent in the lower threshold models but failed to achieve statistical significance using the higher threshold. Further investigation revealed that the raions with high concentrations of other minorities that recorded high support for Fatherland were not those populated by Indo-European groups, but rather small non-titular ethnic groups because such raions were located in Dagestan and Bashkortostan. Figure 5.21 highlights the precipitous incline in Fatherland's vote share with more non-Russian inhabitants of any sort and reveals numerous raions located in the upper right quadrant. The raions recording the highest support for Fatherland were located chiefly in ethnic republics, such as Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Dagestan and Mari El, and the two federal cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg. These areas flocked to Fatherland because, as mentioned, the party's leaders included the Mayor of Moscow and the governor of St.

Petersburg, ensuring support from the two largest cities in Russia, and the presidents of the republics of Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and Ingushetia, guaranteeing votes from the provinces. The most fanatical raion, registering a vote share for Fatherland of over 95%, was found in the republic of Ingushetia, sandwiched in between North Ossetia and Chechnya and bordering Georgia to the south.

Figure 5.21: Non-Russian Minorities and Fatherland-All Russia's Vote Share in 1999

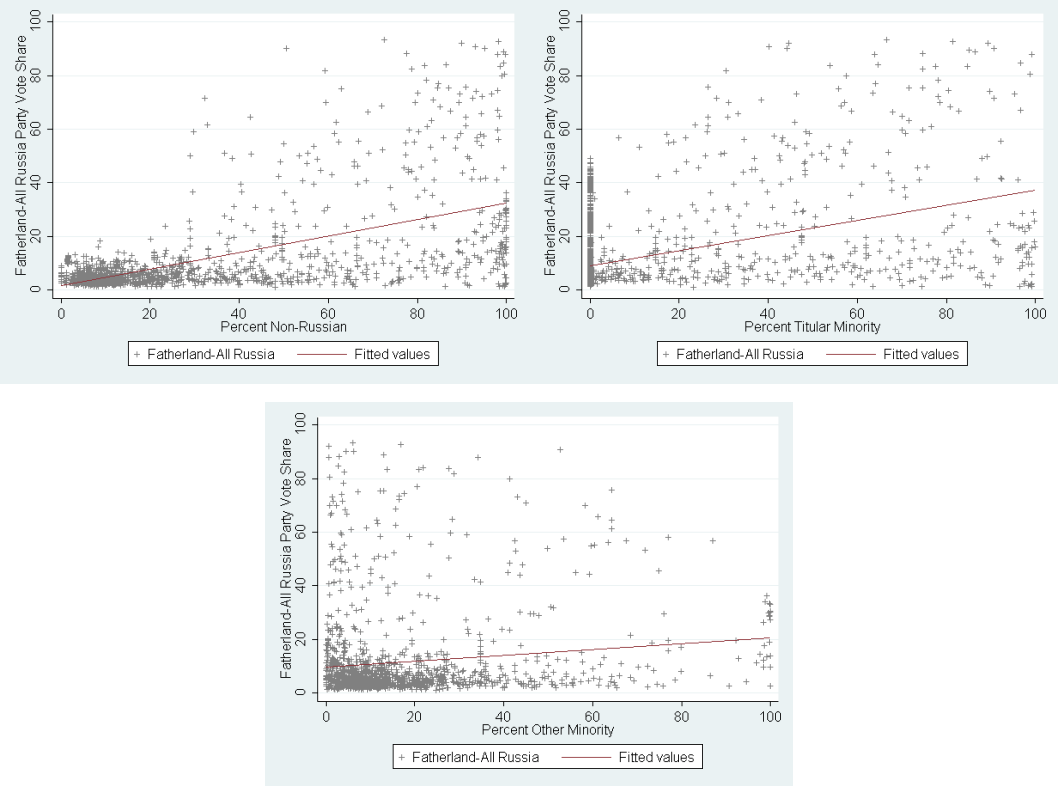
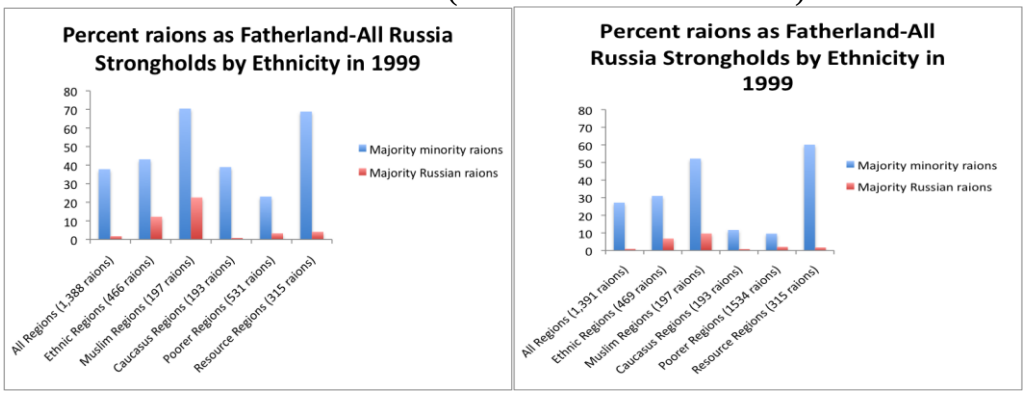


Figure 5.22 confirms the findings from the statistical models by exposing the unmistakably ethnic minority contours of the Fatherland vote. Of all majority-minority raions, nearly 40% delivered high levels of support to the hopeful party of power. However, a minuscule percentage of majority-Russian raions registered similar devotion. In each regional context, the party captured a disproportionate percentage of strongholds in majority-minority raions, but Fatherland also harvested a high percentage of support from majority-Russian raions located in ethnic republics and Muslim regions. Strikingly,

more than 70% of majority-minority raions in Muslim regions and roughly the same share in resource-dependent regions channeled immense support to Fatherland. The contours of Fatherland support on this dimension are roughly the reverse of the liberal Yabloko party. Surprisingly, Fatherland was able to maintain at least some strongholds in majority-Russian raions with the shift from the relaxed to the strict threshold.

Figure 5.22: Fatherland-All Russia's Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 1999 (lower threshold on the left)



Descriptive statistics showcase the positive effects of non-Russian populations and ethnic regional contexts on Fatherland's electoral fortunes. Fatherland's average in majority-minority raions was more than three percent greater than its raion-level national average as shown in Table 5.9. The party gathered tremendous support from ethnic republics and Muslim regions: its mean showing was more than 10% greater and, astonishingly, nearly 21% greater than its countrywide average, respectively.

Table 5.9: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of Fatherland-All Russia's Electoral Performance in the 1999 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	11.50	13.00	14.74	26.51	21.73	32.47	11.94	13.60	20.10
Min	1.00	1.11	1.17	1.00	1.00	1.73	1.11	1.11	1.11
Max	99.53	99.53	99.53	99.53	99.53	99.53	99.53	99.53	99.53
SD	14.68	17.28	17.14	27.06	22.44	25.33	13.36	17.14	24.28

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, 1.11.

The party thrived in ethnic republics: the shift from raions located in Russian federal regions to those in ethnic republics amplified the odds of a stronghold immensely, by 151 to 248 times. Indeed, nearly two-thirds and almost 50% of Fatherland strongholds were located in ethnic republics, as indicated in Table 5.10. Similarly, but by a drastically greater degree, Fatherland flourished in Muslim contexts across the majority of models: the values for raions located in these regions were at least over one thousand times and at most more than six hundred thousand times the value for raions situated elsewhere. Roughly half and 40% were located in Muslim regions according to the stricter and relaxed measures, respectively.

Table 5.10: Fatherland-All Russia Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 1999				
	# of Fatherland-All Russia Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (332 Total)	% of Fatherland-All Russia Strongholds	# of Fatherland-All Russia Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (180 Total)	% of Fatherland-All Russia Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	159	50.16	112	63.64
Russian federal regions	158	49.84	64	36.36
Muslim regions	124	39.12	89	50.57
Caucasus regions	32	10.09	10	5.68
Poorer Regions	61	18.37	27	15.00
Natural Resource Regions	107	33.75	90	51.14
Fraudulent raions	137	41.27	107	59.44
Non-Fraudulent raions	195	58.73	73	40.56

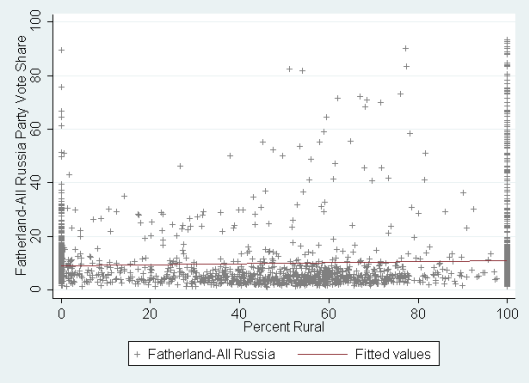
These data strongly suggest that Fatherland largely supplanted Our Home is Russia in ethnic republics and Muslim regions in the late 1990s, but Fatherland managed to monopolize ethnic zones significantly more successfully than its anemic predecessor. With regards to opposition party trajectories in ethnic republics and Muslim regions, Fatherland's emergence was seemingly most consequential for the KPRF, which previously tangled with the comparatively incompetent Our Home is Russia for control of these areas. But Fatherland's deeper ties to Muslim regions, effectuated through the presidents of predominantly Muslim republics that formed part of Fatherland's leadership, crippled the KPRF's footholds in the area that had been carved out in the mid-1990s to at least some extent.

The Urban-rural Divide and the Potential Party of Power (Fatherland-All Russia)

In addition to raions with sizable populations of ethnic minorities, ethnic republics, and Muslim regions, Fatherland made inroads in the countryside and harvested high levels of support from yet another core constituency of the Communists. The odds of a Fatherland stronghold lifted by two to three percent in the relaxed models and by two to four percent in the strict specifications. Furthermore, its average in majority-rural raions was over one percent greater than its raion-level national average. Figure 5.23

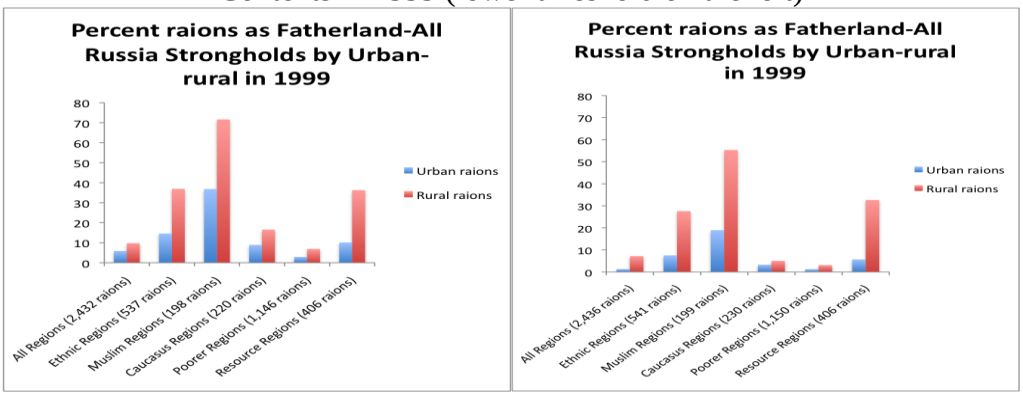
indicates the growth in Fatherland support with increased rurality. The preponderance of outlier raions were found in mostly rural areas, such as in Bashkortostan, Dagestan, Tatarstan, Ingushetia and Mari El, and a few urban centers located in the same regions and the two federal cities.

Figure 5.23: Rural Inhabitants and Fatherland-All Russia's Vote Share in 1999



The balance of Fatherland's support clearly followed rural lines in 1999 and endured across thresholds, as shown in Figure 5.24. Of all rural raions, Fatherland enjoyed bastions of support in roughly 10%; of all urban raions, the contender for the party of power prize had strongholds in approximately five percent. Although the balance of support with regard to percentages was tilted toward the countryside in ethnic republics and Muslim regions, where Fatherland performed best, a healthy share of bastions were found in urban centers as well. In the case of Muslim regions, the percentage of urban raions that were Fatherland strongholds exceeded the party's share in these areas in any other regional setting by at least double. In these regions, almost 80% of rural raions and roughly half that percentage of urban raions churned out abnormally high vote shares for the Unity challenger. As was the case with majority-Russian and majority-minority contexts, Fatherland managed to retain at least some urban strongholds in each regional environment when the stronghold threshold was raised; urban strongholds in predominantly Muslim regions appeared to take the largest hit based on the shift.

Figure 5.24: Fatherland-All Russia Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 1999 (lower threshold on the left)



In the previous election, the unsuccessful party of power, Our Home is Russia, experienced mixed electoral fortunes in rural zones, but Fatherland fixed a firmer grip on the countryside and harvested support where Our Home is Russia was largely unable. The robust rural contours of Fatherland strongholds deviates from prior scholarship reporting that the effect of rurality varied, either demonstrating that Fatherland performed best in bigger cities or found that community size did not exercise a systematic effect on the party's support (Colton and McFaul 2003; Hale 2006). Considering Fatherland was formed just months before the election and the countryside was historically the mainstay of the KPRF, Fatherland's performance in rural areas was remarkable. Undoubtedly, Fatherland's absorption of most of the Agrarian Party helped the aspiring party of power attract rural support and siphoned votes off the Communists.

Regional Geographic and Socioeconomic Indicators and the Potential Party of Power (Fatherland-All Russia)

In addition to areas with larger populations of ethnic minorities and those situated in the countryside, Fatherland made inroads in Caucasian regions, capturing windfall support across the majority of models. The values for raions located in the area were at least 121 times and at most thirty thousand times higher than the value of the odds for raions situated outside. The magnitude of the positive effect on the occurrence of Fatherland strongholds was significantly greater than that of the Communists, the only other party that enjoyed an advantage in the Caucasus, in the lower threshold models and

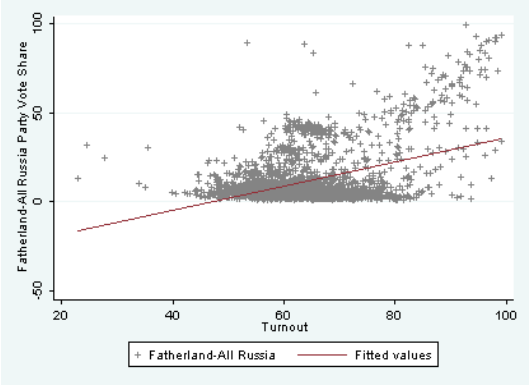
in two-thirds of the strict specifications. Fatherland's average level of support in the Caucasus was greater, albeit within one percent, of its countrywide showing. The percentage of Fatherland strongholds in the Caucasus was roughly 10% and approximately six percent by the relaxed and strict threshold. Fatherland competed head-to-head with the Communists for control of the Caucasus and the potential party of power carved out a substantial region of dominance. The fact that Fatherland was created just months before the election, while the KPRF had competed in every legislative election since 1993, and was able to harvest high levels of support in the Caucasus may have signaled the beginning of the end of the Communist presence there.

While Fatherland profited electorally in the Caucasus, the party was shellacked by a one-unit increase in gross regional product as much as 93% and as little as 80% across both measures of stronghold, even though Fatherland's average in economically developed regions was approximately two percent higher than nationally. Interestingly, not as many Fatherland strongholds were found in poorer regions as might be expected given the statistical results, approximately 18% and 15% according to the relaxed and strict threshold. This finding closely mirrors that of the Communists and nationalists. Despite Fatherland's entrance into the electoral fray, the proportion of KPRF and LDPR strongholds in poorer regions remained largely intact from 1995 to 1999, suggesting that these two opposition parties were not immediately frozen out in areas housing one of their key constituencies. In contrast to distinctions based on gross regional product, a region's classification as resource-dependent did not produce statistically significant results in any of the models. While the statistical models lacked a systematic effect, descriptive statistics suggest that Fatherland performed well in regions endowed with natural resources: approximately one-third and more than half of Fatherland's strongholds were located in resource-rich regions, by the lower and higher threshold, accordingly, and the party of power contender secured a vote share that was astonishingly eight percent higher than its national share. Thus, with regards to the findings from the statistical models, Fatherland's electoral trajectory in economically developed regions and those endowed with natural resources roughly mirrored that of the LDPR.

Electoral Manipulation and the Potential Party of Power (Fatherland-All Russia)

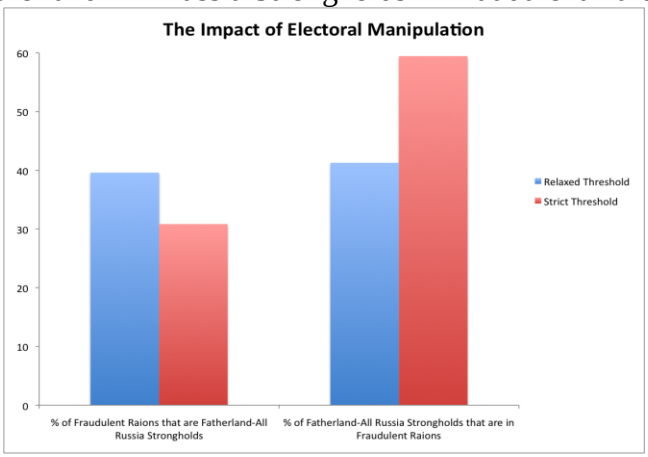
Even in a relatively competitive election, raions suspected for electoral manipulation were considerably more likely to be Fatherland strongholds, as was also true of the Communists and ultra-nationalists. With the shift from the non-manipulated category to the fraudulent class, the odds of a stronghold increased by seven to 14 times across all the relaxed models, and by 27 to 66 times across all the strict specifications. In 1995, the party of power also captured support in high turnout zones, but the magnitude of the effect was substantially smaller than that found for Fatherland at the end of the decade. The strength and sign of the association between support for the hopeful party of power and suspected electoral malfeasance was anticipated to some extent prior to the election because many of the party's key advocates sat atop regional governments that delivered some of the most questionable figures from the previous presidential election, e.g. Tatarstan and Bashkortostan. Approximately 40% and nearly 60% of the party's strongholds were located in fraudulent raions, according to the relaxed and strict measure and the party's average showing in these areas was staggering: a full 15% higher than its national mean. The positive relationship between support for Fatherland and voter turnout is also evident in Figure 5.25. Numerous raions are located in the upper right quadrant of the scatterplot, where high vote shares for Fatherland coincided with high rates of political participation. As anticipated, these raions were located in the same ethnic republics that were mentioned previously with regard to the ethnic minority and rurality scatterplots. The dense cluster of raions located near the center of the scatterplot, reporting turnout close to the national average but vote shares for Fatherland around 40%, were virtually all located in Moscow.

Figure 5.25: Voter Turnout and Fatherland-All Russia's Vote Share in 1999



Furthermore, Figure 5.26 shows that a substantial percentage of Fatherland strongholds across thresholds were found in areas suspected for electoral fraud and the percentage increased with the shift in thresholds. Almost 40% of Fatherland strongholds were located in manipulated raions according to the relaxed threshold but this percentage climbed to nearly 60% with the increase in thresholds. Significantly more of Fatherland's bastions were found in fraudulent raions compared to the Communists (roughly 18% and 36%) and the nationalists (approximately 9% and less than one percent). Fatherland thus captured less support from non-manipulated raions than either of the two opposition parties that benefitted, albeit to varying degrees, from electoral malfeasance. Of fraudulent raions, Fatherland strongholds accounted for a sizable share, nearly 40% and roughly 30% according to the relaxed and strict threshold. Far fewer fraudulent raions were KPRF strongholds (roughly 23% and 9%, respectively) or LDPR bastions (approximately 10% and three percent). The forecasted victor of the election was not able to completely eradicate the steadfast KPRF presence, and the newfound LDPR footholds, in high turnout areas. Fatherland had a clear advantage in high turnout areas relative to the other parties that also performed well there, but these areas were still divided between multiple parties in 1999, unlike the situation that would quickly manifest in the 2000s when one party universally dominated high turnout areas at the expense of all other parties.

Figure 5.26: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are Fatherland-All Russia Strongholds vs. Percent Fatherland-All Russia Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 1999



Ethnicity and the Potential Party of Power (Unity)

In contrast to the core party troika and Fatherland-All Russia, the statistical models for Unity produced few statistically significant and across-the-board findings. Previous research seeking to identify Unity's bases of support also produced exceedingly limited results, in one case finding that, except for rurality and age, "no other social attributes wield[ed] significant influence over the Unity vote" (Colton and McFaul 2003: 65). Other survey research corroborated the narrow contours of Unity's electorate, which were again based almost entirely on age and size of settlement (Hale 2006). Nevertheless, some new dimensions emerged as a result of more refined measures of ethnic composition. Although existing research reported that the Russian, non-Russian ethnic cleavage did not systematically influence support for Unity, the model results indicate that this dimension defined Unity strongholds (Colton and McFaul 2003; Hale 2006). With unit increases in the non-Russian population, Unity received a slight boost in a lower threshold model, but the magnitude of the effect became more positive and robust in the upper threshold specifications, lifting the odds of a stronghold by four to six percent. A parallel dynamic occurred vis-à-vis the covariate assessing titular minority populations: Unity gained negligibly in the relaxed models and considerably more so, between three and seven percent, in the strict specifications. Higher densities of other minorities did not reach standard levels of statistical significance in any of the models.

Considering Unity was formed just three months prior to the legislative election, the party maneuvered deftly to lock down ethnic minority communities, especially those comprised of titular minorities, recognizing that electoral windfalls could be captured by leveraging ethnic-based political machines to achieve partisan ends. When Unity's vote share and voter turnout was employed continuously, rather than dichotomously as in the statistical models, Figure 5.27 depicts slight dips in support for the hopeful party of power in raions with more concentrated ethnic minority populations. However, several raions populate the upper right quadrant at the intersection of electoral windfalls and geographically concentrated non-Russians, particularly titular minorities. The most zealous Unity supporters were concentrated in the republic of Tuva, certainly because Unity's official leader, Sergei Shoigu, hailed from the region. Other enthusiastic raions, including some that were almost purely ethnic Russian, were found in the republics of Dagestan, Kalmykya, and Komi, as well as the oblasts of Vologodskaya, Tverskaya, and Irkutskaya, and Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, which is the most northeasterly region of Russia.

Figure 5.27: Non-Russian Minorities and Unity's Vote Share in 1999

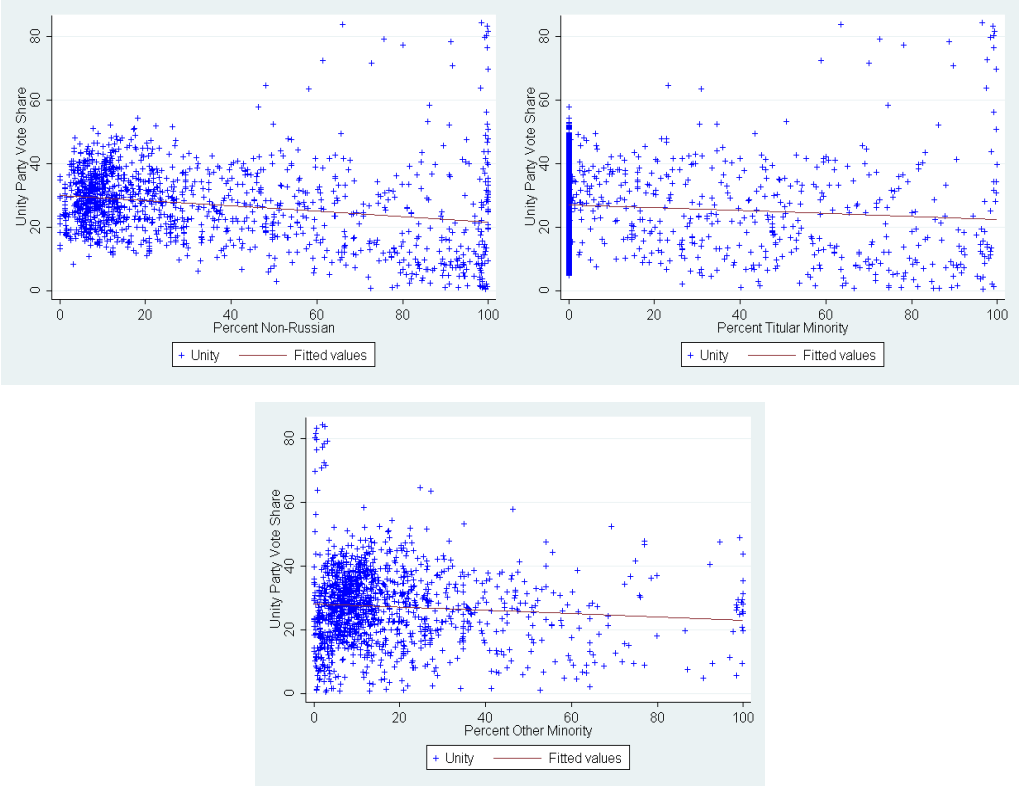
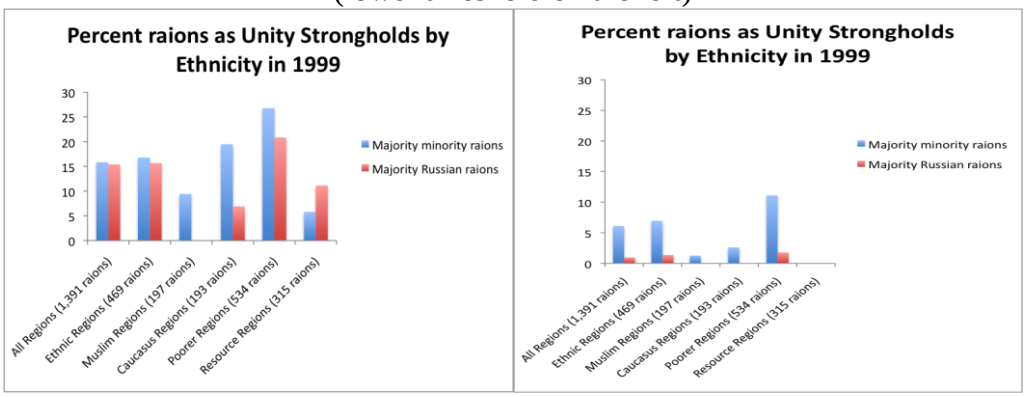


Figure 5.28 largely corroborates the results from the statistical models and shows the general ethnic minority pattern of the Unity vote. Of all majority-minority and majority-Russian raions, Unity captured strongholds in approximately 15% of each, although the party's share of majority-minority raions was slightly higher than majority-Russian areas. Of the majority-minority raions in the Caucasus and poorer regions, roughly 20% and almost 30%, respectively, churned out tremendous support for the Kremlin's pick. According to the relaxed threshold, in many regional contexts, such as ethnic republics, and, albeit to a lesser extent, poorer regions and those dependent on natural resources, the percentage of Unity strongholds was fairly balanced between majority-minority and majority-Russian raions. In resource-rich regions, in fact, Unity captured a higher share of strongholds in majority-Russian raions by the lower measure. With the shift in thresholds, the percentage of Unity strongholds became more firmly rooted in majority-

minority raions, and Unity strongholds were found only in these areas in Muslim regions across both thresholds, and in the Caucasus by the strict measure.

Figure 5.28: Unity's Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 1999 (lower threshold on the left)



The two contenders battling for the party of power prize thus both captured support from non-Russian minorities, notably titular minorities, and Unity strongholds were as firmly articulated on this dimension as Fatherland's, per the statistical results. However, while Fatherland's average in majority-minority raions soared compared to its national mean, Unity's performance in these raions was below average, albeit within roughly one percent of its countryside showing, as displayed in Table 5.11.

Table 5.11: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of Unity's Electoral Performance in the 1999 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	26.47	26.29	25.11	23.27	25.19	19.55	27.10	23.80	23.27
Min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Max	84.12	84.12	84.12	84.12	84.12	78.02	78.02	78.02	78.02
SD	11.51	12.35	12.70	14.85	15.29	12.59	10.41	11.00	11.85

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, 1.11.

The effect of ethnic regional contexts on the occurrence of Unity strongholds was decidedly mixed. Surprisingly, given the effect of ethnic minorities at the raion level and the party's close connections to numerous ethnic republics, exemplified by the Tuvan Sergei Shoigu serving as the party's leader, the ethnic region variable did not exercise a systematic effect on the occurrence of Unity strongholds in any of the models. According to the descriptive statistics, Unity's mean in ethnic republics closely mirrored the party's showing in majority-minority raions and was again within approximately one percent of its national average. Despite the lack of a statistical association between Unity strongholds and ethnic republic status, Table 5.12 indicates that the party established a respectable presence in the ethnic republics considering Unity was formed merely three months prior to the election: more than 60% of the party's bastions were located in these regions by the higher threshold and still roughly 25% by the relaxed measure.

Table 5.12: Unity Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 1999

	# of Unity Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (403 Total)	% of Unity Strongholds	# of Unity Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (44 Total)	% of Unity Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	99	25.32	26	61.90
Russian federal regions	292	74.68	16	38.10
Muslim regions	15	3.84	2	4.76
Caucasus regions	29	7.42	2	4.76
Poorer Regions	251	62.28	34	77.27
Natural Resource Regions	47	12.02	2	4.76
Fraudulent raions	49	12.16	12	27.27
Non-Fraudulent raions	354	87.84	32	72.73

In contrast to distinctions between raions nested within ethnic republics and those situated in Russian federal regions, location in a Muslim region severely damaged the odds of a Unity stronghold in a lower threshold model. Unity's overall raion-level national average was almost 15% higher than Fatherland's, yet Unity proved woefully

incapable of weakening Fatherland's tenacious grip in Muslim regions and amassing strongholds of its own. Fatherland's average in Muslim regions was almost 21% higher than nationally; by comparison, Unity's was a full seven percent under, as indicated in Table 5.10. Merely 3% and 4% of Unity's strongholds were found in Muslim regions using the lower and higher measure, respectively. Compared to the other potential party of power and the KPRF, Unity's source of strength in ethnic minority constituencies operated solely at the raion level, as ethnic republic status failed to exert a systematic effect and raions in Muslim regions plunged the odds of a stronghold acutely.

The Urban-rural Divide and the Potential Party of Power (Unity)

Broadly paralleling the electoral outcomes of the KPRF, LDPR and Fatherland-All Russia in the countryside, Unity also captured rural support, albeit to the slightest degree of any of the aforementioned parties. The odds of a Unity stronghold increased by less than one percent with a unit increase in rural inhabitants in some lower threshold models. In rural areas, Unity seemed to be simply outmatched in a party market crowded with not only the tried-and-true KPRF, boasting the most well-established organizational networks and long-standing partisan attachments in the electorate, but also the LDPR, which cut deeper inroads in the countryside in the late-1990s, and the party startup, Fatherland-All Russia, backed by numerous provincial executives sitting atop robust patronage-based political machines. Yet Unity's average in predominantly rural areas closely approximated its raion-level national vote share. Notably distinct from the Communists and the liberal Yabloko and more akin to Fatherland, Unity's vote share was remarkably stable across various levels of rurality, as shown in Figure 5.29. The scatterplot depicts a relatively neutral association between the Unity vote and the proportion of rural inhabitants but also reveals that the preponderance of outliers recording the highest levels of support for the party was found in the countryside. The fanatical raions in the countryside were primarily located in Tuva, while the partially rural enthusiasts were mostly found in Chukotka Autonomous Okrug.

Figure 5.29: Rural Inhabitants and Unity's Vote Share in 1999

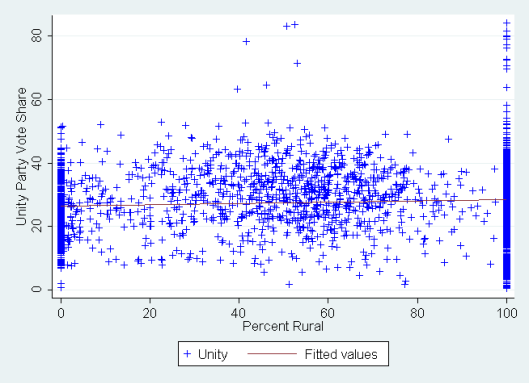
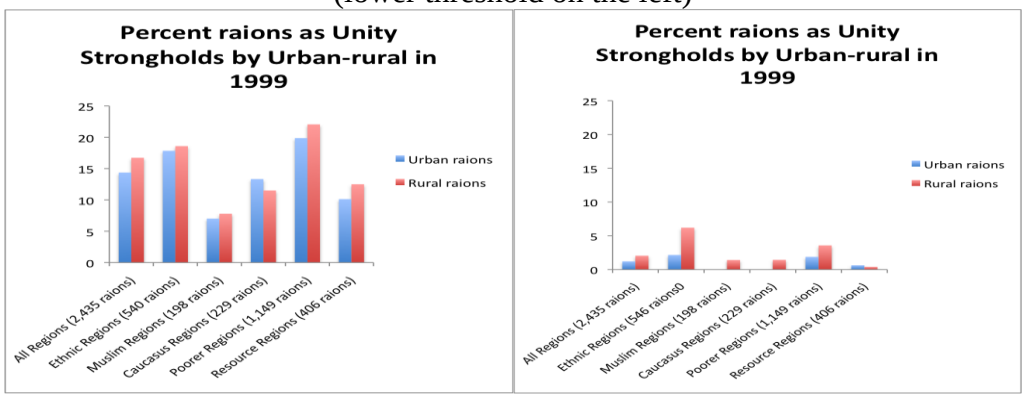


Figure 5.30 reveals that, of all the parties considered, the percentage of Unity strongholds was the most evenly dispersed between urban centers and the countryside in each regional context according to the lower threshold, suggesting that Unity lacked the genuine geographic strengths in either rural or urban areas that other parties enjoyed. Of all urban and rural raions, Unity harvested strongholds in just less than 15% in the former and just greater than 15% in the latter. Unity's pattern of support appears most similar to the LDPR, which also captured roughly balanced support. In economically disadvantaged regions, Unity enjoyed strongholds in slightly more than 20% of urban raions and nearly one-quarter of countryside raions. Surprisingly, in the Caucasus, Unity captured a higher percentage of strongholds in urban centers than rural areas. With the shift to the higher measure, the balance tilted in favor of rural raions in all regional contexts, save for resource-rich regions.

Figure 5.30: Unity Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 1999 (lower threshold on the left)



The extremely modest positive relationship identified in the statistical models qualifies previous research based on large-scale panel surveys claiming Unity made "deep inroads" into rural communities, compared to its party of power predecessor (Colton and McFaul 2003: 64). In fact, Unity's minor boost from increased rurality was vaguely similar to Our Home is Russia's four years prior.

Regional Geographic and Socioeconomic Indicators and the Potential Party of Power (Unity)

The sub-national indicators assessing various regional contexts produced few systematic effects on Unity strongholds. Location in the Caucasus did not reach statistical significance in any of the models. With the Kremlin, led by Prime Minister and self-avowed Unity supporter Vladimir Putin, prosecuting another war with Chechnya at the time of the legislative election, the effect of Caucasus location was expected to be statistically significant and negative because voters in the area had the opportunity to punish the central government through the ballot box for its ruthless incursion into their homelands. Despite the lack of an effect statistically, Unity had no strongholds in the area by the higher measure, and merely seven percent by the lower one. Interestingly, Unity's average in Caucasus regions was actually slightly higher than nationally, but still less than one percent above. As in Muslim regions, Unity wrestled to unseat the KPRF from its entrenched position and seize Fatherland's newly acquired footholds in the Caucasus, but ultimately did not succeed in making meaningful inroads in this area.

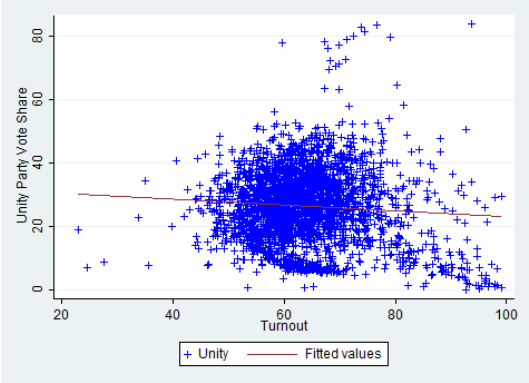
With regard to the effects of socioeconomic welfare parameters on the Unity vote, gross regional product diminished the odds by roughly 50% in a lower threshold model. Descriptive statistics substantiate this finding, as the majority of the party's strongholds were housed in poorer regions, 62% by the relaxed measure and 77% by the stricter measure and Unity's average in economically developed regions was more than two percent less than its national showing. Counter-intuitively, regions with lower levels of economic development supported the Kremlin's party, even though the Kremlin directed the very economic reforms that may have caused those regions to suffer. In the wake of the 1998 financial crisis, those living in regions comparatively worse off did not punish the government for their plight. Paralleling dynamics prevailing in the countryside, economically disadvantaged regions emerged as a central battleground in 1999: the Communists, nationalists and both potential parties of power all competed for the support of those living under conditions of relative economic deprivation, while Yabloko enjoyed virtually free rein in wealthier regions. Resource-dependence, on the other hand, did not generate statistically significant results in the Unity models. Despite this finding, descriptive statistics indicate that Unity's performance in areas with natural resource endowments was poor: the party's average in resource-rich regions was approximately three percent less than its countrywide showing and less than 5% of strongholds were located in these regions according to the higher threshold, and approximately one-tenth by the lower measure. According to the descriptive statistics, Unity excelled in regions with diversified economies, rather than those reliant on abundant natural resource endowments.

Electoral Manipulation and the Potential Party of Power (Unity)

Rounding out the "full pluralism of falsification" that occurred in the 1999 election, Unity benefitted from unusually high voter turnout alongside the Communists, nationalists, and the other party of power hopeful, Fatherland-All Russia (Fish 2005: 53). The effect produced by the fraud variable on the occurrence of Unity's strongholds was contingent on the threshold specified: unusually high voter turnout exerted no systematic effect on Unity strongholds in the lower threshold models but consistently hiked the odds

by two to six times across the upper threshold specifications. The methodical influence of electoral manipulation on Unity strongholds substantiated opposition parties' fears that the Kremlin-backed party project engaged in electoral fraud to secure a solid showing in its first foray into electoral competition. Before the election, opposition party leaders alleged that regional and raion administrators were told that future regional funding from the central government would be tied to Unity's performance in the Duma contest (Belin 1999). The model results strongly suggest that the alleged malfeasance in Unity's favor ultimately manifested as anticipated. The finding that Unity benefitted from electoral manipulation runs counter to previous scholarship arguing that the Kremlin showed "uncharacteristic self-restraint" in 1999: there was "little need for fraud" because Unity had already demolished Fatherland in a media blitz and "Unity did relatively well anyway" (Wilson 2005: 77). Upwards of 25% of Unity strongholds were located in raions suspected for fraudulence by the higher measure, and more than one-tenth by the lower threshold. Unexpectedly, Unity's average in fraudulent areas was roughly three percent less than its national share. When Unity's vote share and voter turnout were both considered continuously, in contrast to the model specifications that leveraged those variables dichotomously, a slightly negative association emerged, as Figure 5.31 portrays. Compared to Fatherland and the KPRF, there are decidedly fewer raions in the upper right quadrant of Unity's scatterplot. Mirroring the KPRF and LDPR, Unity's scatterplot shows a large bubble in the middle, where voter turnout approximated the national mean but the Unity vote surpassed thresholds set for party strongholds. The cluster of raions in the lower right quadrant, where voter turnout was close to 100% and the Unity vote approached zero percent, were nearly all strongholds for Fatherland-All Russia and the residual raions were KPRF and/or LDPR pockets of support. The raions that registered political participation between roughly 60 and 80% and similar vote shares for Unity, forming a distinct cluster at the top of the scatterplot, were all found in Unity leader Sergei Shoigu's home region of Tuva.

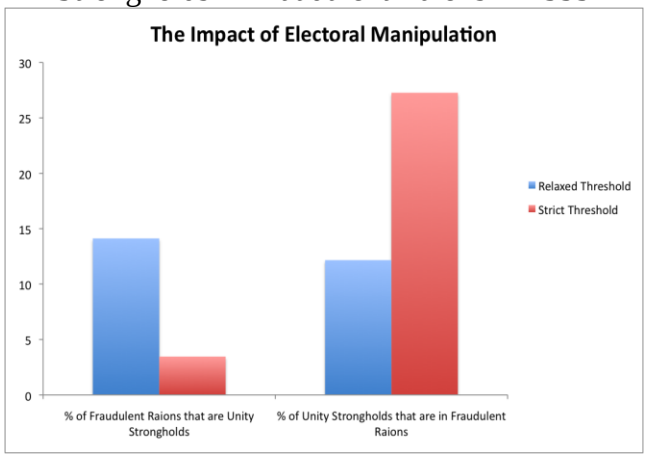
Figure 5.31: Voter Turnout and Unity's Vote Share in 1999



Consistent with the statistical findings, Figure 5.32 showcases the role of electoral manipulation in generating electoral windfalls for Unity. Of the four parties with strongholds in fraudulent areas, the percentage of Unity strongholds in high turnout zones was higher than only the LDPR: approximately 12% and 27% of Unity strongholds were found in these areas by the relaxed and the strict measure, while the KPRF had 18% and 36% and Fatherland had 41% and nearly 60%, respectively. Paralleling the KPRF and Fatherland, the percentage of Unity strongholds in manipulated raions increased with the shift in thresholds. Of the raions suspected for electoral malfeasance, Unity again proved inferior to the KPRF and Fatherland, as the party had the second lowest percentage of strongholds, at 14% and 3% per the lower and higher threshold, compared to the KPRF with 23% and 8% and Fatherland with 39% and 30%. The share of manipulated raions that were Unity strongholds was thus roughly comparable to the LDPR, even though the nationalists were severely constrained by limited resources and relied instead on the charismatic appeal of the party's leader. Save for the LDPR, Unity dominated fraudulent areas to the most limited extent of the parties for which electoral manipulation exerted a systematic effect. Interestingly, of fraudulent raions, a higher percentage were Our Home is Russia strongholds in 1995 than Unity strongholds in 1999, as Our Home is Russia enjoyed stronghold-level support in nearly 18% and almost 14% of high turnout raions but Unity captured only 14% and 3%, as mentioned. Although these data suggest that the weak party of power, Our Home is Russia, dominated fraudulent areas in 1995 more

successfully than Unity did in 1999, Unity battled against two well-equipped challengers in the KPRF and Fatherland while Our Home faced off against only the KPRF in these areas in the mid-1990s. One indication that Unity was, in fact, more successful than Our Home in harvesting high levels of support under conditions of contracted competition is that, although a higher percentage of Our Home strongholds were found in manipulated raions according to the lower threshold, Unity captured a higher share than Our Home when the threshold was raised. In other words, unusually high turnout helped Unity achieve support at the highest levels, i.e. surpassing the strict threshold for party stronghold (two standard deviations above the party's raion-level national average), more than Our Home in the previous election. Furthermore, since Unity's raion-level national average bested Our Home is Russia's in 1995 by nearly 17%, Unity strongholds across thresholds indicated significantly higher levels of support in absolute terms than Our Home is Russia bastions.

Figure 5.32: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are Unity Strongholds vs. Percent Unity Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 1999



When considered collectively, the results produced by the electoral manipulation variable suggest that electoral malfeasance played a key role in the relatively competitive legislative elections of the mid- and late-1990s alike, and also that such malfeasance benefitted multiple parties in each election. In each election, the parties that benefitted, with the exception of the LDPR, were precisely those parties with the most robust

organizational infrastructures and patronage endowments that could be leveraged to achieve partisan ends. Bracketing other notable differences, the 1999 election differed from the previous contest because more parties successfully penetrated high turnout areas; this was not purely because two potential parties of power emerged to replace the inept Our Home is Russia and carved out regions of dominance in these areas, but also because the LDPR, rather unexpectedly, made new inroads in manipulated raions. Even in the context of competitive contestation, electoral manipulation did not simply inflate voter turnout but also the electoral outcomes for specific parties. With a weak party of power present in 1995 and two potential parties of power competing in 1999, multiple parties were able to position themselves to capture electoral windfalls in high turnout raions, rather than one party universally dominating these areas.

Conclusion

The final legislative election of the decade was a transitional one, bridging the Yeltsin and Putin eras and, accordingly, democracy and authoritarianism in post-communist Russia. As was the case four years prior, the party system in 1999 was remarkably weak and fragmented, notwithstanding the fact that the number of parties in toto had diminished from 43 parties and electoral blocs in 1995 to 26 by the end of the decade. The 1999 election was witness to a fierce struggle between contending parties of power, the fortification of existing opposition party strongholds, and the construction of a few new pockets of support. Despite generally maintaining their vote shares from four years earlier, opposition parties were jolted out of place in some previous strongholds due to the emergence of Fatherland-All Russia and Unity. For example, the KRPF benefitted enormously in Muslim regions in the mid-1990s when its fiercest competitor was the ineffectual Our Home is Russia but was essentially run out of town by the brand-new Fatherland coalition in the 1999 election. Nevertheless, even with two new potential parties of power in the mix, one with substantial strength in Russia's regions and the other with backing from the Kremlin, opposition parties enjoyed their second best chances at success in 1999 because the contest was relatively free and fair. In the face of competitors with more broad-based appeal, namely Unity, however, opposition parties

generally failed to respond in kind by widening their own respective ideological platforms and niches in the electorate, instead electing to doggedly pursue relatively narrow segments of voters. The opposition thus retained important structural continuities across the 1990s, chiefly characterized by weakness and fragmentation.

Once more, although to a lesser degree than was the case four years prior, the fragmented party system resulted in a significant share of wasted votes, i.e. more than 16%, that were cast for parties that ultimately failed to cross the threshold for legislative representation. Russia's floating electorate had contracted, but approximately one-sixth of voters were still virtually up for grabs by major parties. The emergence of the party of power contender Unity, with its catchall appeals and amorphous ideology, undoubtedly spoke for a large portion of votes that would have otherwise been squandered. The fact that Unity's vote share closely approximated the KPRF's and Unity was created just three months before the election, rather than in the wake of communism's collapse in 1993 as was the case for the KPRF, was one indication that a sizable segment of the electorate had been waiting for a party to surface that better aligned with their own attitudes and beliefs. Because Unity emerged just before the election, the party's administrative capacity was not fully developed and therefore Kremlin political technologists were not able to produce the kind of overwhelming victory for the party of power that became a hallmark of the 2000s. By the end of the decade, the Kremlin had identified a window of opportunity to build a dominant party system by leveraging the weak and messy party system that prevailed throughout the 1990s to its advantage, but needed to bolster its capacity by merging with its rival in the 1999 election before party dominance could materialize. By the time of the 2003 legislative election, the Kremlin had achieved precisely that and a full-fledged dominant party emerged like a phoenix from the ashes of its failed party of power predecessors.

Chapter 6: The 2003 Parliamentary Election: The Birth of United Russia and the Emergence of a New, Uncompetitive Status Quo

The 2003 legislative election was a watershed moment in Russian politics and party system development, as it marked the rise and initial consolidation of the dominant party, United Russia, and ushered in an "era of legislative quiescence" (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 678). With Unity and Fatherland-All Russia's merger in the early 2000s that created the monolithic United Russia, opposition parties faced a party of power that united strength in Russia's dozens of regions, many with impenetrable political machines that could be manipulated to devastate the opposition, with the political and economic clout of the Kremlin. Unlike the circumstances prevailing in the late 1990s, the most formidable opposition parties, such as the Communists and the nationalists, could no longer leverage the uncertainty as to which party of power would prevail in the election to their benefit.

The birth of United Russia rationalized the party system and eliminated the divided loyalties that allowed multiple parties to muddle through in the previous contest: the loci of political power backed only one horse in 2003 rather than quinella betting, to at least some degree, on Unity and Fatherland-All Russia. For the first time in post-communist Russian history, the Kremlin-backed party of power won the race for the Duma, quite a feat when compared to Our Home's abysmal showing in 1995 and Russia's Choice in the 1993 snap elections. United Russia not only beat the winner of the 1995 and 1999 election, the KPRF, but also secured an impressive margin of victory, capturing a vote share that was 25% higher than the second-place Communists in the party list tier. The Communists' vote share was decimated from the previous election, plunging by half; in emasculating the party of power's primary opposition, United Russia succeeded where Our Home is Russia proved patently incapable in the mid-1990s. The overwhelming support for United Russia in 2003 was an unambiguous signal that the Russian experiment with democracy was over, even before it had a chance to fully materialize, and a return to authoritarianism was peeking over the horizon.

The 2003 Legislative Election in Context

The political context in which the 2003 election occurred was more stable than four years prior, when presidential succession had not yet been accomplished and the conflict in Chechnya, coupled with numerous terrorist attacks, created widespread fear about internal security and regional separatist movements based in the Caucasus. With Yeltsin's unexpected resignation six months before the end of his second four-year term on December 31, 1999, Vladimir Putin took up the mantle of the Russian presidency as Yeltsin's hand-picked successor at the stroke of midnight. The presidential election in 2000 was conducted earlier than scheduled, as stipulated by the Constitution, and Putin captured approximately 52% of the vote in the first round of the March contest, almost 25% more than his most formidable opponent, KPRF leader Zyuganov.

Putin's election as president marked not only the first successful presidential succession in Russia's short democratic history, but also the beginning of a program to radically reshape Russia's political system into a managed democracy. President Putin moved quickly to consolidate his power by reigning in the regional governors and reshaping center-periphery relations, increasing government control of independent media, and challenging the country's business elite. Putin leveraged the invasion of Dagestan by Chechen militants and the string of apartment bombings just one month before as justification for increased centralization in center-periphery relations and, "by doing so, he put an end to dreams of any other secessionist malcontents in the regions who might have entertained similar notions of establishing an independent country" (Goldman 2008: 95). The 1999 elections afforded President Putin a pliant and non-Communist Duma to carry out his comprehensive economic and political reforms, including a tax code overhaul, banking reform, changes pertaining to the constitution of the upper house of the legislature, centralization of power in center-periphery relations, and the reform of political parties. President Putin gradually muzzled the independent media by ordering the selective prosecution of media moguls, such as the owner of the Media-MOST group, and subsequently placing media outlets in the hands of state-controlled corporations, such as the gas monopoly Gazprom. In 2003, Freedom House's Freedom of the Press report assessed Russia as "not free" for the first time in post-Soviet

history, a notable decline from the "partly free" rating the country received in 2002 (Freedom House 2003: 3, 6). Russia's overall status was fixed at "partly free" in the period between the 2000 election of President Putin and the 2003 legislative elections (Freedom House 2001-2004). Putin's various reforms and political endeavors showed that "democracy as practiced by Putin is partly about practical problem solving, but it is also about eliminating external checks on the power of the state and the leader without scrapping the constitutional framework bequeathed by Yeltsin" (Colton and McFaul 2005: 25). The 2003 contest was thus the first legislative election to be held in the context of unambiguous democratic contraction in a variety of spheres.

On the economic front, Russia had bounced back impressively from the crippling financial crisis in the late 1990s due almost exclusively to record-setting world oil prices that funded robust economic growth. The price of Ural crude skyrocketed from $15.2 per barrel on average in 1999 to $27.2 in 2003, reaching a high of more than double the average in 1999, $33 a barrel (World Bank 2005: 16; Goldman 2008: 77). Demand for oil and gas was driven by India and China in large part; for example, from 2001 to 2005, China accounted for "30-40% of the increase in oil consumption" (Goldman 2008: 79). The production of petroleum ballooned in Russia, increasing by 6% in 2000 and 11% by 2003 (Goldman 2008: 80). With an estimated 40% of the Russian central government's budget coming from oil and natural gas production, the federal budget and the economy at large benefitted from a protracted windfall (Hale et al. 2004; World Bank 2005: 8). The economy grew by "a cumulative 38 percent in the five years from the 1998 financial meltdown to the end of 2003" and inflation declined to approximately 12% in 2003 (World Bank 2005: 5). Indeed, in 2003 the federal budget ran a surplus for the fourth consecutive year; that year, the surplus stood at 8.1% (*Ibid*). Real GDP growth in 2003 increased more than seven percent from the previous year, far exceeding forecasts of between 3.9 and 4.5% (OECD 2004). Furthermore, average real wages increased by almost 10% and real personal disposable income increased by more than 13% (Cooper 2009). The unemployment rate improved considerably since four years prior, declining from 13% to 8.2% (World Bank, *World Development Indicators*).

Yet many experts worried that the "overdependence on natural-resource exports (a situation where 1 percent of the workforce creates almost one-fifth of GDP)" that helped sustain annual growth of above five percent made the country highly vulnerable to international price changes (World Bank 2005: vii). The degree to which the Russian economy was dependent on natural resources is staggering: in 2003, approximately 80% of exports were natural resources, and 55% of all exports were from the oil and gas sector (World Bank 2005: 8). Russia's "persistent good fortune" in the international price of hydrocarbons during the early 2000s was not leveraged to diversify the economy considerably and reduce dependency on extractive industries, perhaps in part because official figures grossly underestimated the economy's dependence on the energy sector (World Bank 2005: 5). For example, in 2000, official figures show that the oil and gas sector contributed between 8-20% of GDP, suggesting that the economy and economic growth were considerably more vulnerable to international price shocks than implied by the official figures (World Bank 2005: 8-9). Nevertheless, Russians benefitted widely from the windfall created by high energy prices in the early 2000s, creating an economic backdrop for the 2003 election that differed sharply from four years prior.

Following Unity's triumph in the 1999 election, Kremlin insiders endeavored to augment the place of parties in essentially all major elections and enshrine United Russia's position through the reform of political parties and electoral rules that would govern future legislative elections (Hale 2006). The electoral law governing the 2003 elections preserved the mixed system and the five percent threshold for representation in the parliament, but introduced an onerous regulatory labyrinth that was intended to consolidate the party system to the benefit of the established party of power. The Kremlin's 2001 law "On Political Parties" and other associated reforms were sweeping in content and far ranging in their effect on political parties and the party system.

Prima facie, the law attempted to create a party system built on parties that were truly national in membership and organization, rather than preserve the volatile "floating" party system of the 1990s characterized by infinitesimal parties that commonly contested only one legislative election before dissolving altogether (Rose 2000). However, the law

also added layers of difficulty that political parties were forced to navigate in order to participate in electoral politics, although some argued the new rules were "not prohibitive" (Golosov 2012: 5). The law required parties to meet the following requisites before contesting in an election: the party must have regional branches established in more than half of the regions, 10,000 or more members, an objective or action aimed at the performance of non-extremist activity, and created on bases other than professional, racial, national or religious affiliation (Federal Law No. 95-FZ on Political Parties, 2001). While the membership requirement was quite low in real terms, given the country's population was just shy of 146 million in 2001, by the mid-2000s, "only United Russia and the [KPRF] could realistically claim sufficient numbers of activists, whereas many other parties, even registered ones, could not attain this target" (Golosov 2012: 5). The required regional distribution of party branches "constitute[d] a *de facto* ban on regional and inter-regional political parties" and was "unusual in comparative terms" (Wilson 2006: 318). The OSCE Election Observation Mission Report concurred, commenting that this stipulation "may seriously inhibit the development of local or regional political activism and effectively blocks the establishment of new political parties by any groups that seek to represent local, regional or minority interests" (OSCE 2004: 5). Ironically, electoral blocs headed up by regional leaders, such as the All Russia faction of Fatherland-All Russia and Unity, would have faced significant challenges in registration had this stipulation of the law been introduced earlier. Constricting political parties to non-professional, -racial, -national, or -religious bases particularly targeted organizations trying to foment separatist sentiment, with the ultimate objective of territorial autonomy from Russia, via formerly legitimate political avenues (Wilson 2006).

Opposition party leaders, notably KPRF-head Zyuganov, argued the law was essentially undemocratic and would severely constrict party development by placing a "straightjacket" around parties, ultimately suffocating them altogether (Wilson 2006: 316). Altogether, the intricacy of the law provides "a basis to disqualify just about any organization the incumbent leadership finds troublesome" (Balzer 2003: 201). For example, the state registration of political parties and its regional branches contained nine

detailed stipulations, which also provided at least an equal number of opportunities for state interference in the process. The law had an immediate effect of reducing the number of registered parties, primarily based on insufficient regional branches. Although all major parties met the new law's requirements, 21 parties that were niche in orientation were 'outlawed' (Oversloot and Verheul 2006).

Other components of the package of reforms introduced in the early 2000s included numerous new clauses related to party finance and established state finance of parties, which was intended to make parties independent, especially from the wealthy, but politically-motivated, oligarchs (Wilson 2007). Opposition parties, notably the KPRF and LDPR, and the party of power were united in support of this dimension of reform because it freed political parties to a limited extent from the tenacious grip of private donors and sponsors who would expect parties to lobby for their interests in the legislature in exchange for financing (*Ibid*). Indeed, donations from private actors composed the lion's share of parties' income in the 1990s (Gelman 1998). The law explicitly tied public financing of parties to performance in the proportional representation tier of legislative elections and only financed those parties that received at least three percent of the proportional representation vote, giving each party 50 kopecks for each vote earned on an annual basis through the election cycle (Wilson 2007). This provision was plainly designed to shore up the party of power. Although it provided for state finance, the law did not help political parties during the 2003 campaign or on election day itself, as any state money was awarded after the results were announced; moreover, the level of state funding was not adequate to keep any major party free from powerful private interests after the election either (*Ibid*).

The Central Election Commission registered 18 political parties and five electoral blocs for the party-list tier of the Duma contest, and 95% of the registered parties and blocs employed the 200,000-signature route to registration, as opposed to the cash payment option requiring $1.25 million. The requirements for registration remained largely intact from four years prior, specifically the number of signatures required (200,000), the maximum number of signatures obtained from one region (7% or 14,000)

and the vote share threshold after which the electoral deposit would be returned (3%). As in 1999, exemption from these registration requirements was not granted to parties already represented in the Duma. Notwithstanding these continuities, the amount of the electoral deposit was increased enormously, from 2.087 million rubles in 1999 to 37.5 million in 2003 (Hutcheson 2013: 912). In 1995 and 1999, the CEC denied the registration of Yabloko and the LDPR, respectively, but the organization registered all party and bloc lists in 2003. "On Political Parties" was intended to consolidate the party system to some degree, however the law did not produce the intended short term effect because 23 total parties and blocs participated in the election, only three fewer than four years earlier in 1999 (Wilson 2006). Thus, the law succeeded in reducing the number of potential participants in the election by denying legal recognition as a political party even if it did not meaningfully change the number of actual participants (*Ibid*). Among the 18 competing parties and blocs, the core party troika again defined the rough contours of the party system: the KPRF on the left, the LDPR on the right, and Yabloko carving out the liberal-democratic niche. In contrast to the 1999 contest, where two potential parties struggled to emerge as the sole party of power, that battle had been resolved through the merger of Unity and Fatherland-All Russia by the time of the 2003 election and the refashioned party of power, United Russia, competed alone.

The KPRF relied on tried-and-true strategies in the 2003 contest, hoping to repeat its solid performance in the 1990s, in which the KPRF was the only major party to actually win a higher vote share in the party-list tier in each successive election, beginning with the snap elections in 1993 (Wegren and Konitzer 2006). Up until 2003, the party had carved out a unique position for itself as the strongest party in Russia's weak party system (*Ibid*). Ultimately, however, the KPRF "vie[ed] with the liberal parties for the accolade of the worst fought electoral campaign" (Sakwa 2005: 377).

With the merger of previous competitors Fatherland-All Russia and Unity in 2002, the KPRF emerged as the party of power's most formidable opponent in 2003 and faced a deluge of attacks from all sides throughout the campaign. The KPRF's campaign manager stated that, during the electoral period, "all the power of the state apparatus was

directed against us—from the state-owned mass media to state administrators at all levels of government" (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 687). For example, the KPRF was the primary target for negative coverage in state-run media outlets, which alleged that the party was hypocritical and corrupt for accepting donations from large businesses and oligarchs, and in some cases even giving them spots on their party list, while publicly espousing workers' rights (OSCE 2004; Hale 2006). The KPRF failed to challenge the attacks leveled against it and even opted out of widely viewed televised debates once United Russia refused to participate as well (Hale 2006).

The party was silent on its cozy relationship to oligarchs and big business, likely because such allegations were accurate: the KPRF allegedly received enormous donations from Boris Berezovsky and Yukos, who reportedly donated $100 million and between four and seven million, respectively (Wilson 2005). The party also purportedly sold spots on its party list for as high as $1.5-2 million and approximately one-fifth of the party's candidates had direct ties to big business (*Ibid*). As the Kremlin's main challenger, the KPRF bore the brunt of the anti-oligarch frenzy that emerged after the Kremlin's politically motivated arrest of Yukos CEO Mikhail Khodorkovsky just two months prior to the election. Equally important, the KPRF and other opposition parties lost a key source of financial backing due to the Kremlin's selective application of the law.

For the KPRF in particular, the 2003 electoral landscape differed from those of the 1990s because the country's transition from Communism was settled decisively, which shifted the focus of the overall campaign away from the old communist, anti-communist cleavage and left the party with only a "rump vote of transition losers" (Sakwa 2005: 377). Moreover, the economic context of the 2003 election was unfavorable compared to that surrounding previous contests: the 1995 election occurred at a time when the economy had been in free fall for five consecutive years with GDP contracting by almost 40% and the 1999 election took place in the aftermath of the 1998 financial crisis, which forced the country to depend on food aid from the West to avert starvation and contributed to the "fact that over one-third of the population was below the government's official poverty threshold" (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 686). In contrast to

the elections in the mid- and late-1990s, positive developments on the economic front sapped the KPRF's traditional strategy of "berating the existing government for destroying the economy and threatening the well-being of the Russian people" (*Ibid*). Seemingly impervious to changing political realities that produced a new contract between regime and society, the party nevertheless forged ahead with its traditional offerings based on a holistic denunciation of the regime that tendered neither viable leadership nor a program for the country with any long-term promise (Sakwa 2005). In short, the KPRF was a programmatic party without a viable program and largely unprepared to assume office; this failure "weakened all programme parties and thus ultimately undermined the development of democracy in Russia" (Sakwa 2005: 379). The KRPF campaigned on the slogan "Against the Current Anti-People Regime" (McFaul 2003).

Compounding the effects of a disastrous campaign, the KPRF's formerly cooperative relationship with the Agrarian Party crumbled. In the 1990s, the two leftist parties created their party lists in consultation to avoid competing directly with each other but a large portion of the Agrarian Party was absorbed by Fatherland-All Russia prior to the 1999 contest (Wegren and Konitzer 2006). The acrimonious relationship between the KPRF and what remained of the Agrarian Party continued into the 2003 election with the Agrarian Party fielding its candidates independent of the KPRF. Although the Agrarian Party's decision to go it alone in 2003 left the party with a vote share short of the threshold for representation, the roughly 3.5% of the party-list vote that the Agrarians did harvest was believed to have been "directly siphoned off from the KPRF," since there was a sizable correlation between KPRF support and occupation as an agricultural worker (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 685).

Despite the onslaught by the Kremlin and United Russia, and the increasing irrelevancy of the party's platform, the KPRF was widely expected to preserve its approximately 25% vote share from previous elections at the least, polling between 20 and 30% during the 2003 campaign (Hale 2006). The final result of the election, however, proved the party of power's capacity to annihilate its opponents and devastated

the KPRF by halving its 1999 vote share, rendering it the biggest loser in the 2003 contest. The KPRF essentially came full circle in the span of a decade, as its 2003 vote share was comparable to its third place showing in the 1993 snap elections, when the party was "still recovering from suspension and suffering from internal division" (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 678). Although the party returned to the legislature as the "only opposition party with any significant representation in the State Duma," the KPRF's showing was disastrous and represented its "long-awaited decline" (OSCE 2004: 1; Clark 2006: 15).

On the nationalist front, the LDPR again waged an energetic campaign in 2003 to sway disaffected voters by harping on the traditional anti-establishment and nationalist themes, advocating the "very harshest treatment" for government bureaucrats and stating that those who mistreat ethnic Russians would "pay" (Hale 2006: 70). The LDPR also advocated state building through the abandonment of federalism and the creation of a unitary state, while also recycling the great power rhetoric used in previous elections (Sakwa 2005). The party recognized that openly opposing President Putin and United Russia was not feasible, and instead portrayed leader Zhirinovsky as simply tougher than Putin, earning the party favorable coverage on state-controlled media (Hale 2006). For these reasons, the LDPR was alleged to be on the Kremlin payroll, receiving donations from state-owned enterprises and private business concerns on orders from central authorities (Wilson 2007). Witnessing the barrage of attacks on the KPRF, the LDPR hoped to benefit by sweeping up previous Communist loyalists: the party tacked "For the Poor" to its conventional "For Russia" slogan and adopted more left-leaning rhetoric than in the 1990s (Hale 2006).

In the final election results, the LDPR's showing was a marked improvement over the previous election, indeed almost double its 1999 vote share, and was comparable to its performance in the mid-1990s. Unlike the other two parties, the LDPR was the only party of the core party troika to see its vote share increase since the previous election, rather than precipitously decline. The party thus made a critical step forward by effectively reversing a two-election decline in the 2003 contest.

Yabloko faced a critical juncture in the 2003 election as to whether the party would pass the five percent threshold for legislative representation after experiencing declining support since the 1993 snap elections and leaving the party perilously close to the threshold in 1999. In the interim period between elections, Yabloko's support hovered just above, but dangerously close to, the five percent hurdle (Hale 2004). Gaining parliamentary representation was vital to the party's long-term survival, but its disastrous campaign in the 1999 election cast a long shadow, evident in the party's inability to attract as many major donors and independent politicians in the 2003 electoral cycle (McFaul 1997).

Nevertheless, as in the 1990s, Yabloko received considerable funding from Yukos early on: the party raked in the equivalent of between four and six million dollars, but were required to place Yukos representatives on the party list as a condition for financial support (Wilson 2007). Khodorkovsky's arrest dealt a severe blow to Yabloko's, and other opposition parties', campaign coffers and deterred other opposition donors to continue funding parties that were not aligned with the Kremlin (*Ibid*). Moreover, the episode revealed rather conspicuously that the "anti-oligarch" party had, in fact, close financial ties to oligarchs (Hale 2006). Indeed, the party campaigned in 2003 under the slogan "Against the Criminal-Oligarch System."

Coming to terms with political and financial realities, the party, like the LDPR, drastically shifted its campaign in the final weeks towards accommodation and cooperation with the party of power and President Putin himself. State-run media outlets featured Yabloko leader Yavlinsky collaborating with Putin in prime time (Hale 2006). President Putin himself commented in September that he would like Yabloko to be represented in the legislature because the party had been "doing positive work" and "went out of his way" to help the party enter the legislature through the party-list, ostensibly to "improve Russia's image abroad" and show that "opposition forces were tolerated and still had their place in Russian politics (Sakwa 2005: 375; White 2007: 217).

Taken together, the Yukos affair and highly publicized cooperation between Yabloko leaders and the executive administration all but destroyed the party's reputation as a defender of civil liberties, democracy and the rule of law (*Ibid*). As in 1999 when Yabloko missed a crucial opportunity to take a clear anti-war stance regarding the war in Chechnya, the party failed yet again four years later by not defending liberal principles during the campaign, at a time when shades of authoritarianism were unequivocally manifesting under President Putin and United Russia. Aside from these tactical and political errors, Yabloko otherwise advanced an expected policy platform that highlighted populist themes such as increasing the minimum wage and welfare stipends (Sakwa 2005). A local Yabloko candidate in Pskov, a region bordering Estonia, Latvia and Belarus, commented, "there was a huge problem with the campaign strategy. We were repeating what we've been saying for the past ten years, instead of coming up with a new formula for the 21st century" (The Economist 2003).

Although Yabloko was expected to re-enter the legislature through the proportional representation contest, it was ultimately the only party in the core party troika that failed to clear the five percent hurdle. The party's failure in the 2003 elections was seen as "a natural consequence of [the] strategic shift" to be loyal to the Kremlin, rather than maintaining its standard party line (Gelman 2005: 240). Another factor contributing to Yabloko's electoral rout was that liberalism was no longer associated with the Russian president and, without crucial executive support, the party was woefully incapable of preserving it independently (Sakwa 2005). For its part, Yabloko explained away its downfall as a product of electoral fraud rather than eroding support in the electorate. One Yabloko party activist explained that falsifications may have been directed against Yabloko since it is a liberal party: "liberalism and the democratic idea is discriminated against now because of what happened under Yeltsin," which makes the party an easy target for the regime because it supports ideas largely discredited in the eyes of the electorate (Party Activist in Yabloko's National Organization 2011). The archetypal liberal party, and one of the oldest in post-communist Russia, earned a paltry 4 single-mandate seats, but was consigned to non-parliamentary status in the party-list tier

for the first time in its decade-long history. Indeed, garnering 4.7% of the vote, the "against all" category won more electoral support than Yabloko and nearly enough to secure its own theoretical Duma representation (Sakwa 2005). Yabloko's inability to hold up the liberal contour of the post-communist party system into the 2000s was a major event in Russian party development and represented the near total disappearance of liberal parties and liberalism, both in the party system and parliament (Hale 2004). The deputy Kremlin chief of staff echoed this when he proclaimed immediately following the elections that the "liberals' historical mission [is] exhausted" (Gelman 2005: 238). Yabloko was thus "finished as an electoral force and would […] return to their traditional historical role of an 'embattled and marginali[z]ed fragment in Russian society'" (White 2013: 69). The party's electoral undoing in 2003 thus stands in stark opposition to the nationalists and Communists, who both survived the new status quo under United Russia, albeit to varying degrees.

The 2003 legislative election contrasted sharply with the 1995 and 1999 contests because the Kremlin supported the same political party or a direct descendent in two consecutive elections for the first time (Hale 2006). For the first time, the party of power was afforded an opportunity to fortify its position across elections (Sakwa 2005). Unity's surprise second place finish in the 1999 elections provided the momentum party builders needed to turn the electoral bloc into a full-fledged party of power with extensive local infrastructure in preparation for the 2003 contest (Hale 2006). Unity leadership pursued party growth vis-à-vis other parties along two tracks, coalition and absorption. Along with Fatherland-All Russia's group, Unity's parliamentary faction created a powerful coalition in the legislature with collectives of independent Duma deputies, notably Russia's Regions and People's Deputy, producing the overarching "group of four" coalition (Hale 2006: 231). Within a short time, Unity absorbed the nearly extinct Our Home is Russia in early 2001 after disbanded by Chernomyrdin; the party also captured the remnants of Fatherland-All Russia after it was dissolved and officially merged with Unity soon after the election, together creating United Russia. In short, Putin "realized that Unity and Fatherland were two halves of one whole" and would together make a

powerful party, united by the fact that both parties were "concerned with securing administrative power at the federal and regional level" (Politician Formerly Affiliated with United Russia 2011). The merger of the two competing parties of power in the previous election elevated United Russia as the largest party in the legislature and signified a truly seismic change in the political environment. Through the merger with Fatherland, Unity "eliminat[ed] a significant source of opposition" and "gained key regional elites as allies" in one stroke (Riggs and Schraeder 2004: 146). The refashioned party of power enjoyed the broadest political base including both the Kremlin and regional governors, never before united with such a high degree of elite political consensus.

Unlike his predecessor, President Putin explicitly endorsed the party of power in September, but did not formally join as a member. Less than a month before the election, President Putin publicly backed the party in no uncertain terms, stating, "Concerning United Russia, I can tell you that I am not a member of this party, but this is a political force that I have been able to rely on over these last four years and that has consistently supported me…United Russia has shown itself capable of rising above a certain level of populism and not letting itself slip into populist mode, and has proven its ability to take responsible decisions and take on responsibility" (Quoted in Sakwa 2005: 372-373). United Russia featured quotations by the president prominently on campaign materials. The party directly benefitted from President Putin's high approval rating that hovered between 60-80% throughout his first term and party policies strongly reflected those of the president (Hale 2006).

Despite criticism of United Russia for lacking a policy platform, other than its unyielding support of the president, the party of power did stake out an identifiable ideological position in arguing that the party neither occupied the left nor the right but the pragmatic and realistic center, which enabled the party to solve "real problems for real people" (Quoted in Sakwa 2005: 373). In the campaign, United Russia focused on the themes of order and legality and the importance of maintaining a coalition fit to govern, rather than becoming entangled in the ideological struggles between left and right (Sakwa

2005). United Russia harped on deliverables in the social arena that would benefit all Russians, such as enhancing living standards and creating a "civilized market" (Sakwa 2005: 373). Regarding international affairs, United Russia echoed broadly nationalist ideas by arguing the country should occupy a worthy position in the world community, to be achieved via membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and visa-free travel between the EU and Russia within five years (Sakwa 2005). The party of power relied on state-owned media to promote its platform and opted out of televised debates, thereby signaling its political supremacy, certainty of electoral triumph, and antipathy for the electoral process itself (*Ibid*).

United Russia stacked its 2003 party-list with more regional heavy-hitters than any of its party of power predecessors; the list included 29 of the most powerful regional heads in the country, giving United Russia access to and command over regional political machines that could turn out the vote for the party of power (Hale 2006). In addition to regional executives, many raion and municipal managers also allied themselves with United Russia, effectively removing a source of administrative resources for the KPRF in those areas, as previously regional- and local-level operators were "friendly, or at least indifferent" to the KPRF (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 687). Approximately 27% of United Russia's 268 party-list candidates had close ties to major national and regional corporations, including 14 candidates associated with oil producers Lukoil, Yukos and Sibneft and 12 candidates connected to the metals industry through Russian Aluminum and Norilsk Nickel (Wilson 2007). United Russia's close bond with powerful regional governors and corporations produced "unprecedented administrative capital" that could be leveraged in the 2003 campaign (Hale 2006: 84). Reserves of administrative capital were also expanded due to the fact that United Russia established regional party organizations in all of the 89 regions, accomplishing what all of its party of power ancestors had failed (Wegren and Konitzer 2007).

United Russia also doggedly pursued electoral victory by engaging in a full-blown two-pronged assault against the KPRF using state-owned media on one side, and on the other side, the creation of at least five Kremlin-friendly spoiler parties that

ideologically resembled the KPRF to poach votes from those disaffected by the negative media attacks (Wilson 2006; Gelman 2005; Hale et al. 2004). In creating numerous loyal opposition parties akin to the KPRF prior to the election, the Kremlin and United Russia by extension aimed to "split and weaken" possible protest and opposition in the legislature (Gelman 2005: 242). Indeed, one such Kremlin creation was created just four months before the election, the Motherland (or Rodina) party. Sergei Glazyev, who was elected in 1999 via the KPRF's party list, and Dmitry Rogozin, a moderate nationalist, led Rodina in the 2003 elections, espousing the populist policies of economic redistribution coupled with nationalist rhetoric. Indeed, "Rodina's platform overlap[ped] significantly with that of the KPRF in certain issue areas […] and its success […] may have been at least partially responsible for the depressed vote support of the KPRF" (Clark 2006: 22). Rodina exceeded expectations, culling approximately nine percent of the party-list vote by positioning itself as the patriotic left. Rodina's success coupled with the withering of the KPRF signaled that the Kremlin and United Russia had realized its long-term agenda of "marginaliz[ing] the [K]PRF as a political force in the country and parliament" (Sakwa 2005: 385).

But United Russia went a step beyond the creation of spoiler parties that resembled the KPRF and actually adopted a nationalist and patriotic platform itself, while also featuring prominently the party's ties to President Putin, who was widely regarded as a tough leader and often espoused such rhetoric himself. With regards to domestic policy, President Putin moved on numerous fronts to attract the KPRF's core constituency of rural voters: he increased pensions, paid wage arrears, embarked on a campaign to eradicate corruption by targeting the oligarchs, prioritized social development, upped state investment in agriculture, relieved large farms of some accumulated debt, and reformed the banking system with an eye toward making it easier for agricultural producers to gain access to credit (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 685-686). In an interview after the 2003 contest, the head of the KPRF's campaign staff commented, "three of our main issues—rich and poor, protecting the rights of Russians, the people versus the oligarchs, were taken up by other parties. These issues, and the remaining basic

conditions of our program were all used by different politicians, and we need to admit, that they did this much more actively than we did" (Quoted in Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 685). The combination of newly created and Kremlin-financed spoiler parties and a nationalist-patriotic platform co-opted by United Russia proved catastrophic for the KPRF: the KPRF "ceded its monopoly" on nationalist-patriotic rhetoric and slogans to a more formidable party and President Putin himself, "leaving the KPRF to occupy the narrower niche of a rather traditionalist leftist party" (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 685). Ultimately, United Russia won a crushing victory in the party-list vote by capturing approximately 25% more than the second place finisher, the KPRF, and became the first truly successful party of power in post-communist Russia. Indeed, United Russia had won by a greater margin than any party in any of Russia's legislative elections since 1993 (Clark 2006).

The first legislative elections held since Vladimir Putin's election as president produced a "commanding majority" for United Russia, with a combined total of 222 out of 450 seats, and surpassed the KPRF as the largest party in parliament (OSCE 2004: 1). United Russia ultimately secured even more Duma seats, 300 in total, once independents and deputies from other party lists reevaluated their loyalties and band-wagoned with the party of power, producing a two-thirds constitutional majority for United Russia. One party switcher was one of four single-mandate winners affiliated with Yabloko. For the first time in the short history of Russian legislative elections, the party of power not only preserved but also fortified its position to the point of being "virtually unassailable" (Riggs and Schraeder 2004: 148).

The election contributed to the "Mexicanization" of the party system by transforming it into a one-party dominant system (Riggs and Schraeder 2004: 141; Gelman 2006). This feat was not achieved without the near total "extinction of political opposition in Russia," most conspicuously the KPRF and Yabloko (Gelman 2005: 241). The results of 2003 election fundamentally recast the opposition in Russia by "marginali[zing] not only the [K]PRF as the strongest programm[atic] party but of all program[atic] parties standing in the election," such as Yabloko (Sawka 2005: 385). The

outcome was undoubtedly most catastrophic for Yabloko than the KPRF, since no Russian political party had survived after falling short of the five percent hurdle. Nevertheless, the clear "losers" in the contest were united by opposition party status, origins independent from the Kremlin, and societal roots, while the "winners," namely United Russia, Kremlin-creation Rodina, and the LDPR, were united by Kremlin support, loyalty to President Putin, and nationalist platforms to some extent (McFaul 2003). Overall, the elections produced a Duma weakened as an independent institution and engendered a political opportunity structure that was judged "unfavorable for opposition of any kind" (OSCE 2004; Gelman 2005: 241).

The varying electoral trajectories of opposition parties in the 2003 contest demonstrate that the new political status quo under a successful dominant party was more inhospitable to some parties than others, as Yabloko was completely frozen out, the KPRF was severely crippled but alive, and the LDPR emerged with newfound vitality. Despite this divergence within the electoral trajectories of the opposition camp, the election was marked by the "simultaneous decline of the left and right:" with economic liberalism clearly triumphant over statism by 2003, the citizenry "turn[ed] away from ideology as such" (Aslund 2004: 281). This fact took the wind out of the sails of both the KPRF and Yabloko, as the former's constituency recognized that there was no viable alternative to a market economy, and the latter campaigning in support of the economic system that already existed made it seem like the "leaders were just kicking an open door" (Aslund 2004: 282). Thus, with many crucial elements of the post-communist political and economic system in Russia already in operation, previously salient policy distinctions between political parties became essentially moot and voters made their decisions using alternative information.

Another important feature of the election was that it illustrated the "rise of a militant and aggressive nationalism" (Aslund 2004: 283). Among the three parties in the core party troika, the ultra-nationalist LDPR was the only to see its vote share rise and it was a substantial increase over 1999, to nearly double. Moreover, United Russia campaigned on vague nationalist themes, such as unity, stability and strength, and ran

away with the election. Clearly, the two prominent trends in the election results, the decline of the left and right and the rise of Russian nationalism, are related in that the resolution of post-communist political and economic problems created a void that could be filled with nationalist sentiment. In 2003, Russia had weathered the dual political and economic transition and survived, fostering a sense of pride and nationalism that was dampened throughout the 1990s due to veritable chaos.

The 2003 Legislative Election as an Uncompetitive Election

In contrast to the 1995 and 1999 legislative elections, the 2003 contest will be treated as an uncompetitive election because, although some electoral malfeasance occurred in the elections in the 1990s, the scale in which such practices were used in 2003 was extreme even by post-Soviet Russia standards (Hale et al. 2004). In short, the election was "entirely and fundamentally flawed from the start," was "far from fair," and represented a regression of democratization in Russia (Sakwa 2005: 382, 369; OSCE 2004). The contest was judged to be the "most constrained and least competitive since the Soviet period" (Hale et al. 2004: 285). The Kremlin's domination of the electoral process "undermined the legitimacy of the regime itself [and] discredited Russia's democratic institutions," creating an election that was no more than "demonstration of what the power in the land is capable of" (Sakwa 2005: 383, 385).

The lines between the executive administration and political parties, notably United Russia, were blurred due to the widespread use of state administrative resources that created a severely uneven playing field during the campaign and election itself (OSCE 2004). The OSCE Election Observation Mission Report notes that, "while advantages of incumbency may be generally recognized, in the context of the 7 December State Duma elections, these advantages seriously distorted the process (2004: 1). In numerous regions, United Russia campaign offices were located within state or government administrative offices and the local government provided office equipment and transport services (OSCE 2004). Furthermore, the sizable proportion of regional governors on United Russia's party list (29 in total) led to open promotion of the party in their respective regions, directly contravening laws requiring candidates to suspend their

official functions during the election campaign period (*Ibid*). An annual student meeting with the governor of Khabarovsk, for instance, transformed into a campaign stop for the governor and United Russia (*Ibid*).

Election observers noted a range of other practices that substantially jeopardized the freedom and fairness of the election. For example, observers witnessed widespread open voting in 29% of observed polling stations and group or family voting, i.e. where voters mark their ballots together, in 25% of stations; indeed, "in practice secrecy of the vote is not treated as an obligation" (OSCE 2004: 6, 20). In one extreme case in a precinct located the ethnic republic of Bashkortostan, there were no voting booths present at all, and in other cases, precinct administrators expressly encouraged voters not to make use of voting booths or facilitated open voting by placing tables with pens attached next to ballot boxes (OSCE 2004). In the federal cities of St. Petersburg and Moscow, observers witnessed open voting in 49% and 36% of polling stations, respectively (OSCE 2004: 21). In Russian regions and ethnic republics alike, employers required workers to secure absentee ballots for vote monitoring purposes or pledged job termination (OSCE 2004). Once workers in Bashkortostan secured their absentee ballots, they were bussed in to Ufa by the thousands to vote at pre-selected polling stations (*Ibid*). Election observers noted an unusually high proportion of absentee ballots used in the region (*Ibid*). When automated counting machines were employed in Ufa, Bashkortostan, "operator[s] stood by each machine all day and assisted voters, many of whom fed the ballot horizontally into the machine face-up, so their voting mark was clearly visible" (OSCE 2004: 9-10). Observers noted "the blatant fraud that occurred in Bashkortostan and irregularities seen in some other national republics and in certain regions, particularly in Siberia and the Far East" (OSCE PA 2003). In remote rural areas in Tatarstan, precinct election commissioners stated that local leaders bribed voters with sugar, tea or sausages to vote for the party of power (Franklin 2004). Local election commissions openly displayed United Russia party materials in their offices and in Voronezh region, one of the polling stations was located within a United Russia party campaign office with United Russia campaign materials posted conspicuously (OSCE 2004). Local governments slanted the

playing field toward the party of power and against opposition parties by refusing public advertising space that was previously arranged by opposition parties, preventing parties from securing appropriate spaces for rallies or meetings, destroying or impounding campaign posters and other materials, and detaining campaign workers by police (*Ibid*).

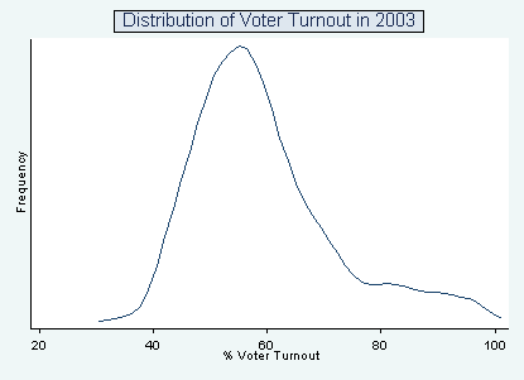
The vote counting process was considered prejudicial in 27% of polling stations observed and an additional 31% had "significant procedural errors and omissions"; some 14% of precinct election commissions also failed to issue copies of election results after the final tally to entitled persons as well as Russian non-partisan and political party observers (OSCE 2004: 2). The KPRF, Yabloko, and the Union of Right Forces together conducted their own 2003 election observation mission and alternative recount of the results using a system called FairGame. The alternative count suggested that results were falsified because Yabloko was found to have actually won almost six percent of the party-list vote (which would have allowed the party parliamentary representation), rather than the 4.3% tally in the official results (Wilson 2006: 334). Other results also varied to differing degrees from the official count: the KPRF received .01 less than its official 12.61%; LDPR received 11.25% rather than the official 12.45%; and United Russia captured 33.66%, a significant difference from the 37.57% officially reported (*Ibid*). The FairGame results were believed to be accurate and unbiased because the KPRF's vote share was found to be *lower* than the official result and multiple exit polls conducted by *The Moscow Times,* the Soros Foundation, among others, largely corroborated FairGame's results (White 2007).

In about a dozen regions, mostly in the ethnic republics, "mass falsification [was] alleged" (Sakwa 2005: 382). Zyuganov demanded a recount in all areas where the official results diverged from those of the alternative recount and requested the CEC withhold from publishing the results; the CEC ignored Zyuganov's complaints and published the official count the following day (Wilson 2006). The CEC responded similarly when the KPRF and Yabloko entered another formal complaint asking for a recount, arguing peculiarly that the CEC was unable to investigate mistakes on the results forms because nearly all of them were completed incorrectly, despite the fact that the results forms were

filled out by district election commissions and not the parties themselves (*Ibid*). The CEC acknowledged, however, that there were differences between the results of the alternative recount and the official tally but not such that the "true will of the voters" was distorted because the differences primarily involved voter turnout figures and the proportion of absentee ballots (*Ibid*). Yabloko leader Yavlinsky disagreed, commenting wryly that his party's biggest error in the election was that "we should have understood earlier that to win five percent in Russia, twenty percent of the vote must be gathered de facto" (Quoted in White 2007: 220). The CEC granted no relief to any of the parties engaged in the alternative recount, which compromises the accuracy and validity of the election results.

Figure 6.1 supplies further evidence that strongly indicates that methods of manipulation were practiced in the 2003 legislative contest. Compared to the previous election in 1999, the right hand tail of the distribution became notably fatter in 2003. Additionally, a dubious small bump is apparent in voter turnout just higher than 80%, suggesting artificially augmented turnout, either through ballot box stuffing or the illicit changing of results protocols. The distribution of turnout in 2003 reveals the first instances of what quickly became the hallmarks of voter turnout and elections under United Russia: a fat right hand tail and suspicious peaks found at high levels of turnout.

Figure 6.1: Distribution of Voter Turnout in 2003



Raion-level national turnout in the first contest of the 2000s was 59.20% and the corresponding standard deviation was 12.27. The distribution of voter turnout was

therefore considerably more dispersed from the mean in 2003 than was the case in 1999, when the standard deviation was 9.22. The increased standard deviation reflects the fattening of the right hand tail in 2003. Table 6.1 indicates the voter turnout threshold set for suspected electoral manipulation, the number of manipulated raions and the percent of raions that reported voter turnout exceeding the threshold, which was just greater than 14%. Thus, the percent of raions classified as fraudulent increased by approximately one and half percent from 1999 to 2003, signaling the slow expansion of electoral manipulation under conditions of contracted competition with United Russia at the helm.

Table 6.1: Manipulated Raions in 2003

Voter Turnout Threshold (1 Standard Deviation Above Raion-level National Turnout)	Number Manipulated Raions	% Total Raions
71.47	379	14.27

As in 1995 and 1999, but to a significantly more pronounced degree, media coverage "exhibit[ed] a clear bias in favour of United Russia" at the expense of opposition parties, notably the KPRF (OSCE 2004: 15). Freedom House noted that the Kremlin "gained nearly total control of the broadcast media in 2003" by "using restrictive legislation and exerting financial pressure through the government and government-related companies" (2004: 164). State-owned or state-managed media outlets provided a substantial amount of positive coverage to United Russia, ranging from 16-22% of prime time news, and devoted a comparable share of negative coverage to the KPRF at approximately 14% (*Ibid*). There was also considerable coverage of President Putin himself, a fact considered "to indirectly benefit the campaigns of pro-presidential political parties": over one-third of airtime on one channel was devoted to his activities (OSCE 2004: 16). Since the overwhelming majority of Russians obtain their news from television, United Russia's near monopolization of the national channels during the campaign proved a major advantage. KPRF leader Zyuganov filed a complaint with the CEC and the CEC's legal department concurred, stating there was a "systematic and deliberate broadcast of positive or neutral information about United Russia and negative

information or information with negative commentaries about the KRPF" (Corwin 2003). In one instance, the primary state channel ORT reported on a new book by KPRF leader Zyuganov that, according to ORT, tried to show the "spiritual proximity between the KPRF and the Russian Orthodox Church" (*Ibid*). The report then turned to archival footage detailing the Soviet's demolition of churches and two interviews with historians who disparaged the book (*Ibid*). The CEC Chairman elected only to issue warning letters to the two channels and generally lacked the ability or desire to investigate and legally pursue complaints regarding biased media coverage (Corwin 2003; OSCE 2004).

Analysis

In 2003, the KPRF, LDPR and Yabloko are investigated, notwithstanding Yabloko's failure to cross the five percent threshold for legislative representation. The Kremlin-created Motherland party received Duma seats, but the party is excluded because it had not competed in the two previous elections in 1995 and 1999. Unity and Fatherland-All Russia's merger in the early 2000s formed the new dominant party, United Russia, which is analyzed alongside the core party troika. Table 2 details the two stronghold thresholds established for each party and indicates the number of strongholds and the percent of raions accounted for by both thresholds. Compared to the final election under President Yeltsin, the Communists and liberals lost numerous lower level strongholds but gained several higher level bastions of support while the nationalists preserved their lower level support but numerous higher threshold strongholds were wiped out.

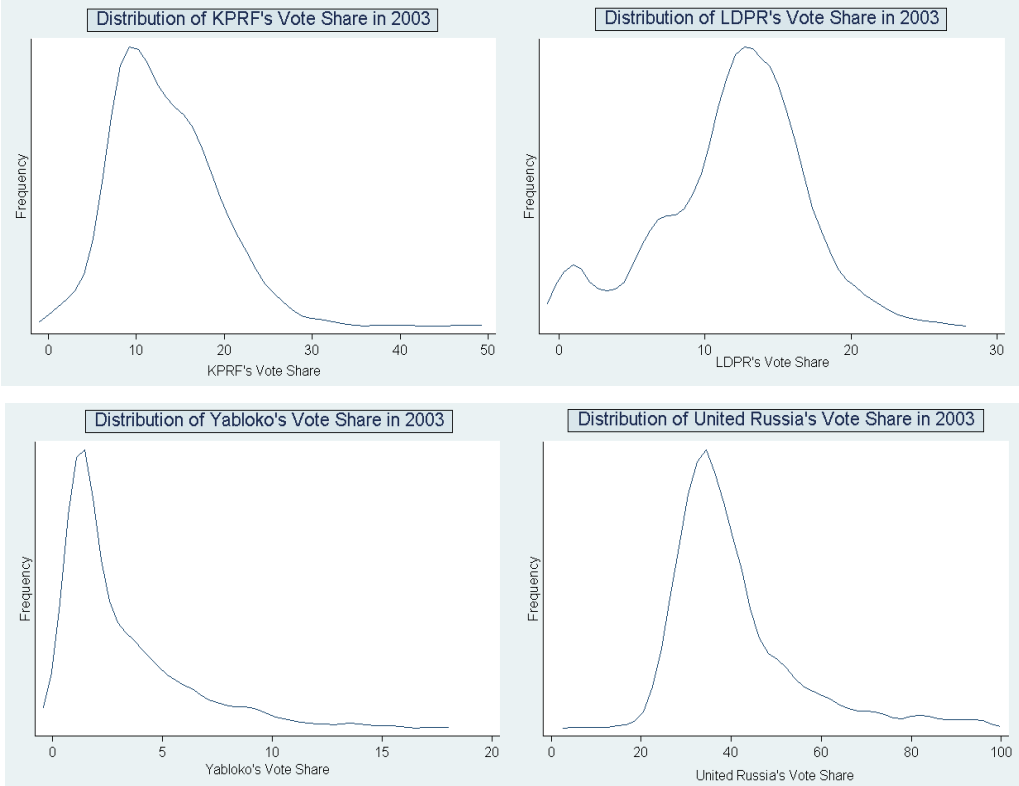
Table 6.2: Measuring the Dependent Variable: Party Strongholds in 2003

	1 standard deviation above party's raion-level national average	# Strongholds	% Raions	2 standard deviations above party's raion-level national average	# Strongholds	% Raions
KPRF	18.95	428	16.03	24.62	91	3.41
LDPR	16.80	391	13.15	21.67	45	1.69
Yabloko	5.84	397	14.87	8.61	156	5.84
United Russia	54.35	346	12.96	68.21	154	5.77

Figure 6.2 displays the distribution of each party's vote share in the 2003 election and allows for the rough identification of the two stronghold thresholds for each. The distributions for the Communists and liberals were again more clustered than the previous election. In the case of the KPRF, the distribution was approximately twice as clustered in 2003 as in 1999: the standard deviation was 10.79 in the late 1990s but contracted sharply to 5.67 once United Russia rose to power. The distribution shows a slight bump beginning at approximately 15% but does not raise any suspicions because the party's raion-level national average was only roughly two percent less. Like the Communists, the standard deviation for Yabloko's distribution also narrowed, from 3.44 in 1999 to 2.76 in the early 2000s. The distribution displays a rather elongated right hand tail with a bump around nine percent, but, although the bump occurred at vote shares three times Yabloko's raion-level national average, the raions comprising the bump were located in Yabloko's urban heartland in Moscow and St. Petersburg and therefore are not subject to doubt. The small bump in the right tail is, in fact, significantly smaller than was the case in the previous and more competitive election. In contrast to the Communists and liberals, the nationalist's distribution did not experience the same winnowing effect from the 1990s to the early 2000s: the party's distribution was, in fact, more dispersed in 2003 than it was in 1999, with standard deviations of 4.87 and 3.10, respectively. The distribution is quite abnormal, revealing a conspicuous peak and valley in the left tail around a null vote share and a soft "step" at around eight percent, a few percent below the party's raion-level national average. United Russia's distribution revealed the most dispersion of the group with a standard deviation of 13.85. The distribution was therefore significantly more dispersed than Our Home is Russia's in 1995 and Unity's in 1999, but more clustered than Fatherland-All Russia's in the previous election. Similar to Yabloko's, United Russia's distribution also exhibits an elongated right tail with noticeable bumps at approximately 55%, 75%, and in the low 80% range, all of which surpass the lower stronghold threshold and two of which comfortably surpass the higher threshold. As United Russia's raion-level national average was just greater than 40% in

2003, many of these raions delivered vote shares to the dominant party that reached or exceeded no less than double the party's countrywide showing.

Figure 6.2: Distribution of Parties' Vote Shares in 2003



See Appendix Tables 55-78 (pages 580-627) for Multilevel Model Results.

Ethnicity and Opposition Parties

Under the weight of the Kremlin's new party powerhouse, the electoral trajectories of opposition parties shifted strikingly in various conditions but retained a few core contours in the early 2000s. In the two competitive elections in the 1990s, the KPRF scored electoral windfalls in areas with geographically concentrated ethnic minorities at the raion level, with odds hiking one to seven percent; by 2003, however, denser populations of non-Russians did not exercise a systematic effect on the occurrence of party strongholds in the lower threshold models. Only in one strict specification did the proportion of ethnic minorities increase the odds of a bastion of support and the

magnitude of the effect was limited to approximately one percent in that isolated case. The fact that ethnic minorities were, save for one instance, not methodically connected to high vote shares for the Communists represented a sea change for the party in the early 2000s: with that core constituency seemingly waffling, likely due to the presence of a dominant party with deep pockets for patronage, the KPRF struggled to preserve its once firm position in non-Russian communities. Refined measures of ethnic composition indicated that other minorities generated the transformation in the KPRF's constituency in part: while unit increases in the other minority population augmented the odds of a stronghold by one to six percent in the previous election, this demographic did not exercise a systematic influence in 2003 in all but one strict specification, in which the odds increased by merely one percent. Furthermore, titular minorities exerted a limited and negative impact on the KPRF vote in 1999, but the magnitude of the effect became greater in 2003 and was found across thresholds, diminishing the odds by three percent in a lower threshold model and by roughly seven percent in a strict specification. With its tentacles in numerous ethnic districts, the rise of United Russia effectively shifted the ground under the Communists and the correlates of the KPRF vote became more ethnic Russian than ever before. When vote share was treated continuously rather than dichotomously, as is the case in the statistical models, the association between the KPRF's vote share and the proportion of non-Russians appears inverse, as shown in Figure 6.3. The scatterplot pertaining to titular minorities is more consistent with the statistical findings, revealing a comparatively steep inverse relationship. On the other hand, the scatterplot detailing the association between other minorities and the KPRF's electoral fortunes or failures exhibits a more positive relationship, but one noticeably weaker than that which prevailed in 1999. Especially when compared to the scatterplots pertaining to the previous election, there are significantly fewer outlier raions with large ethnic minority populations that reported unusually high vote shares for the Communists. The most zealous "red raions," churning out vote shares reaching upwards of three times the party's national showing, had populations dominated almost entirely by other minorities and were located in Dagestan. As such, the mostly other minority raions that

the KPRF excelled in were comprised chiefly of non-titular but also non-Indo European ethnic minorities, such as those in Dagestan and some other Caucasian regions. The remaining enthusiastic raions were found in majority Russian raions in Bryansk Oblast on the Ukrainian border, Volgograd Oblast bordering Kazakhstan to the southeast, and many other so-called "red belt" regions, such as Lipetsk, Tambov, and Kursk.

Figure 6.3: Non-Russian Minorities and KPRF's Vote Share in 2003

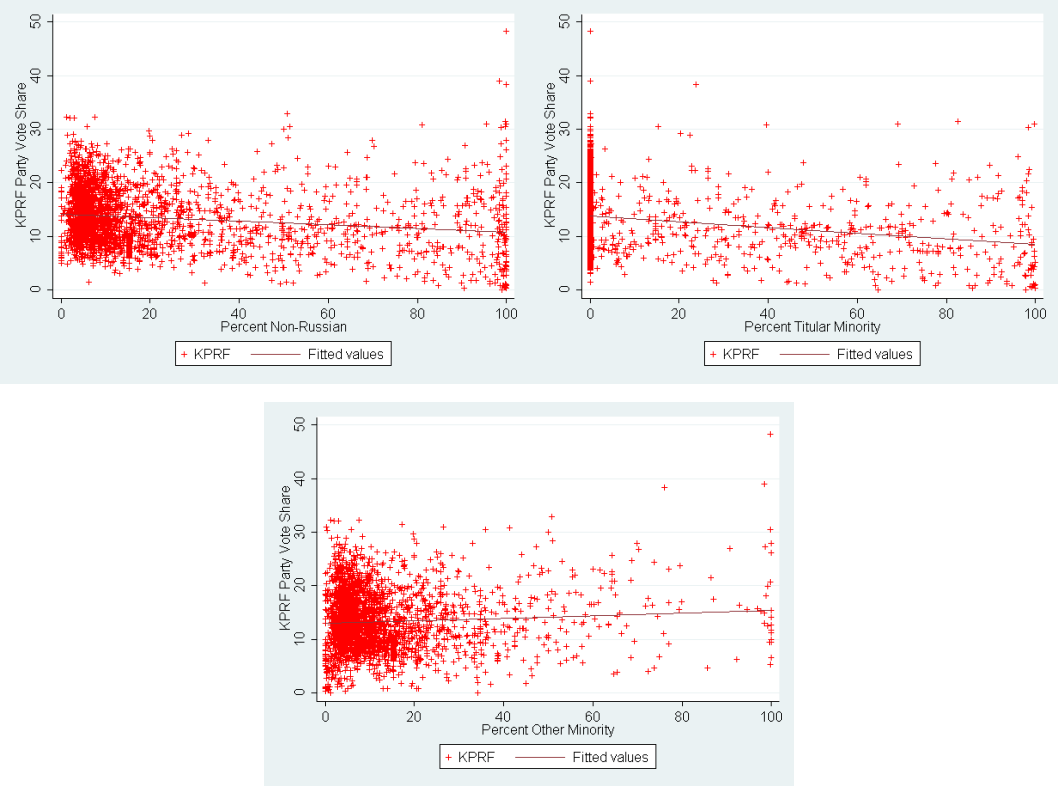
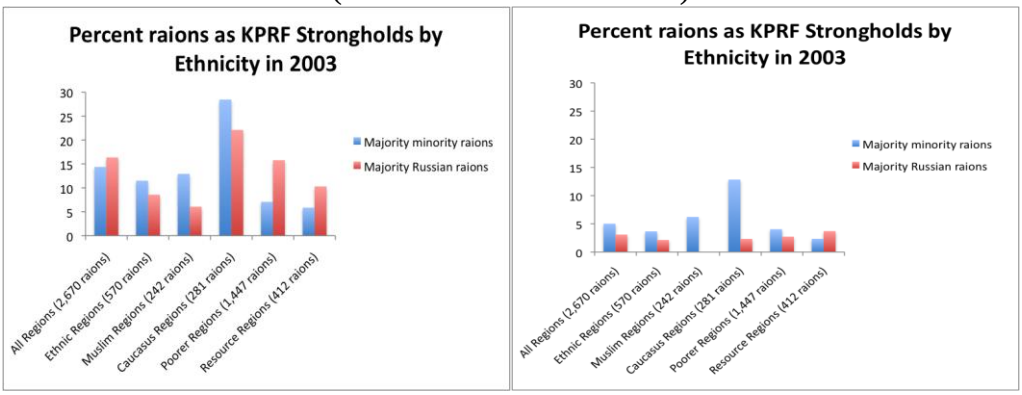


Figure 6.4 exposes the slow transformation in the ethnic contours of the Communist vote: in the final election of the 1990s, the KPRF captured a higher percentage of strongholds in majority-minority than majority-Russian raions overall, but by the first election of the 2000s, the party drew a higher share from ethnic Russian areas. Of the majority-minority and majority-Russian raions, the percentage that were KPRF strongholds dropped in 2003, from more than 20% in 1999 to less than 15% in 2003 in the former and from just less than 20% to just greater than 15% in the latter. An additional shift was apparent in

poorer regions, as the Communists harvested a higher percentage of strongholds in majority-minority raions by a sizable margin in the previous election but the balance heavily favored majority-Russian raions in 2003. The Communists suffered acutely in the Caucasus in the first contest with United Russia on the ballot: in 1999, even though two potential parties of power jockeyed for control of the Kremlin, the KPRF boasted stronghold level support in over 60% of majority-minority raions in the area, but the party's share plummeted to less than 20% in 2003. Likewise, of majority-Russian raions, the proportion that was KPRF bastions of support plunged by roughly 20%. The Communists were also unable to maintain levels of support comparable to the 1990s in the remaining regional contexts, save for one exception that served as a ray of light in the otherwise stormy conditions: the party gained ground in majority-Russian raions in resource-dependent regions in 2003. Interestingly, with the shift from the relaxed to the strict threshold, the ethnic contours of the Communist vote became less Russian. In contrast to the lower threshold, the KPRF captured a higher percentage of strongholds in majority-minority raions than majority-Russian raions overall and in poorer regions. Additionally, the raising of the stronghold threshold resulted in the evaporation of the few strongholds that the party had preserved in mostly Russian raions housed in Muslim regions.

Figure 6.4: KPRF Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 2003 (lower threshold on the left)



Majority-minority raions registered average vote shares for the KPRF that were less than one percent below its countrywide showing, as indicated in Table 6.3. Although the shift from raions located in Russian federal regions and non-Muslim regions to those housed in ethnic republics and Muslim regions did not systematically affect the occurrence of KPRF strongholds, descriptive statistics suggest that the Communists' performance was sub-average in these two ethnic contexts at the regional level: the party's average was less than two percent and nearly two percent, respectively, under its raion-level national average. With regards to Muslim regions, the KPRF's fortunes in Muslim regions changed swiftly from the 1990s. In the previous contests, more competitive contestation and the absence of an effective party of power helped produce electoral windfalls for the Communists in Muslim regions, with odds soaring by dozens and hundreds of times. Thus, the lack of a systematic effect in 2003 represents a marked softening of support.

Table 6.3: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of the KPRF's Electoral Performance in the 2003 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	13.27	14.17	11.76	10.82	11.08	11.34	14.66	12.95	10.87
Min	.030	.037	.030	.037	.030	.030	.030	.661	.030
Max	48.25	48.25	48.25	48.25	48.25	48.25	48.25	32.87	29.93
SD	5.67	6.09	7.23	6.76	6.48	7.81	7.35	5.44	5.57

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, .9.

A small share of Communist strongholds were located in ethnic republics and an even more limited proportion were found in predominantly Muslim regions, as shown in Table 6.4: roughly 14% and less than 20% according to the lower and higher threshold for ethnic republics and less than seven percent and approximately 14% in the case of Muslim regions.

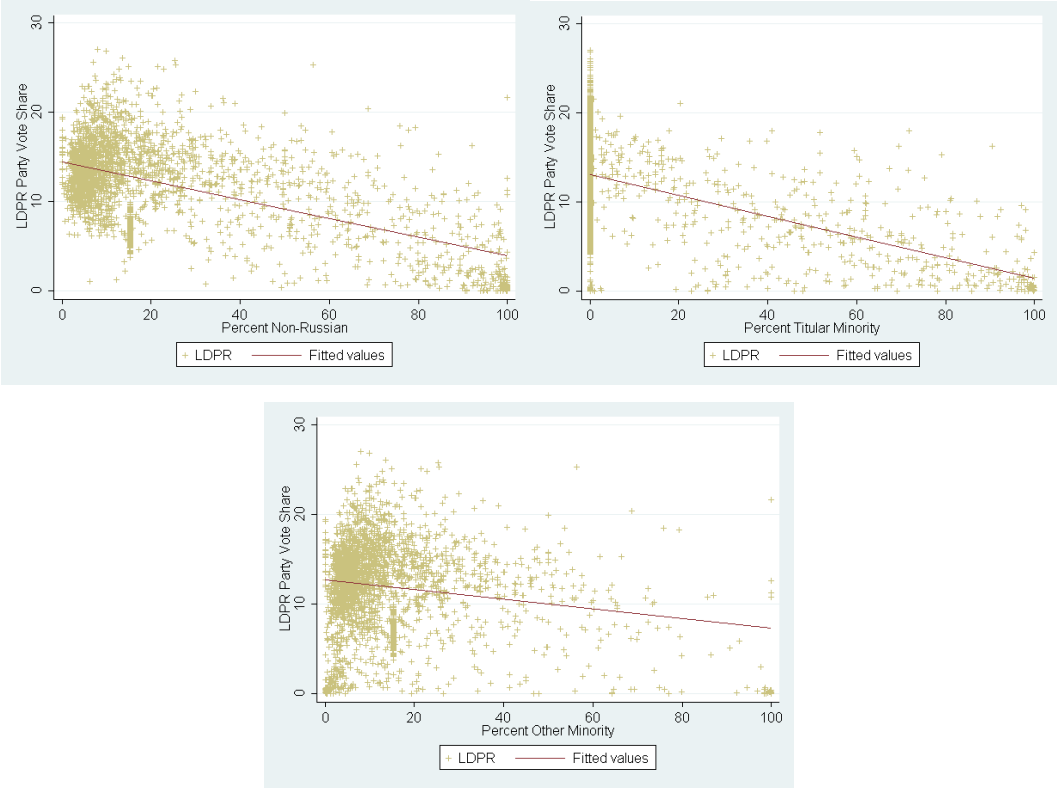
Table 6.4: KPRF Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 2003				
	# of KPRF Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (428 Total)	% of KPRF Strongholds	# of KPRF Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (91 Total)	% of KPRF Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	60	14.02	18	19.78
Russian federal regions	368	85.98	73	80.22
Muslim regions	29	6.78	13	14.29
Caucasus regions	69	16.12	18	19.78
Poorer Regions	211	49.30	42	46.15
Natural Resource Regions	35	8.18	13	14.29
Fraudulent raions	40	9.35	16	17.58
Non-Fraudulent raions	388	90.65	75	82.42

The KPRF preserved and expanded its pockets of support in areas with geographically concentrated ethnic minorities in the mid- to late-1990s but United Russia's accession drastically reconfigured the electoral arena in these areas and the KPRF was largely incapable of staving off the inevitable.

In contrast to the Communists, the ethnic contours of the nationalist vote remained generally intact from the 1990s and the party was shellacked once more by increases in the non-Russian population of any kind in 2003. The percent non-Russian covariate diminished the odds of a nationalist stronghold by three to five percent across the lower threshold models and by four percent in a strict specification. Unit increases in the titular minority population again shrunk the odds, but the magnitude of the negative effect was greater in some models than in the previous election, diminishing the likelihood of a stronghold by four to eight percent across-the-board in the relaxed models. Finally, other minorities plunged the odds by two to five percent in the lower threshold models, a modest improvement over the four to seven percent tumble indicated in 1999. The LDPR was well equipped to preserve its ethnic Russian constituency in the face of United Russia's rise to power because the dominant party homed in on ethnic minorities, leaving ethnic Russian areas in the nationalists' hands. However, the findings pertaining to the Communists collectively suggested that days in which the nationalists battled with

only the weak Yabloko for support from ethnic Russian areas may have been numbered. With United Russia squeezing the most formidable opposition party out of ethnic minority enclaves, the KPRF was forced to turn its attention to collecting votes from ethnic Russians instead, directly challenging the LPDR. Figure 6.5 displays the unmistakably inverse relationship between the LDPR's vote share and non-Russian minorities in 2003 and closely resemble those regarding the contest in 1999. In each of the three scatterplots, there are conspicuous clusters of raions located in the lower right quadrant, where raions populated entirely by ethnic minorities registered null vote shares for the nationalists. The LPDR's most enthusiastic raion, reporting a vote share more than twice the party's raion-level national mean, was comprised mostly of ethnic Russians with a small segment of other minorities and was found in Amur Oblast bordering China to the south. Other majority-Russian raions that churned out vote shares for the LDPR that exceeded twice its national mean were located in Primorsky Krai, Russia's southeasternmost region bordering China and North Korea, Magadan Oblast on the Sea of Okhotsk, and Sakhalin Oblast that borders the same sea. The few outliers at the intersection of high ethnic minority population and support for the nationalists were located in Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug and Orenburg Oblast on the border with Kazakhstan.

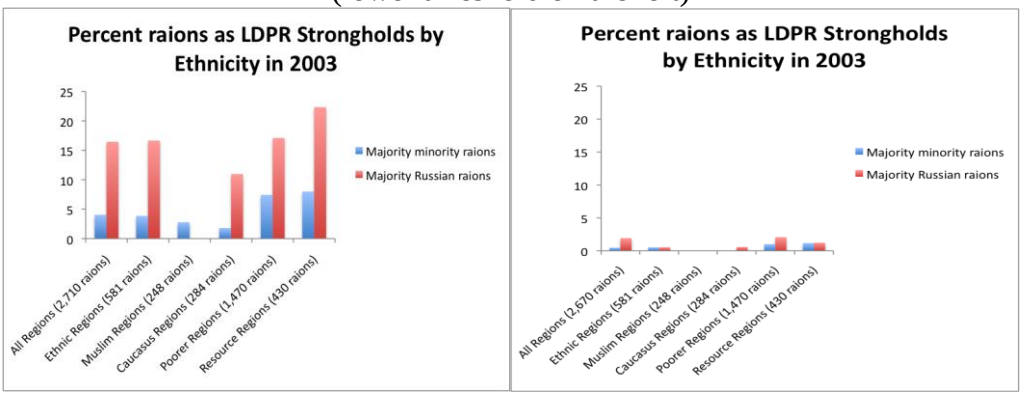
Figure 6.5: Non-Russian Minorities and LDPR's Vote Share in 2003



While the Communists were crushed in some regional environments with the entrance of United Russia into the electoral fray, the LDPR seemingly grew its support, particularly in the unlikely areas of majority-minority raions, as demonstrated in Figure 6.6, although the overall pattern of LDPR strongholds retained core ethnic Russian characteristics over time. In every regional environment, except for Muslim regions, a higher percentage of majority-Russian raions were LDPR strongholds than majority-minority raions. Of majority-Russian and majority-minority raions, the share that was LDPR strongholds was tilted heavily towards the former. Of the majority-Russian raions, the percentage that were LDPR strongholds fell from more than 20% in 1999 to just greater than 15% in 2003, but, of the majority-minority raions, the share increased by a few percentage points from the previous election. Compared to 1999, a higher percentage of majority-minority raions in Muslim regions, those in the Caucasus, economically disadvantaged and resource-dependent regions, delivered stronghold level support to the LDPR in 2003. In

fact, the LDPR did not capture any strongholds in Muslim regions in 1999; not only did the nationalists gain bastions of support in Muslim regions in the election in which United Russia rose to power, but the strongholds that the party did capture were in majority-minority raions. Support for the nationalists also ballooned in the Caucasus in both majority-Russian and majority-minority raions: in 1999, the LDPR had no strongholds in majority-minority raions and, of the majority-Russian raions, much less than five percent channeled immense support to the party; in 2003, of majority-minority raions, a few percent were strongholds and, of majority-Russian raions, more than 10% were bastions of support. Of the majority-Russian raions in ethnic republics, the percentage that were strongholds rose from less than 15% in 1999 to greater than that in 2003. Electoral support for the LDPR dwindled in a key constituency for the party, i.e. majority-Russian raions in poorer regions, dropping from nearly 35% of those raions in the last election to less than 20% in 2003.

Figure 6.6: LDPR Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 2003 (lower threshold on the left)



Descriptive statistics in Table 6.5 suggest that the nationalists fared poorly in majority-minority raions, as the party's average was less than 50% of its raion-level national mean, a larger drop off compared to 1999. At the regional level, ethnic republic and Muslim region status also generated serious setbacks for the LDPR: the party's average showing in ethnic republics was approximately one-third less than its countrywide take and the LDPR was thrashed in Muslim regions with an average roughly seven percent below.

Indeed, Muslim regions delivered the party the paltriest average of any regional context considered. Compared to the party's national mean, the LDPR's average in ethnic republics and Muslim regions took a steeper plunge than in the previous election.

Table 6.5: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of the LDPR's Electoral Performance in the 2003 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	11.92	11.46	5.90	6.75	7.47	4.54	8.71	12.14	11.59
Min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.246	0
Max	27.10	25.11	25.33	25.33	25.33	15.13	22.54	26.09	25.33
SD	4.87	5.11	5.04	5.23	5.72	4.54	6.42	4.62	5.18

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, .9.

The results from the multilevel models substantiate the descriptive statistics and paint a bleak picture of the nationalists' performance in these areas. The shift from raions in Russian federal regions to those nested within ethnic republics shrunk the odds by approximately 75% in a lower threshold model and the magnitude of the negative effect became even greater in the strict specifications, plunging the odds by roughly 90 to 99%. These findings are broadly similar with those pertaining to 1999. Nationalist strongholds in ethnic republics were scarce, as indicated in Table 6.6: 12% and nearly 7% of the party's bastions of support were found in these regions by the lower and higher threshold, respectively.

Table 6.6: LDPR Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 2003				
	# of LDPR Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (391 Total)	% of LDPR Strongholds	# of LDPR Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (45 Total)	% of LDPR Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	47	12.02	3	6.67
Russian federal regions	344	87.98	42	93.33
Muslim regions	6	1.53	0	0
Caucasus regions	21	5.37	1	2.22
Poorer Regions	232	59.34	28	62.22
Natural Resource Regions	71	18.16	5	11.11
Fraudulent raions	9	2.30	2	4.44
Non-Fraudulent raions	382	97.69	43	95.56

Muslim regions delivered a similarly harsh blow to the LDPR. The value of the odds for raions housed within Muslim regions was approximately one-twentieth the value for raions located elsewhere in a relaxed specification, a conspicuous decline from the late 1990s when this distinction did not exercise a systematic effect on the occurrence of strongholds. Compared to the other regional settings considered, the nationalists enjoyed the fewest strongholds in these areas, less than two percent and zero according to the lower and higher threshold. Yet the fact that the party gained six strongholds in Muslim regions by the lower stronghold threshold represented a marked improvement compared to 1999 when the party captured no bastions of support with regards to either stronghold measure. The LDPR's electoral trajectory from the 1990s to the early 2000s with regard to the ethnic Russian, non-Russian cleavage retained core features but also reflected subtle shifts suggesting that the party was making modest inroads into constituencies outside of its traditional base, i.e. ethnic minorities. These limited but discernible initial forays into ethnic minority areas occurred at an unlikely electoral juncture: United Russia's dramatic rise to power in 2003 was achieved in no small part due to the mobilization of ethnic minorities, but the dominant party had not yet fully consolidated and established a stranglehold over these areas, allowing for faint infiltrations by the comparatively Kremlin-friendly nationalists.

Alongside the nationalists, there is some evidence that Yabloko also carved out new pockets of support in ethnic minority areas in 2003, although the party's general profile seemed to remain mostly ethnic Russian. In the previous election, Yabloko suffered as a result of unit increases in all three ethnic composition covariates at the raion level: the odds tumbled four to 30% with regards to the percent non-Russian parameter, declined four to 13% in terms of the titular minority refinement, and took a five to 27% drop in relation to other minorities. In the early 2000s, increases in the percent minority and percent other minority covariates generated a modest positive effect, in fact, augmenting the odds of a liberal stronghold by one percent in the lower threshold models. These findings indicate that the Yabloko vote became less ethnic Russian and more minority than had been the case in the previous election. Communities with denser populations of titular minorities delivered another blow to the party, shrinking the odds by three percent in a lower threshold model, but one that paled in comparison to the late 1990s. These signs of improvement were not strong enough, however, to propel the party over the threshold for legislative representation in 2003. When vote share was leveraged continuously rather than dichotomously and without controlling for the other variables as in the statistical models, the association between Yabloko's performance and the proportion of ethnic minorities appeared slightly grimmer but still showed some progress from the last election, especially vis-à-vis other minorities, as exhibited in Figure 6.7. Indeed, the scatterplot pertaining to other minorities shows a more balanced relationship in 2003 than the steep inverse association evident in 1999. When compared to the final election of the 1990s, the scatterplots reveal somewhat fewer outliers reporting high vote shares for the newly non-parliamentary party. Of the top 50 most liberal raions, two percent were found in the Republic of Karelia bordering Finland, four percent in St. Petersburg, 10% in Primorsky Krai, and an amazing 84% were housed in Moscow. A full 100% of these raions were majority-Russian, with ethnic minority populations ranging from nine to 18%. The raions populated entirely or predominantly by ethnic minorities that channeled support to Yabloko exceeding the lower threshold set for party strongholds were found in Chelyabinsk Oblast bordering Kazakhstan, and, surprisingly,

the ethnic republics of Ingushetia and Dagestan in the Caucasus, and Bashkortostan, situated between the Urals Mountains and the Volga River. As was the case with the nationalists and to a more limited degree with the Communists, there are groups of raions packed into the lower right corner, indicating purely ethnic minority raions in which the liberal party's vote share hovered perilously close to zero.

Figure 6.7: Non-Russian Minorities and Yabloko's Vote Share in 2003

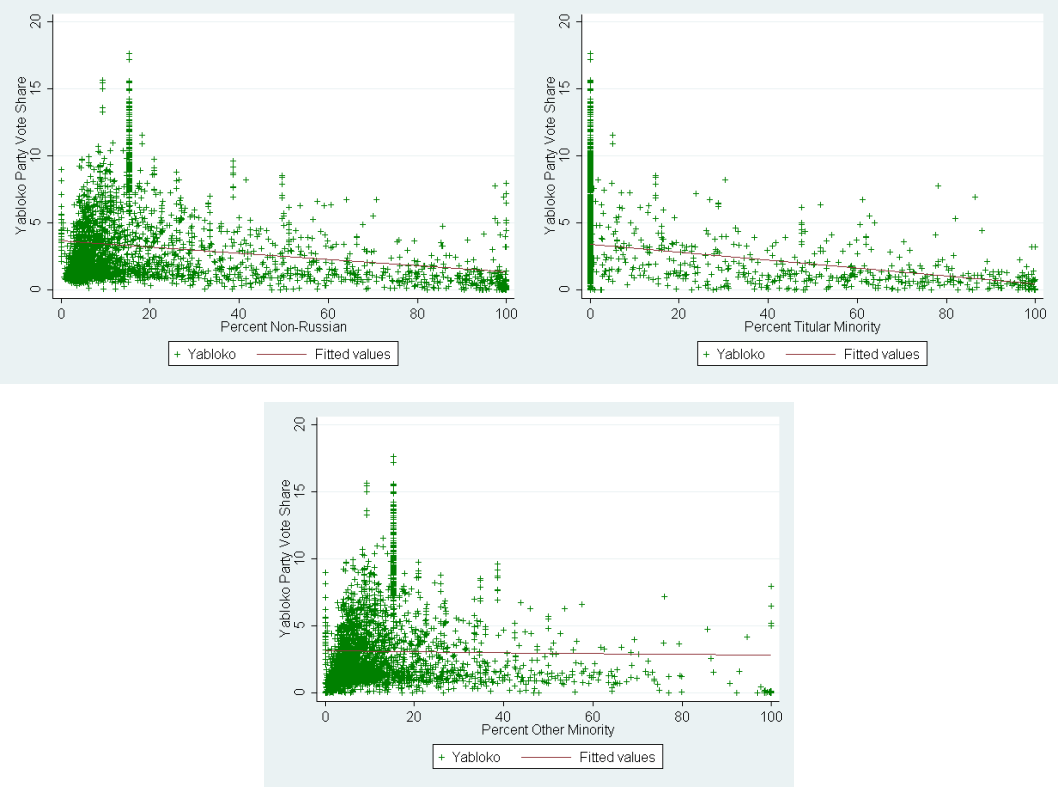
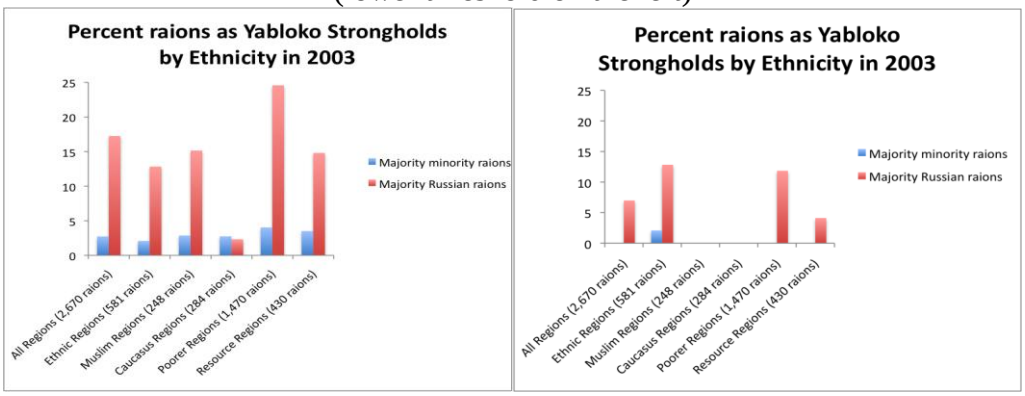


Figure 6.8 demonstrates that the pattern of Yabloko strongholds generally followed ethnic Russian lines in the early 2000s, as it had in the 1990s, but also shows signs of expansion into some majority-minority raions. More than 15% of majority-Russian raions delivered tremendous support to the fragile liberal party, a jump of about five percent over 1999. Similarly, a greater percentage of majority-minority raions became Yabloko strongholds in the early 2000s, nearly doubling, in fact. Therefore, contrary to the findings from existing scholarship, Figure 6.8 reveals that Yabloko was, in fact, able to

"mobilize its core electorate and expand its limited social base" (White 2007: 210). In each regional context, save for in the Caucasus, a higher percentage of majority-Russian than majority-minority raions were bastions of support by a wide margin. Evidence of dramatic expansion is apparent in majority-Russian raions in poorer regions: of these raions, approximately 10% were strongholds in 1999, but Yabloko's share skyrocketed to 25% four years later, which may help explain the LDPR's loss of support in this previously long-standing constituency. It is surprising that Yabloko may have muscled in on the nationalists' territory in poorer regions because, although Yabloko and the LDPR both target the ethnic Russian constituency, the liberal vote is traditionally housed in more prosperous areas while the nationalist vote typically reflects the opposite. Compared to 1999, a higher percentage of majority-minority raions in economically disadvantaged regions also churned out large vote shares for Yabloko. Likewise, Yabloko consolidated support from both majority-Russian and majority-minority raions in ethnic republics. Interestingly, with the shift in thresholds, the percent of both types of raions that were Yabloko strongholds remained nearly unchanged in ethnic republics. Yabloko's improved performance in ethnic republics may have been a result of Kremlin interference on its behalf, as Putin himself commented that he would like to see Yabloko in the Duma and state-run media featured Putin and Yabloko leader Yavlinsky cooperating during the campaign season. In Muslim regions and those in the Caucasus, the percentage of majority-minority raions that were Yabloko strongholds increased from 1999 while the share of majority-Russian raions diminished. In the case of the Caucasus, Yabloko's strongholds in majority-minority raions grew and those in majority-Russian raions dwindled to the point that the balance shifted in favor of majority-minority raions for the first time. Raising the stronghold threshold resulted in Yabloko losing all strongholds in Muslim regions and those in the Caucasus, and majority-minority bastions of support in poorer regions and those reliant on natural resources.

Figure 6.8: Yabloko Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 2003 (lower threshold on the left)



Despite the fact that Figure 6.8 indicates that the party seemingly made modest inroads in a few majority-minority raions, Yabloko's average in majority-minority raions was lower than its raion-level national mean for the first time in 2003, as shown in Table 6.7. In the two elections in the 1990s, these raions delivered average vote shares to the small liberal party that were above its countrywide showing, albeit by a small amount, but, upon United Russia's rise, they handed it vote shares that were less than 50% of its national mean. Save for fraudulent raions, Yabloko performed the worst in majority-minority raions. Descriptive statistics also provide evidence of Yabloko's rout in ethnic republics and Muslim regions: the average vote shares for Yabloko in these areas were merely 62% and 49% of the party's nationwide mean, respectively.

Table 6.7: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of Yabloko's Electoral Performance in the 2003 Legislative Elections									
	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	3.08	1.58	1.47	1.32	1.94	1.48	1.83	3.76	2.66
Min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.061	.031
Max	17.63	9.09	7.92	10.93	11.58	8.51	7.79	17.63	9.77
SD	2.76	1.13	1.52	1.69	1.95	1.83	1.67	3.22	2.15

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, .9.

The findings from the statistical models corroborate Yabloko's failure in ethnic republics: the value for raions housed in ethnic republics was one-tenth the value of the odds for raions located in Russian federal regions. The magnitude of the negative effect was therefore comparable to that in the previous election. Table 6.8 indicates that raions in ethnic republics generated few liberal party strongholds, merely eight percent and less than two percent according to the relaxed and the strict measure. Yabloko thus excelled in the predominantly Russian oblasts and krais, as opposed to the primarily non-Russian ethnic republics.

Table 6.8: Yabloko Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 2003				
	# of Yabloko Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (397 Total)	% of Yabloko Strongholds	# of Yabloko Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (156 Total)	% of Yabloko Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	32	8.06	3	1.92
Russian federal regions	365	91.94	153	98.08
Muslim regions	11	2.77	0	0
Caucasus regions	7	1.76	0	0
Poorer Regions	315	79.35	148	94.87
Natural Resource Regions	42	10.58	10	6.41
Fraudulent raions	7	1.76	1	0.64
Non-Fraudulent raions	390	98.24	155	99.35

Unexpectedly, given the descriptive statistics presented above, Muslim region status did not produce statistically significant results once more, but Yabloko strongholds in Muslim regions were even more scarce than in ethnic republics, with less than two percent and zero by the lower and higher threshold. Overall, in the early 2000s, the political landscape pertaining to ethnic Russian and non-Russian constituencies was in flux to varying degrees for each member of the core party troika as a result of United Russia's presence in the electoral arena. The picture of the KPRF transformed from one that was primarily non-Russian to one that was slowly acquiring ethnic Russian contours. Seemingly numbered were the days in which the Communists were capable of competing in contests of strength with Kremlin favorites and challengers alike by leveraging rival political machines in ethnic minority areas, although the KPRF still enjoyed some residual support. While the Communists struggled to preserve their position, the nationalists entrenched themselves in ethnic Russian areas, which continued to function as the bedrock of the nationalist vote, and also managed to carve out a few isolated pockets of support in majority-minority raions. The LDPR was most likely able to expand into a few majority-minority raions because it was the most Kremlin-friendly opposition party and therefore may have benefited to a limited degree from the Kremlin's machinations. This development in the LDPR's electoral trajectory may help account for the party's higher vote share in 2003 than in the previous election, when the Kremlin had directed its attention toward destroying Fatherland-All Russia rather than potentially boosting its favorite opposition parties. Mirroring the nationalists, Yabloko's path from the Yeltsin era to the Putin era was also marked by a minor increase in ethnic minority support against the backdrop of a larger Russian constituency, but in Yabloko's case the ethnic minority votes were drawn chiefly from raions with larger populations of Indo-Europeans rather than those with sizable non-titular and non-Indo European ethnic minority populations, as was true of the KPRF.

The Urban-rural Divide and Opposition Parties

The dramatic rise of United Russia also affected opposition parties' performance in the countryside. Even when two potential parties of power competed for votes in the countryside, the Communists carved out zones of dominance and the odds of KPRF strongholds were amplified two to four percent based on unit increases in the rural population, but by 2003 the magnitude of the positive effect had diminished, augmenting the odds by a negligible amount to one percent in the lower threshold models and by one percent in the strict specifications. This finding lends substantiation to current scholarship, which suggests, "during the 1990s, the KPRF could count on strong rural support […] Since […] early in Putin's first term, however, an important shift in rural politics occurred, marked by the fact that the KPRF suffered an erosion of its rural electoral support. […] As a result of this dealignment, the KPRF experienced a significant decrease in the number of popular votes and seats in the 2003 Duma election" (Wegren and Konitzer 2007: 1038). Yet, the KRPF still received a modest boost in these areas in the models and descriptive statistics indicate that the party's average in majority-rural areas was nearly one percent higher than its national mean, suggesting that the rural "dealignment" from the KPRF was perhaps short of wholesale (*Ibid*). The erosion of support among the KPRF's base was particularly unexpected because the party had rooted itself more firmly in rural areas from 1995 to 1999.

Scholars have attributed the loss of rural support in 2003 to the fact that the KPRF "did not capture support from the rural cohort that was better off or from those who were adapting to new economic opportunities," nor their traditional base of the most deprived: "the KPRF failed to obtain the support of those who were the most downtrodden and those who had been left behind by reforms, and this trend resonates with the dealignment thesis […] Apparently, the ineffectiveness of the KPRF in defending the interests of the disadvantaged during the 1990s caught up with the party and cost it support as Russian politics entered a new era under Putin" (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 689, 691). The softening of support in the countryside for the Communists, the backbone of the KPRF vote, was one of the most conspicuous changes in electoral dynamics from the Yeltsin era to the Putin era: the decline in rural support was "not only unexpected, but it also ha[d]

major implications for future elections" (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 678). The fact that the most formidable opposition party struggled to retain its key constituency foreshadowed the complete emasculation of the political opposition in elections under United Russia because opposition parties were no longer equipped to compete even for their core constituencies in the presence of a dominant party. As the party that commanded the largest share of Duma seats from 1995 onward and the one with the largest membership and most robust organizational infrastructure, the KPRF had given the party system "vibrancy" and "prevented complete domination by the executive branch" (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 678). In squeezing the Communists out of the countryside to a large degree, thereby eroding their bedrock support and throwing them against the ropes, United Russia succeeded where Our Home is Russia had failed.

Consistent with the modest positive effect revealed in the model results, Figure 6.9 shows a positive relationship between the KPRF's vote share and increasing proportions of rural inhabitants at the raion level, although the association is markedly less steep than in 1999. The two distinct outliers in the upper right quadrant, at the intersection of the countryside and vote shares more than thrice the party's raion-level national mean, were both located in Dagestan; the most enthusiastic urban raion was also found there. Notwithstanding the two most extreme rural outliers, there are discernibly fewer raions in the upper right quadrant than was the case in the late 1990s. As was the case in the prior two elections, the majority of urban raions reporting unusually high vote shares for the Communists were located in Russia's so-called Red Belt.

Figure 6.9: Rural Inhabitants and KPRF's Vote Share in 2003

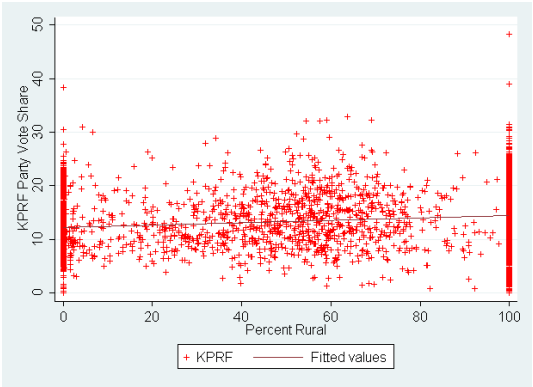
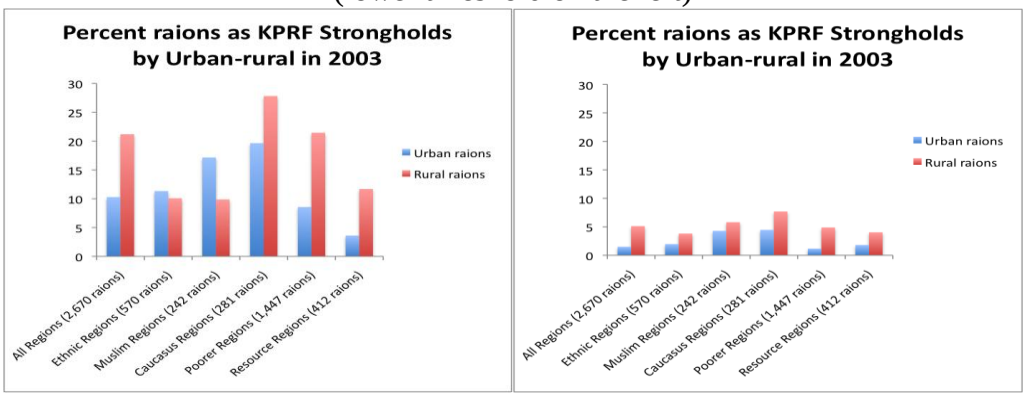


Figure 6.10 portrays a different pattern of support than that which prevailed in the late 1990s, when the Communists enjoyed strongholds in a higher percentage of majority-rural raions than majority-urban raions in each regional context considered. Figure 6.10 reveals more clearly than Figure 6.9 the drop in support in the countryside: just more than 20% of mostly rural raions were bastions of support in 2003, a drop from the nearly 30% captured in 1999. Moreover, the percentage of strongholds in majority-urban and majority-rural raions shifted in favor of the former in ethnic republics and Muslim regions. Indeed, of the rural raions in ethnic republics, Muslim regions, those in the Caucasus, and those dependent on natural resources, the percent that channeled immense support to the Communists was halved, at the least, from 1999 to 2003. Although rural raions in the Caucasus continued to churn out the highest percentage of strongholds in 2003, the plunge from the previous election was extreme, falling from nearly 60% of majority-rural raions to less than 30%. The decline of rural support in ethnic republics, Muslim regions and those in the Caucasus can be attributed chiefly to United Russia's overwhelming presence in these areas, but also to the other parties in the core party troika that made a few limited gains as well. Despite languishing in rural areas in several regional contexts, there is evidence that the Communists carved out more support in the countryside in resource regions, as the percentage that were KPRF strongholds hiked from less than 10% in 1999 to more than that in 2003. The KPRF also captured a higher

percentage of urban raions in ethnic republics and resource regions in 2003. Interestingly, with the shift in thresholds, the pattern of support became unambiguously rural.

Figure 6.10: KPRF Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 2003 (lower threshold on the left)



When faced with a formidable party of power in the 2000s, the KPRF was more or less outmatched in zones that it had locked down in the 1990s: in the countryside, the biggest loses for the KPRF "occurred where […] United Russia made gains relative to the support for the electoral blocs Unity and Fatherland in 1999" (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 685). The KPRF was better positioned to compete with Unity and Fatherland-All Russia in 1999 than United Russia in 2003 because the competing parties of power in the late 1990s fragmented the rural vote rather than providing a vehicle for coalescence around a single party. The KPRF was therefore able to leverage its political machines in the countryside to compete for the rural vote that was essentially up for grabs. With the merger of Unity and Fatherland, however, these areas simply fell into line behind United Russia and the KPRF was taken by surprise.

Alongside the Communists, the nationalists also experienced an erosion of rural support when United Russia was on the scene. The LDPR entrenched itself more thoroughly in the countryside across the 1990s, with unit increases in the rural population augmenting the odds by up to two percent in the late 1990s. By 2003, however, the rural covariate changed signs, producing a negative effect that diminished the odds by one percent in both the relaxed and strict specifications. The nationalist vote therefore became

less rural and more urban for the first time in the early 2000s, pushing into Yabloko's heartland. Moreover, the LDPR's showing in majority-rural areas was sub-average by a slight amount. Of the core party troika, the Communists and nationalists were the most well positioned to succeed in the countryside, but only the Communists managed to preserve a degree of the support they enjoyed in the 1990s into the 2000s. Thus the rural voter was far from "'open game' to be wood and won over by alternative parties" in 2003, as the results indicate that fewer parties, i.e. the KPRF and United Russia, captured the rural vote than in the previous election, when the Communists, nationalists, Unity and Fatherland-All Russia carved up the countryside during open season (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 678). Despite enjoying perhaps a somewhat privileged position among opposition parties as the Kremlin's favorite, the LDPR proved patently incapable of safeguarding gains made in the decade prior and became yet another casualty of United Russia's electoral spree in the countryside. Figure 6.11 corroborates the statistical results and, in sharp contrast to the previous two elections, shows an inverse association between the LDPR's vote share and the proportion of rural inhabitants in a raion. Of the top 50 raions that churned out zealous support for the ultra-nationalists, a full 60% were majority-urban and were located in the oblasts of Amur, Kirov, Murmansk and Magadansk, as well as Primorsky Krai and Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug. The ardent rural raions were found in Sakhalin and Kurgan Oblasts, and Khabarovsk and Krasnoyarsk Krais.

Figure 6.11: Rural Inhabitants and LDPR's Vote Share in 2003

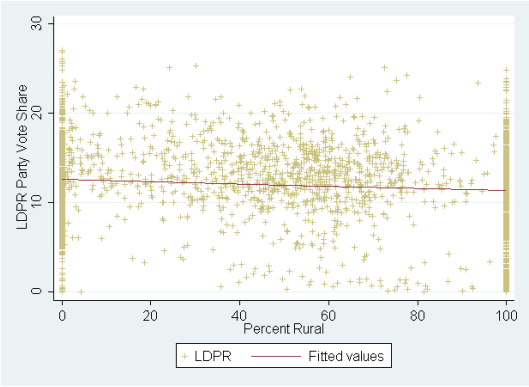
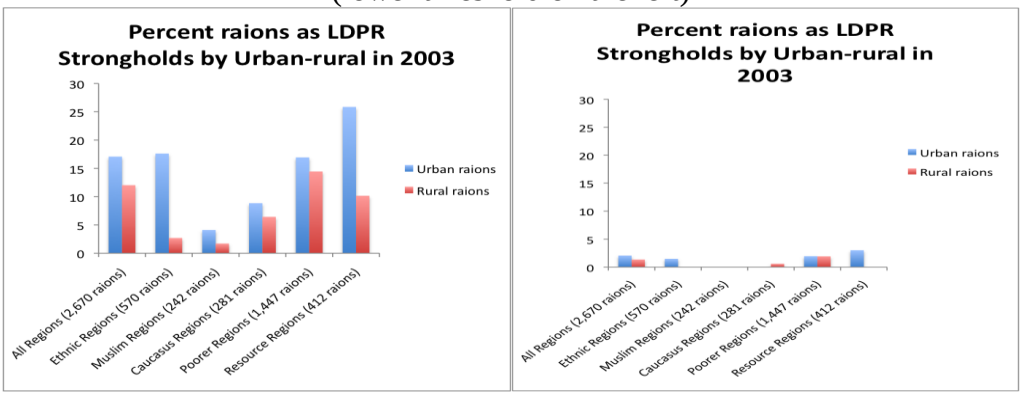


Figure 6.12 reveals the extent to which the ground in the countryside slipped out from under the nationalists' feet: in the previous election, the pattern of support was near completely rural with the exception of ethnic republics, but by 2003, the contours of the nationalist vote had become unambiguously urban. Of all urban and rural raions across the country's expanse, the percentage that were LDPR strongholds ballooned by five percent in the former when compared to the previous election and diminished commensurately in the latter. In the countryside, a smaller percent channeled high vote shares to the LDPR in ethnic republics, economically-deprived regions and those dependent on natural resources. The decline in ethnic republics and resource regions was the most severe: of rural raions in those two contexts, the share that were nationalist strongholds plunged by more than five percent and was cut in half, respectively. There is evidence that the LDPR adapted rather successfully to United Russia's encroachment in the countryside and spread its tentacles into urban areas to compensate for the erosion of rural support. For example, of urban raions in resource regions, the percentage that were bastions of support hiked from 15% in 1999 to nearly double that in 2003. The party also captured a more sizable share of urban raions in ethnic republics by roughly five percent. Unexpectedly, given United Russia's virtual occupation of Muslim regions and those in the Caucasus, in both regional environments a higher percentage of urban and rural raions alike delivered abnormally large vote shares to the LDPR. The LDPR had no strongholds in Muslim regions in 1999, but nearly 5% of the urban raions there were bastions of support in 2003. Of the urban and rural raions in the Caucasus, the share of nationalist strongholds increased from roughly two percent in both in 1999 to nearly 10% in urban raions and more than five percent in rural raions. Interestingly, the LDPR was incapable of expanding its share of urban and rural raions in the area ripest for deeper nationalist inroads, i.e. poorer regions. With the shift from the relaxed to the strict threshold, rural strongholds in ethnic republics and resource regions evaporated, urban bastions of support in the Caucasus vanished and strongholds of either type fell away in Muslim regions.

Figure 6.12: LDPR Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 2003 (lower threshold on the left)

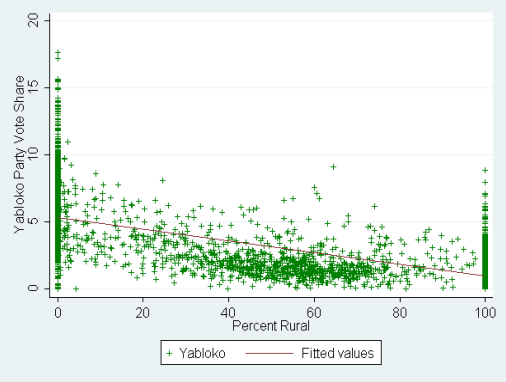


Thus, one of the most consequential shifts from the perspective the Communists and nationalists that occurred with the emergence and consolidation of a successful party of power was the general dealignment of rural voters. Rural areas served as perhaps the single most important pockets of support for the Communists in the 1990s and one in which the LDPR began to prime and make fresh inroads in the late 1990s, but United Russia's infiltration sent a seismic shock wave throughout the countryside and swiftly brought these areas into the dominant party's fold. Without doubt, it is not coincidental that United Russia targeted rural areas as a means to achieve its electoral ends because they offered an environment ripe for electoral manipulation and patronage politics, away from the prying eyes of electoral observers and opposition party representatives.

The dealignment of rural areas from the Communists and nationalists pushed these parties into the urban centers, crowding Yabloko's electoral enclaves with formidable opponents. However, as the party with the strongest urban base, Yabloko was well positioned to compete in these areas with the KPRF and LDPR, who were both tenderfoots in urban areas despite being seasoned in seeking votes in the countryside. As expected, the rural covariate shrunk the odds of a liberal stronghold, diminishing by six to seven percent across the board in the lower threshold models and by seven percent in the strict specifications. The magnitude of the negative effect was roughly comparable to that in the late 1990s. Thus, Yabloko excelled once more in more urban raions, which offered

a crucial refuge from dominant party incursions. Figure 6.13 appears strikingly similar to the corresponding scatterplots from the 1995 and 1999 election and again shows a steep inverse relationship between Yabloko's vote share and the proportion of rural inhabitants. Compared to 1999, there are fewer outliers in partially or predominantly rural raions: indeed, only a handful of raions of this type delivered vote shares that exceeded the five percent threshold of representation to the small liberal party. Of the top 50 most enthusiastic raions, 100% were purely urban, and located primarily in the federal cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg. The most zealous predominantly rural raions were found in Sverdlovsk Oblast and the Republic of Karelia.

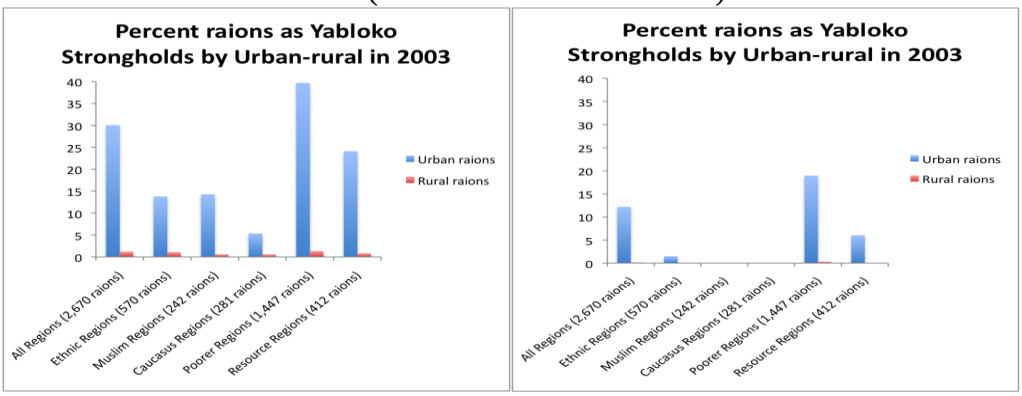
Figure 6.13: Rural Inhabitants and Yabloko's Vote Share in 2003



The contours of Yabloko's strongholds continued to follow urban lines in the early 2000s, as evident in Figure 6.14: in each regional environment, a higher percentage of predominantly urban raions than rural areas again delivered high vote shares to the fragile liberal party, but subtle fluctuations also manifested. For example, the percentage of urban raions that were strongholds increased by roughly five percent from the previous election, indicating that Yabloko cast a wider net around urban areas. The most conspicuous zone of expansion was in urban raions in economically disadvantaged regions, which were outside of Yabloko's traditional base located in wealthier areas: in 1999, just greater than 15% were strongholds, but by 2003, that percentage skyrocketed to 40%. Yabloko thus made sizable gains in precisely those areas that previously

functioned as part of the backbone of the LDPR. Interestingly, a higher percentage, albeit slight, of rural raions in Muslim regions and the Caucasus became strongholds in 2003, an increase from zero in 1999. Notwithstanding Yabloko's surge in urban raions overall and under conditions of economic deprivation, the party lost ground in urban areas situated in United Russia's heartland, i.e. ethnic republics and the Caucasus. The percentage of urban raions in ethnic republics that were bastions of support fell from more than 20% in 1999 to less than 15% in 2003. Urban raions in the Caucasus dropped off more precipitously, plummeting from the more than 15% that were strongholds in the last election of the 1990s to roughly 5% in the early 2000s. Urban raions in resource dependent regions also drifted from Yabloko's reach from 1999 to 2003, slumping from nearly 35% to roughly one-quarter. Likewise, the share of rural raions that delivered high levels of support to Yabloko in these areas fell as well.

Figure 6.14: Yabloko Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 2003 (lower threshold on the left)



Thus, Yabloko managed to preserve to some degree key pockets of support in urban areas, despite the fact that it was without a doubt the feeblest of the core party troika and the reds and browns had begun to muscle in on its most treasured turf. Yabloko also felt the ripples produced by United Russia's consolidation of countryside support: with the Communists and nationalists forced retreat from rural areas, urban centers transformed into the new battleground for opposition parties and, consequently, they turned their

energies toward cannibalizing each other, perilously fracturing the urban vote to the benefit of United Russia.

Regional Geographic and Socioeconomic Indicators and Opposition Parties

Opposition parties were also affected variably by the rise of United Russia in the Caucasus. Under the Yeltsin administration, the KPRF enjoyed a distinct advantage in the Caucasus with odds soaring by dozens to hundreds of times. In numerous instances, the magnitude of the KPRF's boost was significantly larger than that experienced by the enfeebled Our Home is Russia. United Russia's presence, however, ended unceremoniously the Communists' heyday in the area. In 2003, this parameter did not influence the occurrence of KPRF strongholds, representing a marked deterioration from the 1990s. Descriptive statistics point in the same direction: the KPRF's average in the Caucasus was six percent higher than its raion-level national mean in the late 1990s but was merely one percent higher in 2003. Still, of all the raion and regional environments considered, the KPRF's showing in the Caucasus was the best, relative to its raion-level national average. Furthermore, far fewer Communist strongholds were located in the Caucasus than was the case in 1999, 16% according to the lower threshold and roughly 20% by the strict measure, the latter plummeting by more than half. With the center-periphery conflicts in the Caucasus settled decisively in favor of the Kremlin, these regions fell in line squarely behind United Russia and the KPRF was left out in the cold. Although the Communists would not benefit from a protest vote in 2003 as may have been the case in the mid- and late-1990s when the central government waged brutal military campaigns in the area, the decline of the Communists in the Caucasus was far from a foregone conclusion before the contest because the KPRF had well-oiled channels for delivering patronage resources, acquired from its Soviet-era predecessor and through the party's long tenure in the Duma post-transition, and well established political machines. Surely, the KPRF faced a daunting challenge of preserving its territory in the Caucasus when confronted with a powerhouse party like United Russia, but the Communists also failed to maintain the political resources that were at their disposal,

namely political machines with the capacity to at least compete with, even if not beat, the dominant party.

While United Russia's ascent spelled catastrophe for the KPRF in the Caucasus, the LDPR fared better in the area than in the previous election: the shift from raions located elsewhere to those in Caucasian regions plunged the odds by 99% in 1999 but failed to achieve statistical significance in 2003, signifying an improved electoral atmosphere for the nationalists. However, the LDPR's showing in the Caucasus was yet again sub-average, falling further below its raion-level national average than four years prior. Merely five percent and two percent of LDPR strongholds were found in the Caucasus in the early 2000s.

Yabloko experienced the opposite trajectory in the Caucasus: the distinction between Caucasian raions and others did not exercise a systematic effect on liberal strongholds in 1999 but the odds tumbled by 90 to 95% in 2003. Yabloko suffered acutely, capturing an average in the Caucasus was nearly 50% of its countrywide mean. The percent of Yabloko strongholds in the Caucasus was merely two according to the relaxed threshold and the party had no bastions of support according to the strict measure.

With drastic changes to the party system in 2003, the capacity of opposition parties to maintain their strongholds in economically disadvantaged areas, in the case of the KPRF and LDPR, or better off regions, in the case of Yabloko, varied considerably. The odds of KPRF strongholds were once again damaged by unit increases in gross regional product, falling by more than 50% in a lower specification. For the first time, however, the minority of KPRF strongholds was found in poorer regions, specifically 49% according to the relaxed threshold and 46% according to the strict measure. The share of Communist party strongholds in economically deprived areas winnowed considerably when compared to the mid-1990s: in 1995, 69% and 73% by the lower and higher threshold, respectively, of KPRF bastions of support were housed in these areas. Regions with levels of economic development above the median reported average vote shares that were roughly half a percent lower than the Communists' raion-level national mean, indicating an improvement over previous contests when the hit absorbed by the

party was between one and a half percent and two and a half percent. Collectively, these data strongly suggest that support for the Communists from economically disadvantaged areas eroded, chiefly because United Russia targeted these constituencies with promises of social and economic deliverables but also because the KPRF itself was unable to translate the misery of the market that still affected segments of the population into votes (Wegren and Konitzer 2006). Drawing on survey results, existing scholarship found, "among the respondents with the lowest incomes, the KPRF was distinctly unpopular" (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 690). Combined with the rather sudden dealignment of rural voters, the erosion of support in poorer areas undoubtedly accounted for a large part of the halving of the KPRF's vote share in 2003, rendering the impression that the KPRF was in its death throes after having been emasculated by a party of power with a capacity not seen since the days of the CPSU.

Broadly following its trajectory in the 1990s, the LDPR again experienced setbacks in regions with higher levels of economic development, but to the least extent compared to the 1990s: unit increases in this covariate diminished the odds by 21 to 39% across the board in the lower threshold models and by 35% in a strict specification. The magnitude of the negative effect was therefore notably lesser, compared to the 90% drop from the previous contest and the more than 50% plunge in the mid-1990s. Nevertheless, the nationalists secured more strongholds in poorer areas than in previous contests according to the lower threshold: in 1995, roughly 49% of LDPR strongholds were found in these locales; four years later, approximately 54% were located there, and in 2003, 60% of the nationalists' bastions of support were situated in conditions of economic deprivation. The percentage of higher-level strongholds tapered off, however, from two-thirds in 1999 to approximately 62% in 2003. For the first time, the LDPR's average in economically developed areas was marginally higher than the party's raion-level national mean. Indeed, only in economically advantaged regions was the nationalists' average vote share actually higher than the party's countrywide mean. Thus, the nationalists experienced a fate similar to the Communists in poorer areas: in 2003, there was a

marked softening of support in precisely those areas that had formed one of the party's core constituencies in the 1990s.

Alongside the KPRF and LDPR, Yabloko also struggled to maintain its footing in areas that were once relatively sure bets, albeit in areas better off rather than economically depressed. In the previous election, the odds of a Yabloko stronghold were amplified by approximately 70 to 75% based on increases in regional economic advancement but in 2003, the party received a more limited boost, between 25 to 32% across the lower threshold models and between 28 to 56% across the strict specifications. Yabloko's average in economically developed regions was still marginally higher than its raion-level national mean in 2003, but the share of strongholds that were located in raions nested within poorer regions skyrocketed from roughly 20% and 21% according to the relaxed and strict threshold in 1999 to about 80% and 95%, respectively, in 2003. Indeed, never before had the majority of the party's strongholds been located in poorer, rather than wealthier, regions. Interestingly, despite the fact that the economy was booming and Yabloko's social base was historically rooted in areas that were better off economically, the party seemed to make new inroads in areas outside of their traditional base. As a niche party representing the urban intelligentsia, primarily in Moscow and St. Petersburg, the expansion of Yabloko's social base into poorer areas muddled the party's identity and may have damaged its ability to preserve its core electorate in future elections. In short, the respective constituencies of the core party troika were in flux in 2003 with regards to socioeconomic welfare at the regional level and future elections would reveal whether these trends continued or were ultimately reversed.

A region's reliance on natural resources produced results generally consistent with those from before United Russia's entry into the electoral fray, but shifts on the margins were also evident. Similar to the finding from 1999, the value for raions situated in resource dependent regions were approximately one-tenth the value of the odds for raions located in more diversified regions. Descriptive statistics suggest that the KPRF improved on its performance over 1999 in resource-rich regions: its average in these areas was roughly two percent less than its raion-level national mean in 2003, a

considerable gain from the six percent loss it experienced in the previous election. Furthermore, a higher percentage of Communist strongholds were found in resource regions according to both thresholds: the party doubled its share of strongholds from four percent in 1999 to eight percent in 2003 according to the lower measure, and increased its share of higher-level strongholds from zero to four percent, respectively. The Communist presence in resource dependent regions was therefore the strongest it had ever been in 2003.

The LDPR's trajectory in resource regions remained more or less unchanged from the 1990s. The shift from raions in diversified regions to those in resource abundant regions did not exercise a systematic effect on the occurrence of nationalist strongholds, as was true in 1999 as well. Yet again, the LDPR's average in resource regions was marginally lower than its countrywide take. Subtle shifts emerged in terms of the share of nationalist strongholds that were located in these regions: while the percentage of lower-level strongholds fell from 20% in 1999 to 18% in 2003, the share of higher-level bastions of support more than doubled, from 5% to 11%.

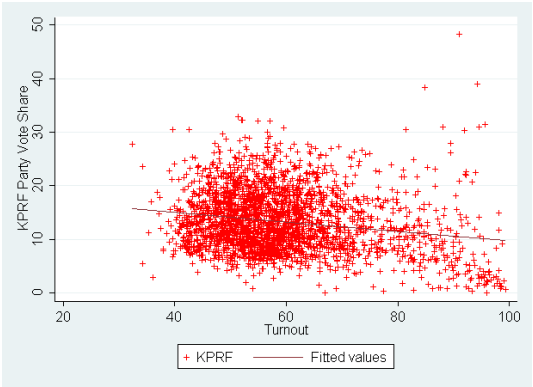
From the mid- to late-1990s, Yabloko carved out new pockets of support in resource-rich regions and consolidated this constituency in the early 2000s. In 1999, the odds of a liberal stronghold hiked three to five times based on resource-region status; in 2003, the magnitude of the positive effect was considerably greater, with odds skyrocketing to nearly 12 times in a strict specification. Descriptive statistics, on the other hand, paint a somewhat different picture. For example, Yabloko's mean in resource regions was below its national showing, whereas its average was above its raion-level national level four years prior. Furthermore, the share of liberal strongholds in resource abundant regions dwindled according to both thresholds, from 14% in 1999 to 11% in 2003 by the relaxed measure, and from 20% to six percent, respectively, according to the strict threshold.

Electoral Manipulation and Opposition Parties

The effects produced by abnormally high voter turnout, used to assess electoral manipulation, showcases the how quickly the new party of power reconfigured the

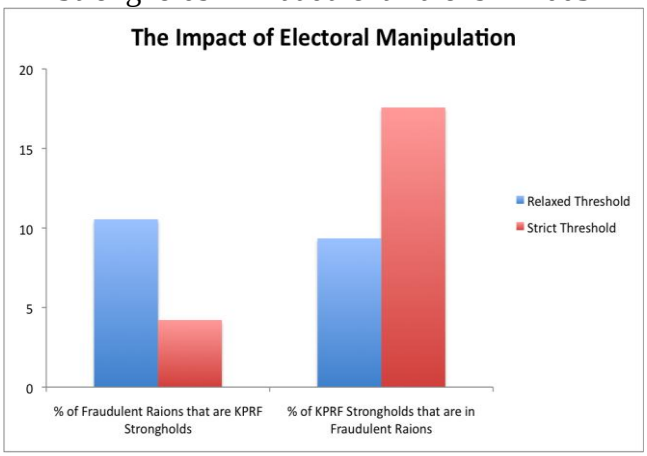
electoral arena to its own benefit and at the expense of all others. In the mid-1990s, the KPRF tangled with the feeble Our Home is Russia for control of manipulated raions and the Communists scored electoral windfalls as a result. In the late 1990s, however, Unity and Fatherland-All Russia's entry into the political fray complicated matters for the Communists in these areas, but the KPRF was ultimately able to preserve its zones of dominance and still captured a boost in the 1999 election, with odds of a stronghold jumping by two times in fraudulent raions. But United Russia was clearly more than the sum of its parts and, although 2003 was the first election that it contested, the party was able to lock down fraudulent raions with remarkable efficiency. The days when rival parties carved up manipulated raions were numbered at best. With the shift from the non-fraudulent to the manipulated class, the odds of a Communist bastion of support plummeted by 56 to 63% across the board in the lower threshold models. In 1999, the party's average in fraudulent raions was higher than its nationwide showing by roughly one percent, but in 2003, its mean in these areas was approximately two percent less. Figure 6.15 reveals the dramatic shift in the KPRF's electoral fortunes in high turnout raions: there is an unmistakably inverse association between the KPRF's vote share and voter turnout in 2003 and raions populating the upper right quadrant, where unusually high political participation coincides with electoral windfalls, are few and far between. The outlier raions that reported close to full political participation and high vote shares for the Communists were located chiefly in Dagestan, Orenburg Oblast, which is located along the border with Kazakhstan, and Belgorod Oblast, which is located along the border with Ukraine, with a smattering from the oblasts of Orlov, Saratov, Novosibirsk, and the ethnic republic of North Ossetia.

Figure 6.15: Voter Turnout and KPRF's Vote Share in 2003



As evident in Figure 6.16, the share of KPRF strongholds that were found in manipulated raions was essentially halved compared to the previous election according to both thresholds, from roughly 20% in 1999 to 9% in 2003 by the lower measure and from approximately one-third to 18%, respectively. Yet some patterns remained from the late 1990s, namely the percentage of strongholds that were in these areas doubled with the shift from the relaxed to the strict threshold. The fact that the KPRF's vote share was halved from 1999 to 2003 and a fair share of the party's strongholds were still housed in fraudulent raions in 2003 suggested that the Communists would face an even tougher time in these areas and beyond in future Duma contests, when United Russia was more consolidated and effectively roped these raions off from opposition party access. Of the nearly 380 raions that reported turnout at least one standard deviation above raion-level national turnout, just over one-tenth delivered high votes shares to United Russia's archenemy according to the lower threshold. Although the Communists wrestled with Unity, Fatherland-All Russia, and the LDPR, albeit to a lesser extent, for control of manipulated raions in 1999, the KPRF captured stronghold-level support in a higher share of fraudulent raions, nearly 25%, than in 2003. When the stronghold threshold was raised, the percentage of manipulated raions that channeled immense support to the Communists dropped by more than half, to less than 5%.

Figure 6.16: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are KPRF Strongholds vs. Percent KPRF Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 2003



Throughout the 1990s, the KPRF was the party with the greatest capacity to challenge the Kremlin's party of power, at least in part by leveraging its deeply embedded political machines to mobilize voters and engage in electoral manipulation on its behalf. Despite retaining its position as the most formidable challenger to the emerging dominant party in the early 2000s, the Communists were all but devastated in manipulated areas. The story of the KPRF's demise in these areas is one partly of United Russia's tremendous capability, but also one of a missed opportunity vis-à-vis the KPRF itself. The KPRF had the political clout, patronage resources, party infrastructure, and know-how necessary to maintain its political machines, but missed the boat when such illicit methods and machinations became vital to the party's continued survival in a dominant party regime.

The LDPR faced a fate similar to the KPRF in fraudulent raions in 2003, but the nationalists' general performance in these areas was inferior to the Communists, even when the LDPR did manage to scoop up some strongholds in 1999. As such, the fact that the LDPR lost ground in manipulated raions in the early 2000s affected the party's general performance less than the KPRF's. Before United Russia's rise to power, the odds of a nationalist stronghold hiked two to three times in manipulated raions but the LDPR's fortunes changed drastically in 2003 and the odds plunged by 53 to 67% across the lower threshold models. If the nationalists profited in manipulated raions as a result of the Kremlin's generosity in the previous election, as speculated, the central authorities

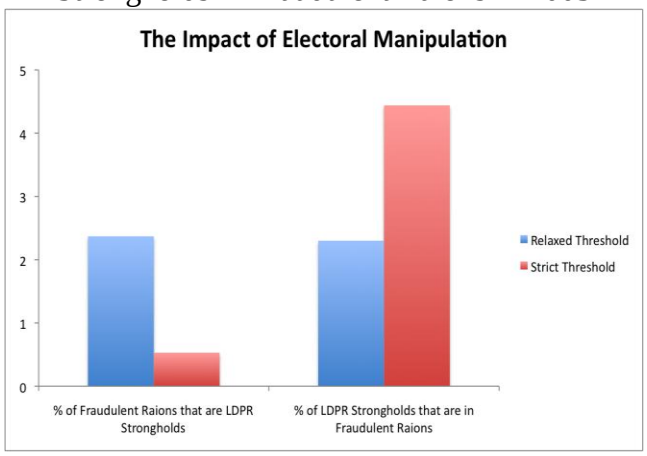
clearly reassessed the political landscape and neglected to provide the same level of assistance to the Kremlin-friendly nationalists in 2003. With United Russia in the picture, the LDPR would be forced to fight on its own to remain in the Duma. Moreover, the party's average in high turnout raions was approximately five percent less than its countrywide mean. Figure 6.17 shows the steep inverse relationship between the nationalists' vote share and the level of voter turnout in a raion. The raions reporting zealous support for the LDPR and unusually high turnout were located in Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug, Arkhangelsk Oblast in northern Russia, and the oblasts of Kurgan, Novosibirsk, Orenburg, and Tyumen, which are all found along the border with Kazakhstan.

Figure 6.17: Voter Turnout and LDPR's Vote Share in 2003

The extent to which support for the nationalists deteriorated in high turnout raions is also revealed in Figure 6.18. Compared to the late 1990s, the percentage of LDPR strongholds that were housed in fraudulent areas dropped immensely, from roughly nine percent to about two percent according to the lower threshold, and from approximately 17% to four percent according to the strict measure. Of the raions across Russia reporting extraordinarily high voter turnout, a small share delivered high vote shares to the nationalists, less than three percent and less than one percent, according to the relaxed and strict threshold, respectively. In 1999, just greater than one-tenth of fraudulent raions

were lower-level LDPR strongholds; thus, the share carved out by the nationalists fell sharply.

Figure 6.18: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are LDPR Strongholds vs. Percent LDPR Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 2003



In contrast to the KPRF, which was at least partly responsible for its poor performance in manipulated raions in 2003, the breakdown in support for the nationalists in these areas was most likely due to the withdrawal of Kremlin support for the party, rather than negligence in terms of party building. The fact that the LDPR ever captured electoral windfalls in these areas was the product of its cozy relationship with the Kremlin because the party lacked the infrastructural resources necessary to carry out widespread manipulation on its behalf; therefore, when United Russia came to the fore, the Kremlin's machinations in the electoral arena were rationalized to the benefit of the dominant party and the nationalists were overlooked. Without the Kremlin's implicit backing, the LDPR would struggle to maintain even a nominal presence in high turnout areas.

Surprisingly, given the fragility of the party and the sizable negative effect found vis-à-vis the KPRF and the LDPR, the odds of a Yabloko stronghold were not systematically affected by the shift from non-manipulated raions to the fraudulent class. This finding was, however, consistent with the model results from the previous election. Yet Yabloko's average showing in raions suspected for electoral malfeasance was nearly two percent less than its countrywide mean. Despite the lack of a statistical effect, when

vote share and turnout were both leveraged in their continuous forms, rather than dichotomously as in the multilevel models, an inverse association between Yabloko's vote share and the level of political participation is apparent, as shown in Figure 6.19. Only one raion that was coded as fraudulent churned out support for Yabloko that met the strict measure for stronghold, which was just shy of a nine percent vote share in 2003; this raion was found in Kamchatka Oblast on the Kamchatka Peninsula in the Russian Far East and was rather unusual in that it was a stronghold for neither United Russia, nor the KPRF, nor the LDPR. Unexpectedly, Yabloko was the only party to capture stronghold-level support there. High turnout raions that met the relaxed measure for Yabloko's strongholds were located in the city of Moscow, Sakhalin Oblast, and unexpectedly, the ethnic republics of Dagestan, Ingushetia, and Bashkortostan.

Figure 6.19: Voter Turnout and Yabloko's Vote Share in 2003

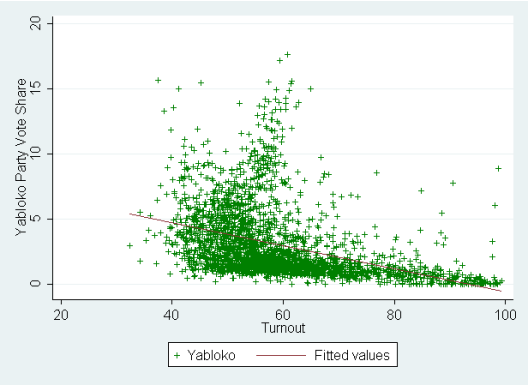
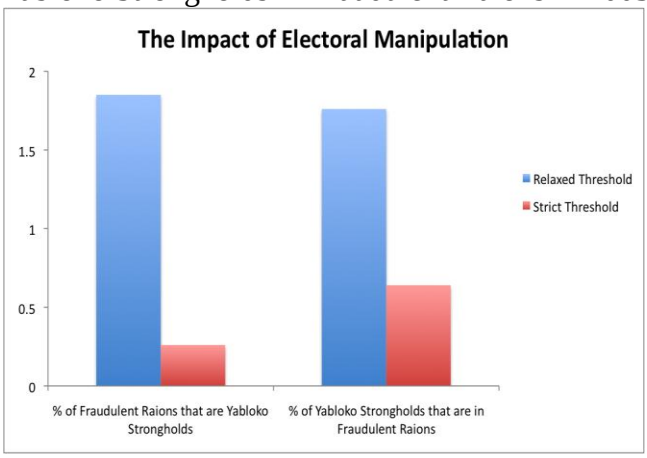


Figure 6.20 reveals that Yabloko strongholds were few and far between in manipulated raions, indeed, less than two percent and less than one percent, according to the lower and higher threshold, respectively. The share of strongholds in high turnout areas decreased sharply with the shift in thresholds in 2003, whereas it had increased sharply in 1999. Unexpectedly, of the hundreds of fraudulent raions, the share that were Yabloko strongholds actually doubled in 2003 from 1999 in relation to the relaxed threshold. However, the percentage that reported vote shares high enough to surpass the strict threshold fell precipitously compared to the last contest.

Figure 6.20: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are Yabloko Strongholds vs. Percent Yabloko Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 2003



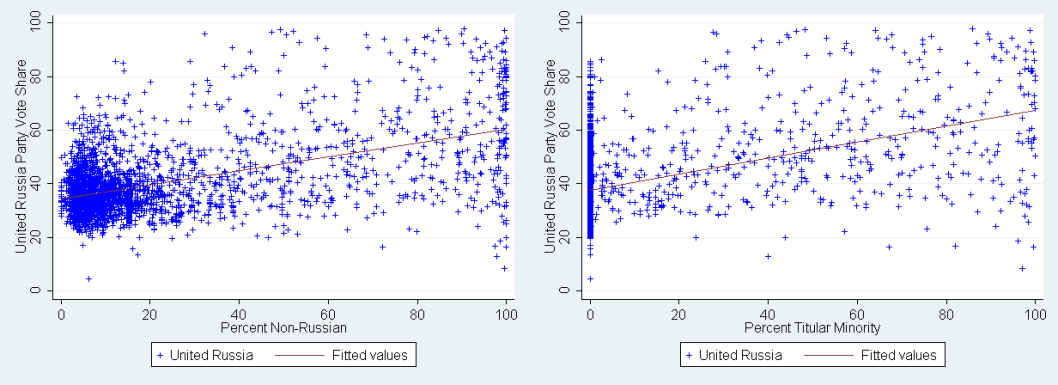
Since Yabloko had never enjoyed a systematic advantage in high turnout raions, as was the case for the KPRF and the LDPR, United Russia's tacit objective of establishing a monopoly over these areas undoubtedly affected the small liberal party the least.

Ethnicity and the Dominant Party

Out of the starting gate, United Russia wasted little time and locked down areas with geographically concentrated ethnic minorities to the greatest degree of any party. All three covariates assessing ethnic composition at the raion level produced robust and positive results. With unit increases in the percent non-Russian covariate, the odds of a dominant party stronghold were augmented by approximately three to four percent across all of the relaxed threshold models and hiked three to roughly six percent across the board in the strict specifications. Similarly, higher proportions of titular minorities amplified the odds by two percent in a lower threshold model and by three to four percent in the upper measure models. Finally, percent increases in the other minority population lifted the odds by two to four percent in the relaxed models and by three to approximately four percent in the strict models. Before United Russia's birth, raions with denser populations of ethnic minorities channeled immense support to Our Home is Russia, Unity, Fatherland-All Russia, and the resilient KPRF. But as the undeniable heir to the party of power throne, United Russia generated a slipstream and these raions were pulled

along behind it. Figure 6.21 demonstrates that United Russia's vote share soared with denser populations of ethnic minorities of any kind. The majority of raions that churned out tremendous support for United Russia had predominantly ethnic minority populations and was located chiefly in the ethnic republics of Chechnya, Dagestan, Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Mordovia, Tuva and Kabardino-Balkaria. United Russia also captured immense vote shares from raions with majority Russian populations, but these raions were also mostly located in the aforementioned ethnic republics, rather than in oblasts or krais that are populated largely by ethnic Russians. The cluster in the upper right quadrant of the scatterplot pertaining to other minorities reveals that these raions, delivering roughly 80% vote shares to United Russia, were located almost exclusively in Dagestan, indicating that these raions were comprised primarily of non-titular minority, but also non-Indo European, groups. In capturing stronghold level support from raions with non-titular and non-Indo European populations, such as those in Dagestan, the dominant party and the non-parliamentary Yabloko surprisingly shared the same constituency, although United Russia patently outshone the liberals in these areas. The most zealous raion, composed primarily of titular minorities, was found in Chechnya and reported an astonishing 97.96% vote share for United Russia. Ten raions registered support for the dominant party in excess of 95%; of these, 70% were majority-minority raions and the remaining 30% were majority-Russian. Of the twenty raions that reported vote shares between 90 and 95%, 95% were majority-minority raions.

Figure 6.21: Non-Russian Minorities and United Russia's Vote Share in 2003



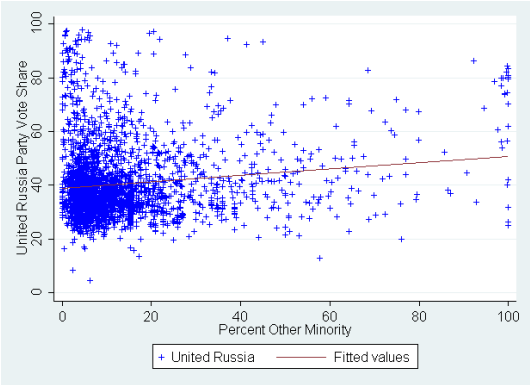
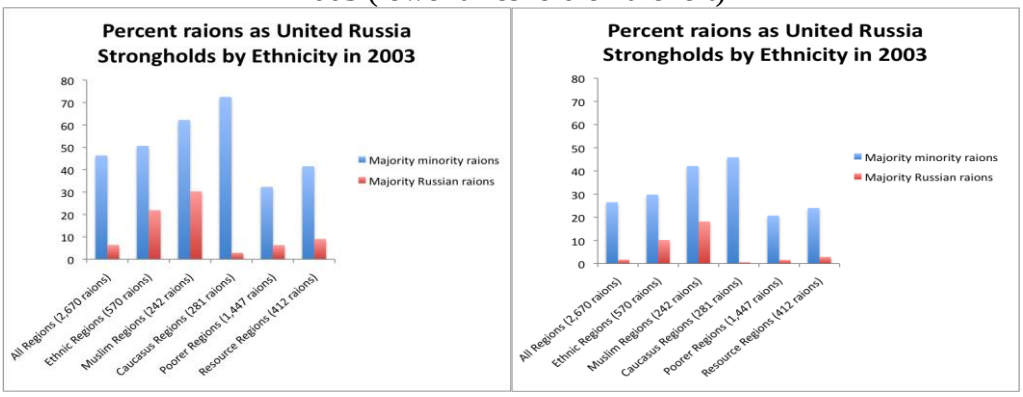


Figure 6.22 provides further substantiation of the ethnic minority pattern of support for the emerging dominant party: the percentage of majority-minority raions that delivered enormous vote shares to United Russia eclipsed the share of majority-Russian raions in each regional environment and this pattern endured across thresholds. Of all the majority-minority raions across Russia, nearly half were United Russia strongholds according to the relaxed threshold, and nearly 30% according to the strict measure. The share of majority Russian raions that reported similar enthusiasm for the Kremlin's pick was far lower, indeed less than 10% and less than 5%, respectively. Majority-minority raions in ethnic republics, Muslim regions, and those in the Caucasus were the most ardent, as more than half, greater than 60%, and upwards of 70%, respectively, registered unusually strong support. On the other hand, those in economically disadvantaged regions and resource dependent regions appeared apathetic in comparison because just over 30% and greater than 40% acted as lower-level United Russia strongholds. The percentage of

majority-Russian raions in ethnic republics and Muslim regions that were bastions of support was also higher than in poorer regions and those with abundant natural resource endowments: roughly 20% and approximately 30%, compared to less than 10% each for the latter two. Interestingly, given surging support from majority-minority raions in the Caucasus, the percentage of majority-Russian raions that were United Russia strongholds was the least of any regional context investigated. Compared to Unity and Fatherland-All Russia in 1999, a higher percentage of majority-minority raions in ethnic republics, the Caucasus, and poorer regions were United Russia strongholds, but a lower percentage were bastions of support in Muslim regions and resource rich regions. In terms of majority-Russian raions, a greater share of those in ethnic republics and Muslim regions delivered high vote shares to United Russia compared to Unity and Fatherland-All Russia before, but a lower share in the Caucasus, poorer regions, and resource regions did likewise.

Figure 6.22: United Russia Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 2003 (lower threshold on the left)



Descriptive statistics from Table 6.9 lend additional evidence of United Russia's electoral feat in majority-minority raions: the party's average in these areas was a full 15% higher than its raion-level national mean. Relative to each party's nationwide average, United Russia established a firmer grip over majority-minority raions than had the two parties that tangled for party of power status in 1999, as Fatherland's advance was limited to a three percent increase. Furthermore, although United Russia's party of power predecessor

in 1995 also excelled in raions with denser populations of ethnic minorities, Our Home is Russia's boost in majority-minority raions was merely two percent. Thus, the degree of these parties' dominance in ethnic minority areas paled in comparison to United Russia's in the early 2000s. The nascent dominant party also outstripped its national performance in regions with geographically concentrated ethnic minorities, namely ethnic republics and Muslim regions. For example, United Russia's mean showing in ethnic republics was more than 13% higher than its countrywide average and its performance in Muslim regions was the best of any raion or regional context, skyrocketing approximately 21% higher. Of the two parties that merged to form United Russia before the 2003 contest, the quickly consolidating dominant party looked more like Fatherland-All Russia than Unity according to these data: Fatherland's bump in ethnic republics was 10% and was 21% in Muslim regions in 1999. In the mid-1990s, Our Home is Russia profited to a greater degree than United Russia in these regions relative to its raion-level national average, with a mean that was nearly double in ethnic republics and more than double in Muslim regions, but Our Home's countrywide mean was paltry compared to United Russia's. Indeed, United Russia's raion-level national average in 2003 was more than four times greater than Our Home's in 1995. These considerations bring to light the stark differences in performance between the anemic party of power in 1995 and the remarkably successful one that emerged in 2003.

Table 6.9: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of United Russia's Electoral Performance in the 2003 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	40.49	43.72	55.48	58.80	53.82	61.43	46.87	39.10	45.94
Min	4.44	4.44	8.21	8.21	8.21	8.21	8.21	16.97	16.96
Max	97.96	97.96	97.96	97.96	97.96	97.96	97.96	97.32	97.32
SD	13.85	15.77	19.54	19.55	19.15	19.79	19.32	12.75	17.23

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, .9.

The model results also demonstrate United Russia's prowess in ethnic republics and Muslim regions in its early days. The value for raions located in ethnic republics was 39 to 152 times higher than the value of the odds for raions nested within Russian federal regions in the relaxed threshold models and was between 24 to 162 times higher in the strict specifications. In the 1995 election, no party was able to establish monopoly control over the ethnic republics, as the feeble Our Home is Russia wrestled with the KPRF and both parties ultimately earned electoral dividends for their efforts. In 1999, on the other hand, Fatherland-All Russia flexed its muscle in these regions and hermetically sealed off these areas from intruders, including its party of power rival Unity. United Russia thus preserved the dominance in ethnic republics that Fatherland had secured. Astonishingly, more than two-thirds of United Russia's strongholds were located in ethnic republics by the lower threshold, and upwards of 86% by the higher measure, as reflected in Table 6.10.

Table 6.10: United Russia Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 2003

	# of United Russia Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (346 Total)	% of United Russia Strongholds	# of United Russia Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (154 Total)	% of United Russia Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	235	67.92	133	86.36
Russian federal regions	111	32.08	21	13.64
Muslim regions	140	40.46	94	61.04
Caucasus regions	84	24.28	51	33.12
Poorer Regions	143	41.33	61	39.61
Natural Resource Regions	93	26.88	48	31.17
Fraudulent raions	222	64.16	132	85.71
Non-Fraudulent raions	124	35.84	22	14.29

United Russia scored electoral windfalls in Muslim regions in 2003: the shift from the reference group to the indicator group magnified the odds by 22 to 184 times across the relaxed models, and by 53 to 786 times in the strict specifications. Paralleling the

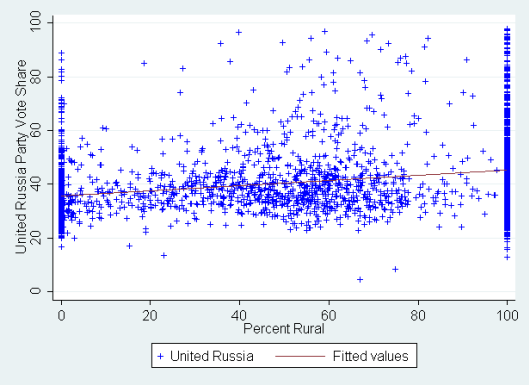
dynamics prevailing in ethnic republics, Muslim regions were carved up by both Our Home is Russia and the KPRF in 1995 contest. However, in 1999, Fatherland was incapable to evicting the KPRF from this prized territory and was forced to divide the spoils. United Russia succeeded where both Our Home and Fatherland had failed and became the sole beneficiary in these regions. Of United Russia's strongholds, two-fifths and three-fifths by the lower and higher threshold, respectively, were drawn from Muslim regions. United Russia's commanding performance in Muslim regions squeezed the KPRF out from areas that had previously served as crucial pockets of support throughout the 1990s. Yet there was still room for the dominant party to monopolize Muslim regions more fully than it did in 2003, as shown earlier in Figure 22. Overall, United Russia triumphed in raions and regions with geographically concentrated ethnic minorities, which served as a central pillar of party dominance at election time.

The Urban-rural Divide and the Dominant Party

In addition to pocketing high vote shares from raions and regions with dense ethnic minority populations, United Russia largely cornered the vote in the countryside, a development that essentially broke the back of the KPRF in 2003. Unit increases in the rural population at the raion level amplified the odds of a dominant party stronghold by one to three percent in the relaxed and strict specifications alike. United Russia's gains in the countryside closely followed inroads made in the previous election by Fatherland-All Russia. In contrast, the findings pertaining to Our Home is Russia in 1995 were inconsistent in rural areas, increasing the odds of strongholds in some models but decreasing them in others. United Russia's average in predominantly rural raions was more than three percent higher than its nationwide mean. Figure 6.23 reveals the direct relationship between United Russia's vote share and the proportion of rural inhabitants in a raion. The majority of the raions delivering the highest vote shares to the dominant party was entirely rural, and was located in the ethnic republics of Chechnya, Dagestan, Tatarstan, Mordovia, Tuva, and Kabardino-Balkaria. The most ardent urban raions were also located in those same regions. Of the top 50 raions in terms of United Russia's vote share, 58% were entirely rural, 4% were entirely urban, and 38% were mixed. The four

raions that reported vote shares for the dominant party upwards of 97% were all situated fully in the countryside.

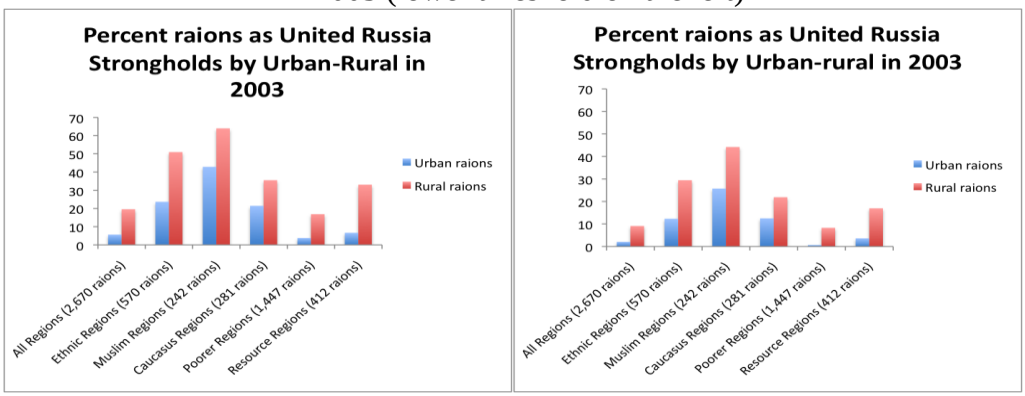
Figure 6.23: Rural Inhabitants and United Russia's Vote Share in 2003



The pattern of United Russia's support was clearly rural in 2003, as evident in Figure 6.24: of the rural and urban raions in each regional context, as well as overall, a significantly higher percentage of the former than the latter were strongholds and this pattern held across thresholds. Of the rural raions across the country's expanse, 20% channeled immense support to United Russia, while only 5% of their urban counterparts recorded comparable vote shares. Strikingly, nearly 70% of rural raions and upwards of 40% of urban raions in Muslim regions were United Russia strongholds, the highest percentage of the rural and urban raions in any given regional context. More than half of the raions situated mostly in the countryside in ethnic republics were bastions of support. The share of urban and rural raions in poorer regions that United Russia harvested stronghold-level vote shares from, less than 5% of the former and less than 20% of the latter, was the smallest of any regional environment. The percentage of urban raions in resource regions that were bastions of support was also comparatively low, albeit slightly higher than economically disadvantaged regions. Compared to the failed party of power, Our Home is Russia, in the mid-1990s, United Russia's pattern of support with regard to the urban-rural divide is remarkably similar, despite the fact that the degree of dominance was much greater in the 2000s. When considered in light of Fatherland and Unity in

1999, the share of rural raions in Muslim regions that were strongholds was slightly lower for United Russia than Fatherland. Urban raions in resource regions were the only other area in which the percentage of raions of either type that were strongholds was higher for Fatherland than for United Russia. Unity also outstripped United Russia in a few isolated cases: a higher percentage of urban raions overall, rural and urban raions in poorer regions, and urban raions in resource regions were Unity strongholds in 1999 than were bastions of support for the Kremlin's pick in 2003.

Figure 6.24: United Russia Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 2003 (lower threshold on the left)



Regional Geographic and Socioeconomic Indicators and the Dominant Party

Turning to the regional level correlates of the United Russia vote, the emerging dominant party performed exceptionally well in the Caucasus. The value for raions situated in the Caucasus was 17 to 159 times the value of the odds for raions located elsewhere across the board in the relaxed models and was 223 to 1245 times the value of the odds in the strict specifications. Descriptive statistics corroborate these towering odds: United Russia's average take in Caucasian raions was six percent higher than its nationwide mean. Furthermore, approximately one-quarter and one-third of United Russia's strongholds were found in the Caucasus, according to the relaxed and strict threshold, respectively. In the mid-1990s, the odds of Our Home is Russia strongholds plummeted in a lower threshold model but skyrocketed by 34 to 99 times in the strict specifications. The KPRF challenged the party of power in these restive regions and

benefitted consistently. In the 1999 election, in which two dueling parties of power vied for control of the Kremlin, location in the Caucasus did not exercise a systematic effect on the occurrence of Unity strongholds, but Fatherland scored electoral windfalls in these areas. In 2003, United Russia made deeper inroads in these areas than had its constituent parts in the previous contest: descriptive statistics reveal that United Russia outperformed Fatherland, as its mean in the Caucasus was six percent higher than its raion-level national average and Fatherland received a boost of less than one percent in 1999. Moreover, the share of United Russia's strongholds that were located in the Caucasus was roughly 25% and 33% by the lower and higher threshold, respectively, which was an improvement over Fatherland's 10% and six percent. Fatherland did not enjoy an electoral monopoly in the Caucasus and had to compete head to head with the KPRF for control of the restive republics. United Russia, however, was able to rationalize the electoral arena in the Caucasus by dispatching the Communists, ensuring that high vote shares would be channeled its way at the expense of all others.

Contextual correlates assessing socioeconomic welfare, namely gross regional product and resource dependence, damaged the odds of dominant party bastions of support. Unit increases in economic development diminished the odds by 69% in a lower threshold models and the magnitude of the effect was greater in the strict specifications, plunging the odds by 70 to 75%. United Russia thus excelled in economically disadvantaged regions, the former locus of Communist and nationalist strength in the 1990s. United Russia's predecessors from the 1995 and 1999 elections also languished with increases in gross regional product: the odds of Our Home is Russia strongholds fell 66 to 82% in 1995, and the odds of Unity and Fatherland-All Russia bastions of support dropped by 50% and between 80 to 93%, respectively, in 1999. United Russia therefore targeted the same constituency as its forerunners, but scored vote shares many times higher than those parties competing in the 1990s. United Russia's showing in economically developed regions was sub-average, approximately one percent less than its countrywide mean. A healthy share of the dominant party's strongholds was found in poorer regions, 41% and 40% by the relaxed and strict threshold, which was less than the

62% and 77% of Unity's strongholds and more than the 18% and 15% of Fatherland-All Russia's strongholds in 1999.

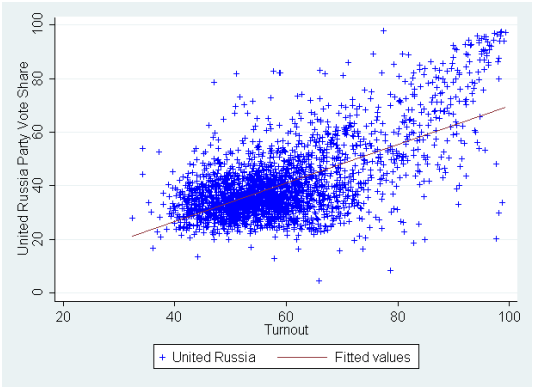
Mirroring the effects of higher levels of regional economic development, natural resource wealth also depressed the odds of United Russia strongholds: the value for raions situated in resource rich regions were one-tenth the value of the odds for raions located in diversified regional economies in the lower threshold models. United Russia's average in resource regions took a larger hit than was the case for raions in economically developed regions, coming in at roughly five percent below its raion-level national mean. Roughly 27% and 31% of dominant party strongholds occurred in resource regions. The fact that United Russia withered in resource regions diverged from the electoral trajectories of Our Home is Russia, as well as Unity and Fatherland-All Russia. The odds of an Our Home stronghold in the mid-1990s towered to between 34 and 53 times in resource regions and the party's average in these raions was a full five percent higher than its rather paltry national mean. In fact, resource regions were the only raion or regional environment in which the electoral paths of Our Home is Russia and United Russia veered in different directions. In the final election of the 1990s, resource region status exerted a systematic effect on neither the occurrence of Unity nor Fatherland-All Russian strongholds. Descriptive data, however, indicated that Fatherland performed well in these areas, as its average in resource regions was eight percent higher than its countrywide mean and roughly one-third and more than one-half of Fatherland strongholds were found in these regions. United Russia therefore distinguished itself from the failed party of power in the mid-1990s and the two dueling parties in the late-1990s by performing poorly in resource regions.

Electoral Manipulation and the Dominant Party

With the resources of the Kremlin and the backing of regional governors sitting atop powerhouse political machines, United Russia flaunted its political prowess in raions suspected for electoral manipulation. The shift from non-fraudulent to manipulated raions hiked the odds of a stronghold by 10 to 14 times across the board in the lower threshold models and by 26 to 61 times in across all of the strict specifications. The magnitude of

the positive effect was therefore greater than that vis-à-vis Our Home is Russia in 1995, when odds were amplified by 70% to three times, and Unity in 1999, when odds lifted by two to six times, and Fatherland-All Russia in most models in 1999, when odds ballooned by seven to 66 times. In high turnout raions, United Russia's performance closely approximated Fatherland-All Russia's in the previous election: United Russia's mean showing was more than 18% higher than its countrywide average, and Fatherland's was 15% higher before. Figure 6.25 corroborates these data by revealing the robust and direct association between United Russia's vote share and the level of political participation at the raion level. Of the 100 most enthusiastic raions for United Russia, 91% were coded positively for electoral malfeasance. Surprisingly, the raion that delivered United Russia's highest vote share reported turnout of 77.46%, which did not surpass the threshold set for fraud, i.e. 71.47%, by a large margin. The vast majority of unusually zealous raions, however, reported turnout figures in the range of 90 to upwards of 99%. No raions reported three-figure voter turnout rates in 2003.

Figure 6.25: Voter Turnout and United Russia's Vote Share in 2003



The percentage of United Russia's strongholds that was found in fraudulent raions was nothing short of striking, 68% according to the relaxed measure and 86% according to the strict threshold, as shown in Figure 6.26. The share of fraudulent raions that were United Russia strongholds, on the other hand, reveals that the new party of power had not fully consolidated its grip over these areas; just less than 60% of manipulated raions were

lower-level dominant party strongholds and roughly 35% were higher-level bastions of support. There is additional evidence indicating that the electoral malfeasance that did occur in the early 2000s did not universally benefit the Kremlin's party project because 54 of the 379 raions coded positively for fraud were not United Russia strongholds but recorded high levels of support for opposition parties and, furthermore, a variety of others were not strongholds for any of the parties examined. Indeed, a rather large number of the 379 fraudulent raions in 2003 were not strongholds for United Russia, the KPRF, the LDPR, or Yabloko: 37 raions in Bashkortostan, 17 in Sakha, six in Belgorod, five in Tatarstan, four in each Dagestan and Omsk, three in each Perm, Tyumen, and Vologod, and one or two raions in a variety of other regions. These raions thus reported incredibly high political participation but there was no clear beneficiary of this mobilization, suggesting that voters may have accepted patronage goods in exchange for turning out to vote (presumably for United Russia) but then ultimately voted as they wished (Nichter 2008). Despite its nascency, the percentage of fraudulent raions that were United Russia strongholds was significantly higher than had been the case for Our Home is Russia, with just above 15% and just above 10%, Unity, with roughly 15% and less than 5%, and Fatherland-All Russia, with 40% and approximately 30%.

Figure 6.26: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are United Russia Strongholds vs. Percent United Russia Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 2003

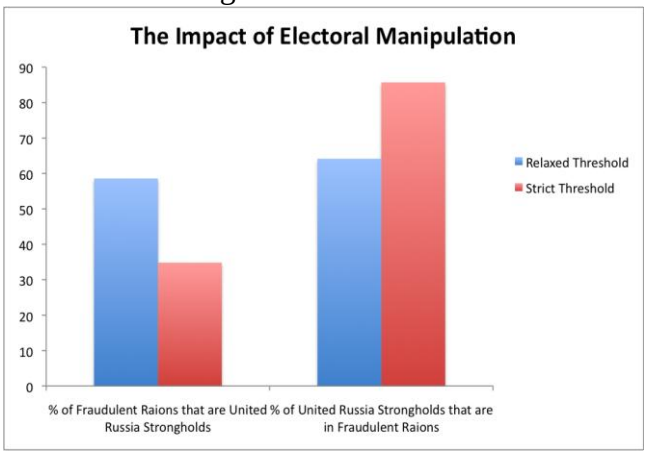
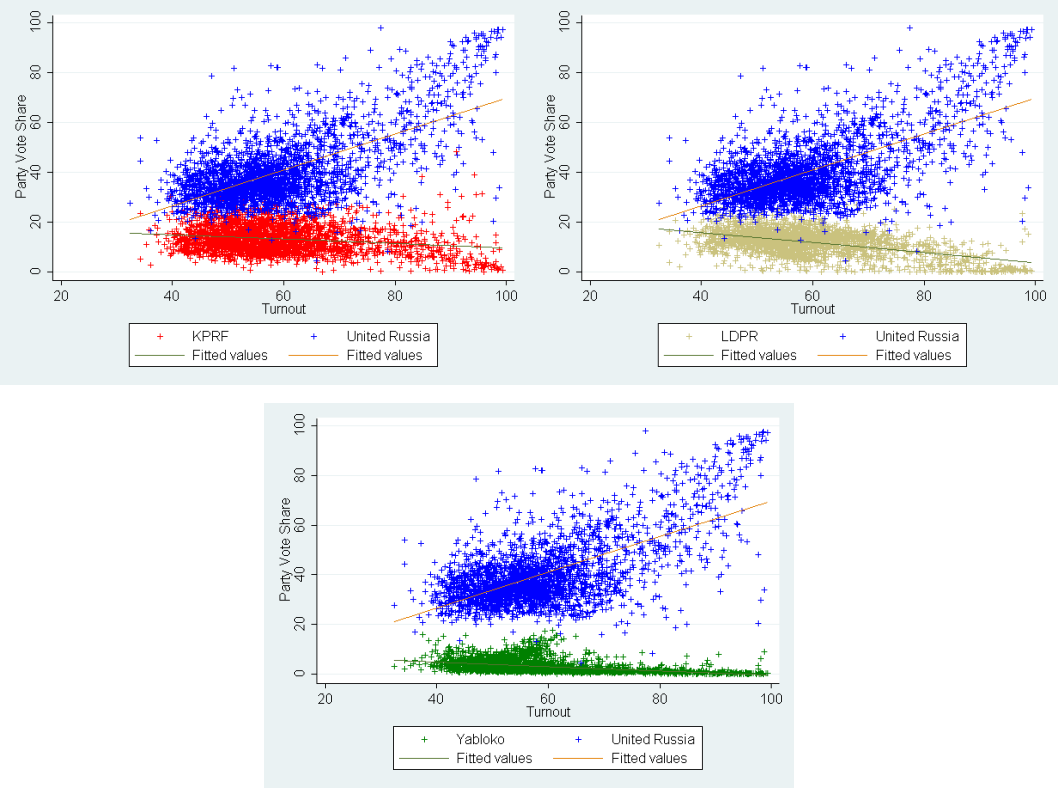


Figure 6.27 showcases United Russia's performance vis-à-vis that of opposition parties under conditions of varying turnout. In the vast majority of raions reporting turnout above 71.47%, United Russia's vote share was higher than each member of the core party troika. Although the KPRF was best equipped to compete with the emerging dominant party in manipulated raions compared to the nationalists and liberals, the zones of convergence in the first scatterplot suggest that United Russia lorded over these areas to the KPRF's detriment with the exception of only a few isolated cases. A stark picture emerged in 2003 in which raions reporting abnormally high turnout figures were quickly absorbed into United Russia's political machine and forked over equally incredible vote shares to the new party of power.

Figure 6.27: Voter Turnout and United Russia vs. Opposition Parties' Vote Shares in 2003



Conclusion

The emergence of United Russia and its spectacular triumph in the 2003 Duma elections dramatically reconfigured Russian political space and forced even the most formidable opposition parties, such as the KPRF, to the sidelines. The contours of the United Russia vote largely followed those from the failed Our Home is Russia in the mid-1990s, but the emerging dominant party benefitted from an economy that rebounded quickly from the economic crisis in the late 1990s and reached boom levels in the early 2000s, which provided the resources necessary to grease the palms of regional executives and grease the wheels of their patronage-based political machines. President Putin exercised unparalleled leadership in building United Russia's capacity and geographic reach almost overnight, and was more willing to engage in widespread electoral malfeasance to pull off a victory for his party than was his democratically committed predecessor.

With unprecedented resources at United Russia's disposal, the party succeeded in marginalizing its chief competition, the Communists, in ways that Our Home is Russia could have only dreamed of in 1995. United Russia excelled in precisely those areas that formed the backbone of its comparatively weak forerunner in the mid-1990s and the KPRF throughout that decade, namely raions and regions with geographically concentrated minorities, the countryside, regions in the Caucasus and those with weaker regional economies, and the KPRF was powerless to resist. The birth of a dominant party in Russia in the early 2000s was, to a large extent, predicated on the subversion of the KPRF's political machine that had vanquished Our Home is Russia in 1995 and effectively challenged the two competing parties of power in the subsequent election.

With the emergence of the catch-all United Russia, opposition parties, particularly the liberals, generally preserved their niche appeals and consequently failed to protect or expand their pockets of support in the electorate. Although members of the core party troika made several new inroads on the margins, the prevailing picture was one of opposition party emasculation in 2003: the KPRF's vote share was essentially halved and Yabloko was shut out from the Duma in the party-list tier. The era in which opposition

parties were on more or less equal footing with those whose sights were set on the party of power prize was undeniably over and United Russia became the only game in town.

Chapter 7: The 2007 Parliamentary Election: United Russia at its Apex and Opposition Party Stagnation on Display

In 2007, United Russia flaunted its political prowess and reached the height of its power, capturing a vote share just shy of two-thirds, while its closest competitor the KPRF harvested approximately 50% less. At least theoretically, the 2007 legislative election offered opposition parties an opportunity to regain ground lost in the previous contest and potentially forestall the full consolidation of United Russia as a dominant party. However, United Russia's performance in the 2003 election signaled that a new era of Russian politics had arrived, one characterized by a party of power with the resources and political clout necessary to produce the electoral outcomes it desired, and a lack of meaningful political opposition in the legislature. With one election under its belt, United Russia had practice in the electoral battleground and aimed not merely to win the contest, as that outcome was a foregone conclusion by all accounts, but to signal its political supremacy to challengers.

To secure United Russia's political prospects, nothing short of an overwhelming victory was required in the Duma contest in December 2007: the Kremlin was in the midst of its preparations for presidential succession in 2008 and the outcome of the Duma race would provide valuable information about the temper of the electorate heading into the presidential contest. A solid showing was necessary to signal to potential presidential contenders that the Kremlin's eventual pick was the heir apparent and the presidential contest was a formality staged only to confirm what was well known in advance. The legislative contest was also a proving ground in the sense that it provided the Kremlin with an opportunity to test and sharpen its manifold instruments of manipulation in advance of the main event. Competing in an election the Kremlin was desperate to win, and would try to do so by using any and all means necessary, the core party troika faced the worst chances of success up to that point in time and were relegated to competing primarily for defectors from the ruling party. The uncompetitive election of 2007 tested opposition parties' mettle and ability to remain afloat under the weight of a hefty dominant party. The 2007 election thus differed from the previous contest because United

Russia was no longer a tenderfoot in the electoral arena and therefore concentrated primarily on consolidating its hold on power with the aim of becoming the only game in town.

The 2007 Legislative Election in Context

United Russia's resounding victory in the 2003 election coupled with President Putin's virtually unassailable position in the eyes of the public leading up to the presidential contest in March 2004 frightened opposition parties to the extent that none of the top parties nominated their best candidates to compete with Putin for the presidency (Hale et al. 2004). Both the leaders of the KPRF and LDPR, Zyuganov and Zhirinovsky, respectively, had contested the 1996 and 2000 presidential elections but were conspicuously absent from the list of contenders in 2004, with a little-known KPRF nominee and Zhirinovsky's former bodyguard taking their turns in the ring. Some at the time interpreted Zyuganov's absence as "calculated, in part, to avoid another contest in which [the KPRF] would be embarrassed electorally" (Clark 2006: 21). In contrast, the liberal Yabloko decided not to field any candidate, although Yavlinsky had also participated alongside Zyuganov and Zhirinovsky in 1996 and 2000. In particular, Yabloko's decision to not put forward a presidential contender after it lost legislative representation in 2003 represented nothing short of the capitulation of the liberals to Putin and United Russia and signaled the death knell for democratic values in Russia. Weak challengers from both the KPRF and LDPR and the absence of a Yabloko candidate resulted in a lack of serious alternatives to Putin, an embarrassment for the regime which sought to retain at least a semblance of democracy.

The political environment surrounding the second legislative contest of the 2000s was thus dominated by 'the Putin effect'. President Putin received a massive popular endorsement presidential election: he was re-elected in 2004 with an extraordinary 70% of the vote, while the second-place finisher tied to the KPRF harvested merely 13% and none of the other challengers received more than five percent. While most elected leaders experience declining public approval with varying degrees of rapidity, Putin's approval rating went from 76% in January 2001 to a "Turkmenian" 87% by December 2007, "an

almost unprecedented situation for a leader in any peacetime democracy" (McAllister and White 2008: 950). Putin's skyrocketing approval ratings were largely attributable to rapid and widespread economic growth and his defiance towards the West during the 2003 Iraq invasion (*Ibid*). Although the Russian constitution forbade President Putin from seeking a third consecutive term in the March 2008 presidential elections, a highly publicized campaign launched by the All-Russian Council of Initiative Groups to Support Putin demanded that President Putin and United Russia amend the constitution to allow for a third term or retain Putin as a "national father figure" that would be able to lead the nation while not formally occupying the executive (AFP 2007).

Less than a year after the 2003 legislative election, dozens of armed militants who were later identified as Islamic separatists held over a thousand hostage, including more than 750 children, in a school gymnasium mined with explosives in Beslan, North Ossetia. Russian security forces stormed the school and exchanges of gunfire and explosions continued for days, leaving over 300 dead, of which 186 were children, and over 800 wounded. Russia's deadliest terrorist attack was cited as the pretext for comprehensive political and electoral reform aimed at shoring up the power vertical: fundamental restructuring of all levels of government was required to create a single system of authority and prevent state fragmentation or wholesale collapse (White and Kryshtanovskaya 2011). The reforms were in the works years prior to Beslan, but the crisis provided the immediate catalyst for action directed at emasculating the regional governors and buttressing the party of power through electoral system reform pertaining to elections to the State Duma. The direct election of approximately 80 regional governors was abolished in favor of presidential appointment as the method constituting the Federation Council, a change that made the regional governors completely dependent on the central executive for continued power and patronage. Moreover, the regional governors were subject to dismissal by the president if he lost confidence in their leadership. The second and most important change affected the electoral system governing legislative elections: a fully proportional system was introduced.

The economy continued to thrive under President Putin and United Russia, growing more than 8% in 2007 alone, marking a six-year high and surpassing the official government forecast of 6.5-7% (Cooper 2009: 6). Average real wages increased by more than 16% and real personal disposable income was up by 12%; the unemployment rate continued to tick downwards, leveling off at 6.2% in 2007 (*Ibid*). Russian oil production had steadily increased since the 2003 legislative election, reaching almost 10 million barrels per day, which contributed heavily to the 4.6% fiscal surplus in 2007 (Cooper 2009: 15). In 2006, Russia overtook Saudi Arabia and reclaimed its title, last enjoyed in the late 1970s and 1980s, of being the world's largest petroleum producer (Goldman 2008: 3-4). However, tempering the excitement was the fact that increased output was largely the result of over-pumping, rather than new exploration, and therefore not sustainable over the long term (Goldman 2008: 111). Total export revenues in 2007 were again dominated by natural resources, particularly oil, natural gas and coal, accounting for 65% of the total, and ferrous and non-ferrous metals contributed another 14% (Cooper 2009: 17). The price of oil soared, reaching $100 a barrel around the time of the Duma contest, generating a "cash blizzard" that United Russia would benefit from when seeking votes (Goldman 2008: 79, 136). The government trade surplus from increased energy exports went straight into the country's currency reserves, which ballooned by more than $100 billion in 2006 alone, hitting $300 billion in toto by the end of the year (Goldman 2008: 80). By the spring of 2007, the state reserves were bursting with $420 billion, making Russia the third largest holder of foreign currency reserves as well as gold, lagging behind only China and Japan (*Ibid*). The stabilization fund that the government established had more than $120 billion in 2007, providing a substantial cushion to buoy the economy in the event of downturn (Goldman 2008: 91). The Russian stock market skyrocketed: when Putin entered office in August of 1999 as Yeltsin's Prime Minister, the capitalized value of Russia's publicly traded stocks was $74 billion but surpassed the $1 trillion mark by 2006 (Goldman 2008: 81).

The executive and legislature, under United Russia's control, focused primarily on re-stabilizing the economy and passing a range of important reforms from 1999 to the

early 2000s but since then, the government turned its attention to regaining control over strategic economic sectors, which also provided a method to stamp out political dissention from independently wealthy owners (Cooper 2009). The government specifically targeted those corporations and conglomerates that were obtained by the oligarchs through the privatization process in the mid-1990s using largely corrupt means. The arrest of Mikhail Khodorkovsky (who was ultimately sentenced to more than eight years in an East Siberian prison on charges of tax evasion, fraud, embezzlement, forgery, extortion and grand theft) and hostile takeover of the Yukos oil company just before the 2003 legislative election represented only the beginning of governmental action against privately held wealth and political capital that had been leveraged to shore up opposition parties financially. The Kremlin believed that privately-held natural resource companies, such as Yukos, were vulnerable to foreign ownership because their oligarch CEOs entertained the idea of selling off portions to various international companies such as Exxon-Mobil and Chevron, which was a "heretical if not treasonous act" to those in the Kremlin (Goldman 2008: 86). In December 2004, a front for state-controlled Rosneft purchased Yukos' Yuganskneftegaz, the company's most valuable holding, at a rigged auction for under half of what the market would have supported at the time (Goldman 2008: 120). After the Yukos affair, the government moved to expand its control over the oil industry at large and the Kremlin set its sights next on Sibneft, formerly owned by oligarch and one-time Kremlin financier Boris Berezovsky: in September 2005, the oligarch Roman Abramovich sold his 72% share of Sibneft to then state-controlled Gazprom. Majority-state owned Rosneft purchased a controlling stake in Gazprom in mid-2005, providing the Russian government with control over the world's largest extractor of natural gas and Russia's web of natural gas pipelines fueling Central Asia and Europe. Indeed, Gazprom was a golden ticket for the government in terms of revenue generation, as it produced 87% of the country's gas in 2004 (Goldman 2008: 186).

With the "holy of holies", as Putin referred to Gazprom, in the state's hands, Russia became "'Gazpromistan' […] run by its president and spiritual leader, Gazputin, an obvious play on the gas-rich countries of Central Asia, as well as Rasputin, the mad

monk favorite of the last czar's wife, Czarina Alexandra" (Goldman 2008: 143). Coinciding with these partial or complete renationalizations in the oil industry, central authorities also encroached on other strategic sectors, such as finance, aviation, machine-building and power generation equipment: a state-owned company producing defense equipment seized control of the largest producer of Russian cars, the state gained a controlling share in the company that produces two-thirds of the world's titanium and also captured a controlling stake in the company that monopolized aircraft production (Cooper 2009). In two terms as president, Putin had accomplished nothing short of the wholesale reversal of the privatization process that Yeltsin presided over in the 1990s, at least with regard to those companies atop Russian industry (Goldman 2008: 133). Thus, sizable growth and increased state intervention in strategic sectors dominated the economic landscape surrounding the 2007 contest.

The electoral law governing the 2007 legislative contest marked a significant departure from all previous post-communist electoral frameworks across numerous dimensions, all of which erected new barriers to entry for parties and electoral blocs. A new law passed in 2005 abolished the single-mandate tier of the electoral system and created a pure proportional party-list system that allowed only established political parties to nominate candidates and seek election. The shift to a purely proportional formula excluded independent and local candidates from participation, a group that historically formed a large or the largest proportion of the total SMD candidates; previously, this group was eligible to gain legislative representation only through the constituency races due to either political independence or affiliation with a party too small to cross the party-list threshold. For the first time in post-communist Russian history, political parties emerged as the sole legitimate actors in parliamentary elections and politics. At the time, the election of deputies exclusively through party lists was hoped to have a positive effect on parties and party-building, since all formerly independent candidates were obliged to align with a party to make it into the Duma and the parties would need to secure more votes in the regions to remain viable (European Parliament 2011).

The Kremlin's ulterior goal, achieved in the legislature via United Russia's majority, was to "eliminate the unpredictability that had always been inherent in the single-member constituency elections. Someone unexpected and undesirable might be elected. And if enough of them were elected, the State Duma could become unpredictable in its behavior" (White and Kryshtanovskaya 2011: 562). More than unpredictability, the change represented another action against regional influence in the Duma because single-seat deputies were often more loyal to their regional elite than the central government, as re-election often hinged on good relations with the regional executives; in other words, "single-seat deputies [meant] power in the regions" (White and Kryshtanovskaya 2011: 563). With all politics conducted through parties, central control over the party system and individual parties would be easier to assert.

Yet another ulterior motive encouraging this change to the electoral system was to target the KPRF specifically, as the "final destruction of the regime's main opponent […] because such an election system would stimulate the rise of non-communist alternatives on the leftist political flange" (Wegren and Konitzer 2006: 693). Although alternatives to the KPRF may have emerged, the move to a purely proportional system would likely have not affected the KPRF as much as centrist and liberal parties: during the three legislative contests in the 1990s and in 2003, the majority of KPRF Duma deputies came from the party list rather than the SMD tier, while the majority of Duma deputies representing centrist and liberal parties were elected in SMD races (Wegren and Konitzer 2006). In fact, based on the results from the 2003 election, the parties that would be most negatively affected by the shift to pure proportional representation would not be the KPRF but United Russia, as 45% of its Duma deputies were elected through the SMD tier, and Motherland, the Kremlin puppet party designed to siphon votes of the KPRF, since approximately 20% of its deputies were elected in single-mandate contests. Ultimately, the new electoral system proved advantageous for United Russia because it captured a significantly higher vote share in 2007 than in the previous election.

The threshold for legislative representation was raised by a considerable amount, from five to seven percent, chilling political pluralism in the lower house of the

legislature. The pure party-list system coupled with the higher representation hurdle was hoped to consolidate the supply of parties, offering a degree of stability for voters and allowing the development of partisan attachments that was exceedingly difficult in the extreme multipartism prevailing in the 1990s. The seven percent threshold was one of the highest for representation in Europe, only lower than Turkey's 10% hurdle (PACE 2007; Treisman 2011). The higher threshold benefitted larger parties to the greatest extent and erected more formidable barriers to entry for smaller parties. Ultimately, the new hurdle did not change the number of parties in the Duma, as no more parties crossed the previous threshold as the new one in 2007. Nevertheless, the reform was intended to reduce Duma parties, which would benefit the best positioned party, the party of power, because parties that successfully cleared the higher threshold would gain an even larger share of seats, as parties that had not cleared the hurdle would not secure any representation (White and Kryshtanovskaya 2011: 564). The advantages produced by the higher threshold would accrue disproportionately to the party of power for other reasons as well. The increased hurdle would force most parties to the margins in the political arena because voters would not want to waste their votes on a party unlikely to clear the threshold, wealthy donors would abandon them financially, and promising political elites would align with more formidable parties (*Ibid*). Intensifying the effect of the higher representation hurdle, a new ban on electoral bloc formation dispensed with the mechanism through which smaller parties joined forces and became more formidable competitors (*Ibid*).

Another reform reduced the minimum number of parties that must be represented in the Duma from four parties to two. If only one party cleared the new seven percent threshold, the second-place finisher would also receive Duma representation regardless of vote share. Puzzlingly, party list candidates were not obligated to be members of their nominating party, provided that the individual was not a member of any other party and such members did not constitute more than 50% of the total party list (McAllister and White 2008). However, mandating that those elected via party-list join their party's Duma fraction, under the threat of expulsion from the legislature, ensured new post-

election party loyalty. Previously, deputies were not obligated to join their party's fraction once the Duma convened, enabling United Russia to poach roughly 80 deputies from competing party lists or independents in 2003 (*Ibid*).

Further changes also advantaged larger parties at the expense of smaller ones. For example, the "against all" option on the ballot was abandoned in July 2006, leaving voters who wanted to register their displeasure with all the competing parties with only one option to do so: "spoiling" their ballot by marking an X through it. Over one percent of voters spoiled their ballots in the 2007 contest. The "against all" option had been included since before the 1993 snap election. This choice was more popular than many parties in the 2003 election, garnering more votes than Yabloko and nearly enough to secure theoretical Duma representation from the party-list tier. Despite the fact that international election observers disapproved of the option because it potentially poached votes from smaller parties that may have otherwise cleared the hurdle, Russian political analysts viewed the against all option as a "traditional form of electoral protest. As such, it may be considered a sign of health in a democracy. Voters shows that they are not afraid to register their displeasure with the […] system publicly, and that they are willing to turnout out at the polls to register that displeasure, thereby displaying their interest and concern in their country's democracy" (Petrov 2004: 252). Public opinion polling showed that a clear majority of Russians, 60%, opposed the removal of the "against all" option, while less than 20% supported such a change (McAllister and White 2008: 935). To the Kremlin and the dominant party however, the "against all" alternative represented the political "'nihilism and protest' of the 1990s that had been 'harmful to the political culture' in that it had 'encouraged and strengthened counterproductive negative attitudes;' a choice 'should always be concrete, and positive'" (White and Kryshtanovskaya 2011: 572).

An extra change "withdr[ew] yet another 'weapon of the weak'—in this case, the ability to invalidate the election itself by abstaining in sufficiently large numbers": a December 2006 amendment removed the minimal turnout requirement to declare legislative elections valid (formerly, a 25% minimum turnout was required) (McAllister

and White 2008: 935). The abolition of the 25% minimum voter turnout rule therefore provided United Russia with a fail-safe mechanism to ensure continued power in the legislature without administering new elections. Indeed, even if the entire Russian electorate abstained from voting, the legislative election would still be deemed valid if only Putin himself turned up to vote (Kara-Murza 2011).

The electoral law preserved some of the financial stipulations and penalties imposed in previous elections on parties failing to garner minimum vote shares of between two and four percent, such as losing election deposits for parties registered via cash payment instead of signatures, and recompensing the government for free air time allotted during the campaign. However, each threshold was increased to the detriment of small parties: parties garnering less than four percent (formerly three percent) would forfeit their cash deposit and parties capturing less than three percent (formerly two percent) would be ordered to return the value of free broadcasting.

The cumulative effect of sweeping political and electoral reform progressively curtailed the independent activities of political parties and electoral blocs, and paved the way for United Russia to consolidate its dominance effortlessly in the 2007 contest (White 2011; Gelman 2008). Comprehensive changes to the electoral law were criticized by the Council of Europe in the mid-2000s: "recent changes to the legislation concerning the elections of the State Duma and the organi[z]ation of political parties will severely restrict political competition. The significantly higher electoral threshold (7%), the prohibition of electoral coalitions and the reduction, from four to two, of the minimum number of parties to be represented in the lower chamber, as well as new, restrictive rules for parties entitled to contest State Duma elections, will significantly raise the entry barrier to the parliament, in clear favour of the parties already represented in the current State Duma" (Council of Europe 2005: Paragraph 7). Despite vast reforms, the major opposition parties made their way back into the Duma in 2007, albeit both the KPRF and LDPR re-entered in a weaker state compared to the previous election; it was therefore premature to forecast that these leading opposition parties were about to become extinct, even under conditions of one-party dominance (Gelman 2008: 913). Nevertheless, the

package of reforms "intentionally or otherwise […] in fact established a 'real legal and political platform for the establishment of not even a relative but the unconditional monopoly of a single political force'" (White and Kryshtanovskaya 2011: 574).

The CEC ultimately registered 11 parties to contest the 2007 elections. Per December 2004 amendments to the 2001 "On Political Parties" law, each political party was required to have a minimum of 50,000 members, a significant increase from the 10,000 necessary under the original law. Furthermore, the amended version required each party satisfy a geographic distribution condition by having regional branches in at least 45 of the federation subjects with at least 500 members in each. Previously, parties were required to have branches in at least 50 regions with at least 100 members each. These newly introduced legal requirements applied to new and established political parties alike and were "virtually impossible to meet, practically forcing many parties to fake membership numbers" (Kynev 2012). Additionally, a 2006 law required that parties submit to verification of their compliance with the new legal framework, causing many parties to disband or reassemble as civic organizations (*Ibid*). Errors detected in the process of compliance verification, most frequently discovered in the case of opposition parties, resulted in numerous court cases and yet more dissolutions the following year (*Ibid*). Parties without Duma representation at the time, such as Yabloko, were required to collect 200,000 signatures or make a cash deposit of approximately $2.5 million (Yabloko opted for the cash deposit route to registration). The amount of the cash deposit was significantly higher than four years prior, increasing from 37.5 million rubles in 2003 to 60 million rubles in 2007. The deposit was returned to parties that garnered at least 4% in the election; previously, the deposit was returned if parties met a lower threshold of 3%.

The stipulations regarding the maximum number of signatures obtained from any given region and the minimum number of regions in which signatures were gathered were both tightened. In 2003, the maximum number of signatures collected in a region was 7% or 14,000 signatures, while in 2011 this was stiffened to 5% or 10,000 signatures. Likewise, parties were obligated to collect signatures in a minimum of 15

regions in 2003, but 2007 regulations stipulated a minimum of 20 federal subjects. The requirements for signature validity were more demanding: a party would not be registered if more than five percent of the 200,000 signatures were invalid (formerly 25%) or if the number of valid signatures fell below 200,000 once the invalid signatures were omitted (McAllister and White 2008). These registration requirements were waived for parties currently represented, favoring the parties in the outgoing Duma, including the party of power, the KPRF and LDPR. Among the 11 registered parties were those constituting the core party troika: the KPRF, LDPR and Yabloko, albeit an extra-parliamentary party. United Russia's astounding performance in the 2003 election left only two other parties that "could be regarded as serious competitors although scarcely as an electoral challenge": the KPRF and LDPR (McAllister and White 2008: 939).

The KPRF entered the election season in 2007 still fragile from the previous contest that cut its vote share in half but secure in its position as United Russia's most formidable opponent. Despite the decline in "transitional uncertainty" that shrunk the "role of ideology as a product in Russia's electoral market," the KPRF clung to its longstanding ideological offerings (Gelman 2008: 921). Under the party's manifesto, "Power for the Working People!" the party aimed to defend ordinary people by carrying out a more equitable distribution of national wealth and undoing the vertical chain of command that had been developed under President Putin (McAllister and White 2008). The KPRF would also continue its struggle to reclaim its image as the "chief and only champion of the Russian people" and follow several steps to guide Russia to a worthy future: nationalization of natural resources and other strategic industries, higher pay and pensions, state-run modernization of industry, agriculture and transport, more honest elections and cutback in the state bureaucracy, renewal of the death penalty, free and high quality education and health services, a new constitution, and revival of relations among the former Soviet states, including Ukraine, Belarus and possibly Kazakhstan (McAllister and White 2008: 940). The party program included a new discussion of ethnic issues using old Soviet newspeak that aimed to retain the KPRF's core voters who harbored xenophobic sentiment and an inferiority complex due to economic dislocation after the

reforms of the 1990s (Babich 2007). Despite the fact that this pocket of loyal supporters was continually shrinking as a result of demographic shifts, the KPRF did not dilute its position on the ethnic question to be more inclusive (*Ibid*). In the 2007 election, the KPRF notably intensified its critique of United Russia, which "gave it a chance of turning into an epicenter of opposition" in future legislative contests; nevertheless, the party was still haunted by the stigma of being the inheritor of the former CPSU and, compounding its image as a "ghost of the past," the KPRF failed to incorporate any democratic values or similar orientations that may have breathed new life into the party (Peregudov 2009: 60). The KPRF continued its uninterrupted streak of legislative representation in post-communist Russia, but roughly one percent of the party's 2003 vote share was shaved off in the final 2007 tally, leaving it with approximately 12%. The result generally preserved the KPRF's position as the "most obvious alternative to an otherwise entirely dominant United Russia" and was the second largest party in the Duma (McAllister and White 2008: 946).

The LDPR returned as the quintessential but controversial nationalist party under the leadership of Vladimir Zhirinovsky. The party list included Andrei Lugovoi, who was wanted in the United Kingdom for the murder of former KGB agent Alexander Litvinenko by radioactive poisoning and who would receive diplomatic immunity if the party surpassed the seven percent threshold. Also on the party's federal list was Igor Lebedev, the son of LPDR-leader Zhirinovsky and leader of the LDPR faction in the Duma. The LDPR's platform focused primarily on righting the wrongs done to the country and ordinary citizens by officials and oligarchs: natural resources were to be reclaimed from the oligarchs, the profits put toward improving living standards, and a progressive income tax would be introduced to raise revenue for higher pensions, a significant increase in all salaries, and better housing (McAllister and White 2008: 940). LDPR Duma deputies would push through a seven-hour workday with Wednesdays off if the party won representation in the fifth Duma (McAllister and White 2008: 941). The party also advocated a return to the pre-1917 government structure, i.e. a unitary state comprised of governorships rather than federalism (Babich 2007). As in previous

elections, the LDPR continued to advocate for the reintegration of the former Soviet states. Alongside the KPRF, the LDPR regained parliamentary representation for the fifth time, but its vote share was approximately three percent less than its 2003 showing. Thus, the party was once again able to remain "afloat only thanks to the popularity of its leader in that section of society which is inclined to take second-rate populism and demagogy as a sign of political virtuosity and independence" (Peregudov 2009: 60).

Yabloko joined the electoral fray in 2007 as the only extra-parliamentary party in the core party troika and struggled to be the only party in post-communist Russian history to lose and subsequently regain legislative representation. As a programmatically-oriented party, Yabloko offered a cogent program based on several steps to equal opportunities: free elections, separation of government power and also separation between government and private business, an independent court system, development of a middle class through small businesses, a one-time tax on the profits earned through corrupt auctions of state property in the 1990s, development of trade unions to protect the rights of workers, strict regulation of monopolies (notably Gazprom), redoubled investment in public health and education, and a renewed emphasis on the environment (McAllister and White 2008: 941). Yet overall, the party was "merely inept and its campaign appeal was bleak" (Gelman 2008: 926). Although Yabloko secured four seats in the single-mandate tier of the 2003 election, the aftermath proved devastating as one deputy ultimately joined United Russia and three others became independents. One year before the 2007 contest, Yabloko abandoned plans to unify with The Union of Right Forces (SPS), a neoliberal party that won only three seats from the single-mandate tier in the previous election (RIA Novosti 2006). Yabloko again failed to cross the threshold for representation, garnering less than two percent of the vote, which itself was almost three percent less than the party's performance in 2003. Thus, the shocking result from the previous contest did not "trigger a needed renewal" in 2007 as some had hoped (The Economist 2003). The results of post-election poll conducted by the Levada center presaged continual decline for Yabloko, as the vast majority of respondents (69%) forecast "a bleak future" for the party (RIA Novosti 2007f). Thus, Yabloko moved

progressively deeper into the political wilderness with each consecutive legislative election, "suffer[ing] most from the political changes of the 2000s" (Gelman 2008: 926).

United Russia was forecast to secure an overwhelming victory leading up to the election. The results of the legislative election were particularly important for United Russia, as they would provide an initial forecast of the results for the presidential election three months later when presidential succession was at stake (McAllister and White 2008). Therefore, United Russia looked for a strong showing in the legislative contest to gather momentum behind the Kremlin's handpicked successor to President Putin; a strong showing in 2007 would ensure that "a victory in March 2008 would be inevitable. The second round of elections would simply be technical" (White and Kryshtanovskaya 2011: 560). Some time prior to United Russia's convention, in February 2006, the chief Kremlin political strategist commented that the Kremlin intended to preserve the party of power's dominance in the political arena for the next 10-15 years and compared the Russian party system under United Russia with Japan under the LDP or Sweden under the Social Democrats (Gelman 2008).

For the first time in post-communist Russia, President Putin claimed the first and only spot on United Russia's federal party-list after accepting United Russia's invitation at the party's convention in October. United Russia thus gave up its "leading troika" practice of nominating three federal candidates (RIA Novosti 2007a). Despite occupying a place on United Russia's list, President Putin declined to join the party as a member, commenting, "Although I was an initiator in the establishment of United Russia, I, like the overwhelming majority of the country's citizens, do not belong to a party and am reluctant to change this status" (RIA Novosti, 2007). Putin explained his decision to head up the party list was to ensure the Duma did not become a "collection of populists paralyzed by corruption and demagoguery" as in the past and to stave off threats to stability and peace originating with the liberals and Communists (Nichol 2007: 3). Opposition parties called for Putin to abandon his place on United Russia's party list, arguing that his position as president accorded him considerable influence, particularly in leveraging extensive administrative resources to help the party at the polls (RIA Novosti

2007c). The mood of the electorate during the campaign indicated that the "personal participation of popular political leaders, primarily Putin, benefited United Russia" (Golosov 2012: 5). Although President Putin was a departing president and stated on numerous occasions that he would not seek a constitutional amendment to allow for a third consecutive term, the Kremlin and United Russia transformed the legislative contest in 2007 into a referendum on Putin's presidency and him personally, suggesting that it mainly functioned as a show of loyalty.

At the October convention, United Russia adopted a party platform that supported Putin's agenda, the so-called "Putin Plan" and subsequently ran on the campaign slogan "Vote for Putin's Plan!". The Putin Plan's identifiable components included preserving Russia as a "unique and great civili[z]ation, […] building a competitive economy, [establishing] a new quality of life, [establishing] the institutions of a civil society, [and] the further development of Russia as a sovereign democracy" (McAllister and White 2008: 938). The party of power tried to counter the perceived threat of Western countries launching a color revolution akin to Georgia in 2003 and Ukraine in 2004 by creating a nationalist and anti-Western youth wing to hold rallies in support of the party during the campaign season. However, United Russia's party platform skirted the issue of migration and instead focused on the country's unity in an attempt to court non-Russian constituencies. United Russia professed that Russia was a country that has "become a common Motherland for all Russian citizens, where national cultures and languages develop unimpeded, where every person's national and religious feelings are respected, where any manifestations of xenophobia and nationalism are uprooted" (Babich 2007). Save for the liberal Yabloko and one other, United Russia was the only party with a national presence that did not include xenophobic statements in its program, which observers attributed to the fact that the ruling party's base was so strong that the party did not need to exploit nationalism to curry favor among ethnic Russians (*Ibid*). United Russia oriented its electoral campaign around harvesting the support of "as many politically disinterested, loyal voters as possible while convincing all others to stay home" (Golosov 2012: 6). As in 2003, United Russia stacked its party list with 65

regional governors and four members of the cabinet of ministers (Gelman 2008). The ruling party reported a membership of 1.25 million, significantly higher than its most formidable competitor, the KPRF, and 45,000 branches operating at all administrative levels. In a replay of 2003, United Russia opted out of televised debates in the 2007 campaign period in order to signal the party's "exclusive character," but made use of free broadcasting time allocated to the party (Peregudov 2009: 51).

With their KPRF "enemy" still in the legislature, the Kremlin and United Russia redoubled efforts to exclude them politically by building another satellite party after the Motherland (or Rodina) party moved from Kremlin-loyalist to genuine opposition (Gelman 2008: 920). The new invented opposition party, A Just Russia, was created through the merger of three smaller satellite parties; A Just Russia, like Motherland before it, was designed to poach votes from the KPRF and acted as a back-up party of power by allowing the Kremlin to distribute its eggs to some extent, rather than putting them all in the United Russia basket (Gelman 2008). A Just Russia won a vote share comparable to Motherland in the elections and cemented its position as the new Kremlin-friendly satellite in the Duma. For its part, the dominant party won a clear mandate with just under two-thirds of the votes cast, an astonishing performance by any measure but especially when compared to the second-place finisher, the KPRF, which collected only 12%. Attracting approximately 14% of each of the KPRF's and LDPR's 2003 voters augmented United Russia's showing, as evident in the flow of votes from 2003 to 2007 (McAllister and White 2008: 947). Coupled with deputies that aligned with the party of power after the election, United Russia gained the two-thirds majority necessary for constitutional amendment. United Russia's triumph in the election was widely viewed as an endorsement of President Putin rather than United Russia, mostly due to Putin's position atop the party's list (Nichol 2007).

The 2007 results furnished uncontestable evidence that United Russia was the only game in town and demonstrated the "deep stagnation of opposition politics" in the context of single-party dominance (Gelman 2008: 927). Each of the three parties forming the core party troika experienced declining vote shares, with the LDPR witnessing the

largest backsliding in support compared to 2003 but still making it back into the Duma. Yabloko fell farther short of the seven percent hurdle in 2007 than the five percent threshold four years prior, providing additional substantiation to claims that the party was uniquely ill-equipped to survive the new political status quo characterized by United Russia's hegemony and increasingly uncompetitive elections. United Russia's dominance in the election created a parliament in which meetings of the legislature were transformed into "party meeting[s]. A parliament wholly dominated by one party […] is also a party meeting, but with guests" (Petrov 2011: 46). In this system, opposition parties were unwelcome guests, but also necessary to maintain the façade of multipartism masking United Russia's near-total control of the lower house.

The 2007 Legislative Election as an Uncompetitive Election

As in 2003, the 2007 parliamentary election will also be treated as an uncompetitive election. Observers from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly reported that the election was "not fair" and "failed to meet many OSCE and Council of Europe commitments and standards for democratic elections" (OSCE PA 2007). The head of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly commented, "if Russia is a managed democracy then this was a managed election" (Harding 2007). Moreover, the Russian non-governmental organization Golos judged the election was neither free nor fair. In 2007, the "entire electoral process, it appeared, had acquired a 'routine character: the approval of what exists,'" much the same as party-controlled elections under Soviet rule (Quoted in McAllister and White 2008: 938). The contest exemplified "'authoritarian elections,' a form of 'unfree competition' in which the 'institutional facades of democracy, including regular multiparty elections […] were used to 'conceal (and reproduce) [the] harsh realities of authoritarian governance'" (White 2011: 937; Schedler 2006).

It is important to note that the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) did not observe the 2007 parliamentary elections, citing delays and restrictions that rendered the organization unable to deliver its mandate (OSCE 2007). The organization received a delayed invitation from Russian authorities that

contained “unprecedented restrictions” on their activities and many experts and observers experienced continuous denials of entry visas (*Ibid*). Nevertheless, the head of the CEC claimed that visas had been issued and President Putin stated, “we have information that this [ODIHR decision] was made on the recommendations of the U.S. State Department,” and averred, “actions such as these cannot wreck the elections” by suggesting they are illegitimate (Quoted in Nichol 2007: 2). The OSCE thus concluded that the “authorities of the Russian Federation remain unwilling to receive ODIHR observers in a timely and co-operative manner and co-operate fully with them” (*Ibid*). Observers who were present reported that they were restricted in their work and were not allowed to observe voting at polling stations on Election Day (OSCE PA 2007). A total of 350 observers affiliated with various organizations monitored the 2007 elections, approximately three times fewer than observed the contest four years prior (RIA Novosti 2007b). Despite comparatively narrow participation of international observers, the OSCE’s Parliamentary Assembly was able to send 70 short-term observers to assess the election. A new ban on the release of public reports directly after the elections was enacted (*Ibid*). Generally, election observers reported major concerns in areas identical to those noted in the previous legislative election, namely the merging of the state and United Russia, strong media bias in favor of United Russia and President Putin, an electoral code that prevented new and smaller parties to emerge and compete effectively, and widespread harassment of opposition parties (OSCE PA 2007). In short, “there was not a level political playing field in Russia in 2007” (*Ibid*).

The ruling party used administrative resources extensively, such as state infrastructure and paying party personnel through the public payroll (*Ibid*). For example, state and local officers frequently worked as part of a United Russia campaign team and municipal offices were routinely transformed entirely into party campaign headquarters (White 2011). Although public officials were not allowed to leverage their positions by campaigning for a specific party unless their normal duties were suspended, this stipulation did not apply to “federal ministers or governors under a change in the law that had been ‘almost unnoticed at the time.’ Those who campaigned against the Kremlin’s

favoured [parties] were, in effect, campaigning against the state itself" (White 2011: 534). Furthermore, regional governors, who were selected through appointment rather than direct election beginning in 2004, constituted a sizable proportion of United Russia's party-list but were unlikely to vacate their positions atop regional government structures to fill their Duma seats, deliberately misleading voters (OSCE PA 2007). Although not a member himself, President Putin played such a major role in United Russia's election campaign that the legislative election transformed into a referendum on his presidency (*Ibid*).

One of the primary mechanisms of state interference and the use of administrative resources was compulsion, or "organi[z]ed pressure to vote" (White 2011: 544). An example of state interference on behalf of the dominant party came from Nizhny Novgorod, where foreman visited workers at the city's largest vehicle factory and instructed them to vote for United Russia, under threat of unspecified punishment (McAllister and White 2008: 943). In other areas, teachers at all levels of education endorsed United Russia by distributing campaign materials about "Putin's Plan," telling their students to encourage their parents to vote accordingly or ordering parents and university students to attend meetings with party representatives and vote for United Russia, under threat of dormitory eviction (*Ibid*). In Orel, students were obligated to become members of the party itself. United Russia representatives informed students at universities underachieving in terms of United Russia membership that university funding would be cut (White 2011). In Ulyanovsk, students were required to use their mobile phones to photograph their ballot in the voting booth to prove they had voted for United Russia (*Ibid*). At one polling station in Chelyabinsk, a photographer was present inside the voting booth itself (*Ibid*). The scale of these practices suggested that electoral manipulation in the form of compulsion was systematic. In the republic of Adygea, officials sent out instructions requiring stallholders in the local market to display United Russia publicity for free but also to collect and put it up the campaign materials, as the officials themselves were 'too busy' (White 2011: 541). The Kremlin also reportedly

demanded that cell phone companies text message their subscribers "inviting" them to vote (RIA Novosti 2007d).

Citing a problem that was also salient on election day in previous contests, voting arrangements that employed electronic boxes and voting booths in 2007 frequently "failed to protect the secrecy of the vote" (OSCE PA 2007). Moreover, the CEC conceded that multiple voting had become a "common practice" on election day: "electoral Stakhanovites" would travel by bus to different precinct stations claiming to be temporary residents and vote numerous times (White 2011: 547). A more nefarious form of multiple voting occurred in Dagestan, where a group of approximately 50 people entered a voting station flanked by armed guards and cast about 300 ballots (White 2011).

The counting of the votes and the final tally seemed to proceed according to directives provided by central authorities rather than standard electoral protocols. Allegedly, "target figures" were provided regarding levels of acceptable turnout and party vote shares through oral correspondence with lower level officials across the country starting as early as the summer of 2007 (White 2011: 543). The average target set for United Russia was 50 or 60%, which could be higher but definitely not lower; traditional support for the KRPF in the red belt south of Moscow was to be transferred to Kremlin-created spoiler party on the left, A Just Russia, although the Communists were still supposed to come in second place, followed by the LDPR that was intended to receive about 7% (the threshold for representation) (*Ibid*). In one region, the governor ordered subordinates to provide a turnout of 60%, a 60% vote share for the dominant party, and no more than 5% (under the electoral hurdle) for the KRPF (*Ibid*). Some regions essentially competed to report higher turnout figures and vote shares for United Russia, with North Caucasus republics "hailing improbably turnouts nearing 100% with correspondingly high percentages of votes for United Russia" (Nichol 2007: 3). Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov called for Chechen voters to support United Russia in the parliamentary elections, commenting "We have to prove on December 2 that we fully support Putin and his party by voting 100% for him"; ultimately United Russia captured

over 99% of the vote in the region (RIA Novosti 2007e). By these directives originating at the highest levels of government, voter turnout across the country was inflated and the party of power's vote share was made high enough to proceed seamlessly with the central administration's political and economic agenda in the legislature. The planned targets that were communicated in an uninterrupted chain from the highest level down to the municipal administrators proved a reliable method of ensuring support for the dominant party due to new selection criteria for regional governors, i.e. presidential appointment. It was a "matter of 'personally signing your death warrant' if the figures were unsatisfactory, or 'continuing to sit in the governor's seat undisturbed'" (White 2011: 543). Turnout percentages in numerous precincts revealed suspicious "spikes at 60, 70, 80, 90, and even 100 percent," providing "strong evidence of fraud" (Hale and Colton 2010: 19). According to one analysis, a larger number of polling stations reported voter turnout of 100% than reported the real average of 51 percent (RFE/RL Newsline 2008). The direct falsification of results in 2007 became one part of a 'massive administrative electoral technology' that began to have a "significant influence on the distribution of votes among the candidates and parties, if not necessarily on the outcome" (White 2011: 553).

The process of counting the votes betrayed ballot-stuffing attempts, as suspiciously large stacks of ballots contained sequences of votes for the same party or ballots were counted that appeared to have been cast before the polling stations formally opened; when observers drew attention to suspected ballot stuffing, they were arrested and threatened with criminal prosecution (White 2011). Moreover, twice as many absentee ballots had been cast in 2007 than four years earlier, indicating the growth of the form of voting most susceptible to manipulation and misuse on behalf of the dominant party (OSCE PA 2007). Myagkov et al. estimated that "anywhere between 20 and 25 percent of United Russia's [2007] vote" was "won in a way that would not pass muster in an established or traditional democracy" (2009: 137).

From a different angle, Figure 7.1 provides additional evidence that electoral manipulation was likely practiced in the 2007 contest. The distribution of voter turnout

reveals a suspicious peak in the right tail, strongly suggesting artificially augmented turnout because the distribution of voter turnout across raions ought to follow a normal or Gaussian distribution, if the data are "roughly homogenous and outliers are the result of uncorrelated or random factors" (Myagkov, et al. 2009: 31). The distribution of voter turnout in 2007 appears more abnormal than that from 2003, when an elongated right tail was evident but the conspicuous bump was absent. The location and size of the distortion in the distribution is suspect in that a distinct local maximum occurs in the far right tail, where electoral participation is the highest, and is large enough to produce a bimodal distribution.

Figure 7.1: Distribution of Voter Turnout in 2007

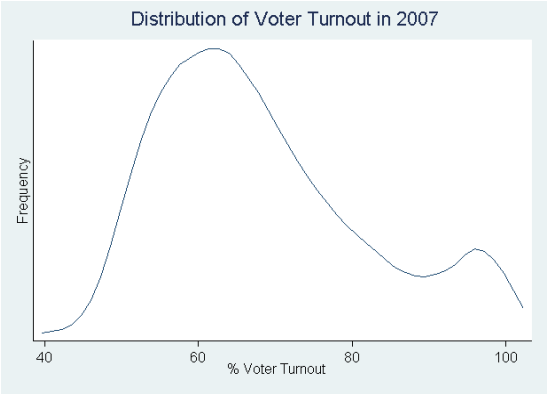


Table 7.1 details the voter turnout threshold used to assess electoral manipulation and the amount of raions that surpassed that threshold. In 2007, raion-level national turnout was 68.16% and the corresponding standard deviation was 13.33. The distribution of voter turnout was therefore more dispersed than in 2003, when the standard deviation was 12.27. Just over 17% of the more than 2,700 raions in Russia qualified as fraudulent, a noticeable increase from the 14.27% that met the turnout threshold in 2003. Indeed, upwards of 80 additional raions were considered manipulated in 2007 than in the previous contest. Given that voter turnout was roughly 10% higher in 2007 than 2003, which hiked the threshold for fraud, the metastasis of electoral malfeasance in 2007 is particularly striking. The turnout threshold accounts for the entirety of raions producing

the suspicious bump in the right hand tail seen in Figure 1, as well as some raions that reported slightly more limited turnout.

Table 7.1: Manipulated Raions in 2007		
Voter Turnout Threshold (1 Standard Deviation Above Raion-level National Turnout)	Number Manipulated Raions	% Total Raions
81.49	461	17.01

Figure 7.1 and Table 7.1 largely corroborate qualitative findings about the nefarious inflation of voter turnout in the election and, as will be shown later, the relationship between unusually high turnout and high vote shares for the dominant party.

During the electoral period, opposition parties faced a minefield of regime coercion, continuously reporting "harassment, detentions [and] confiscation of election material" (OSCE PA 2007). The police visited KPRF activists in their private homes, removing stacks of flyers and newspapers (*Ibid*). All across the country the party reported the seizure of printing equipment, intrusive tax inspections and the confiscation of its electoral communications (White 2011). The regime thus practiced not only nonviolent forms of electoral manipulation, such as ballot stuffing or facilitating multiple voting, but also employed more nefarious methods to tilt the playing field towards the dominant party and away from the party of power's primary opposition, the KPRF.

As was the case four years prior and to a more limited extent in the 1990s, broadcast media offered "overwhelmingly positive coverage" of the president and the party of power to the point of almost total domination of the airwaves, resulting in "grotesque disparities" (OSCE PA 2007; White 2011: 535). The dominant party enjoyed privileged access to the mass media receiving between 57-62% of all prime-time political news coverage in the heart of the campaign period (McAllister and White 2008: 942). In November 2007 alone, the two channels with the largest audiences devoted 69% and 72%, respectively, to the party of power (White 2011: 535). The Centre for Journalism in Extreme Situations (CJES) found that, in the pre-election period, United Russia enjoyed 10 times the coverage as its primary opponent, the KPRF (*Ibid*).

Analysis

The parties analyzed in the 2003 election, i.e. the core party troika and United Russia, remain under investigation in the 2007 contest. A Just Russia, the Kremlin creation that ultimately moved into the political opposition, is therefore excluded for consistency across elections. Table 7.2 below details the two stronghold thresholds for each party, the number of strongholds each captured, and the percent of total raions their share of strongholds represented. The number of Communist and liberal strongholds dwindled according to both thresholds compared to the previous election. Lower-level LDPR strongholds also dropped but the party harvested several more bastions of support according to the strict threshold. As anticipated based on United Russia's spectacular performance in the 2007 election, the number of dominant party strongholds grew, by 46 and 20 according to the relaxed and strict threshold.

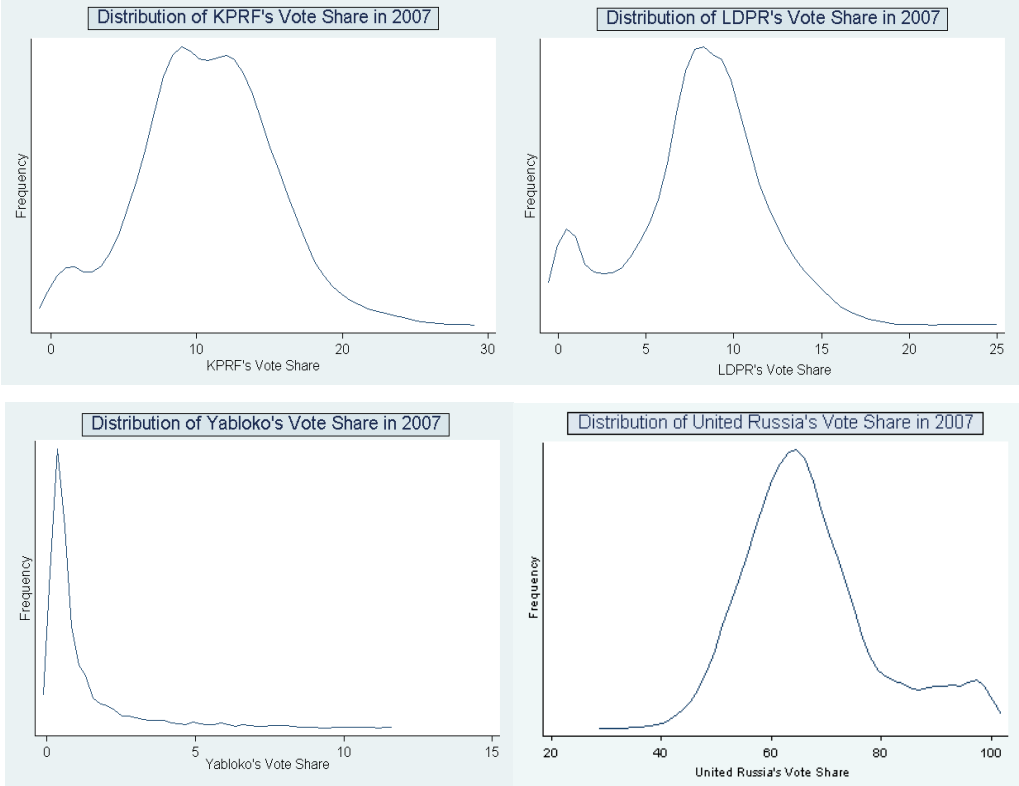
Table 7.2: Measuring the Dependent Variable: Party Strongholds in 2007

	1 standard deviation above party's raion-level national average	# Strongholds	% Raions	2 standard deviations above party's raion-level national average	# Strongholds	% Raions
KPRF	15.22	404	14.91	19.78	71	2.62
LDPR	11.73	376	13.87	15.45	50	1.85
Yabloko	2.50	282	10.41	3.93	150	5.54
United Russia	79.15	392	14.46	91.27	174	6.42

Figure 7.2 exhibits the distribution of the dominant party and the core party troika's vote shares, allowing for the rough visual pinpointing of the two stronghold thresholds for each party. The KPRF's distribution was quite unusual because it dipped at almost the precise location of the party's national mean of 10.66 and there was a conspicuous bump in the left tail of the distribution where electoral defeat prevailed. In acquiring the bump in the left tail, the distribution of the KPRF's vote share began to look more like the LDPR's in 2007 than had been the case in previous elections. Continuing with the trend of progressive clustering in each election, the standard deviation was notably more clustered around the KPRF's national average than in the 1990s and the early 2000s, contracting to 4.56 from 5.67 in the previous election. The LDPR's distribution is strikingly similar to the KRPF's because it also reveals a discernible bump in the left tail

but is distinct in that the bump is markedly more pronounced and akin to a peak. Similarly, the LDPR's distribution became more clustered rather than more dispersed when United Russia was at its apex: the standard deviation contracted from 4.87 in 2003 to 3.10 in 2007. Yabloko's distribution was the most clustered of the core party troika, as the standard deviation was 1.43. Like the KPRF and the nationalists, albeit the latter to a lesser degree, Yabloko's distributions exhibited less dispersion over time: the standard deviation was 2.76 in the previous election. The distribution's right tail is bumpier than that of the Communists and nationalists, with loci of higher support found in various urban centers, but it did not reveal an unusual bump in the left tail because the party performed so poorly in 2007, capturing a national average of a paltry 1.07%. Compared to the core party troika, United Russia's distribution displayed significantly more dispersion with a standard deviation of 12.12. Interestingly, the distribution was markedly more clustered than in the previous election when the standard deviation was 13.85. A suspicious peak is evident in the right hand tail of United Russia's distribution, in precisely the area where electoral windfalls are concentrated. Indeed, it roughly approximates the mirror image of the KPRF and LDPR's. In 2003, the distribution of United Russia's vote share had also displayed a fat right tail, but not the sizable bump that emerged when the dominant party was in its finest form.

Figure 7.2: Distribution of Parties' Vote Shares in 2007



See Appendix Tables 79-102 (pages 628-675) for Multilevel Model Results.

Ethnicity and Opposition Parties

Under the immense weight of United Russia, the KPRF generally performed poorly in raions with larger populations of ethnic minorities, despite somewhat irregular findings from the statistical models. The percent minority covariate decreased the odds of a stronghold by two percent across the majority of the lower threshold models but increased the odds by roughly two percent in a strict specification. In 2003, the odds of a Communist stronghold increased by a limited amount, approximately one percent, in a higher threshold model, but did not exert a systematic effect in the relaxed models. Other minorities depressed the odds of a bastion of support by two to four percent in the relaxed models but raised the odds by approximately two percent in a strict model. In the previous election, the effect of other minorities was also mixed because the covariate did not achieve statistical significance in the relaxed models but increased the odds by only

one percent in a strict specification. The titular minority covariate failed to achieve standard levels of statistical significance in any of the models in 2007, which departed from the findings pertaining to 2003, in which the odds plummeted by three to roughly seven percent. The lack of a systematic effect when the dominant party was at its apex suggests an improvement over the poor performance in titular minority areas during United Russia's initial consolidation. When vote share was employed continuously rather than dichotomously, the KPRF suffered in areas with dense minority communities of any kind, as shown clearly in Figure 7.3. The inverse relationships between the KPRF's vote share and the three ethnic composition covariates appear significantly steeper than was the case in 2003. The association seems most negative concerning titular minorities and the least pronounced regarding other minorities. There are comparatively fewer raions populating the upper right quadrant of the scatterplots, where robust minority populations coincide with high vote shares for the party. The most zealous "red raion," furnishing the Communists with a vote share of nearly 30%, was an almost purely ethnic Russian raion found in Tambov Oblast in central Russia. The other especially enthusiastic raions, supplying the Communists with vote shares more than double their national average, were virtually all majority-Russian raions and were located also in Tambov, as well as in Moscow Oblast, Belgorod Oblast bordering Ukraine, and the Republic of Urdmurtia just North of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan. Only a few majority-minority raions supported the KPRF in high numbers: a predominantly titular minority raion in North Ossetia bordering the occupied South Ossetia in the Northern Caucasus, and a mostly other minority raion in the Nizhny Novgorod Oblast on the Volga River.

Figure 7.3: Non-Russian Minorities and KPRF's Vote Share in 2007

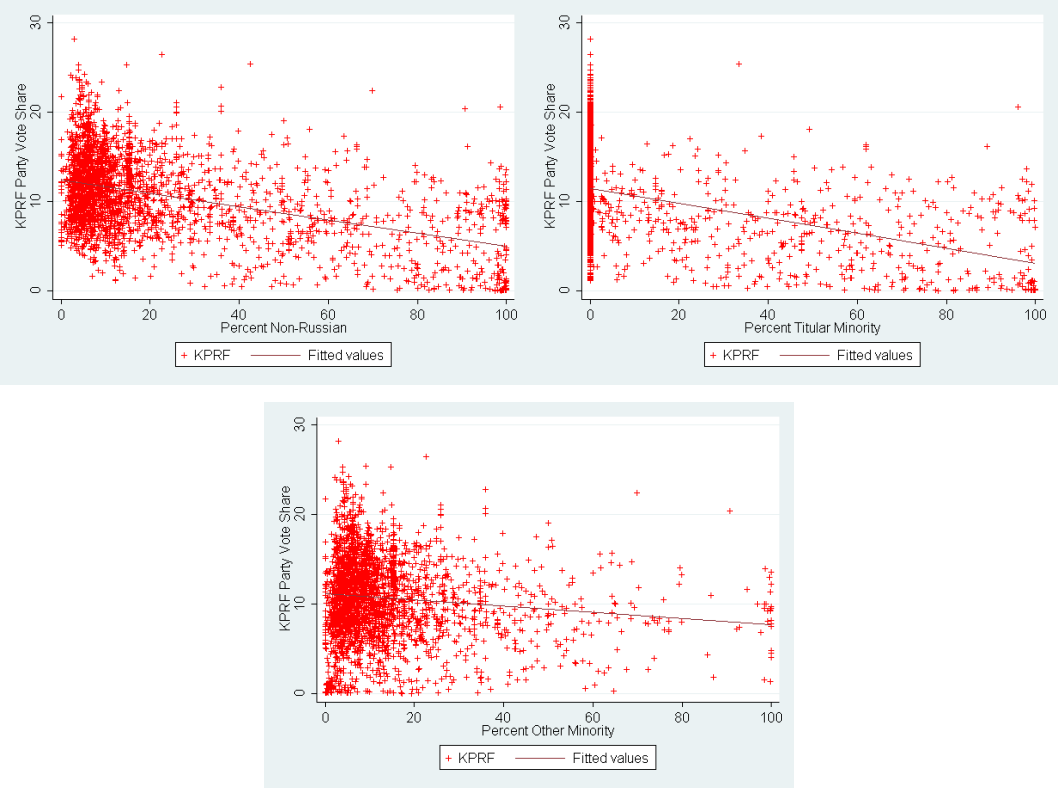
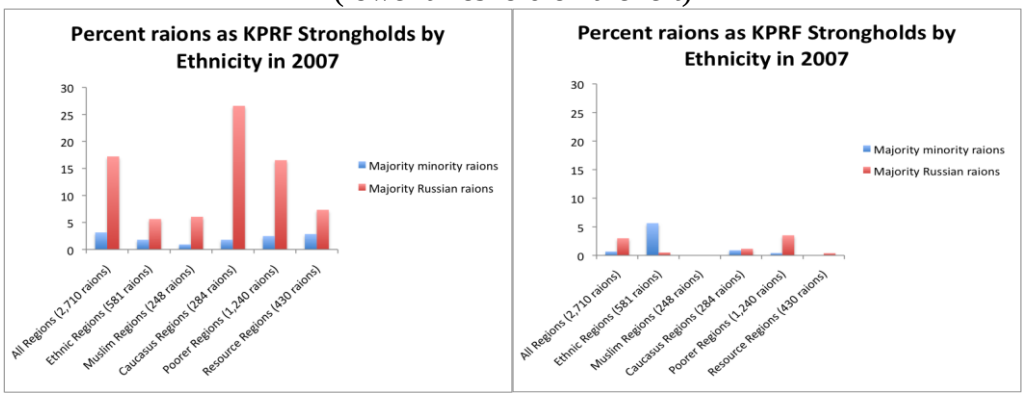


Figure 7.4 corroborates the majority of the statistical findings and those from the scatterplots: the pattern of KPRF support was ethnic Russian without exception for the first time. Of all majority-Russian raions, the KPRF received stronghold level support in just greater than 15%, which was comparable to the party's share in the previous election and those in the 1990s. A more significant change was evident in majority-minority raions: in the 1990s, of these raions, roughly 25% delivered immense support to the party but the percentage dropped progressively during the 2000s, to less than 15% in 2003 and to less than five percent when United Russia was in its prime. In each regional context per the lower threshold, of the number of majority-Russian and majority-minority raions, the KRPF captured a higher percentage of strongholds in majority-Russian raions, with the greatest disparities between ethnic contexts evident in the Caucasus and in poorer regions. In ethnic republics, Muslim regions, and those in the Caucasus, the percentage of majority Russian raions as opposed to majority-minority raions that were Communist

strongholds shifted starkly in favor of the former compared to 2003. The extent of the KPRF's emasculation throughout the 2000s is readily apparent: for example, the percentage of majority-minority raions in the Caucasus that were KPRF strongholds fell from 30% in 2003 to less than 5% in 2007. Similarly, of the ethnic minority raions in Muslim regions, the KPRF's share plunged from nearly 15% to roughly two percent in the same period. The percentage of Russian raions in these regions that delivered high levels of support, however, remained stable. Furthermore, from 2003 to 2007, half the percentage of majority minority raions in poorer regions and those dependent on natural resources channeled immense support to the KPRF. The only noticeable positive change for the Communists occurred in the Caucasus, where the share of majority-Russian raions that were strongholds jumped by about five percent from 2003. The loss of ethnic minority support in every regional environment undoubtedly sapped the Communists of a large part of their vote share. With the shift from the lower to the higher threshold in ethnic republics, the balance between the percentage of strongholds in majority-Russian and majority-minority raions switches in favor of the latter and strongholds in Muslim regions evaporate entirely. Moreover, the ratcheting up of the stronghold threshold resulted in the evaporation of the bastions drawn from majority-minority raions in resource-dependent regions.

Figure 7.4: KPRF Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 2007 (lower threshold on the left)



Descriptive statistics evident in Table 7.3 provide further evidence of the KPRF's rout in

raions and regions with concentrated ethnic minority populations: the party's average vote share in majority-minority raions was more than four percent below its raion-level national mean; in ethnic regions, the Communists fared comparatively better but still dreadfully, harvesting support nearly four percent less than nationally; finally, in Muslim regions, the Communists performed the worst out of the ethnic contexts considered with a mean that was less than half of its countrywide showing. In each of these contexts, the KPRF's mean relative to its countrywide average was considerably worse than was the case in 2003.

Table 7.3: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of the KPRF's Electoral Performance in the 2007 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	10.66	9.56	6.47	5.44	6.80	5.17	9.87	10.72	7.57
Min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.30	0
Max	28.26	26.45	22.46	16.55	25.44	17.37	22.46	25.35	25.44
SD	4.56	4.45	4.42	3.80	4.36	4.23	5.45	4.49	4.27

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, .9.

In a strict specification, the shift from a raion located in a Russian federal region to an ethnic republic collapsed the odds of a KPRF stronghold by an astonishing 99%, the greatest magnitude of effect of any of the correlates of the Communist vote considered. In 2003, ethnic region status did not exert a systematic effect; therefore, the fact that the odds plunged so precipitously during United Russia's second electoral foray was striking and portended nothing less than electoral catastrophe for the KPRF in these regions in future contests. Interestingly, given the findings discussed above, a raion's location in a predominantly Muslim region did not generate statistically significant results, a finding consistent with those from 2003. As indicated in Table 7.4, of all Communist strongholds, few were found in ethnic regions, approximately four percent and less than

three percent according to the lower and higher measure, respectively, and even less were located in Muslim regions. Indeed, as mentioned, the KPRF failed to capture any strongholds in Muslim regions by the strict threshold, the largest drop possible from the roughly 14% secured in the previous contest. The plunge in strongholds in Muslim regions was also evident with regard to the lower threshold, plunging to less than one percent from nearly seven percent four years prior. The percentage of strongholds found in ethnic regions also shrunk nearly to the point of non-existence, falling from 14% and nearly 20% according to the lower and higher threshold in 2003 to less than five percent by both thresholds in 2007.

Table 7.4: KPRF Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 2007

	# of KPRF Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (404 Total)	% of KPRF Strongholds	# of KPRF Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (71 Total)	% of KPRF Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	18	4.46	2	2.82
Russian federal regions	386	95.54	69	97.18
Muslim regions	4	0.99	0	0
Caucasus regions	48	11.88	3	4.23
Poorer Regions	171	42.33	36	50.70
Natural Resource Regions	23	5.69	1	1.41
Fraudulent raions	4	0.99	0	0
Non-Fraudulent raions	400	99.01	71	100

Despite preserving its position as the strongest opposition party in Russia's dominant party system, the KPRF was generally incapable of recapturing the ethnic minority support that it enjoyed in the 1990s.

Paralleling the Communists defeat, the LDPR also performed shabbily in areas with geographically concentrated minorities. Unlike the KPRF, however, the LDPR's weak performance in ethnic minority areas was expected because the party had, in fact, never experienced success in these raions, even during the 1990s, and was oriented primarily around appealing to ethnic Russian rather than minority constituencies. Unit

increases in the ethnic non-Russian, titular minority, and other minority population at the raion level decreased the odds of a stronghold by two to four percent across all of the relaxed measure models and in a strict specification in the case of the minority covariate and across the majority of the models for the remaining ethnic composition refinements. Despite general continuity in the LDPR's trajectory in raions with larger ethnic minority populations from the 1990s to the late 2000s, differences manifested: the magnitude of the negative effect in 2007 was notably smaller than that in the 1990s and even in 2003, when ethnic composition covariates reduced the odds by up to eight percent, contingent on the model and the election. Indeed, even when United Russia was at the height of its power, the magnitude of the negative effect from titular minorities on LDPR strongholds in particular was a notable improvement over the four to eight percent drop experienced in 2003. These findings were unanticipated because the presence of a dominant party with unshakable ties to ethnic minority areas did not result in the nationalists experiencing an even greater rout in 2007 than in the 1990s, when these pockets of support were up for grabs to a greater degree. Figure 7.5 substantiates the statistical findings and reveals steep plunges in the nationalists' vote share as the proportion of ethnic minorities rose. Compared to the scatterplots from 2003, the inverse association was clearly steeper with regards to all three ethnic composition covariates. As was also evident in 2003, in the scatterplots detailing the relationship concerning non-Russians and titular minorities, there are conspicuous and dense clusters where purely ethnic minority populations coincide with rock bottom vote shares for the ultra-nationalists. The most fanatical raion was a majority-Russian raion with a sizable population of other minorities in Murmansk Oblast bordering Finland: this raion endowed the nationalists with a vote share more than three times their national average. Of the 31 raions that supported the LDPR at least twice as much as its countrywide showing, more than 93% were majority-Russian. These raions were located in Chita Oblast, in southeast Siberia bordering China and Mongolia, Magadan Oblast, next to the Kamchatka Peninsula on the Sea of Okhotsk, Perm Krai, located on the western side of the Ural Mountains, Yaroslavl Oblast, located near both Moscow City and St. Petersburg. The remaining nationalist zealots were

majority-minority raions, one populated predominantly by other minorities in Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug in the Urals federal district, and the other, also with a dense population of other minorities, in Magadan Oblast. The most ardent supporters within a majority titular minority raion were found in the Republic of Komi, in northwestern Russia to the west of the Ural Mountains.

Figure 7.5: Non-Russian Minorities and LDPR's Vote Share in 2007

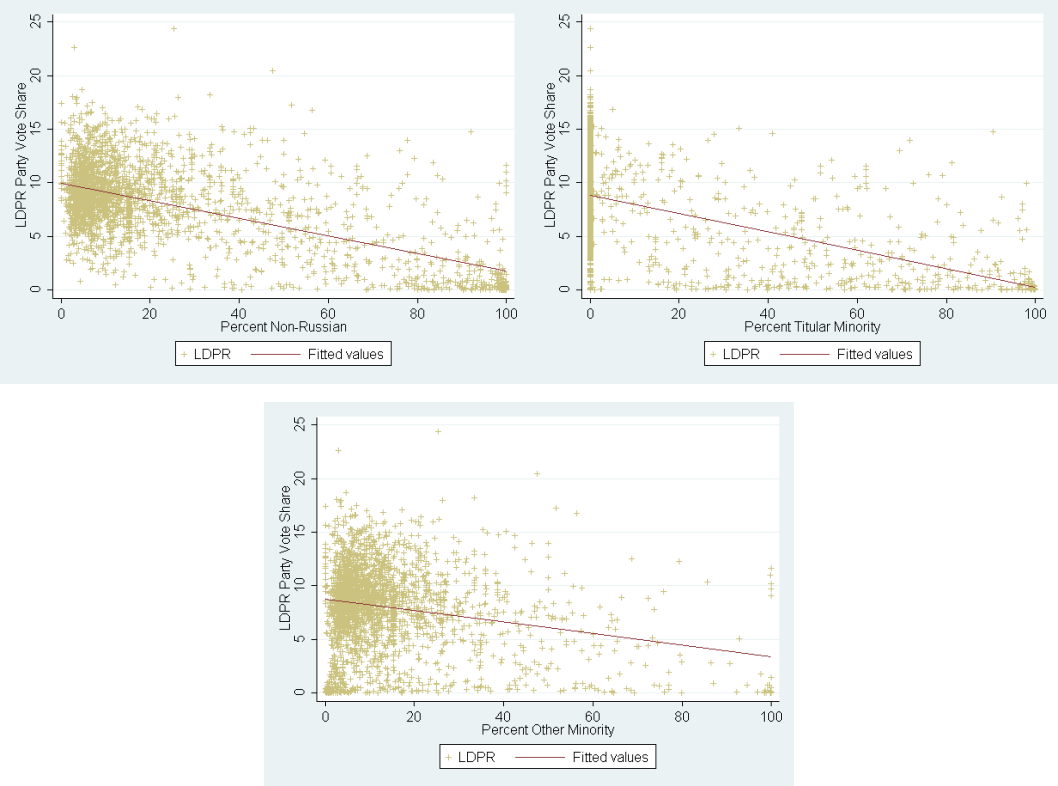


Figure 7.6 highlights the ethnic Russian contours of LDPR support by comparing the proportion of majority-Russian raions that were nationalist strongholds to their majority-minority counterparts. Of the majority-Russian raions, the percentage of nationalist strongholds dropped by approximately five percent in 2007 compared to the 1990s, but changed little from the previous contest. In contrast, of majority-minority raions, the percentage that channeled abnormally high support to the nationalists was as trivial as in the previous decade and even the small share that still served as strongholds for the

LDPR in 2007 was halved from 2003. Of the number of raions of each type in each regional environment, the LDPR harvested a higher share of strongholds from majority-Russian than majority-minority raions and the pattern largely held across thresholds. As was the case in the 1990s, the LDPR's strongholds in Muslim regions were drawn exclusively from majority-Russian raions across thresholds. In 2003, the LDPR had shown unexpected signs of growth in majority-minority raions in Muslim regions. In fact, of the ethnic minority and Russian raions in Muslim regions, only majority-minority raions were LDPR strongholds in the early 2000s, but any indications of expansion were completely erased in 2007. With United Russia at its prime, the share of ethnic minority raions in these areas that were bastions of support for the nationalists was eradicated. Similarly, the percentage of minority raions in the Caucasus that were strongholds fell to zero in 2007, but the LDPR managed to preserve the share of Russian raions that were strongholds in these areas from the prior contest. Other evidence that the LDPR was withering under the dominant party, especially in predominantly minority raions, was seen in poorer regions and those dependent on natural resources: the share of the former that were strongholds plunged to nearly none and the percentage of the latter was halved from 2003. There were also signs of expansion during the 2000s, especially in Russian regions in ethnic republics, where the percentage that were strongholds increased by roughly five percent to more than one-fifth, and resource-rich regions, where the share increased by approximately 10% to more than one-third.

Figure 7.6: LDPR Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 2007 (lower threshold on the left)

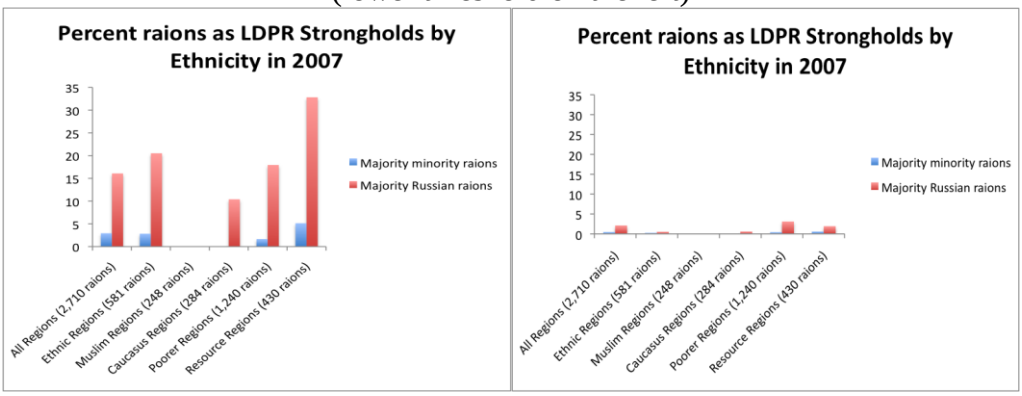


Table 7.5 indicates that the LDPR performed horrendously in majority-minority raions, harvesting average support that was only approximately 40% of the party's national take, a modest improvement from its performance in these areas in 2003. Along with majority-minority raions, the nationalists fared poorly in ethnic republics and Muslim regions. The party's average was just over half of its raion-level national mean in ethnic republics and Muslim regions earned the distinction of handing the party its lowest average vote share of all the raion and regional environments examined, at slightly greater than one percent. Despite the LDPR's abysmal performance in ethnic republics and Muslim regions, the party's average in these areas was still better than was the case four years prior.

Table 7.5: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of the LDPR's Electoral Performance in the 2007 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	8.01	7.01	3.35	2.96	4.47	1.40	5.25	7.85	7.33
Min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.13	0.13
Max	24.41	22.60	17.26	16.89	16.89	10.95	15.79	18.23	18.23
SD	3.72	3.79	3.65	3.19	4.40	1.91	4.36	3.41	4.83

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, .9.

The value for raions situated in ethnic republics was less than one-twentieth the value of the odds for raions located in Russian federal regions. The magnitude of the negative effect was therefore significantly greater than revealed in the 2003 results, when the value for raions in ethnic republics was roughly one-quarter the value of the odds for raions situated elsewhere. Table 7.6 indicates that few nationalist strongholds were found in ethnic republics, 13% by the relaxed measure and merely 4% by the strict threshold. Compared to 2003, the percentage pertaining to the lower threshold was actually higher, albeit by one percent; on the other hand, the share of higher-level strongholds dropped.

Surprisingly, given the findings pertaining to the raion-level ethnic composition correlates in the models, the descriptive statistics discussed above and the effect of ethnic republic status, the shift from raions nested within non-Muslim regions to location in a Muslim region failed to reach conventional levels of statistical significance, a striking finding since this shift plunged the odds of LDPR strongholds by a full 97% in 2003. Paralleling the descriptive statistics, the LDPR performed the worst in Muslim regions, capturing no stronghold level support whatsoever, a notable decline from the six lower-level strongholds that were in these regions in 2003.

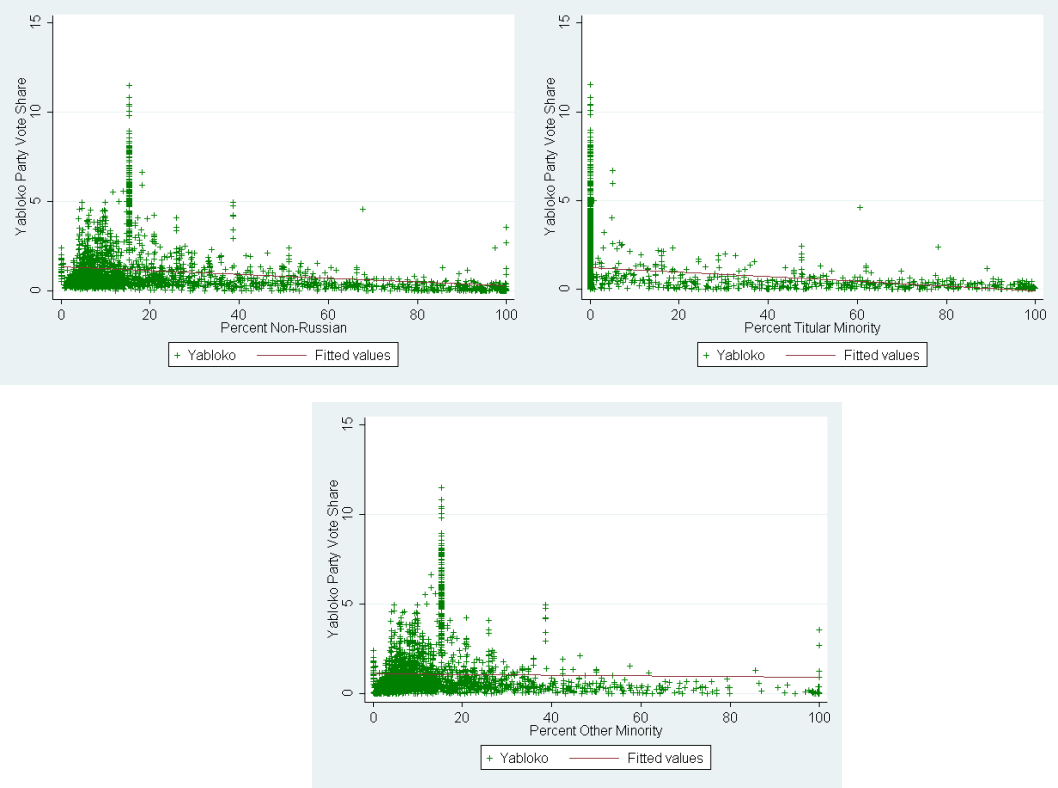
Table 7.6: LDPR Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 2007

	# of LDPR Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (376 Total)	% of LDPR Strongholds	# of LDPR Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (50 Total)	% of LDPR Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	49	13.03	2	4.0
Russian federal regions	327	86.97	48	96.0
Muslim regions	0	0	0	0
Caucasus regions	18	4.79	1	2.0
Poorer Regions	183	48.67	32	64.0
Natural Resource Regions	92	24.47	6	12.0
Fraudulent raions	10	2.66	5	10.0
Non-Fraudulent raions	366	97.34	45	90.0

Compared to the Communists and nationalists, the ethnic correlates of the Yabloko vote were distinct in that the liberals benefitted from increases in the ethnic non-Russian and other minority population at the raion level. The percent minority covariate increased the odds of a bastion of support by one to three percent and by approximately two percent in some of the relaxed and strict models, respectively. Similarly, the other minority refinement amplified the odds by two to three percent across the majority of the relaxed models and boosted the odds by roughly three percent in a strict specification. The magnitude of the positive effect of non-Russians and other minorities was greater than four years prior, when unit increases in these covariates increased the odds by one percent. Denser populations of titular minorities dwindled the odds by three percent in

2003 but did not exercise a systematic effect on the occurrence of Yabloko strongholds in 2007, a clear improvement for the non-parliamentary party. When Yabloko's vote share is leveraged as a continuous variable, rather than dichotomous, a relatively stable association between growing populations of ethnic non-Russians and other minorities emerges, as Figure 7.7 shows. Although the titular minority covariate did not generate statistically significant results, the scatterplot details an inverse relationship, with Yabloko's vote share essentially zero in purely titular minority raions. Compared to the elections in the 1990s, there are markedly fewer raions populated by enthusiastic supporters of the non-parliamentary liberal party, especially in majority-minority raions. Yabloko's highest supporting raion delivered a vote share that was nearly eleven times the liberals' raion-level national average. As was the case in previous elections, Yabloko's strongest pockets of support were found in majority-Russian raions with sizable other minority populations in the two federal cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg. Of Yabloko's top 50 raions in terms of the party's vote share, two percent were in the Republic of Karelia bordering Finland and on the White Sea, ten percent in St. Petersburg, and 88% in Moscow. The two outliers with titular minority populations of approximately 60% and 80% were located in the Republics of Karelia and Ingushetia, respectively. The two evident outliers from raions with purely other minority populations were both located in Chelyabinsk Oblast, which borders Kazakhstan.

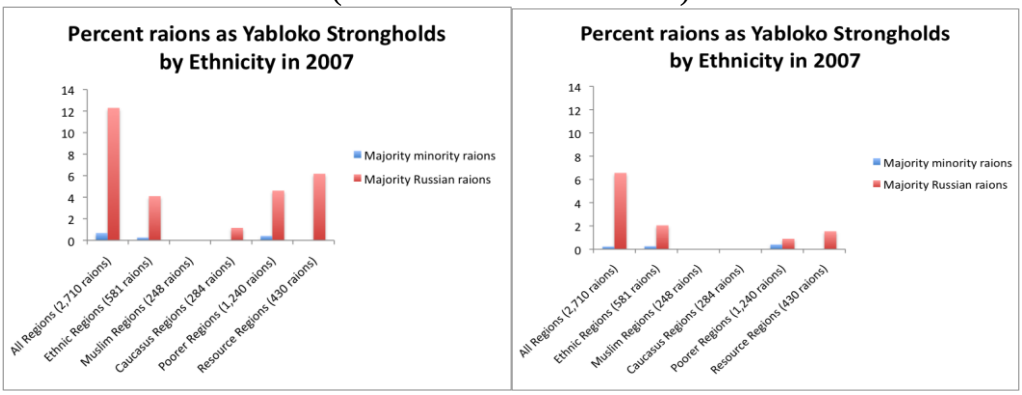
Figure 7.7: Non-Russian Minorities and Yabloko's Vote Share in 2007



In contrast to the statistical results, Figure 7.8 reveals that Yabloko's pattern of support followed ethnic Russian lines. Unlike the Communists and nationalists, of the majority-minority and majority-Russian raions, the share that registered high levels of support for the non-parliamentary party were both comparable to the 1990s. However, compared to the early 2000s, the percentage of minority raions that were strongholds was halved and that of their Russian counterparts fell by four percent. The extent of Yabloko's deterioration is visible in each dyad: the percentage of minority raions in ethnic republics that were strongholds fell to close to zero and the share of Russian raions dropped from close to 15% in 2003 to four percent in 2007; the share of raions in both environments in Muslim regions that delivered high levels of support were wiped out entirely, with the percentage of Russian raions plunging from 15% to zero and the few majority-minority raions forfeited; the share of minority raions in the Caucasus dropped to zero and the share of Russian raions was halved as well; Russian raions in poorer regions fell

precipitously from 25% to five percent and their minority counterparts dipped close to zero; finally, the percentage of Russian raions in resource regions dwindled from 15% to roughly six percent and the share of minority raions was lost altogether. The party was simply unable to remain afloat with drastic changes to the party system and the level of competitiveness in legislative elections. Across thresholds, in each regional context, Yabloko captured a higher percentage of strongholds in majority-Russian raions than majority-minority. In the Caucasus and resource-dependent regions, Yabloko's only bastions of support were drawn from majority-Russian areas but the party failed to retain the small percentage of strongholds in the Caucasus when the stronghold measure was raised.

Figure 7.8: Yabloko Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 2007 (lower threshold on the left)



Descriptive statistics from Table 7.7 suggest that Yabloko performed poorly in majority-minority raions, as well as ethnic federal regions and those with a preponderance of Muslim inhabitants. In each ethnic environment, Yabloko was incapable of mustering average support of even one half of a percent, a drop of approximately one percent in each case from 2003. Like the Communists and nationalists, the liberals performed the worst in raions in Muslim regions, harvesting average support only scarcely exceeding zero. As was true four years prior, the party mobilized the most support in ethnic republics compared to majority-minority raions and Muslim regions, but even in those raions, Yabloko's mean showing was less than half of its countrywide average.

Table 7.7: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of Yabloko's Electoral Performance in the 2007 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	1.07	.430	.330	.257	.489	.238	.534	1.45	.680
Min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Max	11.52	4.99	4.58	2.55	6.66	2.39	2.78	11.52	4.95
SD	1.43	.346	.446	.313	.693	.393	.582	1.82	.734

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, .9.

The multilevel model results regarding ethnic republic status substantiate the descriptive statistics: the value for raions nested within ethnic federal regions was merely one-twentieth the value of the odds for raions located elsewhere across the majority of the relaxed models. Yabloko was thus the only member of the core party troika in which ethnic republic status reached standard levels of statistical significance. During United Russia's initial rise, ethnic region status plunged the odds by roughly 90%; as such, the lack of a systematic effect on Yabloko strongholds in the late 2000s represented an improvement. Indeed, per Table 7.8, merely three percent of Yabloko's strongholds were located in ethnic regions according to both stronghold measures and the party enjoyed no strongholds of any type in Muslim regions. The share of strongholds in ethnic republics and Muslim regions fell from eight percent and nearly three percent, respectively, by the lower threshold in 2003.

Table 7.8: Yabloko Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 2007				
	# of Yabloko Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (282 Total)	% of Yabloko Strongholds	# of Yabloko Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (150 Total)	% of Yabloko Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	9	3.19	5	3.33
Russian federal regions	273	96.81	145	96.67
Muslim regions	0	0	0	0
Caucasus regions	2	0.71	0	0
Poorer Regions	47	16.67	10	6.67
Natural Resource Regions	16	5.67	4	2.67
Fraudulent raions	1	0.35	0	0
Non-Fraudulent raions	281	99.65	150	100

Although United Russia dominated Muslim regions, the odds of opposition parties capturing stronghold level support in these areas were not severely damaged.

The Urban-rural Divide and Opposition Parties

While the core party troika experienced divergent fates in the countryside in the 1990s, the Communists, nationalists, and liberals alike were thrashed in rural areas when United Russia was at its finest. Interestingly, the countryside represented the sole area of convergence of opposition parties' electoral trajectories under United Russia. The KPRF's electoral fortunes in the countryside shifted drastically from the 1990s to the 2000s: higher proportions of rural residents augmented the odds of a KPRF stronghold by one to two percent in 1995 and by two to four percent in 1999, but in 2003 there was a marked softening of support and odds increased by only a negligible amount to one percent and diminished the odds by two to three percent across all of the lower threshold models in 2007. The magnitude of the negative effect became greater in some of the strict specifications, shrinking the odds by three to four percent. The election in 2007, then, was the first in which the effect of rurality on KPRF strongholds moved into negative territory. The Communists' average in majority-rural raions was less than one percent under its raion-level national mean, a shift from the one percent boost that the party received residually in 2003. Figure 7.9 exposes these findings visually: there was a clear

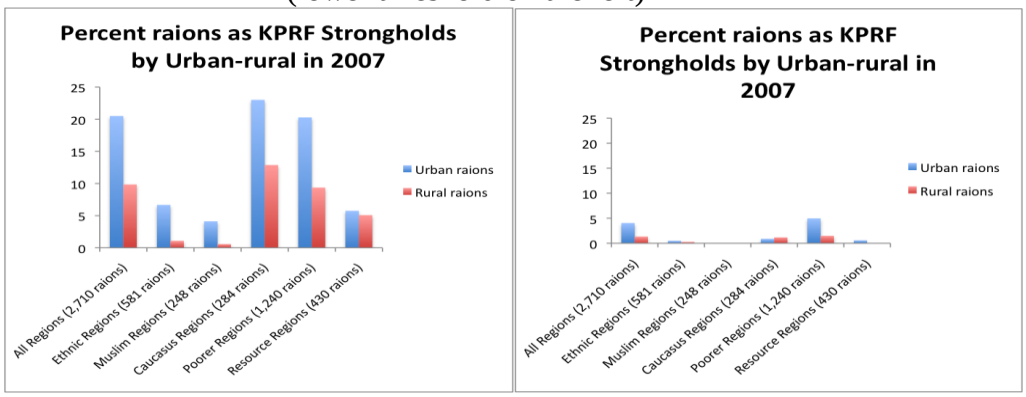
inverse relationship between the KPRF's vote share and the level of a raion's ruralness for the first time in post-communist Russian elections. The scatterplot below resembles the mirror opposite of those in the 1990s and 2003: in sharp contrast to the scatterplots detailing this relationship during the two elections examined under Yeltsin and the first under United Russia, the most zealous supporters of the Communists were more frequently found in city centers than the countryside in 2007. The high supporting raions that were majority-urban were in Tambov, Moscow and Voronezh Oblasts and the Republic of Urdmurtia, while their countryside counterparts hailed from Belgorod Oblast, Kaluga Oblast, due west of Moscow Oblast in the heart of European Russia, Nizhny Novgorod Oblast, Ryazan Oblast, Krasnoyarsk Krai, and the Republic of Altai, which shares a border with China, Mongolia and Kazakhstan.

Figure 7.9: Rural Inhabitants and KPRF's Vote Share in 2007

Especially when compared to the 1990s, the picture of KPRF support portrayed by Figure 7.10 is remarkably urban across both thresholds. The party that once drew its most enthusiastic support from the countryside acquired the contours of an urban party in the late 2000s. Of all the majority urban raions across Russia, the percentage that was KPRF strongholds more than doubled from 2003 to 2007. However, of the raions in the countryside, the KPRF's share of strongholds fell by more than half in the same period. Save for one instance, i.e. in the Caucasus according to the strict measure, a higher percentage of urban than rural areas were KPRF strongholds in each regional context, a

first for the Communists. The loci of expansion for the KPRF in 2003 were confined exclusively to urban raions in poorer regions: more than 20% delivered unusually high vote shares to the Communists, double the percentage from 2003. In all other respects, the percentage of urban and rural raions in each regional setting that was KPRF strongholds fell markedly when the dominant party was in its prime. United Russia's infiltration of the Caucasus was far from out-and-out even in 2007, as nearly 15% of rural raions churned out stronghold level support for the dominant party's most formidable challenger and the percentage of urban raions in these regions that were bastions of support for the KPRF increased by a few points over 2003. Although close to 15% of rural raions in the Caucasus were KPRF strongholds, that share was considerably less than the nearly 30% from four years prior. The smallest disparity between urban and rural environments occurred in resource-dependent regions; the KPRF's performance in the remaining regional contexts was considerably skewed in favor of urban locales. With the shift in thresholds, all strongholds in Muslim regions evaporated and rural strongholds in resource-dependent regions vanished.

Figure 7.10: KPRF Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 2007 (lower threshold on the left)



The findings that rural voters continued to turn away from the Communist party en masse in 2007 critically extend Wegren and Konitzer's findings regarding the 1999 and 2003 legislative elections (2006). These scholars argue, "since the late 1990s and early in Putin's first term […] an important shift in rural politics occurred, marked by the fact that

the KPRF suffered an erosion of its rural electoral support" (2006: 1038). Specifically, they trace the erosion in rural support for the KPRF to the 1999 election (Wegren and Konitzer 2006). It is important to note, however, that the statistical findings presented earlier regarding the KPRF's performance in rural areas in 1999 differ markedly from Wegren and Konitzer's: rather than finding evidence of rural dealignment from the Communists, I found that the occurrence of KPRF strongholds was positively influenced by increasing ruralness at the raion level. Nevertheless, the fact that the KPRF performed poorly in the countryside in 2007 indicates that the dealignment identified by Wegren and Konitzer endured in subsequent elections. United Russia's political dominance and extensive resources at the party's disposal due to the booming economy frustrated the Communists' attempts to woo back rural constituencies lost in previous contests.

Broadly paralleling the KPRF's electoral trajectory in the countryside, the LDPR also experienced changing fortunes in more rural areas from the 1990s to the late 2000s. In the late 1990s, the ultra-nationalists received a boost of approximately one to two percent in the countryside but throughout the 2000s, the party suffered in these areas to a similar extent. The magnitude of the negative effect in some of the 2007 was larger than was the case in 2003, when odds diminished by one percent at most. Interestingly, the magnitude of the negative effect of increasing ruralness on the occurrence of nationalist strongholds in some of the models was less than that experienced by the KRPF, with the LDPR's odds dipping by two percent across the relaxed threshold models. The nationalists' average showing in majority-rural raions was one percent less than its national take, a dive deeper than that experienced in 2003. Figure 7.11 illustrates the steep plunge in the LDPR's vote share with the shift from urban centers to the countryside. Indeed, the plunge was noticeably more severe than in 2003. Of the raions that handed the nationalists vote shares more than double their national mean, approximately 22% were found in city centers, more than one-quarter were located entirely in the countryside, and the majority were in mixed settings. The urban enthusiasts were raions in Murmansk, Chita, Kirov, and Yaroslavl Oblasts, Perm Krai,

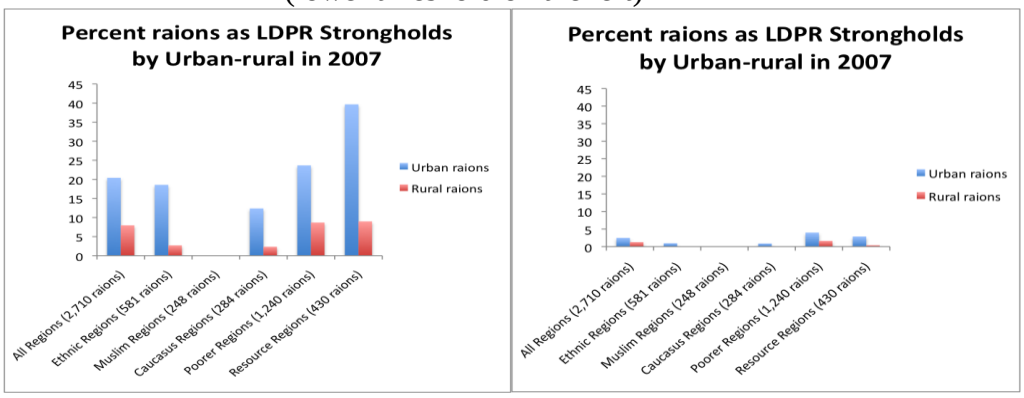
the Republic of Karelia, and the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug and the rural devotees were located primarily in the same regions as their urban counterparts.

Figure 7.11: Rural Inhabitants and LDPR's Vote Share in 2007

Figure 7.12 looks strikingly different to the bar charts from the final election of the 1990s, when the balance in percentages between LDPR strongholds in urban and rural raions favored rural raions in some regional settings. Of all urban raions, 20% delivered high vote totals to the nationalists, nearly double the percentage as in the 1990s. Even compared to 2003, the percentage of urban raions that were nationalist strongholds increased by roughly five percent. In contrast, of the rural raions, less than 10% were LDPR strongholds in 2007, down approximately 10% from the 1990s and halved from four years prior. Of the urban and rural raions in each environment, the nationalists captured a higher percentage of strongholds in the former than the latter and the general contours held across thresholds. Areas of deterioration from the previous contest were evident in rural raions in the Caucasus, in which the percentage that were strongholds was more than halved, rural raions in poorer regions, in which the percentage dropped by five percent, and both urban and rural raions in Muslim regions, in which the share of both plummeted to zero. On the other hand, zones of growth were apparent chiefly in urban raions. For example, of the urban raions in the Caucasus, the share that was LDPR strongholds was a few percentage points higher over 2003. Similarly, close to 45% of urban raions in resource-dependent regions and roughly 25% of those in poorer regions

channeled immense support to the nationalists, which were increases of about 20% in the case of the former and more than five percent in the case of the latter over 2003. Surprisingly, there was little fluctuation in ethnic republics for either rural or urban raions. Compared to the pattern evident in 2003, which still favored urban raions in all contexts, the disparity within each dyad grew more pronounced toward urban centers in 2007. The shift in thresholds resulted in the falling away of rural support in ethnic republics and the Caucasus.

Figure 7.12: LDPR Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 2007 (lower threshold on the left)



Thus, one of the most consequential shifts from the perspective the Communists and nationalists that occurred with the emergence and consolidation of a successful party of power was the sweeping dealignment of rural voters. Rural areas served as perhaps the single most important pockets of support for the Communists in the 1990s and one in which the LDPR began to prime and make fresh inroads in the late 1990s, but United Russia's infiltration sent a seismic shock wave throughout the countryside and swiftly brought these areas into the dominant party's fold. Without doubt, it is not coincidental that United Russia targeted rural areas as a means to achieve its electoral ends because they offered an environment ripe for electoral manipulation and patronage politics, away from the prying eyes of electoral observers and opposition party representatives.

The dealignment of rural areas from the Communists and nationalists pushed these parties into the urban centers, crowding Yabloko's electoral enclaves with

formidable opponents. Once again, the odds of a liberal stronghold collapsed with increases in raion level ruralness, by nine to 17% across the lower threshold specifications and by six to 14% across the higher threshold models. The negative affect of the countryside on Yabloko's electoral support in 2007 is consistent with the findings from the mid- and late-1990s, but the magnitude of the effect was greater in the majority of the models than in 2003, when the odds dropped by six to seven percent. The magnitude of the negative effect of the countryside on the occurrence of Yabloko strongholds was by far the greatest of any opposition party in 2007. Yabloko's mean vote share in majority-rural areas was, once again, less than half of the party's raion-level national average. Compared to the scatterplots from the more competitive elections in the 1990s, Figure 7.13 reveals significantly fewer zealously liberal raions, but the ones that are evident were found predominantly in urban centers. In the early 2000s, there were more entirely rural raions that channeled high vote shares to the party. Of the top 100 raions voting for Yabloko in hordes, 98% were fully urban and nearly all in Moscow or St. Petersburg, one percent was mostly urban and also in Moscow, and the remaining one percent was a majority-rural raion in the Republic of Karelia. The other majority-rural outlier, at roughly 60% rural, was also found in Karelia.

Figure 7.13: Rural Inhabitants and Yabloko's Vote Share in 2007

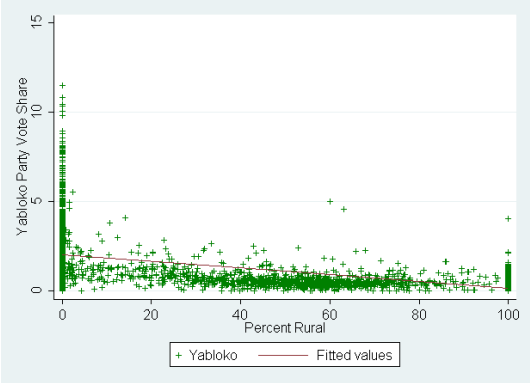
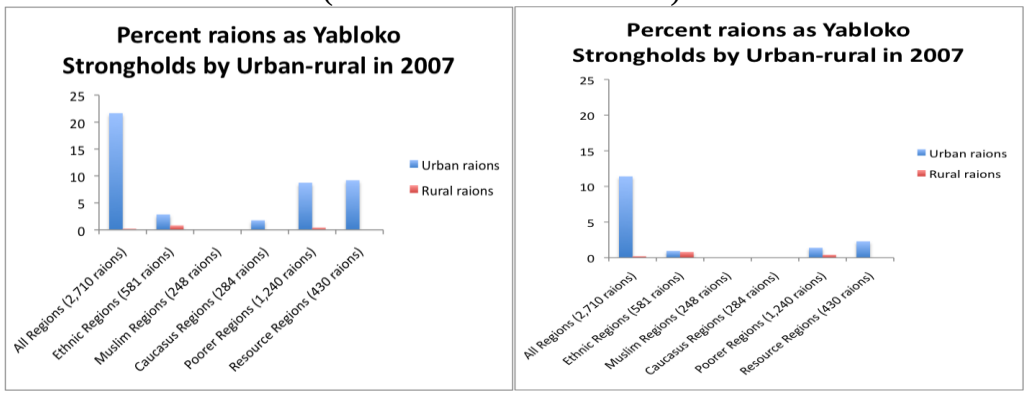


Figure 7.14 reveals a broadly similar pattern to that which prevailed in the 1990s but also illustrates Yabloko's rapid emasculation under a dominant party at the peak of its

performance. Of urban raions, the share that were Yabloko strongholds in 2007 dropped approximately five percent from the 1990s but dropped from roughly 10% from 2003; likewise, of rural raions, only an infinitesimal percentage were Yabloko strongholds, which represented only a slight decline compared to the Yeltsin years and the first election of United Russia's reign. Yabloko captured significantly higher percentages of strongholds in urban raions than their rural counterparts in all cases and, surprisingly, of the rural raions that were Yabloko strongholds, the bastions of support were located in ethnic republics and poorer regions, outside of Yabloko's traditional constituency. The share of urban and rural raions that were liberal bastions of support diminished in nearly every single dyad compared to the previous election: while the percentage of rural raions that were strongholds remained more or less unchanged, roughly 15% of urban raions in ethnic republics were strongholds in 2003 but this fell to less than five percent in 2007; the share of both types of raions in Muslim regions was wiped out, with urban raions plunging from about 15% to zero; urban raions in the Caucasus were halved while rural raions became extinct; the percentage of urban raions in economically disadvantaged regions fell from 40% in 2003 to less than 10% in 2007; finally, the share of rural raions in resource regions that were strongholds was lost entirely and urban raions dropped from 25% to 10%. Of the urban raions in each regional setting, poorer regions and those with abundant natural resources were the most enthusiastic for Yabloko.

Figure 7.14: Yabloko Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 2007 (lower threshold on the left)



Surprisingly, Yabloko managed to preserve to some degree a key pocket of support in urban areas, despite the fact that it was without a doubt the feeblest in the core party troika and the reds and browns had begun to muscle in on its most treasured turf. Yabloko thus also felt the ripples produced by United Russia's consolidation of countryside support: with the Communists and nationalists forced retreat from rural areas, urban centers transformed into the new battleground for opposition parties and, consequently, they turned their energies toward cannibalizing each other, perilously fracturing the urban vote to the benefit of United Russia.

Regional Geographic and Socioeconomic Indicators and Opposition Parties

In contrast to the two variables assessing ethnic republic status and predominantly Muslim populations, the remaining region level indicators exerted more widespread effects on the occurrence of opposition party strongholds in 2007. As was the case in 2003, this variable did not reach conventional levels of statistical significance in 2007 vis-à-vis the KPRF. The KPRF's average in the Caucasus closely approximated its raion-level national mean, but was slightly below, a change from the more than one percent boost the party received in the previous election. Nearly 12% of the KPRF's strongholds were found in the area according to the lower threshold and four percent by the strict measure, the latter declining conspicuously from nearly 20% in 2003. The LDPR and Yabloko, on the other hand, were harmed in the Caucasus. As in the late 1990s, when two potential parties of power competed, both with strong ties to the Caucasus, the odds of an LDPR stronghold plummeted sharply: in 2007, the value for raions in the Caucasus were approximately one-tenth the value of the odds for raions located elsewhere. This finding, however, diverged from those four years prior, when Caucasus location did not exercise a systematic effect on the occurrence of LDPR strongholds. The nationalists struggled to maintain support in the area, harvesting average support that was three percent less than its national take, a drop comparable to the early 2000s. Less than five percent and two percent of the party's strongholds were located in the Caucasus, by the lower and higher threshold, respectively, nearly identical to the previous election. As was the case in 2003, location in the Caucasus exercised a systematic and extremely negative effect on Yabloko

strongholds in 2007, plunging the odds by more than 90%. The magnitude of the negative effect was comparable to four years prior. Yabloko's average in the area was 50% lower than its national mean, a more sizable drop than in the early 2000s, and less than one percent and zero of the party's strongholds were found in the area according to the relaxed and strict measure, accordingly.

Correlates of the vote indicating federal subjects' gross regional product and dependence on natural resources produced diverse results and provide evidence of opposition parties' changing fortunes under competitive and uncompetitive elections. While increases in gross regional product harmed the Communists in the three prior elections, relative economic development did not reach conventional levels of statistical significance in 2007. Of all the raion and regional environments investigated, the KPRF's average was, in fact, the highest in regions that exceeded the median gross regional product, albeit still within one percent of its national mean. The KPRF captured a sizable share of strongholds in poorer regions, 42% and half by the lower and higher measure, the latter representing an improvement from the 46% in 2003. The LDPR distinguished itself as the only party handicapped due to increasing socioeconomic welfare at the regional level: the odds of a stronghold shrunk by 25% in a lower threshold model and its average in economically advantaged regions was less than its countrywide showing. The magnitude of the negative effect in some of the 2007 models was therefore less than in 2003, when the odds plunged by up to 39%. Corresponding to the lower and higher threshold, nearly half and almost two-thirds of ultra-nationalist strongholds were drawn from regions with sub-average levels of economic development, a drop from the nearly 60% harvested in these areas according to the relaxed threshold in 2003. Congruent with the findings from previous elections, Yabloko outstripped the Communists and nationalists in wealthier regions, with odds of a liberal stronghold jumping 12 to 36% across the lower threshold models and 39% in a strict specification. However, the magnitude of the effect was notably smaller than in the 1990s, when odds ballooned by two times in 1995 and by approximately 75% in 1999, and in some of the models from the early 2000s, when the odds were amplified by 56% at the greatest. Nevertheless, the

liberals again raked in their highest average support from wealthier regions, compared to the other raion and regional environments. Approximately 17% and roughly seven percent of Yabloko's bastions of support were located in comparatively underprivileged regions, a large decline from the nearly 80% and 95%, respectively, seen in 2003.

Resource dependence shriveled the odds of a Communist stronghold by roughly 84 to 86% across the relaxed specifications and by 95 to 97% in the strict models, mirroring the findings from 1999 and 2003, where the odds also plummeted sharply. Average support in these regions again fell to three percent less than the KPRF's national level and a paltry six percent and one percent of the party's bastions were located in resource-dependent regions, by the lower and higher threshold. The share of Communist strongholds in resource regions thus fell sharply compared to 2003, when roughly eight percent and 14% were found there. Thus, the KPRF performed better in areas with comparatively more diversified regional economies. Unlike the KPRF and surprisingly, given both the party's traditional support base and the effect produced by increases in gross regional product, raions located in resource-abundant regions hiked the odds of an LDPR stronghold by at least four times and over five times at the most in all the lower measure models. In 2003, resource-region status did not systematically affect the occurrence of LDPR strongholds; thus, the robust and positive effect in 2007 was a drastic improvement. In these areas, the party's average closely approximated its national mean as was the case four years prior, and nearly one-quarter and roughly 12% of nationalist strongholds were drawn from these raions. The share of strongholds culled from resource regions in 2007 was larger than in 2003, when 18% and 11% were found there. Considering the odds of a stronghold plummeted by roughly 80% in the mid-1990s, the LDPR's electoral trajectory in resource-rich regions from the 1990s to the late 2000s represents a sharp reversal in fortunes and indicates that the party established new footholds in precisely those areas where conditions were the least favorable for its success. Furthermore, the LDPR called for increased taxes on natural-resource concerns during the 2003 election, which might have soured resource-rich areas on the nationalists for years to come (The Economist 2003). In fact, the LDPR was the only party, including

United Russia, to gain an advantage in resource-dependent regions. Even when the dominant party was virtually untouchable, an arguably second-rate opposition party managed to secure electoral windfalls from an area that was, at least theoretically, ripe for patronage politics due to the presence of abundant natural resources. The liberal Yabloko thrived in resource regions in the late 1990s and early 2000s, with odds amplified by three to nearly 12 times contingent on the model and election, but the shift from raions located in regions with diversified economies to those situated in resource-dependent regions in the late 2000s did not systematically influence the occurrence of strongholds, signifying an observable softening in these longstanding pockets of support. Descriptive statistics indicate that Yabloko's average performance in these areas was subpar, albeit within one percent of its countrywide showing. The percentage of liberal strongholds that were nested in resource-dependent federal subjects in 2007 was roughly halved from 2003, dropping from 11% to six percent with regards to the relaxed threshold and from six percent to three percent pertaining to the strict measure.

Electoral Manipulation and Opposition Parties

The core party troika was generally annihilated in raions with voter turnout reaching levels specified for suspected electoral manipulation, but variation emerged between parties with regards to the magnitude of the effects. For the Communists, the value of the odds for raions in manipulated raions was one-tenth to one-twentieth the value for their non-manipulated counterparts across all lower threshold models, a deterioration from the 56 to 63% drop in 2003. Indeed, the KPRF's average in fraudulent raions was less than 50% of its national mean; of the various raion and regional settings examined, the Communists, in addition to the nationalists and liberals, performed worse in only Muslim regions. KPRF strongholds in abnormally high turnout raions were extremely rare: a paltry one percent and zero of the party's strongholds by the lower and higher threshold were located in these areas, down from roughly nine percent and nearly 18% in the previous contest. Although it is expected that opposition parties would suffer in elections heavily tilted towards the dominant party by means of manipulation and hard and soft coercion, the KPRF performed strongly in manipulated raions even in the late

1990s when two well-equipped potential parties of power jockeyed for control of the Kremlin. But in 2007, the KPRF was finally vanquished by United Russia in high turnout raions. Figure 7.15 illustrates the acutely negative association between the level of voter turnout and the Communists' vote share. The upper right quadrant, at the nexus between high turnout and high vote share, was an electoral desert for the KRPF. The one rather conspicuous outlier that reported voter turnout just below the threshold established for suspected electoral manipulation, which is 81.49%, and registered an unusually high vote share for the Communists was located in Belgorod Oblast. On the other hand, there is a dense grouping of raions populating lower right quadrant, where high political participation coincides with total electoral defeat.

Figure 7.15: Voter Turnout and KPRF's Vote Share in 2007

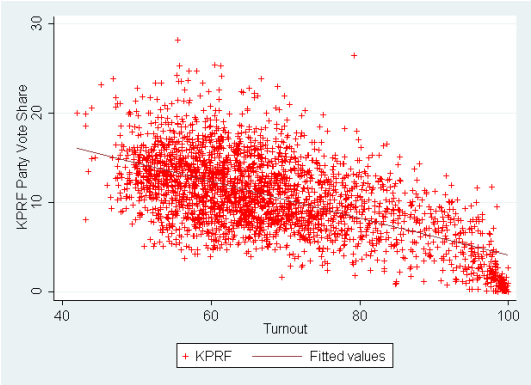
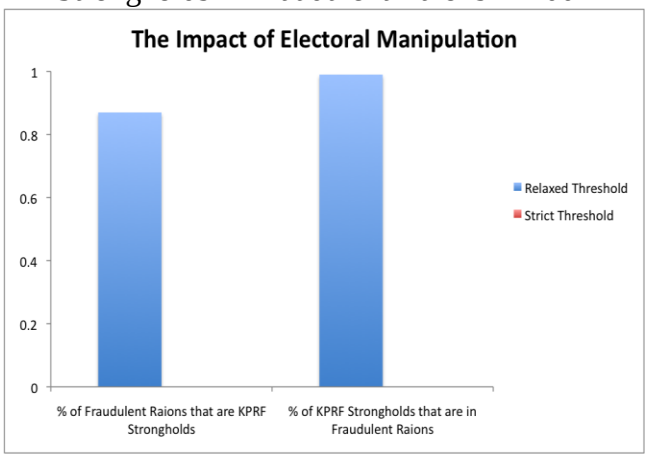


Figure 7.16 provides additional evidence of the Communists' rout in fraudulent raions: as mentioned, a mere one percent of the KPRF's strongholds were housed in these raions according to the lower threshold and none by the strict measure. Of the more than 450 manipulated raions in 2007, the KPRF enjoyed stronghold level support in less than one percent according to the relaxed measure and were entirely absent from high turnout zones when the threshold was raised. Especially when compared to Figure 16 regarding the Communists' performance in manipulated raions in the two competitive elections in the 1990s and even in the first less competitive contest in 2003, the depth of the Communists' descent in these areas is striking. Indeed, the share of fraudulent raions that

were KPRF strongholds in the early 2000s was still more than 10% by the lower threshold and just less than 5% by the strict measure. Although it took two elections to drive the KPRF out of high turnout raions, United Russia reaped the rewards in the form of electoral windfalls in 2007.

Figure 7.16: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are KPRF Strongholds vs. Percent KPRF Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 2007



Alongside the Communists, the nationalists also faced an uphill battle to win support in manipulated raions in 2007, at least according to the lower stronghold threshold. The odds of an LDPR stronghold plummeted by 52 to 60% in some models, a drop comparable to 2003. The magnitude of the negative effect for the LDPR was thus smaller than that for the KPRF in the relaxed models, indicating that the occurrence of nationalist strongholds was less damaged in manipulated raions than the Communists, United Russia's most formidable opposition. Unexpectedly, the odds of an LDPR stronghold skyrocketed to between three and six times in the strict specifications. The nationalists had also performed well in manipulated areas in the late 1990s, receiving a boost of two to three times, but its good fortune when United Russia was at the height of its power is puzzling. It is counterintuitive that the nationalists experienced more rather than less success in fraudulent areas according to the strict threshold, especially when considered in conjunction with evidence revealing the efficiency of fraud under United Russia, discussed with reference to Figure 7.26.

At least to some degree, the threat of opposition party success triggered the Kremlin's use of electoral manipulation in the first place and the fact that the nationalists, of all parties, were able to capture electoral windfalls in these areas when the dominant party was at its apex is striking. Yet, it is plausible that United Russia, which carried out the lion's share of the electoral manipulation that occurred in 2007, transferred some votes in these areas to the LDPR, since it was the most Kremlin-friendly party that was also expected to cross the threshold for legislative representation, and United Russia would benefit from creating the façade of multiparty competition in raions where its own overwhelming victory was virtually guaranteed. As mentioned regarding the 1999 election, a similar logic likely also explained why the LDPR secured electoral windfalls in these raions in 1999. One interesting point is that, if United Russia did, in fact, transfer votes to the LDPR, the party threw quite a few votes to the nationalists because the odds of a stronghold only ballooned when the strict threshold was leveraged, i.e. indicating that the party's vote share was more than two standard deviations above its raion-level national average. In other words, United Russia did not simply toss one or two votes, here or there, the nationalists' way but rather transferred to the party levels of support that were significantly higher than the LDPR's countrywide showing. Perhaps United Russia believed that it was imperative for another party to also perform unusually well in these areas to avoid speculation that United Russia engaged in electoral malfeasance, although that rationale runs counter to the logic that the party was seeking to demonstrate its political dominance rather blatantly.

Nevertheless, the LDPR's average in raions deemed fraudulent was less than five percent below its raion-level national mean, as was true in 2003, and nationalist strongholds were rare, with roughly three percent and ten percent by the lower and higher measure drawn from these areas. Figure 7.17 looks strikingly similar to the corresponding scatterplot from 2003 and again showcases the unambiguously inverse relationship between the LDPR's vote share and political participation. Compared to the scatterplot for the KPRF, more high turnout raions made their way into the upper right quadrant, supplying the nationalists with electoral windfalls, but the two scatterplots both exhibit

conspicuous and dense clusters of raions in the lower right quadrant. The outliers, subject to suspicion of electoral manipulation and reporting high vote shares for the nationalists, were located in the Republic of Karelia, Chita and Kirov Oblasts, and Krasnodar Krai. The remaining outliers reported turnout that was closer to the raion-level national turnout average of roughly 68%.

Figure 7.17: Voter Turnout and LDPR's Vote Share in 2007

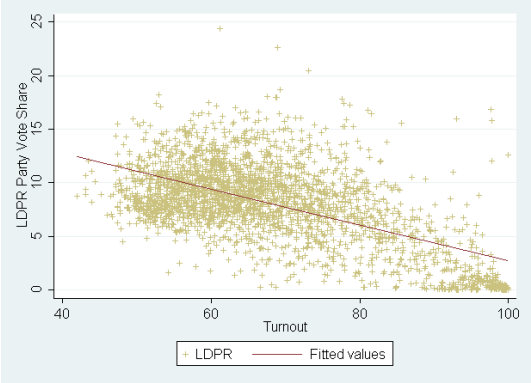
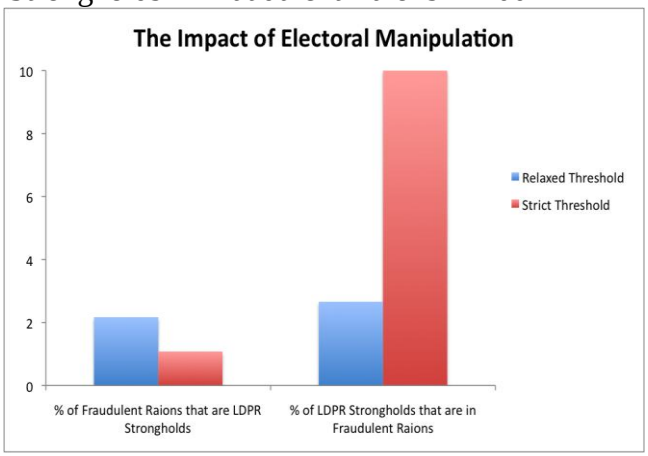


Figure 7.18 demonstrates how the stronghold thresholds capture different pictures of the LDPR's performance in manipulated raions: as mentioned, nearly three percent of the nationalists' strongholds were housed in these raions according to the lower threshold, but the share of strongholds jumped markedly, up to 10%, when the threshold was raised. Surprisingly, the share of nationalist strongholds harvested from high turnout raions was significantly higher than in 2003, when roughly two percent and four percent were bastions of support. Of the raions coded positively for electoral fraud, the nationalists carved out strongholds in only a small fraction. The share of manipulated raions that were bastions of support remained essentially unchanged from 2003.

Figure 7.18: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are LDPR Strongholds vs. Percent LDPR Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 2007



The liberals suffered as a result of electoral manipulation to a degree comparable to the Communists: the value for fraudulent raions was one-tenth to one-twentieth the value of the odds for raions with lower turnout levels across the vast majority of lower threshold models. In 2003, a raion's status as fraudulent did not exercise a systematic effect on the occurrence of Yabloko strongholds; thus, the precipitous drop in the odds in the late 2000s indicated a severe disintegration of support. Yabloko's showing in manipulated raions was nothing short of deplorable: its average was nearly one percent less than its national mean, and Yabloko's national mean was merely 1.07% that year. Even during United Russia's initial rise in 2003, the non-parliamentary party had scraped together an average in manipulated areas that was over one percent. Figure 7.19 reveals the negative relationship between Yabloko's vote share and voter turnout. As expected, since Yabloko is the only non-parliamentary opposition party investigated, few raions were particularly enthusiastic. The small cluster of raions approaching full turnout and registering sizable vote shares for Yabloko were located in the ethnic republics of Ingushetia and Karelia, and Krasnodar Krai. The scatterplot indicates that the vast majority of raions that were liberal zealots reported turnout that was sub-average, in several cases roughly 20% less than the national mean.

Figure 7.19: Voter Turnout and Yabloko's Vote Share in 2007

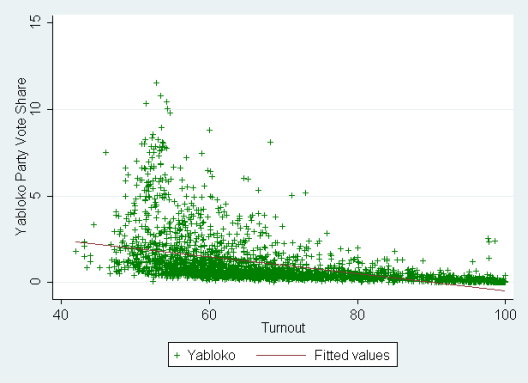
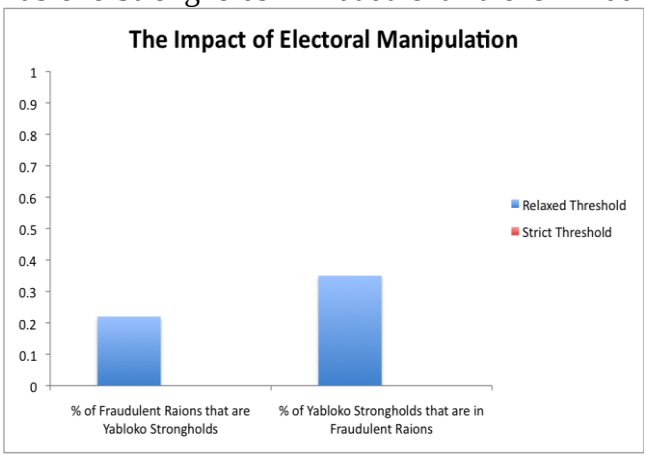


Figure 7.20 highlights how poorly the non-parliamentary liberal party fared in the presence of electoral manipulation. Of the 282 lower level Yabloko strongholds, less than one-half of one percent was housed in raions with suspiciously high political participation. When the threshold for stronghold was raised, the share of bastions of support in these raions was wiped out entirely. The percentage of strongholds found in high turnout raions in 2007 therefore declined from the already infinitesimal share in 2003. Over 450 raions were suspected of artificially augmenting voter turnout and Yabloko's presence was scant, indeed, less than one-half of one percent of these raions was strongholds by the lower measure and none were by the higher threshold. Yabloko also suffered when methods of manipulation were practiced in the 1990s, but, surprisingly, the party's performance in these raions in the 2000s under United Russia did not differ substantially from when elections were more competitive. The party was simply unfit to compete when political contestation contracted sharply, regardless of when or where that occurred.

Figure 7.20: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are Yabloko Strongholds vs. Percent Yabloko Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 2007



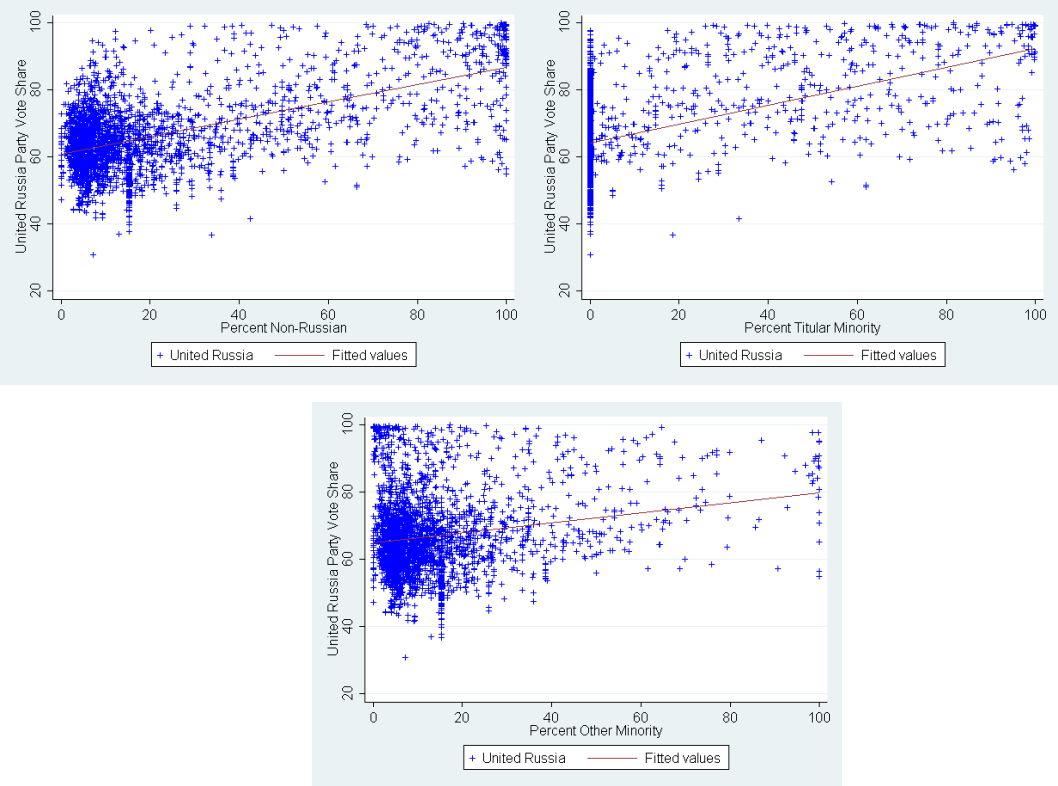
With a dominant party monopolizing raions suspected for electoral malfeasance, the core party troika was forced to turn their attention to lower turnout raions, in which United Russia also maintained an impressive presence, and fight to gain footholds in a crowded electoral arena. Echoing the political scene in urban centers, United Russia confined opposition parties to raions with lower turnout, precisely where electoral manipulation and patronage-based voter mobilization was more difficult to carry out on its behalf.

Ethnicity and the Dominant Party

United Russia performed exceptionally well in areas with dense ethnic minority populations in the 2007 contest. Unit increases in the percent non-Russian covariate increased the odds of a dominant party stronghold by one to four percent in the lower threshold models and by three to six percent in the strict specifications, roughly comparable to four years prior. Similarly, higher densities of titular minorities augmented the odds by two to four percent across both measures. Larger populations of other minorities, however, did not exercise an influence on the occurrence of dominant party bastions, diverging from the findings in 2003, when unit increases in other minorities exercised a positive effect, raising the odds by two to four percent across thresholds. Figure 7.21 corroborates the robust and direct association between geographically concentrated ethnic minorities at the raion level, especially titular minorities, and United Russia's performance. In all three scatterplots, there are clusters of raions with large

populations of ethnic minorities in the upper right corner where United Russia pocketed nearly 100% of the vote, but these clusters are more diffuse in the case of other minorities than the other two measures of raion-level ethnic composition. The raions populating that cluster in the non-Russian and titular minority scatterplots were found in ethnic republics across the country's expanse, such as Chechnya, Dagestan, Kabardino Balkaria, and Ingushetia in the Caucasus area, Tatarstan and Bashkortostan in the Volga District, Mordovia in the East European Plain of Russia and Tuva on the Mongolian border. Interestingly, some of the fanatical ethnic Russian raions were located in Rostov on the Ukrainian border, which housed many of Yabloko's most enthusiastic strongholds in both the 1995 and 1999 election. However, the tide of electoral support in Rostov seemed to be turning away from the liberal Yabloko and toward the party of power, as the regional executive of Rostov supported Fatherland-All Russia in 1999 and raions then voted abundantly for United Russia in the 2000s. Many of the other ethnic Russian raions that were ardent supporters of the dominant party were situated within the ethnic republics of Mordovia, Bashkortostan and Karachay Cherkessia. The most zealous supporter, reporting a 100% vote share and full turnout to boot, was located in the republic of Karachay Cherkessia in the north Caucasus and bordering Georgia.

Figure 7.21: Non-Russian Minorities and United Russia's Vote Share in 2007



Like the statistical results, Figure 7.22 reveals the unambiguous pattern of ethnic minority support that held across thresholds: in each regional context, a considerably higher percentage of majority-minority raions were strongholds for United Russia than majority-Russian raions. Of all majority-minority raions, nearly 60% churned out abnormally high support for the dominant party, an increase of 15% over 2003; majority-Russian raions were less enthusiastic with less than 10% registering stronghold level support, a share comparable to the previous election. Especially in the case of the lower threshold, of majority-minority raions located within Muslim regions and those situated within the Caucasus, United Russia harvested a tremendous share: of the majority-minority areas in each regional environment, the dominant party enjoyed strongholds in upwards of 90%, an improvement from the more than 60% and greater than 70%, in Muslim regions and those in the Caucasus, respectively, in 2003. In ethnic republics, poorer regions, and those dependent on natural resource endowments, more than 60% of majority-minority

raions churned out tremendous support for United Russia, a jump of roughly 10%, double, and approximately 15%, respectively, from the previous election. A noticeably higher percentage of majority-Russian raions, roughly 60%, located within Muslim regions than in the Caucasus channeled high levels of support to the dominant party than in the remaining environments. Indeed, in Russian raions in Muslim regions, the percentage that was United Russia strongholds doubled from the early 2000s. There was comparatively less fluctuation in the share of Russian raions in the other regional settings.

Figure 7.22: United Russia Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 2007 (lower threshold on the left)

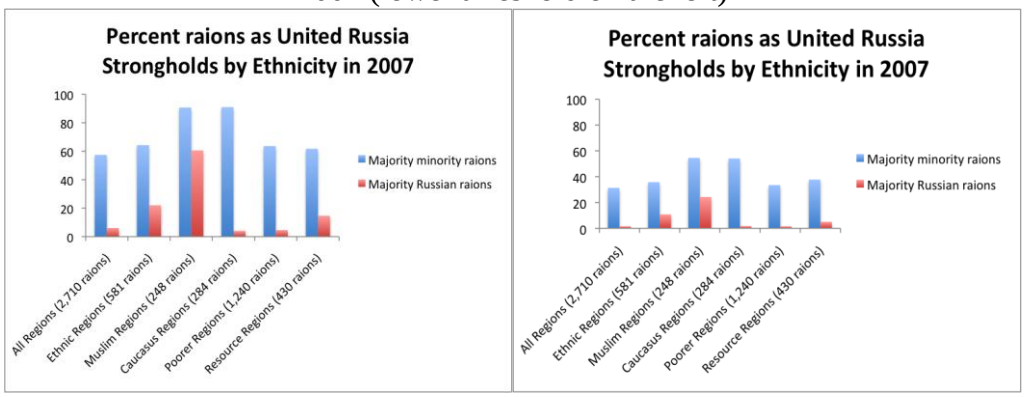


Table 7.9 provides additional substantiation of ethnic minority support for the dominant party: United Russia's average vote share in raions with minority populations that exceeded half of the total populace was, astonishingly, nearly 16% higher than its raion-level national showing, a boost comparable to 2003.

Table 7.9: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of United Russia's Electoral Performance in the 2007 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	66.92	71.49	82.07	85.76	79.66	89.71	74.54	66.05	73.52
Min	30.66	48.90	51.15	36.84	35.58	60.50	36.84	30.66	36.58
Max	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	99.07	99.15
SD	12.12	11.53	12.82	10.68	13.85	8.73	15.86	11.68	14.11

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Gross Regional Product exceeds the median, .9.

In addition to predominantly non-Russian raions, the party cornered the electoral market in ethnic republics: the value for raions situated in ethnic republics were between 20 to nearly 84 times the value of the odds for raions located elsewhere in the relaxed threshold models and 32 times by the strict measure. Interestingly, the magnitude of the positive effect was less than four years prior in some of the models, when ethnic region status skyrocketed the odds by 24 and 162 times. Descriptive statistics from Table 9 indicate that the party's average vote share in ethnic republics was almost 13% higher than its national take, as was the case in 2003, and Table 7.10 shows that almost 75% and more than 90% of United Russia's strongholds were located in these regions, according to the lower and higher threshold, respectively. The share of dominant party strongholds found in ethnic republics increased in 2007 from 68% and 86% in the early 2000s.

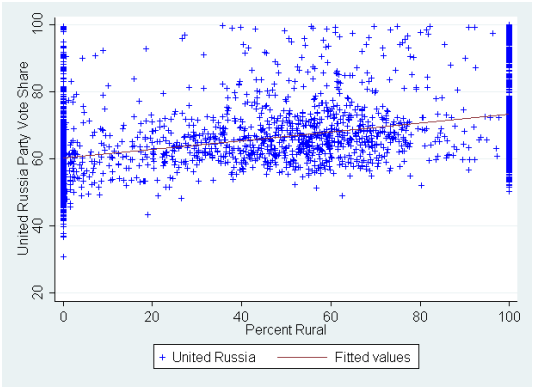
Table 7.10: United Russia Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 2007				
	# of United Russia Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (392 Total)	% of United Russia Strongholds	# of United Russia Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (174 Total)	% of United Russia Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	293	74.74	160	91.95
Russian federal regions	99	25.25	14	8.05
Muslim regions	215	54.85	125	71.84
Caucasus regions	108	27.55	63	36.21
Poorer Regions	200	51.02	96	55.17
Natural Resource Regions	146	37.24	79	45.40
Fraudulent raions	176	44.90	170	97.70
Non-Fraudulent raions	216	55.10	4	2.30

Similarly, raions in predominantly Muslim regions were between nearly 20 to 188 times more likely to be bastions of support for United Russia in the lower threshold models and the magnitude of the effect increased in the higher threshold specifications, from between 179 to 306 times. Mirroring the findings from the ethnic region variable, the magnitude of the positive effect was less in some models than 2003, when odds skyrocketed by 22 to 786 times. United Russia's mean showing in Muslim regions was nearly 23% higher than its countrywide take, similar to its performance in 2003, and more than half and over 70% of the party's bastions of support were found in Muslim regions, according to the lower and higher threshold, accordingly. In 2003, 40% and roughly 60% of United Russia's strongholds were housed in these regions. The dominant party established an unyielding grip over not only ethnic republics and Muslim regions, but also majority-minority raions situated in other regional environments. In the 1990s, areas with geographically-concentrated ethnic minorities, whether at the raion- or regional-level, were carved up by different parties, such as Our Home is Russia and the KPRF in 1995 and the KPRF, Fatherland-All Russia and Unity in 1999, but the 2000s witnessed the swift consolidation of the party market in these areas, which culminated in United Russia becoming the only game in town.

The Urban-Rural Divide and the Dominant Party

United Russia continued its reign in the countryside. Higher proportions of rural inhabitants increased the odds of a stronghold by a slight degree to one percent in the relaxed models and by one to two percent in the strict specifications. Compared to 2003, the magnitude of the positive effect was lesser, as the rural covariate amplified the odds by one to three percent across thresholds. Figure 7.23 demonstrates the positive and robust relationship between rural locales and high electoral returns for the party. Interestingly, there are dense clusters of outliers in both urban centers and the countryside, with comparatively fewer fanatical raions in the blended areas in between. As anticipated, the enthusiastic raions situated in urban centers, populating the upper left quadrant of the scatterplot, were found in ethnic republics, such as Chechnya, Ingushetia, Karachay Cherkessia, Kabardino Balkaria, Mordovia, Tatarstan and Tuva. However, the majority of diehards were in the countryside, nested within the same regions as the urban outliers and Dagestan. Thus, United Russia's pattern of support, even along the salient urban-rural divide in Russian politics, essentially mirrored the ethnic social cleavage, rather than revealing more unique dynamics.

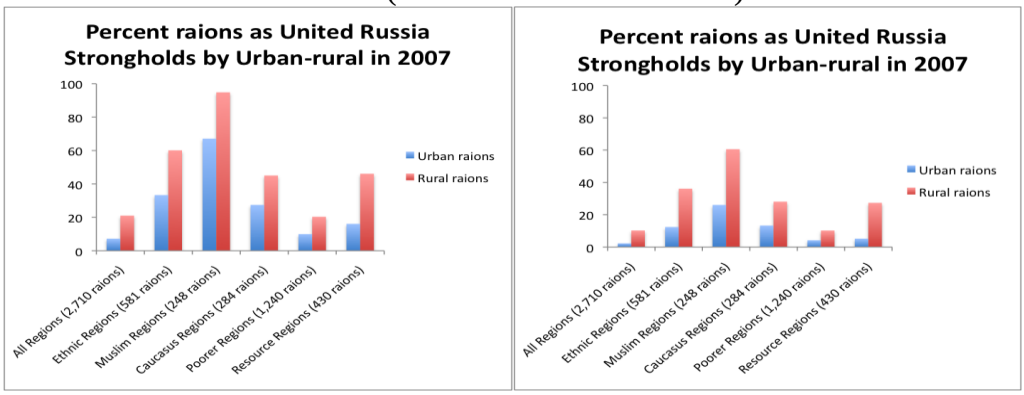
Figure 7.23: Rural Inhabitants and United Russia's Vote Share in 2007



United Russia's average in predominantly rural zones was almost five percent higher than its raion-level national vote share, a sub-standard showing when compared to majority-minority raions and those in ethnic republics and Muslim regions, suggesting that there is some daylight between ethnic and rural areas in the dominant party vote. The dominant

party's performance in the countryside, according to these descriptive statistics, was better in 2007 than 2003, when the boost United Russia received was just greater than three percent. Figure 7.24 reveals that, of the number of majority-urban and majority-rural in each regional setting, a higher percentage were United Russia strongholds in the latter than the former, with a clear spike in Muslim regions. Approximately 20% of all rural raions were United Russia strongholds, while less than 10% of urban raions reported such high vote totals. Of the urban and rural raions in each regional environment, a higher percentage in nearly all cases were bastions of support for the dominant party than was the case in 2003: of the urban and rural raions in ethnic republics, the percentage that delivered high vote totals increased by roughly 10% in both cases; urban raions in Muslim regions increased from over 40% to about 70% and rural raions moved from upwards of 60% to nearly 100%; while the share of urban raions in the Caucasus changed little, the percentage of rural raions that were strongholds increased from nearly 40% to close to 50%; in poorer regions, the share of urban raions doubled from approximately five percent to 10%, although there was only slight change in rural raions; finally, in resource regions, the percentage of urban raions that registered immense vote shares increased from about five percent to nearly 20% and rural raions increased by roughly 10%. A higher percentage of urban raions in Muslim regions than rural raions in any other regional context reported a tremendous showing for United Russia.

Figure 7.24: United Russia Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 2007 (lower threshold on the left)



Regional Geographic and Socioeconomic Indicators and the Dominant Party

Regional contextual correlates of United Russia's electoral support generated diverse results. A shift from the reference group to the indicator group of the Caucasus region variable hiked the odds by 270 times in a relaxed measure model and by between 147 and 624 times in the strict specifications. The dominant party had also received an immense boost in the Caucasus in 2003. United Russia's average showing in the Caucasus was nearly eight percent higher than its national mean, an improvement over the six percent surge in the areas in 2003. Roughly 27% and 36% of the party's strongholds were located in the Caucasus according to the lower and higher measure, a higher percentage across thresholds from four years prior.

In sharp contrast to the robust and positive effect of Caucasus location on United Russia's electoral windfalls, raions located in regions with higher levels of relative wealth, as assessed by gross regional product, plummeted the odds of a stronghold by at least 69% and at most 86% across the lower measure models and by 79% in a higher threshold specification. The magnitude of negative effect was thus comparable to 2003.

The dominant party excelled in economically disadvantaged regions rather than those better off. Although this finding was anticipated based the results from 2003, raions located in regions that might have benefitted more than some others from the booming economy might be expected to reward United Russia at election time for its leadership in the Duma and through the presidency, especially with regards to the economy. One potential explanation for why the dominant party did, in fact, suffer in wealthier regions is that voters living under more favorable economic conditions could afford to consider alternatives to United Russia because they were less in need of the patronage resources that the dominant party dispensed in exchange for electoral support. Thus, it may be the case that United Russia was simply unable to leverage patronage resources as a means of collecting support in areas that were already thriving economically, but these resources became indispensible for harvesting votes in underprivileged regions. Approximately half of the party's strongholds by both thresholds were located in regions with substandard gross regional products, roughly 10% more than was the case in the early 2000s. United

Russia's average in economically developed regions was once again less than its raion-level national mean, albeit within one percent.

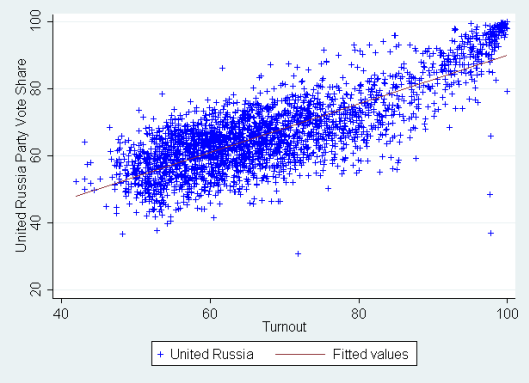
Interestingly, given the sizable and negative effect of relative wealth, a region's status as economically dependent on natural resources did not produce a systematic effect on the occurrence of United Russia strongholds in any of the models specified. In the previous election, resource region status plunged the odds by 90% in the lower threshold models; therefore, the lack of a systematic and negative effect signified progress for the dominant party. Diverging somewhat from the statistical results, descriptive statistics suggest that United Russia performed well under conditions of resource abundance: more than one-third and roughly one-half of the party's strongholds were situated in resource-rich regions according to both measures, compared to the 27% and 31% found in 2003. While United Russia's average take in resource regions was roughly five percent below its raion-level national average four years prior, its mean in these areas was more than six percent greater than nationally in 2007, a drastic shift over the course of just one election.

Electoral Manipulation and the Dominant Party

As anticipated, United Russia benefitted tremendously from extraordinarily high levels of voter turnout across all models specified for 2007. The value for raions coded positively for suspected electoral manipulation were 49 to 64 times the value of the odds for their non-manipulated counterparts in the lower threshold models, and 35 to 69 times the value in the higher specifications. In the majority of the 2007 models, the magnitude of the positive effect was significantly greater than in 2003, when the odds lifted by 10 to 64 times. Fraudulent raions registered average support for the dominant party that was more than 15% greater than nationally, slightly less than the 18% boost the party captured four years prior. Figure 7.25 corroborates these findings, showcasing the steep rise in United Russia's vote share as voter turnout increased. Furthermore, in the upper right quadrant, a dense cluster of raions is evident, which reported voter turnout approximating 100% and similar vote shares for the dominant party. Unsurprisingly, the outlier raions were the usual suspects, i.e. raions in various ethnic republics that were already identified in the scatterplots detailing the relationships between concentrations of

ethnic minorities and rural populations and the United Russia vote. Amazingly, 53 raions reported vote shares for the dominant party between 95 and 97% with turnout figures reaching similar levels. An additional 22 raions registered 98% support for United Russia and turnout rates between 92 and 99%. Incredibly, a total of 34 raions registered 99% vote shares for United Russia, 50% of which were found in Chechnya, 23% in Mordovia, 11% in Kabardino Balkaria, 5% in each Dagestan and Ingushetia, and 2% in each Tatarstan and Karachay Cherkessia. With only one exception, all of those raions also reported voter turnout of 99%. From the perspective of United Russia, the exemplary raion was found in the republic of Karachay Cherkessia: this raion reported 100% turnout and a 100% vote share for United Russia.

Figure 7.25: Voter Turnout and United Russia's Vote Share in 2007



According to the lower and higher stronghold measure, approximately 45% and, startlingly, nearly 98% of United Russia's strongholds were located in fraudulent areas, as revealed in Figure 7.23. Compared to the 86% of dominant party strongholds found in high turnout raions according to the strict threshold in 2003, the share in 2007 was conspicuously higher. Figure 7.26 highlights the efficiency of fraud under United Russia, since nearly 100% of manipulated raions channeled immense support to the dominant party according to the relaxed threshold. From the 1990s through the 2000s, manipulated raions underwent a dramatic transformation that initially began with these raions splitting support between two and four parties in 1995 and 1999, respectively, and culminated

with universal support for one party once United Russia emerged. Yet, as mentioned, only roughly 45% of United Russia strongholds were found in fraudulent raions by the lower measure, indicating that the party captured significant support in non-manipulated raions as well. According to the strict measure, the percentages show the exact opposite: far fewer fraudulent raions were dominant party strongholds, due to the fact that fraudulent raions greatly outnumbered United Russia bastions when using the strict measure of stronghold, but nearly 100% of those higher threshold strongholds were found in manipulated raions. There was a dramatic increase in the percentage of United Russia strongholds that were housed in high turnout zones with the shift from the relaxed to the strict threshold. Compared to the first election United Russia contested, the share of fraudulent raions that were strongholds increased dramatically, from just less than 60% in 2003 to nearly 100% in 2007 by the lower threshold. The number of fraudulent raions that were strongholds for opposition parties, but not United Russia, fell sharply, from 39 raions in 2003 to just 11 raions out of 461 raions in 2007. Similarly, a smaller number of manipulated raions were not strongholds for any party in 2007 compared to 2003: 13 raions in Sakha, 12 in Bashkortostan, seven in each Orlov and Chuvashia, six in Omsk, five in each Tatarstan, Samara, Kirov, and Mari El, four in each Kemerovo, Belgorod, and Voronezh, three in each Krasnodar and Volgograd, and one or two in a variety of other regions. Just in Bashkortostan alone, the number of raions that were not strongholds for any party fell from 37 in 2003 to 12 in 2007. Likewise, 17 high turnout raions failed to register stronghold level support for any party in Sakha in 2003 but this dropped to 13 in 2007.

Figure 7.26: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are United Russia Strongholds vs. Percent United Russia Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 2007

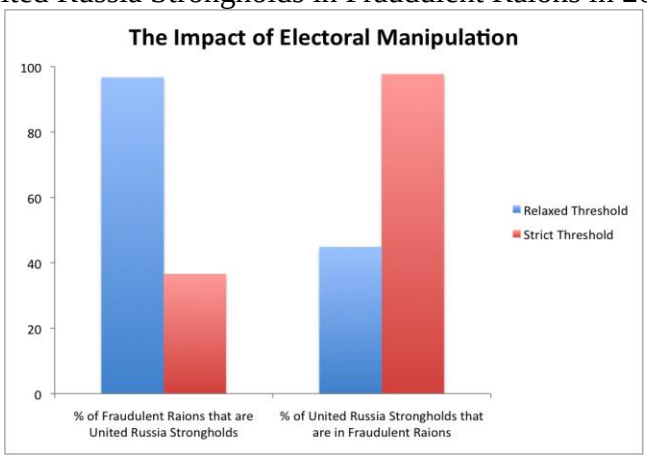


Figure 7.27 uncovers the extent of United Russia's dominance vis-à-vis each opposition party in 2007: in every single one of Russia's more than 2,700 raions, United Russia beat the core party troika, and quite effortlessly in all but a few isolated cases. United Russia's distinct advantages in abnormally high turnout raions were not limited solely to that category of turnout, but spread into lower turnout raions that were significantly more competitive, if competitiveness is assessed by the difference in vote share between the party that won, i.e. United Russia, and the second place finisher. The level of dominance that United Russia enjoyed in 2007 was, as expected, much greater than in 2003, as demonstrated by the fact that the zones of convergence between United Russia and each member of the core party troika were nonexistent. United Russia's dominance was not limited solely to high turnout raions but was universal. There was much more daylight between the dominant party and opposition parties in the late 2000s, when United Russia was consolidated, than when it made its first foray into the electoral arena in 2003.

Figure 7.27: Voter Turnout and United Russia vs. Opposition Parties' Vote Shares in 2007

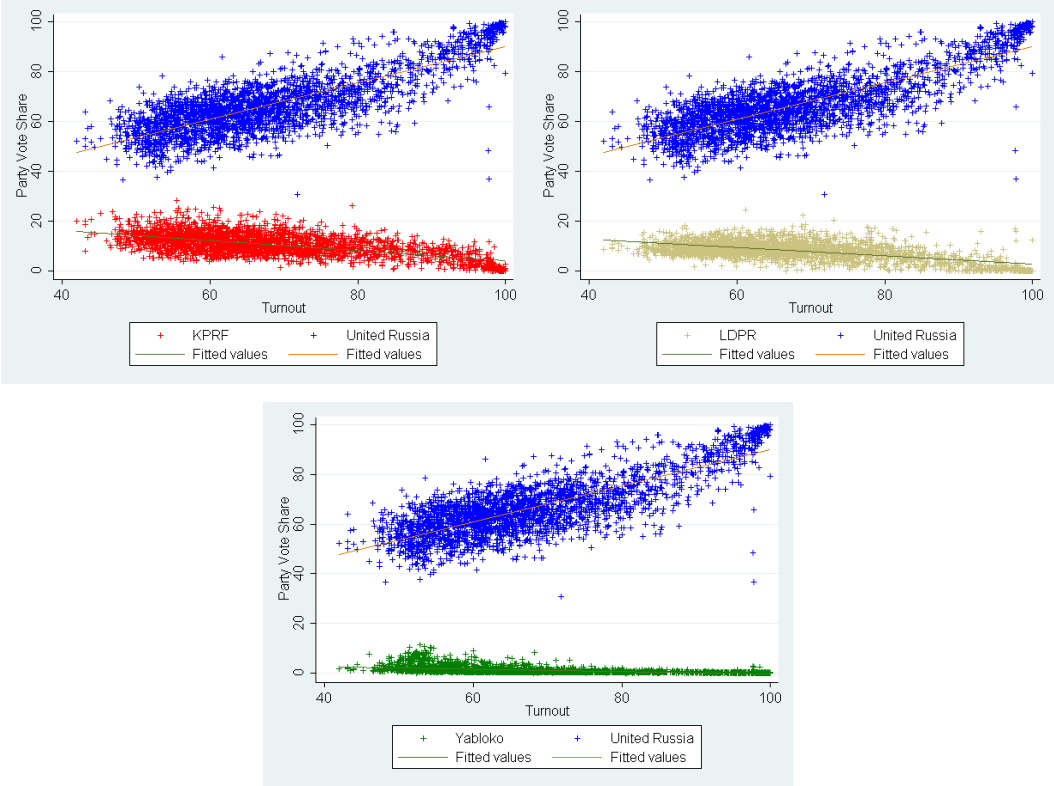


Figure 7.27 demonstrates incontrovertibly the "Putin effect" on Russian legislative elections because, as president, Putin played an instrumental role in bringing the dozens of regions into line and leveraging the vast resources at the Kremlin's disposal to produce precisely the kind of overwhelming victory Putin wanted, not necessarily to secure victory in 2007, as the party likely would have won without such machinations, but to exaggerate United Russia's dominance and send a powerful signal to would-be political challengers. Dominating the election across thousands of raions provided evidence beyond dispute to supporters and challengers alike about the Kremlin's capacity to secure the electoral outcomes it wanted with surgical precision, reward supporters, and punish defectors. In short, the message was that United Russia was the only game in town.

Conclusion

United Russia reached its apex in 2007, achieving a vote share and dominance in the Russian political system to an extent not seen since the time of the Soviet Union. With a constitutional majority in the legislature and a self-avowed party supporter in the Kremlin, United Russia enjoyed free rein in the political arena and opposition parties were put on notice. United Russia was at the height of its power and opposition parties witnessed many of their unique pockets of electoral support wither under the weight of the dominant party. The booming economy meant that United Russia could more easily mobilize supporters and attract defectors from various opposition parties using the vast patronage resources available to those most closely associated with the Kremlin. In short order, United Russia established a firm chokehold on areas that previously served as long-standing constituencies for other parties, for example, areas with geographically concentrated ethnic minorities and the countryside in the case of the Communists. The dominant party squeezed opposition parties from every angle, confining the core party troika to the zones where patronage politics and blatant electoral manipulation were the most difficult to carry out, such as predominantly ethnic Russian areas and urban centers.

To achieve overwhelming support in the election, the regime had leveraged not only economic resources but also the security situation in the years leading up to the election to refashion the political system in a manner conducive to United Russia's rapid advancement. The security situation had been overshadowed by the events at Beslan and other terrorist attacks, such as a suicide bombing on the subway in Moscow and two passenger planes flying to Volgograd and Sochi, which gave the Putin regime the leeway necessary to engage in sweeping reforms that touched several aspects of the political arena, notably party registration requirements and the electoral system for populating the State Duma. The swift centralization of power under Putin and United Russia paved the way for the party's astounding showing in the 2007 contest and foreshadowed its electoral trajectory in future elections. Unbeknownst to the regime at the time, United Russia's light would only grow dimmer in the future, not brighter.

Chapter 8: The 2011 Parliamentary Election: Signs of Opposition Party Inroads and Dominant Party Durability and Decay

The 2011 legislative election was notably different from the one four years prior: first, it was the first legislative election that occurred in the 2000s in which Vladimir Putin was not the country's top executive; second, the scale of public protest in opposition to United Russia that emerged before the election was unprecedented in post-communist Russian history; third, the dominant party's vote share dropped considerably for the first time. With public support for the dominant party softening markedly leading up to the election, opposition parties sought to capitalize on widespread popular discontent and members of the core party troika ultimately experienced some success in various pockets of support. Yet, at the national level, opposition parties remained hopelessly fragmented and proved patently incapable of coordinating with the aim of fashioning a genuine challenge against United Russia. The 2011 election represented a hard test for opposition parties in Russia and they failed to deliver a viable alternative to party dominance, thereby acquiescing in its perpetuation. The election results sent an unambiguous signal that United Russia was in decay and led many to question whether 2011 was the beginning of the end for the party that reached its apex just one election before, capturing nearly two-thirds of the vote. Observers and citizens alike wondered if the results from the legislative election portended Putin's defeat in the presidential elections the following March. Over the course of the 2000s, United Russia's electoral trajectory reflected a full arc: the 2003 election witnessed the birth of the dominant party; United Russia ascended to the height of its power in 2007, and experienced substantial decline in the most recent election to the State Duma.

The 2011 Legislative Election in Context

The political setting of the first Duma elections of the 2010s was characterized chiefly by United Russia's continued dominance in the legislature and executive. The party's devastating victory in the contest four years prior provided an opportune moment for the government to reveal its chosen successor to Putin in the presidential elections in March 2008. Putin declared in September 2006 that he had no intention of pursuing a

constitutional amendment to remain president for longer than two consecutive terms: "I don't believe that the country's stability can be insured by one man alone … If everyone is equal before the law, I cannot make an exception for myself [by ignoring constitutional term limits]" (Goldman 2008: 201). Nevertheless rampant speculation continued, but came to a close with Putin's announcement revealing the heir apparent. As in 1999, the Kremlin deftly resolved the question of presidential succession by forwarding Dmitri Medvedev as their presidential nominee, who was first deputy prime minister and one of Putin's longtime associates from St. Petersburg. Medvedev in short order proclaimed that he would nominate Putin as Prime Minister, were Medvedev successful in March (White 2009).

Like Putin four years earlier, Medvedev faced a limited slate of challengers in the presidential contest: the KPRF's Zyuganov, the LDPR's Zhirinovsky, and Andrei Bogdanov, an unknown independent candidate with a progressive platform. For the first time, the Kremlin's presidential candidate ran under the formal nomination of a political party, United Russia in Medvedev's case (Hale and Colton 2010). Ultimately, Medvedev snapped up the presidency in the first round with over 70% of the vote, just one percent shy of Putin's final share in the 2004 election, beating Zyuganov by over 50%. Medvedev duly appointed Putin as his prime minister, preserving the ruling tandem for at least another four years. Putin likely wanted to remain in the Kremlin in some capacity in order to manage Kremlin elites that were divided between the siloviki and the St. Petersburg faction, but realized that he could neither seek the presidency for a third term nor exit the political scene entirely, as, with his personal popularity ratings between 70 and 80%, the latter would lead to widespread instability at the highest levels of Russian government (Goldman 2008: 201). As Prime Minister, Putin could manage the divided Kremlin elites and fill the role of Russia's own national leader, thereby reassuring the public that continuity of government would be at least partially preserved, all while avoiding a constitutional amendment (*Ibid*).

The 2011 legislative election occurred in an environment characterized by heightened political awareness about the regime's evolving authoritarianism and reliance

on methods of manipulation to best opponents in the electoral arena. United Russia's showing in 2007, artificially augmented by widespread electoral malfeasance, signaled to opposition parties that the dominant party was the only game in town and those parties still struggling to remain outside the ruling party's orbit would be relegated to competing with each other for the support of the few defectors from United Russia in future elections. Especially after United Russia's astounding showing in 2007, the opposition operated in a political context that curbed their activity at seemingly every turn. Therefore, opposition parties widened the political opportunity structure within which they could act and encourage counter-mobilization against the regime.

Opposition parties endeavored to cull supporters from the ruling party's ranks and mobilize their own ardent supporters by publicizing the regime's plans for electoral manipulation: video footage containing preparations for election day fraud was posted to the Internet, offering non-registered and extra-parliamentary parties, along with political activists, a propitious time to urge voters to spoil their ballots by marking an 'x' through each party and across the entire ballot or voting for 'anyone but' United Russia (OSCE 2012). This burgeoning social movement soon acquired the appellation "Nakh-Nakh: Vote Against All". The name was a word play on the names of the Russian three little pigs (and evoked an obscenity meaning, in polite speech, "go away!"); the concept of movement suggested that the little pig Nakh-Nakh could defeat the wolf simply by ignoring him (Arutuinova 2011; Gutterman 2011). As a cartoon character in a series of videos uploaded onto the Internet, Nakh-Nakh wore eyeglasses, a beret, and an orange scarf, evoking Ukraine's Orange Revolution of 2004-2005.

As an electoral strategy, however, the Nakh-Nakh movement was clearly counterproductive: if opposition party supporters spoiled their ballots, opposition parties would be denied much needed votes to the benefit of United Russia. Large-scale ballot spoiling would simply further marginalize the opposition in the country's already uncompetitive political arena (Arutuinova 2011). The other recommendation, i.e. voting for 'anyone but' United Russia, was equally poor because the opposition remained hopelessly divided as to which party the votes should be channeled toward, perilously

fragmenting the opposition vote across many parties rather than coalescing around a single alternative. The opposition was united around a shared desire to rid Russia of Putin and his St. Petersburg cronies, but lacked an alternative vision or coherent plan for a government without Putin and a more limited presence by United Russia would look like. The frenzy of opposition party activity prior to the 2011 election galvanized supporters and previously apolitical citizens alike and engendered the perception that the regime was teetering on the edge of electoral decline, if not outright defeat. Opposition parties thus helped create the conditions under which they might be more likely to succeed against an electoral juggernaut like United Russia.

The economic backdrop of the 2011 election was less favorable than four years prior, as Russia was hit hard by the 2009 economic recession. Indeed, the economy plunged 7.8% in 2009, more than any other G-8 country or BRIC state (Chechel 2011). The price of Urals crude, Russia's chief oil blend, plummeted to as low as $32.34 in 2008, a 77% drop from a high of $142.50 registered in July of that year (*Ibid*). President Medvedev called Russia's continued dependence on raw materials, such as oil and natural gas, "humiliating" and "primitive," and left the economy defenseless in the face of falling demand (*Ibid*). Capital flight continued to burden the economy, reaching close to twice the forecast outflows. In addition, the country's export market was severely affected by the debt crisis in Europe, which drove down European demand for manufactured goods (Chechel 2011a). Overall, the Russian economy took twice as long to bounce back compared to the 1998 financial crisis that occurred after the government's default, largely due to the fact that the economy depended heavily on somewhat precarious energy prices (*Ibid*). The 2011 election would thus serve as a crucial test of United Russia's ability to maintain political control in the face of extensive economic downturn.

Nevertheless, the economy registered considerable average annual growth of greater than four percent in 2011. Russia's GDP growth of 4.2% that year lagged behind only China, with 9.5%, and India, with 7.8%, and exceeded Russia's Economic Development Ministry's forecasts of 4.1% (Lapikova 2012; Nikolsky 2011). Russia

allocated fiscal surpluses accumulated in previous years to repay external debt and fortify its stabilization fund; during the recession, monies from the stabilization fund were used to infuse the economy with a fiscal stimulus to buffer against further downturn. Additionally, during the recession period, the government significantly increased expenditures on social assistance, including job creation, pensions and welfare payments, which prevented the decline in per capita income from diving below one percent (Zubarevich 2012). Unemployment continued its downward trajectory and fell to the lowest level in more than three years. The country's gross debt remained comparatively low a year before the Duma election, higher than only Estonia and Chile (OECD 2011). Therefore, the economy was slowly improving, but had yet to return to pre-recession levels.

The legal framework governing the 2011 elections included notable amendments to the 2007 electoral law. For example, the law combated the development of independent power centers in the regions, made possible through the inclusion of regional candidates on various party lists, by increasing the number of positions for national candidates on party lists from three to ten at the expense of regional candidates. Although part lists could contain national candidates as well as those representing regional areas, nation-wide candidates would receive the mandate before regional candidates if the party overcame the seven percent threshold for representation. Regional groups, which are defined by the Central Election Commission, must then contend for the leftover mandates within the parties once the national positions have been allocated, especially within United Russia since it commands the largest regional system, to ensure that they receive a place in the party list (Kynev 2012). Competition among regional groups introduced a new method of manipulation into the Duma elections, as parties, notably United Russia, faced strong incentives to allocate remaining positions on the party list to candidates from small regions that could credibly promise high vote shares for a particular party in exchange for places on the list (*Ibid*). Less populated regions, such as Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, and Dagestan, received numerous positions on United Russia's party list while the federal cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg and other densely populated

regions saw their spots on the list contract (*Ibid*). Indeed, Dagestan and Nizhgorod both received nine and ten spots but the latter has almost twice as many voters as the former (*Ibid*). Essentially, rules pertaining to mandate distribution encourages electoral fraud because United Russia's success hinges critically on "the support of the most authoritarian and corrupt regions in the country—simply because they are more efficient in manipulating the vote. It also severely inhibits the creation and consolidation of new parties which could, over time, evolve into a genuine alternative to the existing power structures (Kynev 2012: 12).

Additionally, political parties that did not cross the seven percent threshold for representation, but captured more than five percent of the vote were granted 'compensatory' mandates and the privilege of appointing members to the election commission (OSCE 2011). Accordingly, parties that captured between five and six percent were allowed one seat in the Duma, and those harvesting between six and seven percent were allocated two seats. Compensatory mandates and the right to appoint members to the election commission was a positive change to electoral law for smaller parties. Furthermore, per a constitutional amendment passed in 2008, the Duma's term length was increased from four to five years (the same amendment increased the presidential term from four to six years). Notably, questionable provisions concerning absentee ballots and early voting, previously a key instrument of engaging in electoral manipulation via open voting, were clarified and toughened.

Party finance regulations were amended to consolidate the state's control over political parties and benefit the strongest parties, primarily United Russia: beginning in 2009, state support for parties garnering more than three percent of votes in the parliamentary elections was increased from 5 to 20 rubles per annum for each vote received and, furthermore, each party received a one-time payment from the state of 20 rubles per vote if the party's candidate won more than three percent of the vote in the subsequent presidential election (Kynev 2012). With United Russia's strong showing in the 2007 elections, more than two thirds of state support for parties accrued to the

dominant party, creating an additional channel through which state resources could flow to the ruling party (*Ibid*).

As noted in previous observation reports, however, the electoral framework guiding the contest to the State Duma was structurally labyrinthine, redundant, and subject to selective interpretation to the benefit of certain parties and at the expense of others (OSCE 2012). For example, complaints regarding United Russia's campaign activities were dismissed, but those concerning opposition parties were entertained and upheld (*Ibid*). Collectively, mazelike and restrictive electoral regulations that were sequentially introduced during the 2000s resulted in only one successful registration of a new political party since 2004, pro-Kremlin start-up The Right Cause (Kynev 2012).

To be registered successfully as a political party in 2011, the Ministry of Justice required each party to have 45,000 members, distributed as follows: a party must have at least 450 members in more than half of the 83 regions, and at least 200 members in the remaining half. Collectively, the seven parties officially registered in the election had a membership of only slightly more than 3 million, roughly 2.8% of the electorate (Hutcheson 2013: 913). United Russia's membership base dwarfed that of the other parties with twice as many members as the remaining parties combined (*Ibid*). The number of signatures required of extra-parliamentary parties to complete the process of registration with the CEC was reduced from 200,000 to 150,000. The maximum number of signatures acquired in any given region was reduced from 5%, or 10,000 signatures, in 2007 to 3.3%, or 5,000 signatures in 2011 (Hutcheson 2013: 912). Moreover, the minimum number of regions from which signatures must be collected was increased considerably, from 20 regions in 2007 to 42, or half of the 83 subjects, in 2011 (*Ibid*). Thus, although parties were obliged to collect fewer signatures in toto in 2011, the required geographic distribution erected more formidable obstacles for parties with geographically concentrated electoral support. The second route to registration, i.e. a cash payment to the tune of 60 million rubles in the case of the 2007 election, was abolished. Four months prior to the election, the Ministry of Justice denied registration to the People's Freedom Party (PARNAS) that was headed up by a quartet of liberal opposition

politicians, Boris Nemtsov, Mikhail Kasyanov, Vladimir Milov, and Vladimir Ryzhkov (Kynev 2012). Of the registered parties, four out of seven were represented in the outgoing Duma, including two members of the core party troika (the KPRF and LDPR) and United Russia.

The KPRF was again well-positioned to score second place behind United Russia in 2011 despite the fact that the party's membership had dwindled from roughly half a million members in the mid-1990s to just over 150,000 in the early 2010s. Overall, the party's program, entitled "The majority is destined to win. Return the Motherland stolen from us!", remained virtually unchanged from previous electoral campaigns, highlighting nationalization of strategic sectors including mineral resources, diversification of the economy to lessen natural resource dependence, agricultural development, constitutional reform aimed at the devolution of power to workers' councils, reintroduction of regional elections, and a shift in foreign policy that called for the dissolution of NATO and a more active rule for the United Nations (Kynev 2012).

However, the party broke from previous campaigns in openly criticizing the current leadership under United Russia in one of its 2011 slogans, "It's time for a change in power!" (Burghardt 2011). The party's website, however, offered a different slogan, "To protect Russians and recreate the friendship of the peoples," which touched on the foreign policy aim of a reconstituted Soviet Union, called a "Union of Brotherhood," or a less expansive but still multinational Russian state in the future (*Ibid*). Further jabs at the ruling party appeared in other campaign materials, for example, with KPRF-leader Zyuganov standing with a clenched fist in front of the USSR's red flag and one of the Kremlin towers with the slogan, "I will force them to return what was stolen!" (*Ibid*). The party siphoned off a few United Russia apostates and the KPRF's list featured an ex-Putin associate who was head of the State Anti-Drugs Service until 2008 and another former United Russia member who acted as the head of the Transport Committee in the Duma (Astapkovich 2011). Zyuganov again topped the party's list, followed by an admiral who was a standing Duma deputy and the head of the KPRF's youth wing in second and third. Others populating the party list were the KPRF's Secretary for Ideology

and the Secretary for Nationality Policy (Kynev 2012). Along with capturing part of the disaffected United Russia vote, the KPRF openly courted the LDPR's nationalist electorate by calling for the country to "united around a Russian national idea and social justice" (In response, an LDPR deputy commented that the "Communists are trying to copy the agenda that we have pursued for 20 years") (Bratersky 2011).

The KPRF also tried to attract voters concerned with fighting rampant corruption in Russia by launching a website, called the Stalin Anti-Corruption Committee Website, to publicize officials' wrongdoings in the months before the legislative election (Koshkin 2011a). The website displayed images of Stalin, presumably because there was little corruption during Stalin's reign, and urged citizens to investigate and report to KPRF leadership any shady financial dealings involving local and federal officials with the goal of discouraging officials from accepting bribes (*Ibid*). However, emblazoning the website with images of Stalin may have prevented the KPRF from expanding their electorate, particularly because the election year coincided with the 20th anniversary of the collapse of the Soviet Union (*Ibid*). Although the KPRF's electorate was wooed from both sides by United Russia and Just Russia, the party's vote share increased considerably from four years prior, as it culled protests voters from a variety of sources, such as the middle class and former supporters of United Russia (Kuchma 2011). Despite its stronger showing, KPRF leader Zyuganov called the election the dirtiest since the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991.

The LDPR list again featured controversial figures, such as Andrei Lugovoi who was already a Duma deputy and the son of a well-known former Russian Colonel, Yuri Budanov. Budanov's father was best known for murdering a young woman in Chechnya, which earned him the staunch support of Russian nationalists (Astapkovich 2011). The party again relied on nationalist slogans and concepts in campaign materials, such as "For Russians!", "Vote for LDPR or suffer further!", and "The LDPR is for Russians!" (Burghardt 2011; Bennetts 2011). Such slogans fall under the category of hate crimes in Russia, as nationalists parties claim that terrorism and other troubles befalling Russians originate with non-Russians (Burghardt 2011). One central feature of the party's

campaign was the "Russian question," which favored more expansive rights for ethnic Russians as the country's "founding nationality" and prompted President Medvedev to urge election contenders to resist "rude nationalistic rhetoric" (OSCE 2012: 10). The LDPR's campaign focuses on regional hot spots that ignite Russian nationalism, such as regions in the North Caucasus and the Far East. Less than a week before the election, an LDPR Duma deputy commented that the LDPR was the "only party to have defended—for the last 22 years—the interests of ethnic Russians…We call on everyone to stop humiliating the Russian people" (Bennetts 2011). In a televised debate, LDPR leader Zhirinovsky set his sights on the ruling party, calling it a party of crooks and thieves, a phrase popularized by opposition activist Alexei Navalny, to which the United Russia representative commented, "it is better to be in a party of crooks and thieves than in a party of murderers, rapists and robbers" (Quoted in Nichol 2011: 4). The LDPR was the only party of the core party troika to maintain regional branches in all 83 subjects (the KPRF had 81 and Yabloko 75), and also eclipsed the KPRF in terms of its membership base of approximately 185,000 (Kynev 2012). Despite having the broadest regional network and largest membership base compared to the KPRF and Yabloko, the LDPR floated abolishing the ban on party cells in Russian colleges and universities in a fresh attempt to augment the party's popularity with young voters and increase its profile nationally (Koshkin 2011). The LDPR harvested roughly three percent more than four years earlier.

As the only non-parliamentary member of the core party troika competing in 2011, Yabloko needed a significantly stronger showing than in 2007 if there was any hope of the party remaining viable in the long term. The party advanced an electoral program, entitled "Russia Demands Changes!", opposed the political trajectory of Russia under the current leadership, which was leading the country via "arbitrary rule to stagnation and degradation" (Russian United Democratic Party Yabloko 2011). Yabloko's platform insisted that Russia was at a stark critical juncture, in which the country could either choose the "path of development in the 21st century" or the country could "continue moving towards stagnation and will no longer exist within its current

borders by the middle of the 21st century." (*Ibid*). The party proposed eradicating the merger of the business sector and government by ending all "gravy trains" that had been created and nurtured through the close relationship between state owned and quasi-state owned companies and government officials (*Ibid*). Aside from highlighting these macro themes, Yabloko slightly reoriented its campaign following its 2007 defeat and concentrated on smaller policy issues, such as local residential issues, in an attempt to appeal to voters' pragmatism (Kynev 2012). Unsurprisingly, given its non-parliamentary status, Yabloko advocated policies that would reduce the electoral burden on political parties seeking representation in the Duma, such as lowering the minimum threshold for legislative representation from seven percent to three. Additionally, Yabloko hoped to shepherd through reforms to other electoral rules that would increase political pluralism if the party gained representation in 2011, e.g. simplifying registration procedures pertaining to political parties by lowering the number of members required to 5,000 and allowing the creation of blocs and coalitions. Indeed, Yabloko's membership base was perilously gaunt at just over 50,000. Unlike the KPRF and LDPR, Yabloko advocated for a foreign policy that would develop new lines of cooperation between Russia and the European Union and NATO in terms of joint missile defense and other long-term issue items. The archetypal democratic opposition party also backed a key Kremlin foreign policy priority in its 2011 platform, abolishing the visa system between Russia and Europe, but criticized the country's continued dependence on raw materials at the expense of a more diversified economy.

Despite the fact that Yabloko attracted some top-level United Russia members, such as the former mayor of Arkhangelsk and the former deputy head of the Federal Service for Environmental Protection, auditioned new party slogans, such as "Tired of vegetables? Vote for Yabloko," and had a new leader in Sergei Mitrokhin since 2008 (although Grigory Yavlinsky sat atop the party's list), Yabloko was not deft enough to change the party's electoral tide in 2011. Additionally, the party's failure to form a viable opposition to the dominant party over the course of the 2000s became the cause of disillusionment among a large slice of the party's potential base of electoral support

(Astapkovich 2011). Yabloko was not eligible to receive free airtime on national media outlets in 2011 because the party received less than three percent of the vote in the 2007 contest, but had not yet recompensed the government for the free airtime and space debts received during that campaign period.

Although Yabloko failed in the third consecutive election to cross the hurdle for representation, the party's final showing was an improvement over 2007 and was enough, i.e. over three percent of the vote, to qualify it for state funding and free airtime in the next Duma contest. The party's showing was among the strongest at polling places in the United States, the United Kingdom and France, with a 26.6%, 41% and 31.5% vote share, respectively (RIA Novosti 2011). After the official results were released, a high-ranking Yabloko official commented that the party had 1,500 observers and got about 3,000 reports about falsification, which prevented the party from gaining legislative representation: "our observers in Moscow showed us the results from the polling stations and we got about 20 or 25% in Moscow. The official [national] result for Yabloko was 3.4%, but you must imagine that the falsification was very big. We think we got about 7%" (Senior Official in Yabloko's National Organization 2011).

Nevertheless, Yabloko undoubtedly benefitted from the fact that the Kremlin elected not to create a fake party designed to bring the substantial liberal and pro-Western segment of the electorate within the orbit of United Russia: with Yabloko confined to extra-parliamentary status, their natural electorate was orphaned and the Kremlin faced powerful incentives to supplant Yabloko with a liberal, and loyal, party of its own (Peregudov 2009). In the future, Yabloko may not be so lucky because the Kremlin may decide to channel the presently nonsystemic opposition forming among the liberal segments of Russian society through a more reliable avenue by creating such a party. A new Kremlin creation would "reduce the already extremely poor chances of Yabloko occupying any appreciable place in the Russian party-political system, denying it even the hypothetical possibility of filling the as yet unfilled niche of a viable opposition" (Peregudov 2009: 63). Under that scenario, perhaps the best Yabloko could hope for would be forming a coalition with the democratic nonsystemic opposition and other small

liberal parties, although the Yabloko leadership has repeatedly turned down opportunities for coordination with other like-minded parties since the 1990s.

As the dominant party, United Russia competed in the election as the undisputed frontrunner and set its sights on preserving its overwhelming majority in the State Duma. In 2008, Prime Minister Putin became the first to occupy the post of United Russia's "party leader" and thereby became "empowered both to decide the most important questions of personnel […] and to play the leading role in determining the party's political orientation and in making specific managerial and other decisions" (Peregudov 2009: 56). Acting in his capacity as party leader, Putin urged the development of a broad popular front of like-minded political forces, consisting of United Russia, other political parties, unions, business associations, youth movements and women's and veterans' groups, to contest the elections. United Russia and those occupying the central executive apparatus publicly joined forces once more in September 2011: Prime Minister Putin announced at United Russia's annual convention that he would seek the presidency in the March election and reversed President Medvedev's statement four years prior, commenting that he would nominate Medvedev for the premiership if Putin was successful in March. For the public, this move laid bare the authoritarian nature of the political system and fomented widespread discontent with the regime and its party apparatus. In two November incidents, Prime Minister Putin was publicly rejected: he was booed at a boxing match and the KPRF and other parties refused to stand in respect when he entered the Duma to address the deputies. As president, Medvedev occupied the top spot on United Russia's federal party list; the remainder of the list featured almost 200 non-party members, who would help the party appeal to a larger slice of the electorate. United Russia's party list also featured prominent cultural figures and celebrities, such as the director of the Hermitage Museum, a singer similar to Frank Sinatra in the U.S., a gymnast and a boxing champion.

Medvedev argued that United Russia should receive a clear electoral endorsement in the legislative contest so the government could progress its agenda of stamping out corruption, developing civil society and modernizing the economy (Nichol 2011). A

month after the party's convention, United Russia released a "Popular Front" program that advocated for larger pensions for those willingly deferring retirement, lowering taxes on businesses, increasing taxes on luxury items such as alcohol and tobacco (also increasing the minimum ages pertaining to these activities), and creating more humane criminal laws (*Ibid*). The "Popular Front" was more than a political program but represented a full-scale "relaunch" for United Russia in response to its falling ratings (Kara-Murza 2011: 54). Accordingly, United Russia would participate in the 2011 elections as part of this movement, consisting of approximately 500 organizations that ranged from the Union of Women to the Union of Transport Workers (*Ibid*). At the time, critics of Putin and United Russia likened the "Popular Front" to Stalin's construction of the "Unbreakable Bloc of Communists and Non-Party People" that he formed before the Soviet elections in 1937 (*Ibid*). The drafters of the "Popular Front" program furthered the analogy themselves by labeling it a "five-year plan" (*Ibid*). The "popular front" program did not act as United Russia's primary campaign material, however. Instead, the party opted to use a collection of speeches made by the prime minister and president. United Russia stressed anti-Americanism and a hard-line on negotiations with NATO concerning cooperative missile defense, which opposition leaders criticized as fear-mongering in attempt to gain popular support (Nichol 2011). Prime Minister Putin doubled-down on these efforts when he warned at United Russia's congress a week before the election that foreign countries were attempting to control the outcome of the election by financially backing several Russian groups, presumably Golos. Just two days before the election, President Medvedev made a final attempt to court voters by cautioning voters against electing an unmanageable Duma and called for them to support United Russia's list who would constitute a "capable" legislature guided by "national interests" (Quoted in Nichol 2011: 4).

The party successfully appropriated themes central to its primary opponent, the KPRF, such as supporting the revival of the Soviet Union in the form of a Eurasian Union that would help Russia achieve great power in its own neighborhood and global player status in the international arena (Babich 2011; Fischer 2012). United Russia also

courted traditionalist voters, who historically supported either the KPRF or the LDPR, by stirring fears of a new crisis in the future, without speculating as to what specific form such a crisis might take (*Ibid*). United Russia participated in televised debates for the first time in 2011.

The final tally issued a blow to the dominant party compared to 2007: United Russia lost 77 of the 315 Duma seats it captured four years prior, but still garnered more than half of all seats with 238 in total and more than its showing in 2003, when it won 224. The party's simple majority in the Duma was no longer sufficient to change the Constitution unilaterally, requiring United Russia to instead find coalition partners to impose its constitutional agenda on the legislature in the Sixth Duma. However, its simple majority is sufficient to pass the majority of legislation, as a constitutional majority is necessary only to pass constitutional laws and amendments or to override a veto on the legislation by the upper house of the legislature, the Federation Council (Kuchma 2011). Just after the election, Prime Minister Putin addressed the suboptimal showing for the party, stating, "United Russia has won a majority, a stable majority. True, there are losses, but they […] would be inevitable for any political force […] that has borne the burden of responsibility for the situation in the country for years" (Quoted in Nichol 2011: 6). Furthermore, the presidential chief of staff commented that, considering the country was "far from being united," United Russia's 50% showing was "an excellent result. Attempts to rock the boat and interpret the situation in a negative and provocative light are doomed to failure. Everything is under control. The system is working. Democratic institutions are working" (*Ibid*). Boris Gryzlov, one of the leaders of United Russia and the Speak of the State Duma at the time of the election, framed the outcome differently, instead blaming United Russia's comparatively poor showing on the opposition: the opposition "threatened our voters, which is why voter turnout was so low" (Bidder 2011).

The 2011 Legislative Election as an Uncompetitive Election

Like the two legislative elections in the 2000s, the 2011 contest fell far short of free and fair. Golos, a domestic election observation organization, reported that the

election was characterized by "significant and massive violations in many key voting procedures" (Quoted in Nichol 2011: 5). Unlike four years prior, the OSCE/ODIHR accepted the invitation from the CEC to observe the election and deployed an election observation mission, albeit in numbers inadequate for a full assessment (approximately two-thirds fewer than deployed in 2003). The final report stated that the election was slanted to the advantage of United Russia and that there was not a level playing field for political competitors. Several political parties were also denied registration prior to the election, narrowing the choices available to voters. The Ministry of Justice's rationale ranged from overpaying registration fees and "usage of extremist-like emblems" to inconsistencies in address information (OSCE 2012: 4). Although preparations for the legislative election were satisfactory, the election was again besmirched by convergence of the state and United Russia, a less than fully autonomous election commission, media bias, and inappropriate interference of state authorities at various levels of government (OSCE 2012).

The state and United Russia coincided to an undue degree during the electoral cycle. Manifestations of this included local governmental structures influencing voters and engaging in more nefarious forms of compulsion on behalf of the dominant party (OSCE 2012). In the majority of territorial, i.e. raion-level, election commissions (TECs) visited, observers noted that many TEC members were also local government administrators and were usually "most actively involved in the administrative preparations" (OSCE 2012: 6). In Omsk, the regional executive transformed his regular TV show into a campaign show promoting United Russia and himself as a candidate on United Russia's party list; the KPRF filed a formal complaint with the Subject Election Commission (SEC) in Omsk but the complaint was dismissed (OSCE 2012). In Moscow, billboards stated that the local United Russia branch performed construction projects on the metro system, which other parties believed blurred the distinction between the state and dominant party, as the billboards were essentially party advertisements paid for by state funds (OSCE 2012).

Opposition parties faced multifarious obstacles in the 2011 campaign period. For example, the KRPF complained that contracts for billboard space were often not fulfilled or cancelled entirely after they had been signed in 13 different locales (OSCE 2012). In some areas, such as Saratov, Ufa and Pskov, the only visible billboards were United Russia's; in one instance, local authorities instructed a private company to permit only United Russia's posters (*Ibid*). As in previous elections, the police in several areas confiscated opposition parties' campaign materials. Furthermore, opposition parties reported that fictitious newspapers with incorrect or libelous information about various contenders were distributed and filed complaints with raion- and regional-level election commissions. In many instances, laws guaranteeing the right to peaceful assembly were effectively curbed, ostensibly due to public safety and order concerns, resulting in more attempted and actual rallies by political parties and activists under the banner of Article 31 of the Russian Constitution. The police broke up and arrested participants at KPRF rallies in numerous cities.

Several concerns marred the process of voting on Election Day. More than six percent of voters registered their party preferences via 'mobile voting' that allowed them to vote at home or other non-voting-station locations. In previous elections, the existence and scope of mobile voting concerned election observers, as it provided a vehicle with which to engage in electoral malfeasance in the absence of adequate safeguards (OSCE 2012). Although the provisions governing mobile voting were tightened prior to the 2011 election, mobile voting requests could be submitted on election day via third-parties, allowing for the possibility that requests were submitted lacking voter knowledge (*Ibid*). No security measures were adopted to thwart such practices. In the Chelyabinsk region, nurses filled out the ballots of hospital patients who were allowed to vote on location (RIA Novosti 2011a). Golos, the main domestic independent election observation organization, reported that it received over 2,000 complaints, including many from observers who were prohibited from monitoring the mobile voting services provided for disabled and elderly voters (*Ibid*). Group voting was observed in 14% of polling station visits and indications of vote buying were visible (OSCE 2012: 18). Yabloko reported

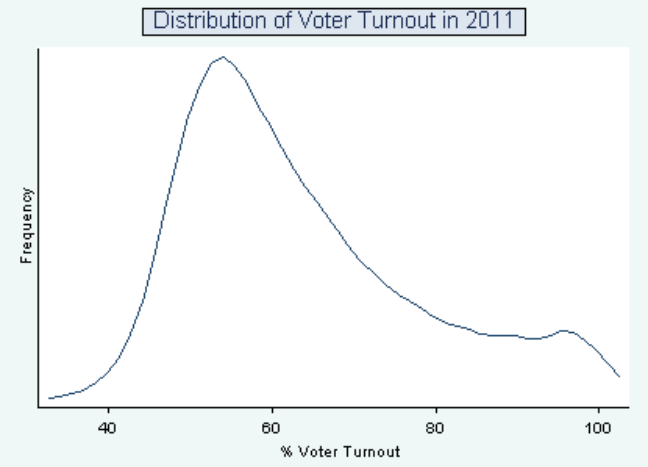
that its party election observers witnessed approximately 40 carousels in Moscow, in which a United Russia representative standing outside a polling station would give a filled-in ballot to a voter, ask the voter to cast that ballot and bring out the blank ballot given to him or her by poll station workers, which would then be filled out by United Russia representatives and given to another voter (RIA Novosti 2011a). Videos uploaded to the Internet showed that pens furnished in voting booths in Moscow polling stations were easily erasable. Staff assigned specifically to assist voters with new voting technologies, based on "non-disclosed proprietary software," were able to see voters' preferences on the ballot or electronic touch screen, compromising the secrecy of the vote (OSCE 2012: 8). The new software was not subject to public independent assessment or formal certification (*Ibid*). In over half of the polling stations visited by observers, the secrecy of the vote was not fully preserved (*Ibid*).

Echoing problems identified beginning in the early 2000s, election observers noted that procedures were followed overall during voting, but "the quality of the process deteriorated considerably during the count, which was characterized by frequent procedural violations and instances of apparent manipulation, including several serious indications of ballot box stuffing" (OSCE 2012: 1). The count of the votes was evaluated as bad or very bad in one-third of the polling stations, primarily due to lack of transparency and counting procedures that did not conform to CEC guidelines (OSCE 2012: 18). In nearly one-half of observed vote counts, marked ballots were not displayed to those observing the election (*Ibid*). Furthermore, in dozens of cases, the number of mobile ballot box ballots was greater than the number of applications but the ballots were not invalidated, per legal requirements (*Ibid*). Ballot stuffing was again suspected in the ethnic republics, with Chechnya reporting voter turnout of 99.51% and a 99.48% vote share for United Russia. Overall, OSCE observers found indications of ballot-stuffing in 17% of polling stations visited (Nichol 2011: 5). A post-election investigation into ballot rigging in the Central Russian city of Vladimir found that about 6,000 so-called "dead souls" voted in makeshift polling stations in which election monitors were prohibited (Tchalabov 2012). Subsequently, most of the documents at the local administration

building were burned in a fire deemed accidental (*Ibid*). Over one-third of polling stations did not publicly display their results protocols as required. Yabloko and the LDPR complained that their party election observers were prevented from adequately monitoring the election: observers were prevented from reviewing video footage of the election, were prohibited from observing the sealing of the ballot boxes, and were removed from polling stations without justification (RIA Novosti 2011a). The LDPR alleged that ballot boxes were sealed inappropriately and its observers were threatened with removal from the polling station if they filed complaints regarding the violations (*Ibid*).

Figure 8.1 provides further evidence pointing to electoral malfeasance, most likely ballot-box stuffing or the illicit changing of results protocols, in the 2011 election. As was the case four years earlier, a suspicious peak was evident in the right-hand tail of the distribution of voter turnout, suggesting that participation figures were artificially augmented and that methods of manipulation were employed to achieve that end. The local peak in the zone of unusually high turnout in 2011 was less pronounced than in 2007, however.

Figure 8.1: Distribution of Voter Turnout in 2011



While electoral observation reports supply anecdotal evidence of electoral manipulation, Table 8.1 quantifies the amount of electoral manipulation in the 2011

election by detailing the voter turnout threshold used to assess suspected malfeasance and the amount of raions that surpassed that threshold. In the most recent election to the State Duma, raion-level national turnout was 63.49% and the corresponding standard deviation was 14.38, higher than the standard deviation of 13.33 in 2007. Compared to the two elections in the 1990s, the distributions of turnout in the 2000s and 2010s displayed notably wider spreads as indicated by the significantly higher standard deviations and thus more raions recorded voter turnout, most frequently unusually high participation, that diverged from the mean to greater degrees. According to the threshold in 2011, just over 17% of all raions recorded unusually high voter turnout. The share of fraudulent raions was nearly identical four years prior, despite the slight smoothing out of the high turnout bump in 2011. When compared to the distribution of voter turnout presented in Figure 8.1 above, the 77.87 threshold takes into account all of the raions within the peak in the right tail, as well as some with slightly lower turnout figures.

Table 8.1: Manipulated Raions in 2011

Voter Turnout Threshold (1 Standard Deviation Above Raion-level National Turnout)	Number Manipulated Raions	% Total Raions
77.87	466	17.05

Taken together, Figure 8.1 and Table 8.1 strongly substantiate the findings from election observation missions.

As in 2007, the CEC failed to adjudicate filed complaints in a timely manner, in many instances not responding to complaints in writing per legal provision, and the process generally lacked transparency (OSCE 2012). The CEC failed to address numerous complaints filed by individual voters and Yabloko concerning United Russia posters that were nearly identical to the Moscow City Election Commission, both of which were papered prominently around the city. The posters, observed firsthand by the author during fieldwork at the time of the election campaign and as noted in the OSCE report, used identical colors, images, overall design and word fonts, which could mislead voters unable to distinguish between voter information and United Russia party materials. In response to this issue, the mayor of Moscow (and a member of United Russia)

commented to the media that there was nothing concerning about the similarity of posters: "when talking about United Russia, we mean that in the scale of Moscow the city and party authorities de facto act as a single entity, as we work on the same issues, solving common tasks" (Quoted in OSCE 2012: 7). Election observers also noted identical posters in St. Petersburg, Voronezh and Ufa, the capital of Bashkortostan. In this instance, the CEC "missed an opportunity to underline the importance of a clear separation between the activities of a state institution and a political party" (*Ibid*). Furthermore, the CEC considered only one post-election complaint that was filed by Yabloko before the final results were released: Yabloko disputed the results in the whole Moscow district and demanded recounts; the CEC debated whether it had the authority to order recounts and, although it did, per the Law on State Duma Elections, recounts were denied and Yabloko's complaint was dismissed (OSCE 2012). Yabloko and the KPRF stated that they would challenge the results in the whole country at the level of the Supreme Court. Ultimately all three parties forming the core party troika either challenged or censured the conduct of the elections. The Central Election Commission registered only 68 complaints, 45 of which were filed by political parties, by 4pm on voting day itself (RIA Novosti 2011a). The police received upwards of 1,100 complaints, most of which were filed in response to illegal campaigning (*Ibid*). However, the First Deputy Interior Minister Alexander Gurovoi stated, "there are no serious violations and crimes which could affect the outcome of the elections" (*Ibid*). Furthermore, Vladimir Churov, the head of the Central Election Commission, stated that the election was "crystal clear and clean" (Bidder 2011).

The aftermath of the 2011 election differed considerably from previous contests: large-scale public demonstrations and protest erupted across 130 cities in Russia in response to broadly publicized electoral fraud. The opposition rallies represented a "major watershed in Russia's post-Soviet social and political development" because there have been no such "mass actions" after 1989 and the early 1990s (Filimonov 2011). The protests crushed enduring presumptions about the insouciance of Russian society and signaled to the executive that the implicit social contract between the government and

society, whereby the political leadership provided economic stability and "income growth in exchange for political stability and society's passive acquiescence in government policies" was weakening (Zubarevich 2012: 25; Fischer 2012). The Golos website featured 200 precinct electoral commission results protocols that showcased inconsistencies between the precinct and higher levels; the CEC subsequently determined the allegations lacked foundation (OSCE 2012). The day after the election, thousands of protestors attempted to march to the CEC, but the police dispersed the gathering and arrested hundreds of participants. The largest protests occurred in Bolotnaya Square and Sakharov Avenue in central Moscow with tens of thousands participating, demanding the cancellation of the election results, dismissal of the chairman of the CEC, investigation of suspected manipulation, registration of previously banned parties, release of 'political prisoners' and those detained for participating in protests, and the execution of new elections (OSCE 2012; Nichol 2011). Other rallies also emerged spontaneously in Moscow and resulted in numerous arrests of journalists covering the protests and opposition figures, as the gatherings were unauthorized in advance (*Ibid*).

United Russia's youth wing, Nashi, and pro-government Youth Guard organized a series of counter-rallies in support of the dominant party, dubbed 'clean victory,' just outside Red Square. Vladislav Surkov, Medvedev's chief of staff and the architect of "managed democracy" in Russia, called on Nashi members to "train their muscles" in advance of the elections in order to fulfill the group's role as the "combat detachment of our political system" (Kara-Murza 2011: 54). The 'clean victory' gatherings made clear that minority groups, i.e. those constituting the opposition, would not be permitted to impose their will on the 'majority' of the electorate (Nichol 2011). Police presence was overwhelming at the numerous opposition rallies, signaling the government's intention to stem any early suggestions of political activity resembling that which occurred prior to the color revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan. KPRF leader Zyuganov criticized the protests, commenting that he was a man who "is categorically against the Orange contagion that is able to paralyze a nuclear power on the eve of a severe winter" (Babich 2011b). Just Russia leader Sergei Mironov sent a similar signal to central

authorities, party activists, and voters, effectively distinguishing parties like the KPRF and Just Russia, i.e. the systemic opposition consisting of parliamentary parties and those recognized by the state, from more radical forms of non-systemic opposition, comprised primarily of non-parliamentary parties and those the state refuses to register and recognize (Babich 2011b; Kynev 2012).

Analysis

The parties analyzed in 2011 remain unchanged from 2003 and 2007: the core party troika and United Russia. Table 8.2 indicates the parties' respective vote shares that met the relaxed and strict thresholds for party strongholds, the number of strongholds each party captured with regard to each threshold, and the percent of total raions accounted for by each. Despite the fact that the dominant party was against the ropes to some degree, the number of opposition party strongholds dipped from 2007 across both thresholds, save for the number of Yabloko's lower-level bastions of support. Compared to the previous election, United Russia gained strongholds according to both measures, but lower-level stronghold support swelled more notably than higher-level support. It is important to note that United Russia's vote share in 2011 declined from the all-time high reached in 2007. Consequently, the lower stronghold threshold was roughly 10% less than in the previous election, which may have eased the way for additional raions to register stronghold-level support for the dominant party.

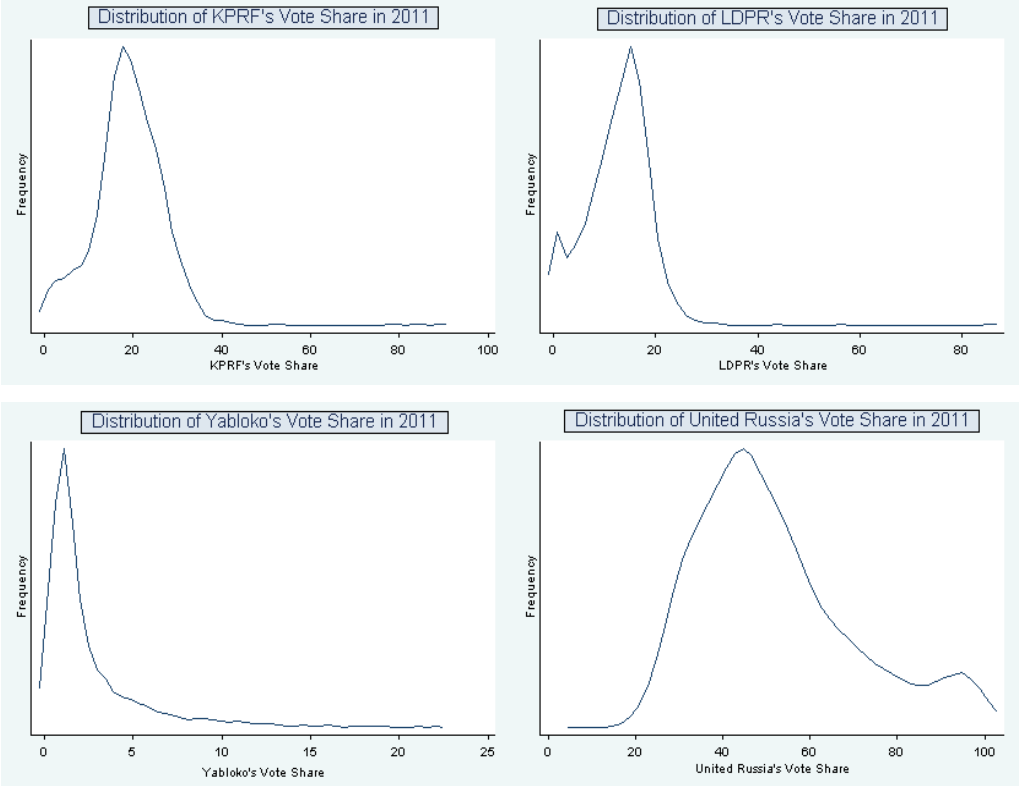
Table 8.2: Measuring the Dependent Variable: Party Strongholds in 2011

	1 standard deviation above party's raion-level national average	# Strongholds	% Raions	2 standard deviations above party's raion-level national average	# Strongholds	% Raions
KPRF	26.50	371	13.70	34.18	40	1.48
LDPR	18.49	345	12.72	24.66	31	1.14
Yabloko	5.11	322	11.89	7.82	148	5.46
United Russia	69.90	430	15.90	87.95	178	6.58

Figure 8.2 exhibits the distribution of each party's vote share, within which the two stronghold thresholds for each party can be roughly identified. The distribution of the KPRF's vote share better approximated a normal distribution than was the case four years

prior, although it still retained a "step" in the left tail at the location of electoral defeat. The standard deviation of the KPRF's vote share actually increased from 4.56 in 2003 to 7.68 in 2011, indicating that the distribution was more dispersed. The distribution of the nationalists' vote share in 2011 more closely resembled its distribution from 2007 than was the case with the KPRF, and again exhibited a sharp peak in the left tail at a null vote share. Mirroring the dynamics vis-à-vis the KPRF, the standard deviation corresponding to the distribution of the LDPR's vote share was 6.17, a marked increase from 4.87 in 2003 and 3.10 in 2007. Rounding out the core party troika, the distribution of Yabloko's vote share in 2011 appeared strikingly similar to that in 2007, although the standard deviation increased from 1.43 in the prior election to 2.71 in the most recent contest. Finally, the distribution of the dominant party's vote share yet again exhibited an elongated right tail and a conspicuous bump around vote shares in the range 95 to 99%. The distribution was considerably more dispersed than in 2007, as the standard deviation was 18.05 compared to 12.12 before.

Figure 8.2: Distribution of Parties' Vote Shares in 2011



See Appendix Tables 103-126 (pages 676-723) for Multilevel Model Results.

Ethnicity and Opposition Parties

The contours of opposition party support in the 2011 election reveal similarities but also striking differences from the contours that emerged in the 2000s during United Russia's rise and initial consolidation and also in the 1990s under conditions of more competitive contestation. Congruent with the findings from the analysis on the 1995 and 1999 elections, higher densities of ethnic minorities increased the odds of a KPRF stronghold by one percent in a lower threshold model and by three percent in the higher specifications. These findings, however, were markedly less consistent than those in the first decade after the collapse of communism. Moreover, in one strict specification leveraging the other minority covariate, the odds lifted by five percent. In 2007, the effect of non-Russians and other minorities amplified the odds of a Communist stronghold in some models but depressed the odds in others. The fact that the findings were uniformly

positive in 2011 suggests that the KPRF may have harvested some genuine support from ethnic minority constituencies, after all these groups did record high support for the Communists in the 1990s, but, considering United Russia's tightening grip on these areas, it is also possible that the support represented a protest vote against United Russia. As discussed above, many opposition parties urged voters to cast ballots for any party but United Russia and ethnic minority constituencies may have voted for the most formidable opposition party rather than waste their votes on a party that would not surpass the threshold for representation. Mirroring the findings from four years prior, increases in titular minorities did not systematically affect the occurrence of party strongholds. In some contrast to the statistical results and notably different from the relationship prevailing in the 1990s, Figure 8.3 illustrates a downturn in KPRF support in areas with geographically concentrated ethnic minorities. However, when compared to the late 2000s, the relationship between the KPRF's vote share and the proportion of ethnic minorities appears markedly less steep. The number of fanatical raions dwindled under the weight of United Russia but the roughly three that retained zealous support were found in an almost entirely ethnic Russian raion in Ivanovo Oblast on the Volga River in central Russia and a raion with a similar ethnic composition in Altai Krai bordering Mongolia, China and Kazakhstan, and a raion composed wholly of other minorities in Sverdlovsk on the eastern slope of the Ural Mountains.

Figure 8.3: Non-Russian Minorities and KPRF's Vote Share in 2011

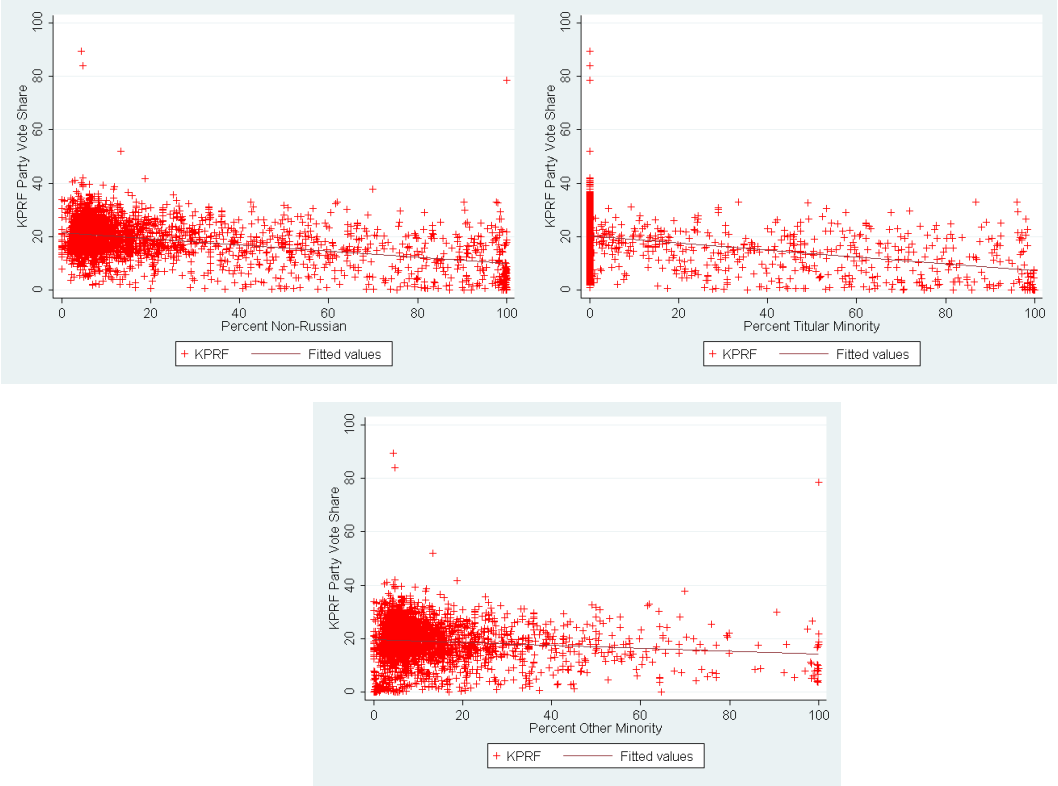
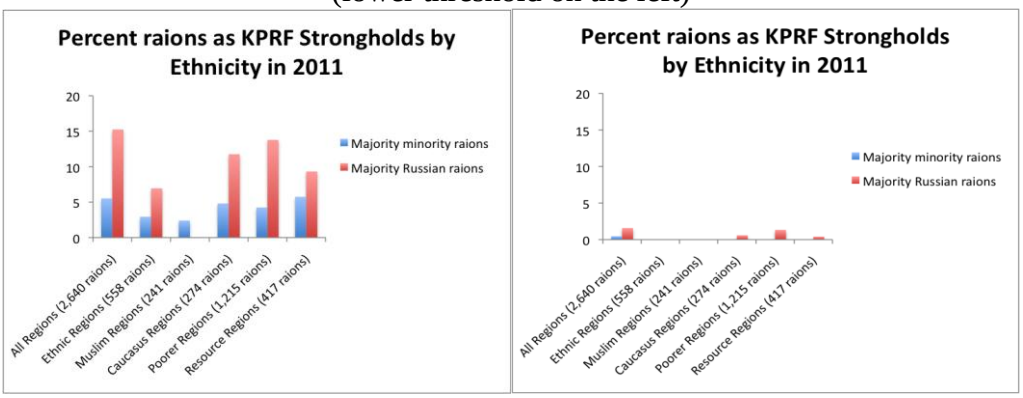


Figure 8.4 breaks down the percentage of KPRF strongholds by regional context and ethnic composition at the raion level, distinguishing between majority-Russian and majority-minority raions. For each dyad, the total number of raions in a given regional context is indicated. The denominator for each red and blue bar is the number of majority-Russian raions and majority-minority raions, respectively, that are in that specific regional context. Figure 8.4 substantiates the largely ethnic Russian picture of KPRF support, but also reveals subtle shifts from 2007: of majority-Russian raions, a slightly smaller percentage was KPRF strongholds in 2011 than 2007, suggesting that the Communists lost some ground in ethnic Russian areas, but when United Russia seemed to be against the ropes, the Communists made gains at its expense in majority-minority raions, as approximately double the share of majority-minority were KPRF bastions of support in 2011 than in the previous election. In nearly every regional context, the Communists captured a higher percentage of strongholds in majority-Russian than

majority-minority raions. Of majority-Russian raions in the Caucasus, the KPRF's share of strongholds plunged from 2007 to 2011: the Communists enjoyed strongholds in nearly 30% in the previous election, but less than half that percentage in 2011. In Muslim regions, the KPRF's bastions were limited to only majority-minority raions, a notable shift from 2007 when the party maintained a presence across ethnic Russian and minority environments. In contrast, the Communists drew support from both ethnic Russian and minority constituencies housed in poorer regions, a mainstay of the party since the 1990s. Of Russian raions in resource-rich regions, the share that channeled high levels of support lifted from just over five percent in 2007 to more than 10% in 2011. With the shift from the relaxed to the strict threshold, the percentage of KPRF support plummeted sharply in all contexts but retained the overall contours evident in the lower threshold.

Figure 8.4: KPRF Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 2011 (lower threshold on the left)



Consistent with the picture portrayed by the scatterplots and bar charts, descriptive statistics in Table 8.3 suggest that the KPRF may have struggled to maintain ethnic minority support during United Russia's political reign: in majority-minority raions, the KPRF's average vote share dropped by more than five percent below its raion-level national average, a showing that was slightly worse than in the late 2000s.

Table 8.3: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of the KPRF's Electoral Performance in the 2011 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	18.82	17.41	13.28	9.42	13.03	9.97	15.91	19.01	15.41
Min	.032	.051	.032	.032	.032	.032	.032	.508	.508
Max	89.48	89.48	78.63	32.89	32.89	32.89	51.94	78.63	35.55
SD	7.68	7.82	8.76	6.72	8.03	7.51	8.75	7.54	7.93

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, .9.

The KPRF faced its fiercest competitor, United Russia, in seeking the ethnic minority vote. Location in an ethnic republic did not reach conventional levels of statistical significance, an improvement over the 99% free fall in the odds in 2007. However, the KPRF's mean vote share in ethnic regions was nearly six percent less than its countrywide take, a drop that was two percent farther than four years prior. Per Table 8.4, the party had few strongholds in ethnic regions, 7% according to the relaxed measure and none according to the strict threshold. While the share of KPRF strongholds according to the lower threshold actually increased by a few percent compared to 2007, the party was wiped out when higher votes were concerned.

Table 8.4: KPRF Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 2011				
	# of KPRF Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (371 Total)	% of KPRF Strongholds	# of KPRF Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (40 Total)	% of KPRF Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	26	7.03	0	0
Russian federal regions	344	92.97	40	100
Muslim regions	6	1.62	0	0
Caucasus regions	26	7.03	1	2.50
Poorer Regions	148	39.89	13	32.50
Natural Resource Regions	34	9.19	1	2.50
Fraudulent raions	8	2.16	0	0
Non-Fraudulent raions	362	97.84	40	100

Comparing the most distant bookend election to the most recent contest, the share of the KPRF's pockets of support in ethnic republics withered all but entirely in the span of about a decade and a half, shrinking from a high of roughly 24% and 40%, according to the relaxed and strict threshold, in 1995 to merely 7% and zero percent in 2011. If the general downward trend continues into the next Duma contest, the KPRF will likely lose all remaining lower-level strongholds and United Russia will have finally delivered the coup de grace, in the ethnic republics at least. Muslim region status, on the other hand, shrunk the odds of a stronghold by more than 99% in a lower threshold model, a stark reversal from the effect of Muslim populations on the KPRF's performance in the two elections in the 1990s, when the odds hiked by dozens to thousands of times across the models, and even from 2007 when Muslim region status did not exercise a systematic effect. The KPRF was challenged in Muslim regions even when a weak party of power competed in the mid-1990s, but United Russia accomplished a feat that would have been next to impossible for the infrastructurally- and resource-challenged Our Home is Russia: squeezing the Communists out of Muslim regions. The KPRF's poor showing in Muslim areas is corroborated by descriptive statistics indicating that the party's average was only half that of its national showing, which was a hit three percent below its already poor performance in the area in 2007. When competing against the inept Our Home is Russia in 1995, the KPRF garnered average support in Muslim regions that was six percent

higher than its national vote share, but the entry into the political ring of competing parties of power and subsequently United Russia with robust support from ethnic minorities in Muslim regions rapidly chipped away at the Communists' former base. The KPRF had less than two percent and no strongholds in Muslim regions in 2011 by the lower and higher threshold, a notable deterioration from the one-quarter to two-fifths of strongholds housed in these areas in the 1990s. By the first election of the 2010s, United Russia had succeeded to greater extent in stamping out the Communist presence in Muslim regions than ethnic republics, but it appears that the writing is already on the wall. In the absence of United Russia's electoral defeat or implosion due to other unforeseen factors, the Communists will likely not be able to preserve what paltry ethnic minority support remains in future elections.

Analogous to the KPRF, the statistical results reveal that Yabloko benefitted from clusters of ethnic minorities at the raion level: unit increases in the percent minority and other minority covariates amplified the odds of a stronghold by two to five percent and by three to nearly five percent, respectively, across the models. When United Russia was struggling to maintain its chokehold on electoral politics, the magnitude of the positive effect for Yabloko was greater than was the case in 2007, when these ethnic composition covariates boosted the odds by one to three percent. However, denser titular minority populations reduced the odds by five percent in a lower threshold model, which was a decline from the lack of a systematic effect in 2007. The finding that larger proportions of non-Russian minorities, particularly Indo-European groups, contributed to Yabloko's electoral success represents a sea change in the patterns of support identified the 1990s. In the mid-1990s, geographically concentrated ethnic minorities had no connection to the occurrence of Yabloko's strongholds and, in the late 1990s, clusters of non-Russian groups of any kind sharply depressed the odds. As a non-parliamentary party, Yabloko was largely consigned to the political wilderness yet still primed fresh constituencies for support, or, more likely, harvested a share of disaffected voters incidentally. Mirroring the KPRF, ethnic minority communities may have supported the liberal party genuinely, as Yabloko had resolutely defended liberal democracy since its inception in 1993, or

voted for it merely to protest against the party of power. For Yabloko more than the KRPF, it seems that the protest vote explanation is more plausible because the liberal party did not have a history of capturing support in these areas before the rise of United Russia. While the statistical results indicate that Yabloko performed well in areas with geographically concentrated ethnic non-Russians and other minorities, Figure 8.5 illustrates declining support, to varying degrees, with increases in these groups. Corroborating the model results, Figure 5 also shows a sharp drop off in Yabloko's vote share with denser titular minority populations. There is a fair share of raions with sizable minority populations that recorded above average support for the party and a few isolated cases of raions with wholly other minority populations reporting tremendously high vote shares for the party. The most enthusiastic raion with a purely other minority population recorded over 22% for the liberal party and was found in Sverdlovsk Oblast. The most zealous blended raion was found in Moscow city, in the raion that houses the Russian Academy of Sciences, which had formal ties to the party, as the third spot on Yabloko's party list was suitably named Alexei Yablokov, a member of the Academy. The chain of blended raions in the scatterplots detailing non-Russians and other minorities, some of which supported Yabloko at stronghold-levels, were all located in the federal cities of Moscow or St. Petersburg.

Figure 8.5: Non-Russian Minorities and Yabloko's Vote Share in 2011

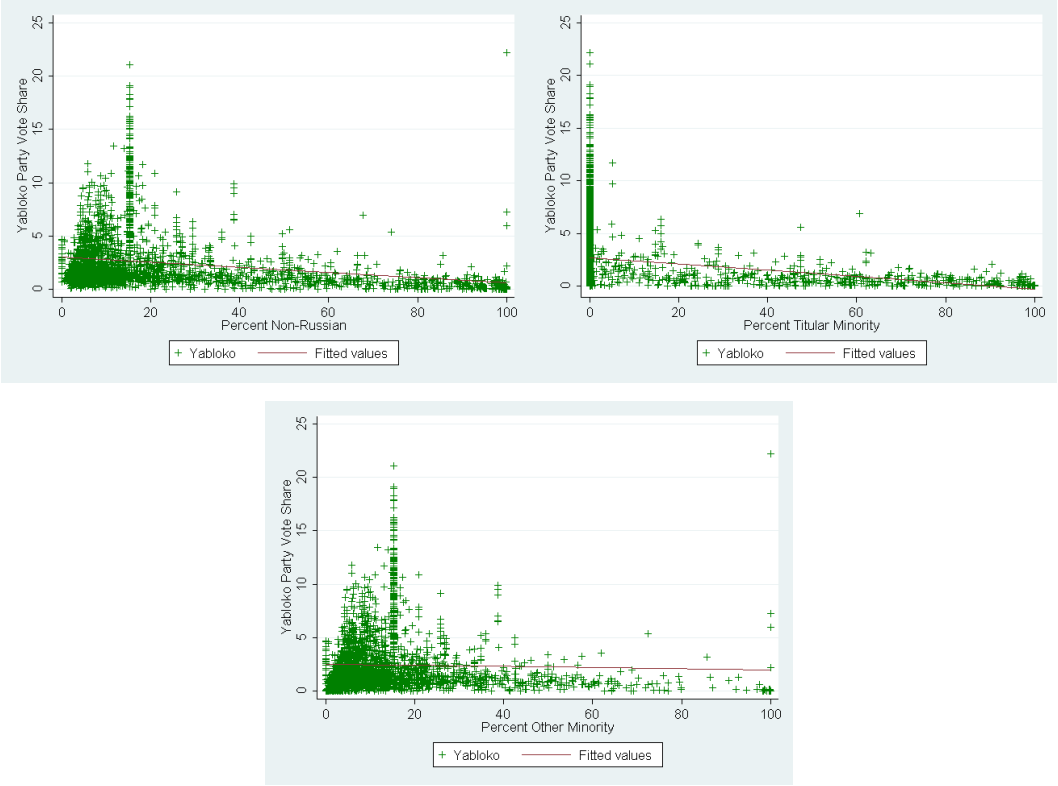
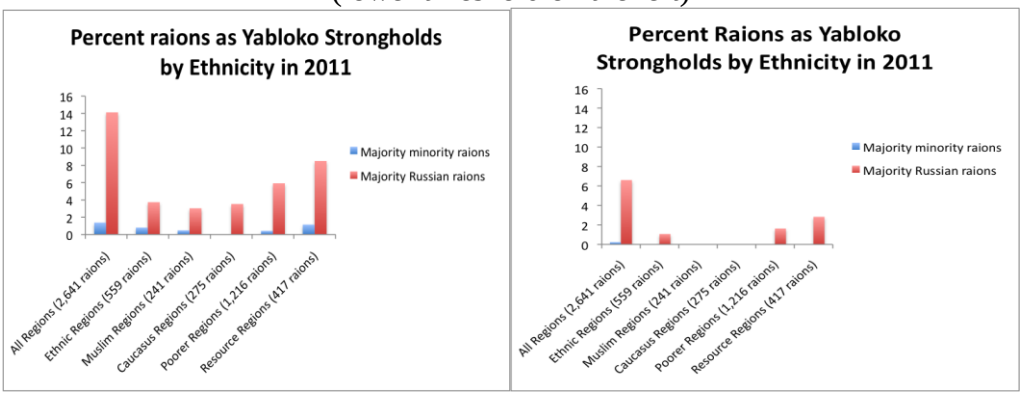


Figure 8.6 shows that, by percentages, majority-Russian raions in each regional environment accounted for a higher share of Yabloko strongholds than their majority-minority counterparts. Roughly 14% of majority-Russian raions channeled unusually high vote totals to Yabloko, an increase of about two percent over the previous election. Although Yabloko carved out more support in ethnic Russian areas when United Russia was vulnerable, yet again only a minuscule share of majority-minority raions registered zealous support. Of the majority-Russian raions in economically disadvantaged and resource-dependent regions, Yabloko's share increased by a few percentage points over the previous election. Of the ethnic minority raions in resource rich regions, the percentage that were Yabloko strongholds increased from zero in 2007 to a small share in 2011. A conspicuous shift from 2007 occurred in Muslim regions and those with abundant natural resources: Yabloko gained new footholds in majority-minority and majority-Russian raions that were previously roped off entirely from the liberal party

when United Russia was at the height of its power. Indeed, nearly four percent of Russian raions in Muslim regions churned out high vote shares for Yabloko. In the Caucasus by the lower measure and in all regional contexts according to the higher threshold, the liberal party failed to garner high levels of support from majority-minority raions. Nevertheless, the percentage of Russian raions in these restive regions that were strongholds more than doubled from 2007.

Figure 8.6: Yabloko Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 2011 (lower threshold on the left)



Descriptive statistics in Table 8.5 further substantiate that the party struggled in raions with a preponderance of ethnic minorities: Yabloko's average was less than one percent below its national mean, which was a significant toll since the party's national vote share was a mere 2.40%. Nonetheless, the small liberal party's showing in majority-minority raions was nearly three times its performance in these areas when United Russia was at the height of its power.

Table 8.5: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of Yabloko's Electoral Performance in the 2011 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural[†]	Ethnicity[††]	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development[†††]	Resource Region
Mean	2.40	1.19	.972	.530	1.02	2.50	1.22	2.97	1.68
Min	0	0	9.00	0	0	0	0	.012	.012
Max	22.21	8.79	22.21	7.88	11.67	5.56	7.09	22.21	10.89
SD	2.71	.951	1.48	.680	1.27	.804	1.31	3.24	1.66

[†] Percent rural exceeds 50%.
[††] Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
[†††] Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, .9.

At the regional level, the value for raions located in ethnic republics was 91 to 96% less than the value of the odds for raions situated elsewhere across the relaxed models, a blow comparable to the one suffered in 2007. The magnitude of the effect of ethnic republic status on Yabloko strongholds in 2011 was also roughly equivalent to that pinpointed in the mid-1990s. The party's average level of support in ethnic republics was as abysmal as its showing in majority-minority raions, but was still more than double its mean from four years prior. Yabloko strongholds were quite scarce in ethnic republics, as three percent and one percent of its bastions of support were found in such areas, a drop from 2007 with regards to the strict threshold, as shown in Table 8.6. Surprisingly, Yabloko was able to preserve a couple strongholds in ethnic republics according to both the relaxed and the strict threshold, where the KPRF proved powerless in maintaining the latter. But United Russia was likely unruffled by Yabloko's few successes in ethnic republics for at least two reasons. First, Yabloko did not represent formidable opposition to the dominant party. After all, the party had been living in the political wilderness as a non-parliamentary party since 2003, whereas the KPRF came in second place in every Duma election that United Russia itself had competed in. Furthermore, it was more than likely that Yabloko would again fail to cross the threshold in 2011, so allowing Yabloko to receive a few votes here and there would not backfire, as it may have if the party did gain representation and then openly challenged United Russia in the Duma. Thus, United

Russia simply did not face a strategic imperative necessitating the complete eradication of the feeble liberal party from the dominant party's most prized electoral turf. Second, if Yabloko performed well in the most unlikely areas, precisely those areas most dominated by United Russia and where Yabloko had not experienced historical success even before the emergence of United Russia, it would allow the Kremlin to claim that the Duma elections were at least pluralistic, even if not competitive. Therefore, although United Russia and the Kremlin surely did not help Yabloko during the campaign, or engage in electoral manipulation on Yabloko's behalf, the liberal party's few electoral successes may have also become United Russia's. Thus, with even roughly a dozen Yabloko strongholds in these regions notorious for producing unbelievable electoral results since the 1990s, United Russia could leverage the results to achieve its own political ends, if backed into a corner by either opposition parties themselves or political protestors.

Table 8.6: Yabloko Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 2011

	# of Yabloko Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (322 Total)	% of Yabloko Strongholds	# of Yabloko Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (148 Total)	% of Yabloko Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	10	3.11	2	1.35
Russian federal regions	312	96.89	146	98.65
Muslim regions	2	0.62	0	0
Caucasus regions	6	1.86	0	0
Poorer Regions	59	18.32	16	10.81
Natural Resource Regions	23	7.14	7	4.73
Fraudulent raions	2	0.62	1	0.68
Non-Fraudulent raions	320	99.38	147	99.32

Interestingly, given the effect of ethnic republic status, raions nested within Muslim regions did not systematically affect the occurrence of a Yabloko stronghold. Unexpectedly, Yabloko outperformed its national showing in Muslim regions, albeit by a slight amount. According to both thresholds, less than one percent of the party's

strongholds were situated in predominantly Muslim regions. The contours of Yabloko support thus persisted in their ethnic Russian definition at the regional level into the 2010s.

The ultra-nationalist LDPR suffered from high densities of ethnic minorities at the raion level, as was the case in the 1990s. In the lower threshold models, the odds of a bastion of support diminished by two to five percent due to increases in the percent non-Russian covariate. Higher proportions of titular minorities damaged the odds even more, by five to six percent in the relaxed threshold models and by 11% in a strict specification. The effect of other minorities was decidedly mixed, reducing the odds by three percent in one lower model and increasing the odds by two percent in one upper model. Contingent on the model and the ethnic composition covariate, the magnitude of the negative effect of non-Russians and titular minorities was larger in some cases than was found in 2007, when the odds diminished by two to four percent. Barring the varied effect of other minorities in 2011, which diverged from the consistently negative effect in the previous election, ethnic Russian patterns of support for the LDPR at the raion level largely endured from the mid-1990s to the early 2010s. Figure 8.7 corroborates the statistical findings and highlights the unmistakably inverse association between the growing proportion of ethnic minorities of any kind and the party's vote share. The scatterplot regarding other minorities reveals a less steep inverse relationship than was the case in 2007. Raions recording the most zealous support for the nationalists were scarce. The highest supporters were found in a raion with a population of purely other minorities in Sverdlovsk Oblast, two almost entirely ethnic Russian raions in Altai Krai and Ivanovo Oblast, and a sizable cluster of majority-Russian raions in Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug in western Siberia. The raions with a preponderance of titular minorities that voted for the LDPR at stronghold-levels were nearly all nested within the republic of Udmurtia, bordering Tatarstan and Bashkortostan to the south. The most fanatical raion, registering an over 85% vote share for the nationalists, was found in Sverdlovsk Oblast.

Figure 8.7: Non-Russian Minorities and LDPR's Vote Share in 2011

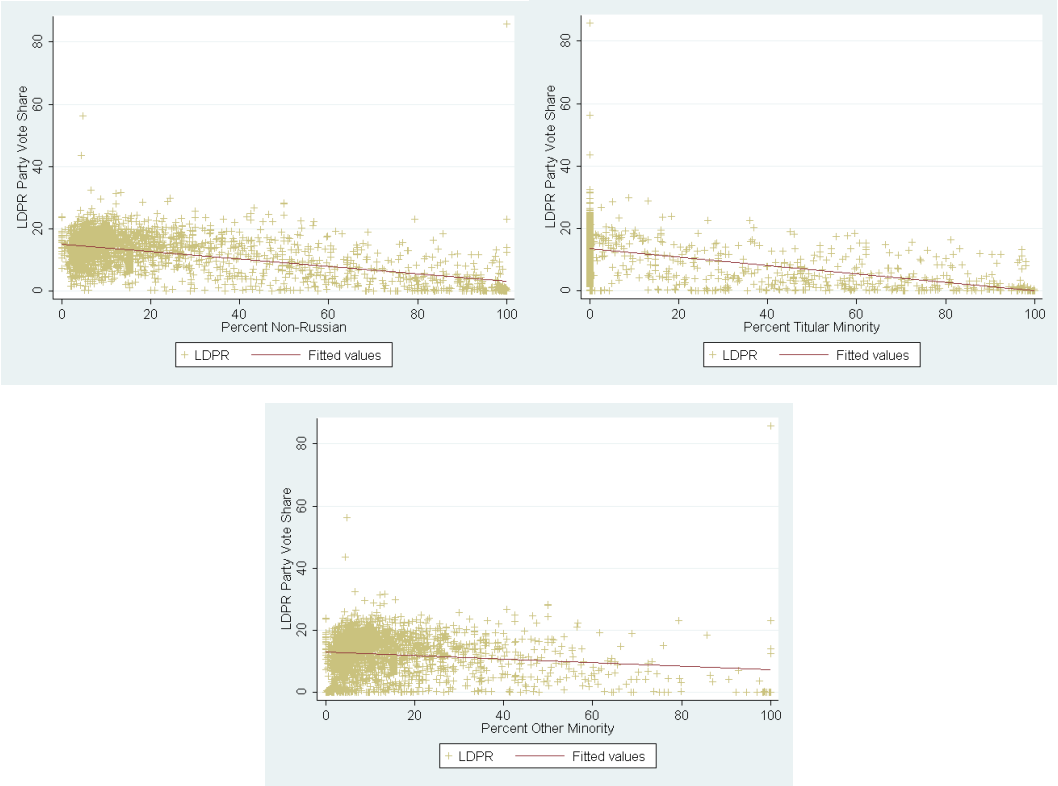
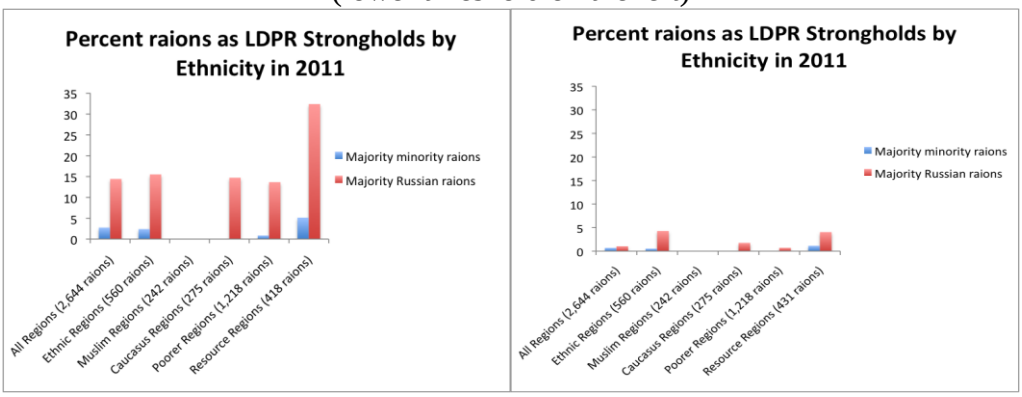


Figure 8.8 closely resembles the corresponding figures from the 1990s and provides additional evidence of the ethnic Russian contours of the LDPR's support that held across thresholds. Unlike the liberals, there are indications that the nationalists lost some ethnic Russian support in 2011 because less than 15% of majority-Russian raions served as strongholds whereas greater than 15% channeled similar levels of support in the previous election. On the other hand, majority-minority raions remained steadfastly opposed to the LDPR once again. Compared to 2007, the nationalists appeared to lose some ground in majority-Russian raions in ethnic republics and economically disadvantaged regions because the percentage of raions that delivered high vote totals to the party plunged from nearly 25% to roughly 15% in the former and dropped from close to 20% to less than 15% in the latter. In each regional setting, the balance between the percentage of majority-Russian and majority-minority raions that were strongholds strongly favored the

former. In the Caucasus, the LDPR only harvested support from majority-Russian areas, which was also true in the last contest.

Figure 8.8: LDPR Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 2011 (lower threshold on the left)



As indicated in Table 8.7, the LDPR's average in majority-minority raions was nearly six percent less than its national showing, a drop one percent farther from 2007.

Table 8.7: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of the LDPR's Electoral Performance in the 2011 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	12.32	11.23	6.52	4.07	6.74	2.10	8.65	12.53	11.68
Min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Max	85.80	56.26	85.80	32.49	29.89	12.73	31.58	85.80	29.89
SD	6.17	6.36	7.58	4.52	6.98	2.73	7.89	5.98	7.51

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, .9.

The effects of location in ethnic republics and Muslim regions produced surprising results, especially when considered in conjunction with the raion level ethnic composition predictors: ethnic republic status did not reach standard levels of statistical significance in the lower threshold models but demonstrated a robust and positive effect in the upper

threshold specifications, augmenting the odds of a stronghold by five to 23 times. This finding represented a significant break from the past because the value for raions located in ethnic republics were a tiny percentage of the value of the odds for raions situated in Russian federal regions in the 1990s and in the 2000s. In the four previous contests, the ethnic Russian contours of LDPR support held at both the raion and regional level, but incongruity emerged in the early 2010s when higher densities of ethnic minorities at the raion level damaged the odds and boosted the odds at the regional level. The LDPR thus gained new footholds in ethnic republics against all the odds, as United Russia kept a firm grip on these areas. Given the dominant party's unshakable presence, the LDPR managed to capture an astonishingly large number of strongholds compared to the rest of the core party troika: one-tenth and one-quarter of the nationalist's bastions were found in ethnic regions, by the relaxed and strict measure, as shown in Table 8.8. The share of strongholds found in ethnic republics increased sharply along the strict threshold, from four percent in 2007 to over 25% in 2011. Interestingly, the LDPR was also the only opposition party under investigation that saw its percentage of strongholds in ethnic republics actually increase with the shift from the lower to the higher threshold.

Table 8.8: LDPR Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 2011

	# of LDPR Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (345 Total)	% of LDPR Strongholds	# of LDPR Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (31 Total)	% of LDPR Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	36	10.43	8	25.81
Russian federal regions	309	89.57	23	74.19
Muslim regions	0	0	0	0
Caucasus regions	26	7.54	4	12.90
Poorer Regions	142	41.16	10	32.26
Natural Resource Regions	89	25.88	11	35.48
Fraudulent raions	3	0.86	2	6.45
Non-Fraudulent raions	341	98.84	29	93.55

Notwithstanding the model results and data presented above, descriptive statistics show that the LDPR's mean level of support in ethnic regions was nearly six percent less than its national average, a precipitous decline from the party's already poor performance in 2007. In contrast to the robust and positive effect of ethnic republic status, a predominantly Muslim population did not have a systematic effect on the occurrence of LDPR strongholds in any of the models, a finding consistent with those from the previous election. However, descriptive statistics suggest that the nationalists fared incredibly poorly in these regions: raions in Muslim regions recorded average support that was more than 10% below its national showing, a dive of an additional four percent compared to 2007, and, yet again, the party had no strongholds in these areas according to either measure of stronghold. Thus, while the LDPR flourished in ethnic republics compared to the KPRF and Yabloko, the party seemed to fall short in Muslim regions according to the more descriptive data.

The Urban-rural Divide and Opposition Parties

The configuration of support for opposition parties continued to be strongly defined by the urban-rural divide into the 2010s. The odds of a Communist stronghold dwindled by three percent across all of the lower threshold models, generally consistent with the findings from 2007. Furthermore, the KPRF's average in predominantly rural raions was again less than one percent below its raion-level national mean. Figure 8.9 illustrates the downturn in KPRF support with the movement from city centers to the countryside. The obvious urban outlier was located in Sverdlovsk Oblast, while the two fanatical raions in the countryside were found in Altai Krai and Ivanovo Oblast.

Figure 8.9: Rural Inhabitants and KPRF's Vote Share in 2011

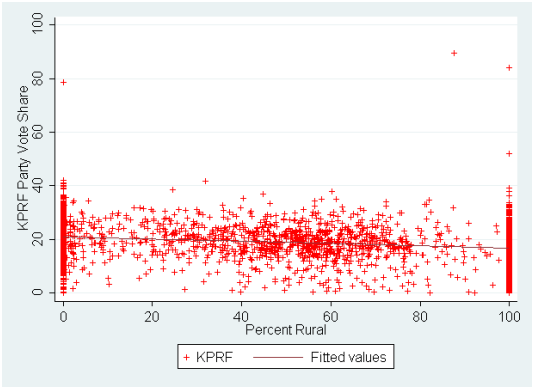
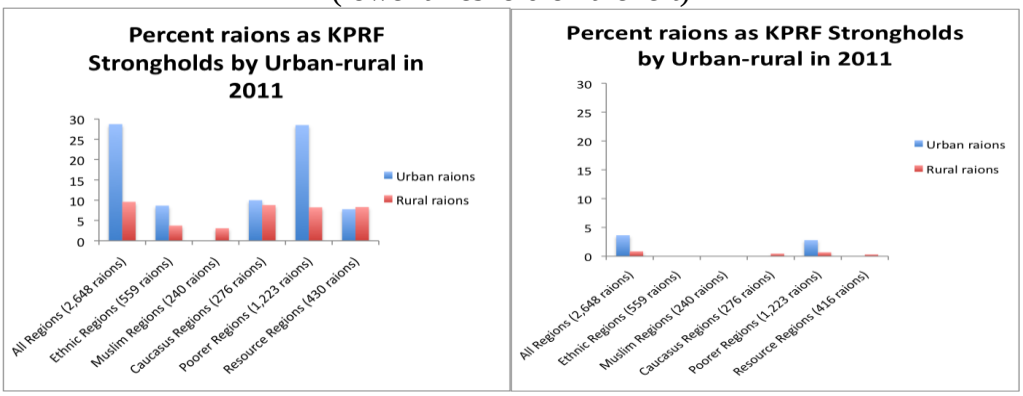


Figure 8.10 demonstrates the percentage of majority-urban raions that delivered tremendous vote shares to the Communists was almost 10% higher, reaching nearly 30%, than when United Russia was at its apex, suggesting that the KPRF adapted rather deftly to the fact that United Russia had squeezed it out of the countryside. Despite consolidating gains in urban areas, the share of majority-rural raions that were bastions of support hovered around 10%, comparable to the previous contest. The KPRF captured a higher percentage of strongholds in urban centers than the countryside, except for in regions with resource wealth and predominantly Muslim populations, where the traditional rural contours prevailed to varying degrees. Compared to 2007, the Communists made gains in urban raions in poorer regions and, surprisingly, rural raions in ethnic republics and Muslim regions. However, the party suffered losses in Muslim regions and the Caucasus: no urban raions in Muslim regions were KPRF strongholds any longer and, of the urban raions in the Caucasus, the percentage that were Communist strongholds plunged from nearly 25% in 2007 to roughly 10% in 2011. Moreover, the percentage of both urban and rural raions in resource-dependent regions dipped from the late 2000s to the early 2010s. With the shift to the strict threshold, the party again captured a higher percentage of bastions in urban areas overall and in the specific setting of poorer regions, but retained trace support in rural areas in the Caucasus, economically disadvantaged regions and resource regions.

Figure 8.10: KPRF Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 2011 (lower threshold on the left)



Collectively, these data reveal the progressing erosion of the Communist vote in the countryside. With the sweeping defection of rural voters to United Russia in the 2000s, the KPRF faces a daunting challenge in trying to win back the support of the countryside in future legislative elections.

Experiencing a fate similar to the Communists in rural areas, the odds of a nationalist strongholds diminished by one to two percent across the lower threshold models, congruent with the findings from 2007. Predominantly rural areas again registered support for the LDPR that was less than one percent under its national take. Figure 8.11 showcases the downturn in LDPR support as the level of rurality increased at the raion level. Compared to 2007, however, the inverse association appears markedly less steep. The most enthusiastic countryside raion was located in Altai Krai and its urban counterpart was in Sverdlovsk Oblast.

Figure 8.11: Rural Inhabitants and LDPR's Vote Share in 2011

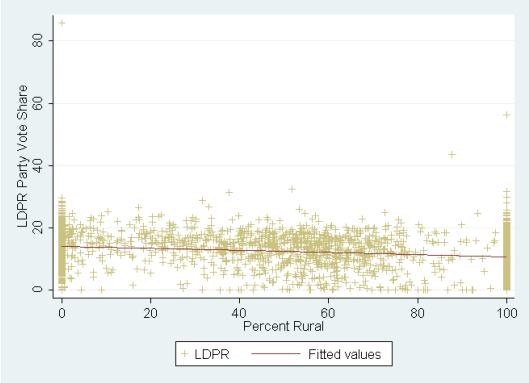
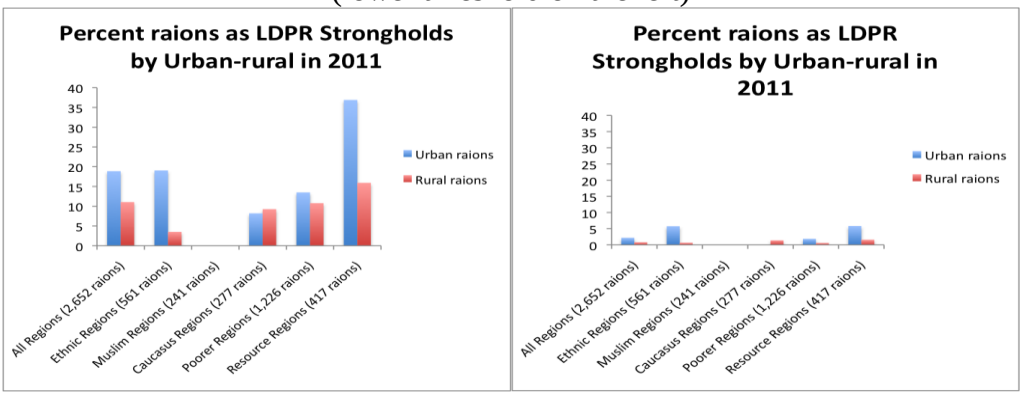


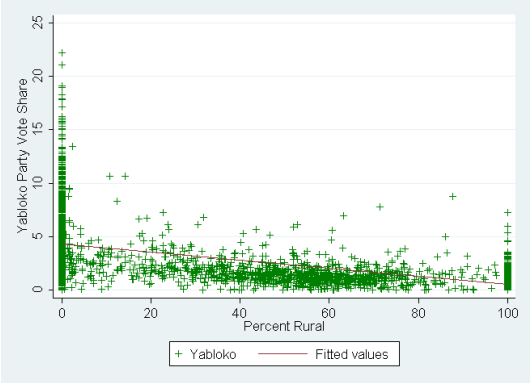
Figure 8.12 illustrates the LDPR's urban base. Of all urban raions, the nationalists carved out strongholds in roughly 20%, preserving but not expanding its share from 2007. Likewise, approximately 10% of rural raions registered unusual devotion for the party, also consistent with the previous election. A higher percentage of urban centers were nationalist strongholds in each regional environment except in the Caucasus. In poorer regions and those in the Caucasus, the percentage of urban and rural areas that were LDPR strongholds was more balanced than in the other regional environments. With the shift from the relaxed to the strict threshold, the percentage of strongholds in urban raions fell to zero in the Caucasus. Compared to the previous contest, a higher percentage of rural raions in resource regions were bastions of support, from less than 10% in 2007 to more than 15% in 2011, and surprisingly, the share of countryside raions in the Caucasus that were strongholds more than doubled. However, the party lost ground in urban raions in economically disadvantaged regions and those in the Caucasus.

Figure 8.12: LDPR Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 2011 (lower threshold on the left)



Compared to the KPRF and LDPR, Yabloko made the deepest inroads outside of the countryside in more urban areas, as had been the case since before the accession of United Russia. With unit increases in rurality, the odds of a stronghold plummeted seven to nine percent across the relaxed threshold models and eight to ten percent across the strict specifications. The magnitude of the negative effect was less in some models than in the previous election, when the odds tumbled by six to 17%. The liberal party's average showing in predominantly rural areas was a full half its national mean, comparable to 2007. Figure 8.13 clearly shows the inverse association between Yabloko's vote share and the level of ruralness at the raion level. Compared to the scatterplots for the KPRF and LDPR on this dimension, Yabloko's support plummeted more steeply, verging on zero in the most rural areas. The figure also reveals that Yabloko captured approximately twice its raion-level national average in urban centers.

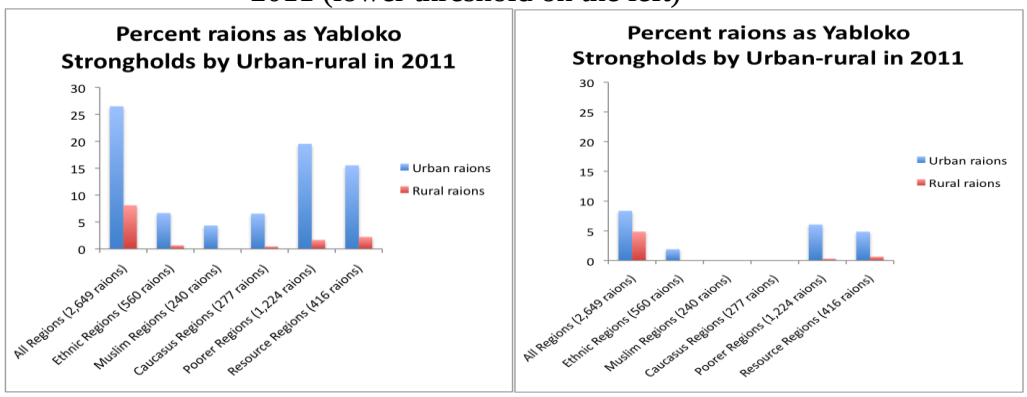
Figure 8.13: Rural Inhabitants and Yabloko's Vote Share in 2011



As in the previous elections, Figure 8.14 shows once again the urban contours of Yabloko's electoral support. Alongside the Communists, Yabloko captured strongholds in a higher share of majority-urban raions when United Russia was seemingly in decline than when it was at the height of its power. Indeed, of urban raions, the percentage that were bastions of support for the liberals increased by more than five percent from 2007 to 2011. Unexpectedly, the traditionally urban liberals also performed better in the countryside: of rural raions, less than one percent were strongholds in 2007 but the party's share had jumped to close to 10% by 2011. In terms of percentages, there is a vast disparity between the share of urban areas and those in the countryside in each regional environment that were strongholds, with the largest divergence evident in poorer regions. With the shift from the relaxed to the strict threshold, Yabloko lost support from rural raions but preserved a degree of urban support in ethnic republics, and support from urban and rural raions alike dissolved in Muslim regions and those in the Caucasus. Of urban raions, the share that was strongholds increased in every single regional setting compared to 2007. For example, Yabloko failed to capture any strongholds in Muslim regions when United Russia was at its apex, but roughly five percent of urban raions in those regions were strongholds when United Russia was showing signs of decay. Additionally, of urban raions in poorer regions, the percentage that delivered high vote totals to the non-parliamentary party more than doubled from 2007 to 2011. Yabloko also demonstrated growth in parts of United Russia's heartland: of the countryside raions in

the Caucasus and resource-dependent regions, Yabloko's share increased from zero in the previous election to a small percentage in 2011.

Figure 8.14: Yabloko Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 2011 (lower threshold on the left)



In the next election to the State Duma, the Communists and nationalists may try to capitalize on United Russia's perceived weakening, as evidenced by its loss in vote share from 2007 to 2011, and struggle to recoup lost territory in the countryside, surrendering urban centers to Yabloko once again.

Regional Geographic and Socioeconomic Indicators and Opposition Parties

Regional variables produced interesting results in the most recent legislative election. As in the previous election, location in the Caucasus did not exercise a systematic effect on the occurrence of Communist strongholds in the early 2010s. Descriptive statistics, however, indicate that the KPRF faced an uphill battle to win back the support it enjoyed in the 1990s: the Communists average vote share in the area was almost three percent less than nationally, a shift from 2007 when its vote share in the Caucasus closely approximated its countrywide mean and, more starkly, from the mid-1990s, when its mean was more than eight percent higher at the height of the party's performance. Moreover, few bastions of support were found in the Caucasus, seven and two percent by the relaxed and strict measure, a decline from the 12% and four percent in 2007. While Caucasus location had drastically reduced the odds by at least 88% in 2007, this correlate had no connection to the occurrence of LDPR strongholds in 2011. The

LDPR's average in the Caucasus was less than its national showing and by roughly the same amount as the KPRF's, but the ultra-nationalists had more strongholds in the area than the Communists, seven and 12% according to the lower and higher threshold. The share of LDPR strongholds in the restive regions increased compared to the late 2000s, when five percent and two percent, respectively, were found there. These findings run counter to expectations that opposition parties, especially the strongest of the core party troika, would languish in the Caucasus due to United Russia's steadfast presence. For Yabloko's part, the early 2010s looked much like the late 2000s, as the value for raions situated in the area were roughly one-tenth the value of the odds for raions located outside in 2011, closely mirroring the magnitude of the negative effect from the previous election. The liberal party eked out little more than one percent on average in the area and Yabloko had hardly any strongholds there according to both thresholds. For Yabloko, future elections will likely reinforce the damaging effect of the Caucasus on strongholds but it is more difficult to forecast the trajectories of the other two parties due to the lack of a relationship between their bastions of support and location in the area.

Variables distinguishing degrees of socioeconomic welfare at the regional level produced effects more consistent with the contours of the KPRF and LPDR vote in the 1990s than the 2000s. Unit increases in gross regional product decreased the odds of a KPRF stronghold by 21% at the least and 29% at the most across the lower threshold models in 2011, but had failed to achieve statistical significance in 2007. A fair portion of the KPRF's bastions of support, roughly 40% and nearly one-third, was located in poorer regions, but the approximately 33% share according to the strict threshold was a large drop from the 50% in 2007. Despite this, the party's showing in regions with larger than average economies was slightly higher than its countrywide performance. Even as the Communists lost ground in the countryside, they clung on to support in economically disadvantaged areas, another long-standing constituency. Similar to the KPRF and mirroring the party's weak performance in these areas in the 1990s and 2000s, the LDPR again suffered electorally as gross regional product grew, with odds decreasing by 24 to 41% in 2011, approximating the magnitude of the effect in the previous contest.

Although the party's average in economically advantaged regions was within one percent of its national showing, numerous LDPR strongholds were housed in poorer regions, 41% and 32% according to the relaxed and strict measure, a significant drop from the nearly 50% and almost two-thirds in the late 2000s. United Russia's presence did not affect the KPRF and LDPR's performance in poorer locales to the extent anticipated, as both parties' electoral trajectories remained relatively stable before and after the dominant party's arrival. In notable contrast to the KPRF and LDPR, Yabloko's electoral performance again improved with increases in gross regional product, augmenting the odds of a stronghold by 16 to 30% across the relaxed threshold models and by 18% in a strict specification. Contingent on the model, the magnitude of the positive effect was lesser in some cases than in 2007, when odds jumped by 12 to 39%. Yabloko's average in economically developed regions was higher than its national showing and was, in fact, Yabloko's best showing out of any raion or regional context considered. The party still captured a fair share of strongholds in poorer regions though: 18% and 10% of Yabloko's bastions were found in economically depressed areas. Thus, Yabloko preserved the niche that it carved out for itself in the 1990s and continued to distinguish itself from the other members of the core party troika and the dominant party by prospering wealthier regions.

Findings concerning resource abundance in 2011 exhibited striking continuity with those from the previous election. Mirroring the final election of the 2000s, resource-abundance at the regional level took a toll on KPRF support: the value for raions in resource regions was one-fifth the value of the odds for raions situated in economically diverse regions in one lower threshold model. Raions in resource regions registered average support for the party that was again more than three percent below than its national level and few strongholds were housed in these areas. For the nationalists, resource-dependence again ballooned the odds across all models, by 16 to 23 times in the lower threshold models and by 8 to 12 times in the higher measure specifications. The magnitude of the effect was considerably greater in 2011 than in the previous election, when the odds reached four and capped off at over five. The party's average in these areas was within one percent of its national average and a sizable share of the LDPR's

strongholds were found in resource regions, about 26% according to the lower threshold and roughly 35% by the strict measure. The effect of resource-abundance on the LDPR's performance is especially intriguing because United Russia also captured a sizable boost in these areas, suggesting that the LDPR and United Russia not only tussled over the same electoral turf but that the LDPR competed with the dominant party without being crushed completely. As in 2007, Yabloko's bastions were not connected to resource abundance in 2011. Yabloko's average in resource-rich regions was nearly one percent less than its national showing, as was true four years prior, and the party had few strongholds in these areas, seven and two percent by the relaxed and strict threshold.

Electoral Manipulation and Opposition Parties

Unsurprisingly, levels of voter turnout that surpassed thresholds for suspected electoral manipulation severely diminished the odds of opposition party strongholds across the board. With the shift from the non-manipulated to the fraudulent class, the likelihood of a KPRF stronghold contracted by 93 to 96%, a blow comparable to 2007. Ex ante, the KPRF was decently positioned to capture unusually high vote shares in abnormally high turnout raions for at least two reasons. First, the Communists still served as United Russia's most formidable competitor. If the executives and administrators sitting atop local government structures believed they were not adequately compensated for their efforts to turn out the vote for the dominant party, through voter mobilization or more nefarious methods, in previous elections, they might be susceptible to Communist co-optation under the right conditions. Second, and more importantly, United Russia's widely perceived weakening leading up to the elections may have infected a few high turnout areas with a sense of uncertainty as to the final distribution of the votes that may have incentivized these areas to distribute their electoral eggs more evenly in various parties' baskets rather than run the risk of being on the wrong side of history when United Russia was defeated electorally. Economic downturn leading up to the 2011 election undoubtedly affected United Russia's resource endowments and regional elites recognized that the party would be forced to do more, as a result of its perceived weakening, with less. As such, it was not necessarily a foregone conclusion that the

KPRF would not benefit in some way from high voter turnout in the most recent election. Nevertheless, fraudulent raions recorded average support for the KPRF that was more than nine percent under its national level, roughly halving its vote share. The nine percent fall was a four percent farther drop than the KPRF experienced in 2007. Moreover, the occurrence of KPRF strongholds in manipulated areas was incredibly rare: only two percent of the Communists' bastions of support were found in fraudulent raions by the lower measure, and none according to the higher one. Figure 8.15 illustrates the steep deterioration in the KPRF's vote share with increasing levels of voter turnout, as was evident in 2007 as well. Interestingly, the three most enthusiastic raions reported turnout that was below the national average, but still relatively close to it. Even in 2011, there were still a few lingering high supporters that registered turnout approaching 100%; these raions were located in the republics of Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachay-Cherkessia, and Krasnodar Krai.

Figure 8.15: Voter Turnout and KPRF's Vote Share in 2011

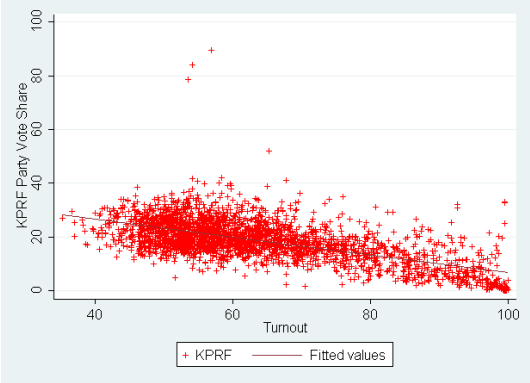
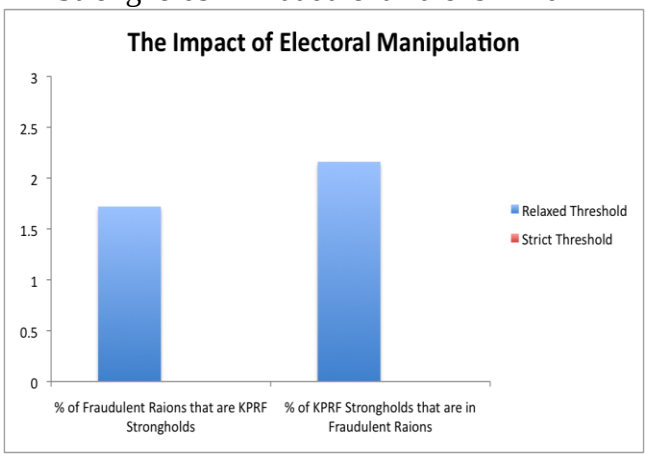


Figure 8.16 corroborates the near-total absence of the Communist party in the presence of electoral manipulation, but also indicates an improvement over the party's performance in these areas in 2007. Of the close to 400 KPRF strongholds according to the lower threshold, merely two percent were housed in fraudulent raions and these few bastions of support evaporated entirely with the ratcheting up of the stronghold measure. Of the more than 450 raions suspected for nefarious practices, less than two percent were KPRF

strongholds by the relaxed measure and none by the strict threshold. From both angles, the Communists performed better in high turnout raions in 2011 than in the previous election, when both the percent of fraudulent raions that were KPRF strongholds and the percent of KPRF strongholds in fraudulent raions fell under one percent. Indeed, the number of KPRF strongholds in manipulated raions doubled from 2007 to 2011 according to the lower measure, suggesting that United Russia's biggest rival may be staging a very gradual comeback in these areas.

Figure 8.16: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are KPRF Strongholds vs. Percent KPRF Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 2011



Paralleling the KPRF's trajectory in high turnout areas, the LDPR suffered to a similar degree, as the odds of a bastion of support plummeted by 91-94% in 2011. However, in sharp contrast to the Communists, the nationalists excelled in manipulated raions in the previous election according to the strict threshold, with odds jumping from three to six times, indicating a dramatic reversal of fortune. With United Russia seemingly on the ropes before the election, the authorities could no longer afford to channel such comparatively large quantities of the votes stolen in fraudulent raions to the Kremlin-friendly nationalists to preserve the appearance of multiparty competition, but there is some evidence that this practice still occurred in 2011, albeit to a more limited degree. The ultra-nationalists' average in manipulated areas was less than eight percent below its national mean, cutting its vote share by approximately two-thirds. The eight

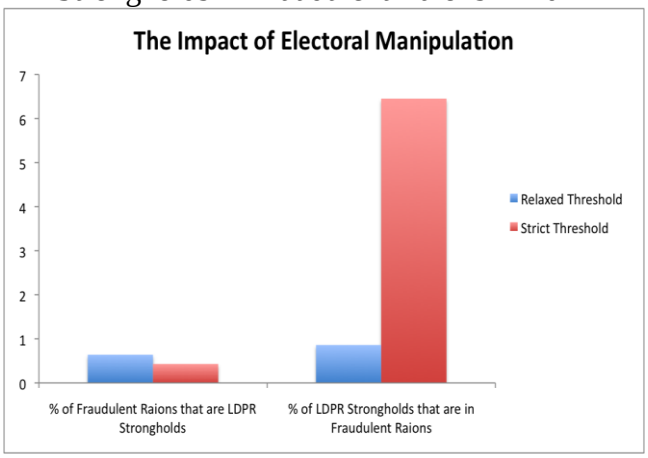
percent drop was a worse showing than in 2007 by three percent. Indeed, LDPR strongholds located in manipulated areas were rare, approximately one and six percent according to the relaxed and strict threshold. Figure 8.17 showcases the inverse relationship between voter turnout and the LDPR's performance and appears strikingly similar to the KPRF's scatterplot above, with the minor distinction that the LDPR's level of support is a great deal lower than the KPRF's when turnout approaches 100%. The three most ardent supporters recorded turnout that was below the national mean, but the nationalists also captured some, albeit scarce, stronghold-level support in high turnout raions. These raions were located in the republic of Karelia, along the border with Finland, and Kemerovo Oblast in southwestern Siberia.

Figure 8.17: Voter Turnout and LDPR's Vote Share in 2011

Figure 8.18 indicates that, unlike the Communists, the nationalists fared worse in fraudulent raions in the most recent election to the State Duma than in 2007, although the share of LDPR strongholds in manipulated raions was still the highest of the core party troika in 2011. With the threshold increase, the proportion of LDPR strongholds in fraudulent raions jumped from less than one percent to nearly seven percent, closely mirroring dynamics prevailing in 2007 when the dominant party likely redistributed some of the votes in these raions to the nationalists. However, the extent of the reallocation was seemingly more limited than in the previous election, as made clear by the fact that the effect of electoral manipulation in the statistical models was negative when the variable

did reach statistical significance in 2011 and the data supplied by Figure 8.18. As mentioned, with widespread speculation that United Russia's days were numbered, the dominant party was forced to double down in fraudulent raions to ensure a solid showing and the nationalists suffered as a result. Of the hundreds of raions registering abnormally high political participation, the LDPR's share fell from more than two percent and one percent in 2007 to under one percent by both stronghold measures in 2011.

Figure 8.18: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are LDPR Strongholds vs. Percent LDPR Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 2011



The trajectory of the KRPF and LDPR in high turnout raions points to a key difference between the competitive elections in the 1990s and the uncompetitive contests in the 2000s: multiple political parties, including the Communists and nationalists, benefitted from high turnout in the 1990s but were effectively shut out of these areas, albeit to drastically different degrees, when United Russia came onto the scene and seized the electoral windfalls for itself. In the end, high turnout raions were just one more in a long list of areas that the dominant party adeptly roped off from competition with opposition parties.

In contrast to the KPRF and LDPR, Yabloko's fate in high turnout raions was only slightly bleaker under United Russia than it had been during the competitive elections when Our Home is Russia was active. Yabloko succumbed to a rout in high turnout zones in 2011: the odds of a bastion collapsed, diminishing by 87 to 97% in the

relaxed threshold models, comparable to the drop in 2007. The magnitude of the negative effect in 2011 was greater than that found in the mid-1990s, when the odds plummeted by 70 to 75%. The party barely managed to capture average support of one-half percent in manipulated raions, slashing its vote share by more than three-quarters and taking the largest toll relative any other party's national showing. Less than one percent of Yabloko's strongholds were found in fraudulent raions according to the lower and higher threshold alike. Figure 8.19 portrays a clear inverse relationship between voter turnout and Yabloko's vote share. The most zealous support for the liberals came from raions reporting turnout that was closest to the national average and those with higher turnout levels were located in almost exclusively in the federal city of Moscow and Tula Oblast, bordering Moscow Oblast, with one exception found in Samara Oblast.

Figure 8.19: Voter Turnout and Yabloko's Vote Share in 2011

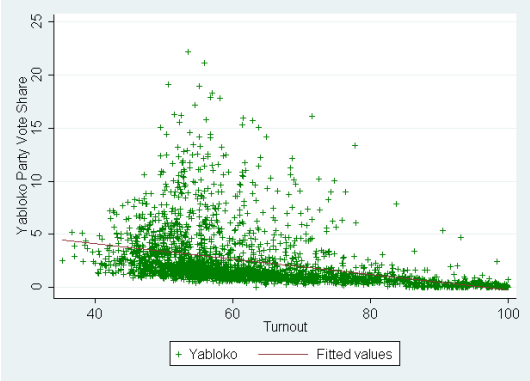
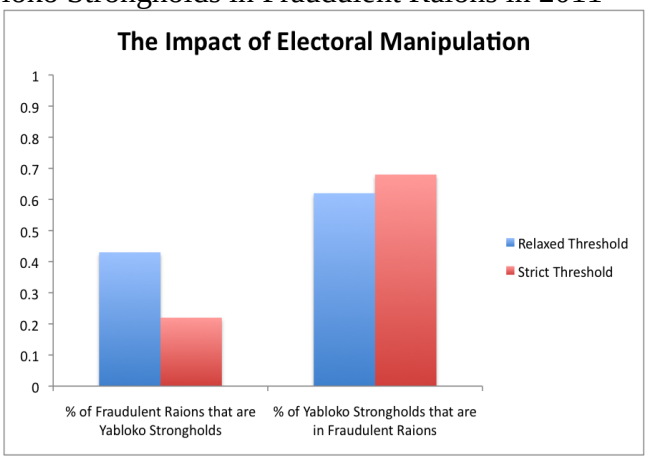


Figure 8.20 reveals that, compared to the previous election, the share of Yabloko strongholds housed in fraudulent raions in fact doubled from 2007 to 2011 according to both measures, although the absolute number of strongholds remained paltry. Against the Communists and nationalists, the non-parliamentary Yabloko was undeniably the least capable of competing effectively in raions suspected for electoral manipulation, but even the weakest of the core party troika was able to make identifiable inroads in these raions when the dominant party was still in play. Another indicator of Yabloko's relative success under conditions of contracted contestation in 2011 compared to 2007 was the

fact that, not only did the party maintain a share of strongholds in fraudulent raions according to both measures, but also the proportion increased with the shift in thresholds. Accordingly, of the hundreds of manipulated raions, Yabloko preserved a presence by both thresholds and the party's share of fraudulent raions was higher in 2011 than in the final contest of the 2000s.

Figure 8.20: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are Yabloko Strongholds vs. Percent Yabloko Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 2011



Thus, each member of the core party troika performed best under conditions of more limited turnout in the early 2010s. When voter participation exceeded one standard deviation above the raion-level national average, opposition parties were essentially frozen out, but not to equal degrees. For example, although the KPRF's average in fraudulent raions was halved when compared to its raion-level national mean, the nationalists and liberals experienced significantly greater losses relative to their national showings in these areas. Furthermore, the fact that the KPRF was able to secure an average vote share of greater than nine percent in high turnout zones indicates that the party was at least partly successful at gnawing away at United Russia's near-universal dominance, even in the areas where the dominant party was most likely to succeed. Other sources of data suggest that the nationalists fared better than the Communists and liberals with regards to the relative share of LDPR strongholds that were found in fraudulent raions, at least concerning the strict threshold. In future legislative contests, there may be

a more observable resurgent Communist presence in manipulated raions, but only if United Russia's forceful grip on these areas softens. It seems comparatively less likely, however, that the nationalists would be able to restore the position they occupied in high turnout raions in the late 1990s and even in the late 2000s in the future unless United Russia stages a comeback that the LDPR could profit from. The configuration of the party system in the late 1990s involving multiple potential parties of power may have been more favorable to a nationalist infiltration of high turnout areas since these raions had not yet coalesced around one party to the exclusion of all others, as occurred in short order after United Russia's rise. Furthermore, as mentioned, the LPDR may have benefitted from fraud perpetrated by the Kremlin because the nationalists were preferred over both Fatherland-All Russia and the KRPF and votes for the Kremlin's most despised foes may have been channeled to the LDPR instead. To secure more support in fraudulent raions in the future, the Communists and nationalists therefore depend on different dominant party trajectories: the KPRF's success in high turnout raions seems to hinge on continued dominant party decay, which would open up space in these areas for the Communists to fill, while the LDPR's electoral fortunes in these areas hinges on the ability of United Russia to renew its strength, allowing the nationalists to prosper by association. In contrast to the nationalists and Communists, Yabloko never enjoyed even a short-term lease in manipulated raions in the 1990s and therefore has no position to reclaim in the future. For this reason, it appears Yabloko's future trajectory in high turnout raions will consist of more of the same: doom and gloom.

Ethnicity and the Dominant Party

For its part, the contours of United Russia's support remained remarkably stable from the late 2000s to the early 2010s. United Russia again scored substantial support in zones with geographically concentrated ethnic minorities. Increases in the non-Russian population at the raion level augmented the odds of a stronghold by one to nearly four percent in the lower threshold models and by two to five percent in the upper specifications. The magnitude of the effect of minority populations on dominant party windfalls in 2011 was strikingly similar to four years prior. Similarly, higher proportions

of titular minorities hiked the odds by two to ten percent and three to four percent, according to the relaxed and strict measure, which represented a stronger effect than in 2007. This finding represented one of the key differences separating United Russia from the opposition regarding the ethnic parameters of electoral support in 2011: titular minority populations caused the odds of a dominant party stronghold to swell, but damaged the odds for the LDPR and Yabloko and did not reach statistical significance for the KPRF. United Russia clamped down on titular minority communities and insulated them from opposition party interference precisely because those areas were organized around powerful patronage-based political machines following ethnic lines that could be leveraged to the advantage of one party at election time. United Russia's steadfast monopoly on the titular minority constituency proved decisive in producing dominant party victories in election after election. Figure 8.21 demonstrates the positive association between higher densities of non-Russians, particularly titular minorities, and United Russia's vote share. The figure also reveals a positive relationship between the United Russia's electoral performance and increases in other minorities, but this variable did not exercise a systematic effect on the party's strongholds in any of the statistical models, congruent with the findings from 2007 In each scatterplot, but especially in those concerning non-Russians and titular minorities, there are distinct clusters of raions in the upper right quadrants at the intersections of near full voter participation and dominant party vote shares approaching 100%. Nearly all of these raions were located in the ethnic republics of Chechnya, Mordovia, Tatarstan, Tuva, Dagestan, Bashkortostan, Ingushetia, Karachay-Cherkessia, with a few outliers in Tyumen Oblast in western Siberia.

Figure 8.21: Non-Russian Minorities and United Russia's Vote Share in 2011

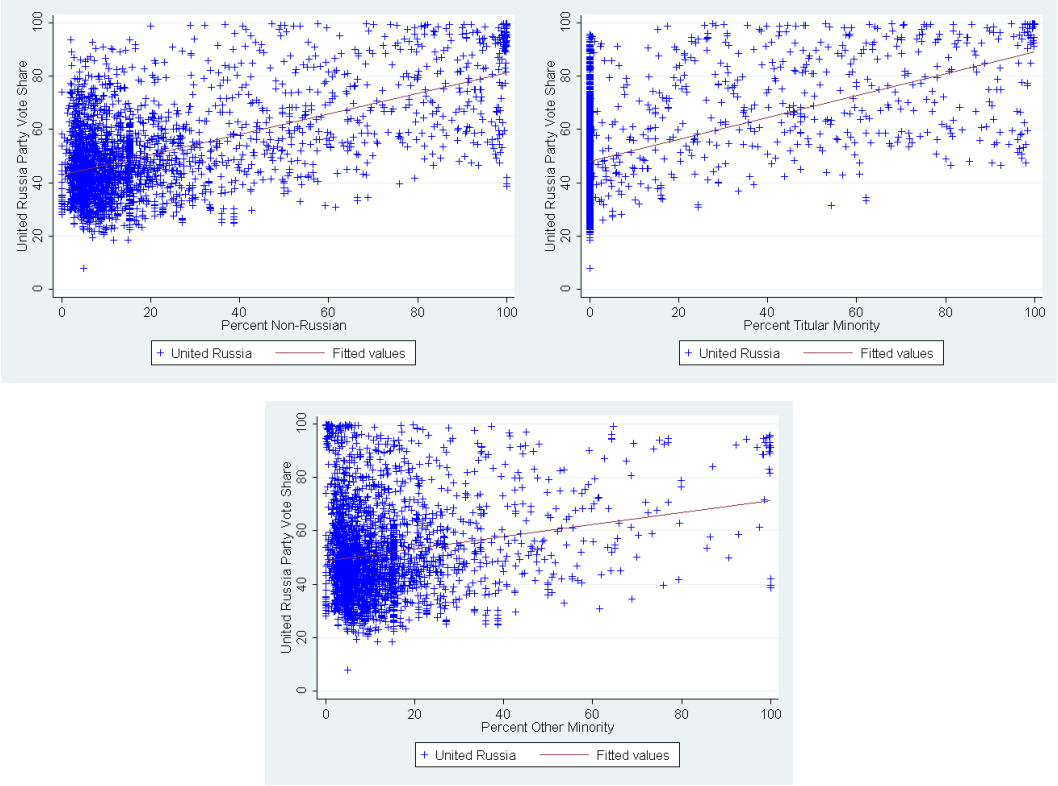
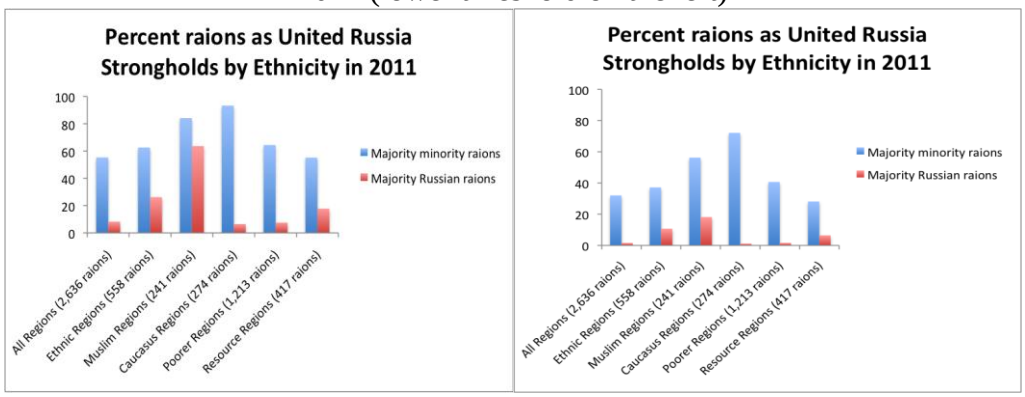


Figure 8.22 substantiates the statistical results and shows a conspicuous pattern of ethnic minority support. Surprisingly, given United Russia's widely perceived weakness, of majority-minority and majority-Russian raions, the shares that were dominant party strongholds remained remarkably close to those in 2007. Without exception, a higher percentage of majority-minority raions were United Russia strongholds than majority-Russian areas and this contour held across thresholds. The greatest disparity between majority-minority and majority-Russian support for United Russia was in regions in the Caucasus. Mirroring 2007, in Muslim regions, the balance between majority-minority and minority-Russian raions that were strongholds was more level than in the other regional environments. A more pronounced peak emerged in majority-minority raions in the Caucasus in 2011 than was evident four years prior, when Muslim and Caucasus regions were more on par with each other. Compared to the core party troika, the pattern of United Russia support with regards to different ethnic contexts changed to a more

limited degree from the late 2000s to the early 2010s. A subtle shift is evident in Muslim and resource-dependent regions, as the percentage of majority-minority raions that channeled immense support to the dominant party dipped slightly from when United Russia was at its finest.

Figure 8.22: United Russia Strongholds by Ethnicity in Different Regional Contexts in 2011 (lower threshold on the left)



Strikingly, Table 8.9 shows that majority-minority raions recorded average support for United Russia that was nearly 19% higher than the party's national mean, a boost of an additional three percent compared to 2007.

Table 8.9: Raion- and Regional-Level Comparison of United Russia's Electoral Performance in the 2011 Legislative Elections

	National (Raion-level)	Rural†	Ethnicity††	Fraud	Ethnic Region	Muslim Region	Caucasus Region	Economic Development†††	Resource Region
Mean	51.85	57.52	70.44	81.18	70.49	84.22	65.61	50.52	56.36
Min	7.71	25.63	20.49	27.72	25.99	41.15	27.18	18.35	22.93
Max	99.83	99.83	99.83	99.83	99.83	99.75	99.75	99.18	99.18
SD	18.05	17.80	20.10	13.28	20.40	12.98	22.28	17.11	21.29

† Percent rural exceeds 50%.
†† Percent non-Russian exceeds 50%.
††† Regional share of total Gross Domestic Product exceeds the median, .9.

Geographically concentrated ethnic minorities at the raion level as well as the regional level anchored United Russia. The dominant party captured electoral windfalls in raions situated within ethnic republics: the value for raions located in ethnic republics was between 23 and 44 times the value of the odds for raions located in Russian federal regions in the lower models and between 13 and 286 times in the higher ones. In most of the strict specifications, raions in ethnic republics exercised a more intense effect on United Russia strongholds than was the case in the previous election. This finding may suggest that the dominant party hardened its grip on these areas over time, either because it was concerned that its hold had actually weakened and therefore wanted to make a renewed show of strength and/or because the LDPR was subtly creeping in on the its turf. As discussed earlier, the LDPR received an unexpected and sizable boost from location in ethnic republics in the strict specifications, hiking the odds of a nationalist stronghold by between 5 and 23 times. Therefore, in some of the models, the magnitude of the effect of ethnic republic status for the LDPR was actually stronger than that for the dominant party. An explanation for this finding is not readily apparent and will require future research to fully disentangle. Descriptive statistics demonstrate that United Russia's average in ethnic republics far exceeded its national take, with almost 19% greater support, a boost of an additional six percent compared to four years prior. According to both thresholds, the vast majority of dominant party strongholds were located in these regions, 67% by the relaxed measure and nearly 92% by the strict threshold, as shown in Table 8. 10. The share of lower-level strongholds that were housed in ethnic republics fell from 75% in 2007.

Table 8.10: United Russia Strongholds and Different Electoral Environments in 2011				
	# of United Russia Strongholds (Lower Threshold) (430 Total)	% of United Russia Strongholds	# of United Russia Strongholds (Higher Threshold) (178 Total)	% of United Russia Strongholds
Ethnic federal regions	289	67.21	163	91.57
Russian federal regions	141	32.79	15	8.43
Muslim regions	202	46.98	127	71.35
Caucasus regions	114	26.51	81	45.51
Poorer Regions	232	53.95	116	65.17
Natural Resource Regions	140	32.56	65	36.52
Fraudulent raions	173	40.23	177	99.44
Non-Fraudulent raions	257	59.77	1	0.56

Mirroring the effects of ethnic republic status, a shift from the reference group to the indicator group of the Muslim region variable skyrocketed the odds from between 186 and 769 in the relaxed specifications and from between 27 and 304 in the strict models. In the relaxed models, Muslim region status exerted a stronger effect than was the case in 2007. United Russia's showing in Muslim regions was even more astonishing than in majority-minority raions and ethnic republics: the party's average was 32% higher than nationally, a nine percent improvement over the 23% jump in the party's mean in 2007. Moreover, nearly 47% and more than 70% were found in Muslim regions, according to the lower and higher measure, comparable to 2007. United Russia successfully guarded its ethnic pockets of support at both the raion and the regional level in 2011, which powerfully signaled to domestic audiences that the dominant party may have lost ground in terms of its final vote share and the distribution of seats in the Duma, but maintained its dominance where it really counted. With ethnic areas essentially hermetically sealed off from other political parties, United Russia will likely be able to maintain its position in the Duma in future elections, as these areas hold the promise of electoral windfalls.

The Urban-rural Divide and the Dominant Party

In addition to areas with high densities of ethnic minorities, the dominant party received a boost outside cities and towns. Higher degrees of rurality increased the odds of

a bastion of support slightly in the relaxed models and by one to two percent in the strict specifications, which represented effect magnitudes roughly equivalent to 2007. Descriptive statistics reveal that United Russia's average vote share in predominantly rural areas was nearly six percent higher than the party's raion-level national mean, a boost of an additional one percent compared to 2007. Furthermore, Figure 8.23 corroborates these findings by highlighting the positive relationship between more rural areas and United Russia's electoral gains and looks strikingly similar to the scatterplot pertaining to the late 2000s. There were numerous especially enthusiastic raions in both the most urban and the most rural areas, although those populating the right edge of the scatterplot were packed in more densely. As expected, the vast majority of the outliers were found in ethnic republics. The bulk of zealous urban raions were found in the capital cities, for example, Grozny, the capital of Chechnya, Makhachkala, the capital of Dagestan, and Cherkessk, the capital of Karachay-Cherkessia.

Figure 8.23: Rural Inhabitants and United Russia's Vote Share in 2011

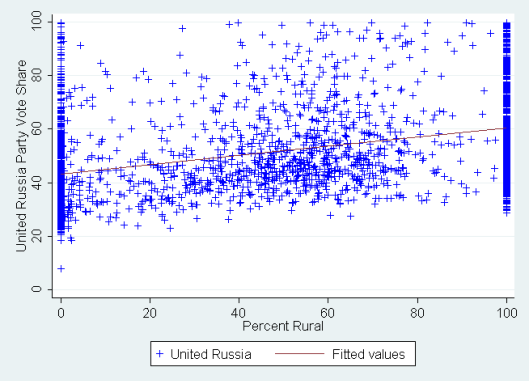
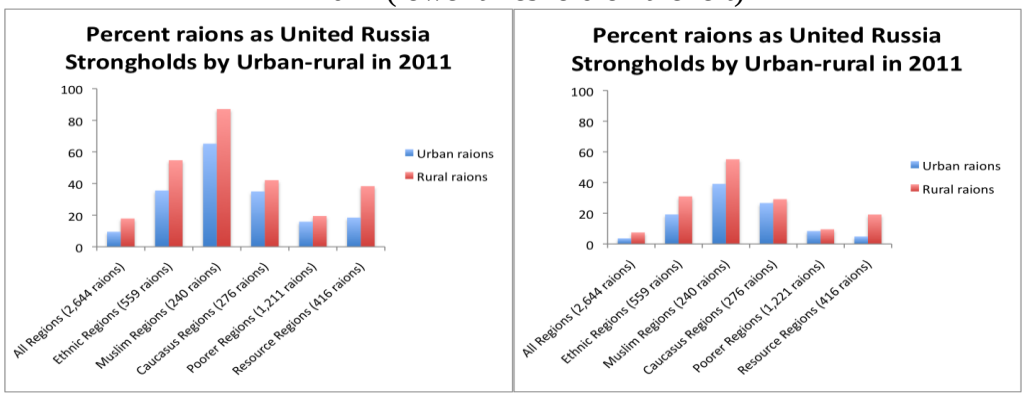


Figure 8.24 reveals that a higher percentage of predominantly rural areas than urban centers were United Russia strongholds. Approximately 20% of rural raions reported unusually high vote shares for the dominant party while roughly half that percentage of urban areas churned out similar figures, congruent with the findings from when the party had reached the pinnacle of its strength in the late 2000s. Despite the rural contours, there seemed to be an evening out of some of the more noticeable disparities between rural and

urban raions in specific regional contexts compared to four years earlier. As in 2007, a distinct peak was evident in Muslim regions: roughly 90% of rural raions and upwards of 60% of their urban counterparts in these regions delivered stronghold-level vote shares to the dominant party. Indeed, a higher percentage of urban raions in Muslim regions were United Russia strongholds than rural raions in any other regional environment. United Russia gained some ground in urban raions in the Caucasus: the percentage of these raions that were strongholds increased by a few percentage points over 2007.

Figure 8.24: United Russia Strongholds by Urban-Rural in Different Regional Contexts in 2011 (lower threshold on the left)



The trend in the countryside evolved from the 1990s to the 2000s and 2010s in a strikingly similar fashion to that in high turnout raions: in the mid-1990s, the countryside was divided between the KPRF, and the LDPR and Our Home is Russia to some extent, and in the late-1990s, was carved up by the KPRF, LDPR, Fatherland-All Russia and Unity, but the accession of United Russia in the 2000s quickly purged this plurality and the dominant party established exclusive control over rural districts. In the mid-1990s, the effect of rurality on the Our Home is Russia vote was inconsistent, increasing the odds in some models while decreasing them in others. One of Our Home's more conspicuous weaknesses when compared to United Russia, then, was its relative inability to lock down rural areas. United Russia clearly distinguished itself from its party of power predecessor in harvesting rural support categorically, greatly contributing to its ability to contest

legislative elections victoriously. The dominant party's ability to retain its hold on the countryside will prove decisive in future contests.

Regional Geographic and Socioeconomic Indicators and the Dominant Party

The variables assessing different regional characteristics highlight continuity but also some shifts in the contours of United Russia's electoral support in the 2000s and 2010s. Raions in the Caucasus were significantly more likely to be bastions of support for the dominant party, between 17 and 33 times more likely in the relaxed models and between 94 and 255 times in the strict specifications. Compared to the previous contest, the magnitude of the effect diminished somewhat in the lower threshold models and some of the higher specifications, which was unexpected because United Russia did not confront new challenges from opposition parties in these regions that may have accounted for the dampening. Nevertheless, these raions registered an average vote share for United Russia that was almost 14% higher than its national take, a significant improvement over the party's showing in the area four years earlier, when Caucasian raions recorded an average vote share approximately 8% greater. The discussion of the scatterplots detailing the relationship between ethnic minorities and rurality and United Russia's vote share above made reference to outliers populating the upper right quadrant and many of those fanatical raions were located in the Caucasus, particularly Chechnya and Dagestan. Roughly one-quarter and nearly one-half of United Russia's strongholds were located in the Caucasus, according to the lower and higher measure. The Caucasus proved once again to be a hotbed of dominant party support. As in the countryside, the dominant party reinforced its standing vis-à-vis opposition parties as the only party that profited in the Caucasus.

Mirroring the findings from 2007, the odds of a United Russia stronghold were damaged by 78% based on a unit increase in regional wealth in one higher threshold specification. Contingent on the model, the magnitude of the negative effect was greater than in 2007, when the odds plunged by up to 86%. Unexpectedly, the dominant party suffered to a greater degree than the KPRF or LDPR with rises in gross regional product. Moreover, more than half of the United Russia's strongholds, approximately 54% and

65% by the lower and higher measure, were located in economically disadvantaged regions. The share of strongholds located in poorer regions was larger than four years prior, when half were found there across thresholds. Raions located in regions with larger than average economies produced an average vote share that was more than one percent under United Russia's national mean. In poorer regions, United Russia competed head-to-head with both the KPRF and LDPR for support. Impoverished areas, therefore, seemed to be one of only two areas where a meaningful plurality of political competitors prevailed when United Russia partook.

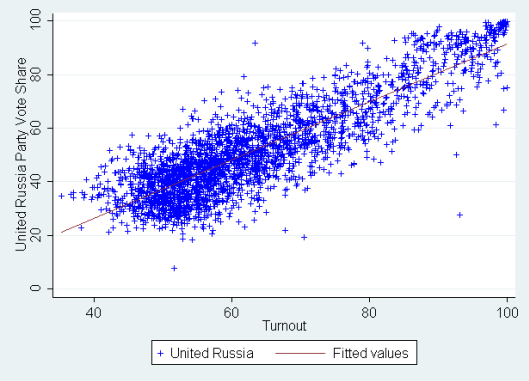
While resource dependence did not systematically affect the occurrence of a dominant party stronghold in any of the models specified for 2007, the value for raions located in resource-rich regions was between eight and 19 times the value of the odds for raions located in regions with more diversified economies across the relaxed models. United Russia's mean showing in resource-abundant areas was more than four percent higher than nationally and approximately one-third of dominant party strongholds were located in resource regions by both measures. Like the LDPR and paradoxically for both parties, United Russia succeeded in two diametrically opposed regional contexts: poorer regions and those endowed with abundant natural resources. Resource-rich regions represented the second area where the opposition, exclusively the LDPR in this case, competed with United Russia and drew results, making some inroads into dominant party territory. In some cases, the magnitude of the effect of resource abundance on the occurrence of LDPR strongholds was actually stronger than that of United Russia. Unlike regions with higher gross regional products, which damaged the likelihood of KPRF and LDPR strongholds even in the 1990s, however, the LPDR's gains in resource-abundant regions came only after United Russia's rise to power.

Electoral Manipulation and the Dominant Party

As was the case four years prior, United Russia captured electoral windfalls in raions suspected for electoral malfeasance, but the magnitude of the effect increased markedly. A shift from the non-manipulated to the fraudulent category increased the odds of a dominant party bastion of support by 65 to 84 times across the lower threshold

models, and by 232 to 1,098 times across the higher specifications. While these findings corroborate existing research indicating that United Russia engaged in and benefited from electoral manipulation, they also provide new evidence regarding the role of malfeasance in generating dominant party electoral windfalls across the thousands of raions in Russia from one election to the next. Fraudulent raions reported an even higher average vote share for United Russia in 2011, astonishingly 30% greater than nationally, than in the previous contest, when the party's mean level of support was 15% greater. Figure 8.25 demonstrates the robust and positive association between increasing voter turnout and United Russia's vote share; the scatterplot looks strikingly similar to that from 2007. Astonishingly, 33 high turnout raions recorded vote shares for United Russia between 95 and 97%, an additional 13 reported vote shares of 98% and a further 29 registered 99% for the dominant party. Of the 99% raions, 62% were located in Chechnya, 31% in Mordovia and 3% in each Tatarstan and Tuva. Surprisingly, the one raion that reported 100% turnout was located in an oblast (Arkhangelsk), rather than an ethnic republic, and registered a 75% vote share for United Russia.

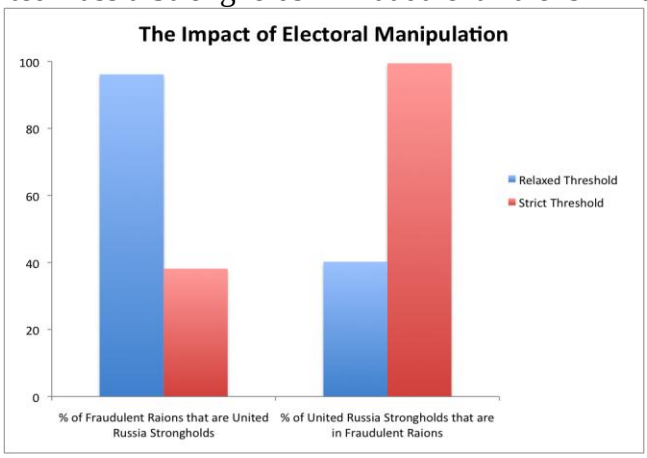
Figure 8.25: Voter Turnout and United Russia's Vote Share in 2011



Approximately 40% and just fewer than 100% of United Russia's strongholds were found in fraudulent raions in 2011, according to the relaxed and strict thresholds. Figure 8.26 looks nearly identical to the chart for 2007 and underscores the continuity in United Russia's patterns of support over time. However, a few subtle distinctions emerge

between 2007 and 2011. First, approximately five percent fewer of United Russia's bastions of support, according to the lower threshold, were found in fraudulent raions than was the case four years prior. Second, regarding the strict measure, there was only one dominant party stronghold in 2011 that was located in a non-manipulated raion, whereas there were four such strongholds in 2007. Finally, of the hundreds of fraudulent raions, approximately two percent more were dominant party strongholds in 2011, according to the higher threshold, than in 2007. The number of high turnout raions that delivered high levels of support to opposition parties, but not the dominant party, remained stable at just 11 raions from 2007 to 2011. The number fraudulent raions that were not strongholds for any party in 2011, however, dropped in many instances from the previous election. For example, there were 12 such raions in Bashkortostan in 2007 but only nine in 2011; while 13 high turnout raions in Sakha were not strongholds for any party in 2007, the same was true of only six raions in 2011; the five raions like this in Tatarstan in the late 2000s dropped to two in the early 2010s; the six such raions in Omsk in 2007 fell to two in 2011.

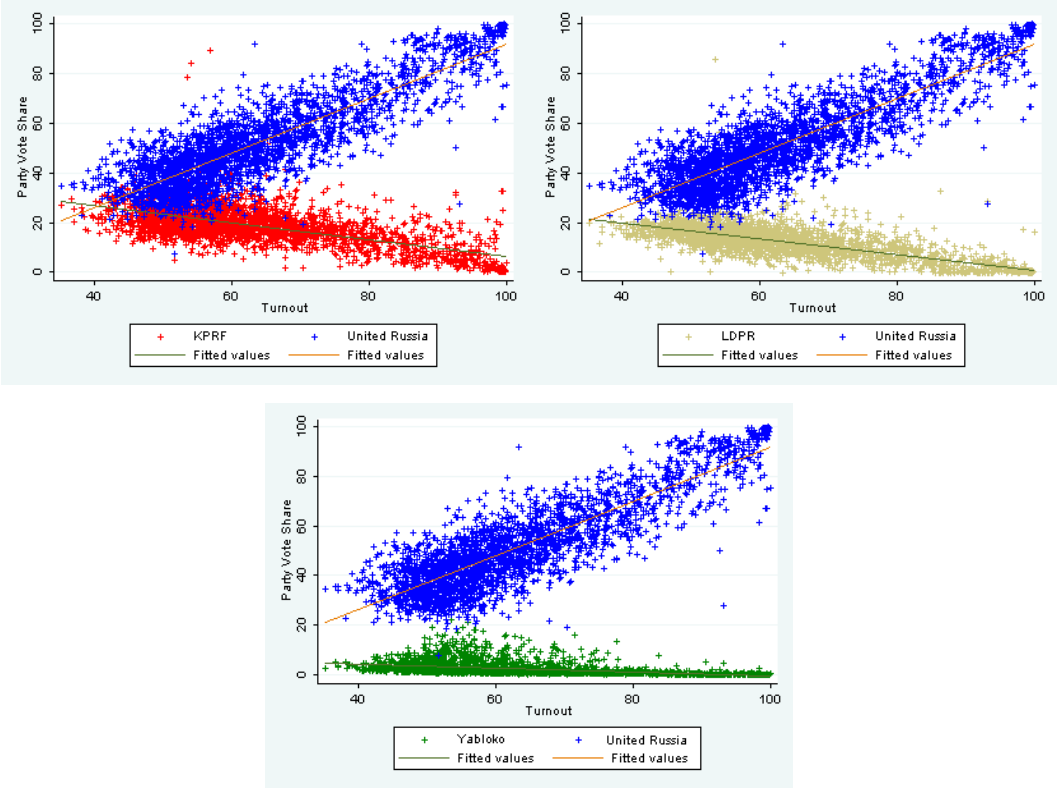
Figure 8.26: Percent Fraudulent Raions that are United Russia Strongholds vs. Percent United Russia Strongholds in Fraudulent Raions in 2011



From a different angle, Figure 8.27 provides additional evidence that United Russia generally ruled in high turnout raions as was the case in the previous election, but also reveals that opposition parties received higher vote shares than the dominant party in a

few isolated cases. In sharp contrast to 2007, opposition parties managed to chip away at United Russia's supremacy in raions with more limited turnout: significant zones of convergence are apparent between United Russia's performance and that of opposition parties when voter turnout fell under thresholds for suspected electoral manipulation in 2011. Interestingly, even Yabloko, a party that had been frozen out of parliament since 2003 and received a paltry 2.40% vote share in 2011, managed to outperform United Russia in a few raions with lower voter turnout. The notable absence of similar areas of convergence in 2007 strongly suggests the dominant party started to lose its grip on elections in lower turnout areas as it strengthened its hold on those in high turnout raions.

Figure 8.27: Voter Turnout and United Russia vs. Opposition Parties' Vote Shares in 2011



In future elections to the State Duma, United Russia may double-down on its efforts in the thousands of raions that have reported more limited turnout, where the dominant party

faces competitors with the potential to outperform it. If zones of convergence evident in 2011 are successfully eradicated, the scatterplots from the 2015 contest will resemble those from 2007 more closely. Alternately, if the dominant party is unable to exercise its control in lower turnout raions as effectively as in high turnout raions in 2015, the areas of convergence present in 2011 may reappear and swell and those figures from 2011 may have offered the first sign of a progressing trend away from United Russia's dominance in the legislature and Russian politics more broadly. In either scenario, opposition party inroads are seemingly most likely to be carved out in raions with more limited turnout in future elections.

Conclusion

The 2011 election offered the first evidence of dominant party decay: the party's vote share dropped precipitously and opposition parties began to make some electoral gains at the expense of United Russia, especially in lower turnout raions. The first election in the 2010s brought forth United Russia's decline, rounding out the party's electoral arc that began in 2003 with its birth and initial consolidation and reached its apex in 2007. Although the dominant party continued to win overwhelmingly in high turnout raions suspected for electoral malfeasance, each party in the core party troika increased its vote share at the national level, despite the fact that the liberal Yabloko still faced an uphill climb to restore its presence in the lower house of the legislature. In the wake of the global recession of 2009, United Russia's patronage reserves in 2011 were more limited than at the time of the previous two elections and voters turned against the party when it could no longer provide economic deliverables. Furthermore, opposition parties exploited the fact that the regime was in dire straits economically and sought to mobilize the public against United Russia and the Kremlin before the polls were opened, and continued to do so long after they had closed. The combination of economic downturn and the broad public exposure of plans for electoral manipulation generated a type of political unrest and protest voting against the dominant party hitherto not witnessed by current power holders. But opposition parties did not succeed in completely unseating United Russia in 2011 as they had perhaps quixotically hoped. United Russia

emerged from the 2011 contest significantly weaker than in 2007, but also stronger than in 2003, and the party would surely live to fight another day.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

Key Findings and Implications

The Social Bases of Party Dominance

The preceding analysis of Russian legislative elections from 1995 through 2011 yields several conclusions that advance our understanding of the dominant party system in Russia as well as dominant party authoritarian regimes outside the post-communist region. The first central finding that emerges from this investigation highlights that dominant parties rely on distinct social bases of support, much like other political parties, to remain in power. Rather than performing well across the country in a uniform fashion, considerable diversity manifest in United Russia's electoral outcomes due to structural or environmental factors. Even with an unparalleled war chest that could be leveraged to achieve an overwhelming victory at the national level, electoral outcomes at the sub-national level reveal heterogeneity in the dominant party's ability to win elections by a landslide.

These findings indicate that dominant parties do not dominate everywhere, as United Russia's vote share fell precipitously in precisely those electoral environments that proved less conducive to machine politics and other machinations. The dominant party has overachieved in legislative elections in areas with dense populations of ethnic minorities, particularly titular minorities, but has continually struggled in predominantly ethnic Russian areas. United Russia targeted ethnic minority constituencies, particularly titular minorities, because ethnic- and patronage-based voter mobilization could be carried out with surgical precision to the dominant party's benefit in exchange for political and economic resources channeled from the central authorities. Ethnic minority areas have also been susceptible to increased dominant party penetration during national elections because the federal government seeks to establish its political dominance over unruly regions to signal its invincibility to potential challengers. Ethnic Russian areas are, by comparison, poorly equipped to deliver immense vote shares to the dominant party and, moreover, the party faces few incentives to dominate these groups politically.

The influence of the countryside in propping up party dominance also comes to the fore. In the early 2000s, the Russian countryside was rapidly transformed from a mainstay of the Communist Party to one of the key bases of support for the ruling party. The prevalence of one-company towns and the comparative ease with which United Russia can monitor voters in rural localities ensures that the countryside is a chief target of dominant party machinations in the electoral arena. These findings lend substantiation to existing theories of party dominance, which indicate that the countryside is an important pillar of dominant party strength because rural areas are more dependent on the ruling party for their continued survival and the party's "punishment regime" is more effective there due to local knowledge (Magaloni 2006). However, rural areas exercised a more moderate effect compared to other factors, namely areas with geographically concentrated ethnic minorities, in undergirding party dominance, suggesting that the countryside may be of secondary importance in the presence of other social structures that may deliver the vote more reliably and may be more vulnerable to dominant party power politics. Indeed, when United Russia experienced declining support, the party turned its efforts toward locking down ethnic minority constituencies more firmly instead of trying to eke out a higher electoral return in the countryside.

Economic determinants appear comparatively less important than the social bases of party dominance, particularly ethnicity and rurality. Although recent scholarship on the resource curse postulates a connection between resource abundance and authoritarianism, the empirical findings indicate a weaker relationship when assessed at the sub-national level. Both within and across elections, the effect of resource wealth on the likelihood of dominant party strongholds was checkered: when attaining a positive sign, the magnitude of the effect was considerably smaller than the effect size connected to social correlates and, in many cases, the sign was statistically significant and negative. Thus, when assessed at the sub-national and sub-regional level, the influence of natural resource wealth in fueling authoritarianism presents a different picture than existing analyses oriented primarily at the national level. Furthermore, the analysis suggests that economic dynamics operating at the national level are less influential than social

parameters in explaining dominant party support because they cannot fully account for the diversity of the dominant party's electoral outcomes across both space and time. For example, Russia experienced a protracted economic windfall produced by high world oil prices across most of the 2000s but the dominant party's performance in the early 2000s paled in comparison to the electoral prowess it displayed in the late 2000s. Rather than the economic environment operating at the national level, the electoral environment at the sub-national and sub-regional level, particularly in areas with geographically concentrated ethnic minorities and in the countryside, proved decisive.

The Russian case underscores that the success or failure of ruling parties, in this case Our Home is Russia and United Russia, hinges on social structures that can be activated with greater or lesser efficacy to achieve partisan ends. While the cohesiveness of the elite is undoubtedly crucial to maintaining party dominance as Brownlee (2007) suggests, the analysis offered here sheds light on a different dimension: the effect of structural conditions at the sub-national and sub-regional level.

The Role of Weak Party Systems

In addition to uncovering the crucial social bases undergirding party dominance once in power, the role of a weak party system in creating the initial conditions ripe for party dominance emerges as a key factor. Existing scholarship on dominant party emergence has attached little importance to party system dynamics immediately preceding the ascension of ruling parties, focusing instead on significant periods of nation building in the wake of decolonization, social revolution, or wars of liberation. The case of dominant party emergence in Russia suggests that a revision of this conventional wisdom is warranted: in the absence of cataclysmic events, conditions prevailing in the Russian party system itself acquired newfound importance and precipitated the rise of a dominant party in circumstances largely unexpected by established theories.

In the mid-1990s, nearly four dozen parties and electoral blocs contested the parliamentary election. With dozens of "apartment parties" entering the electoral fray, more than 48% of the votes were wasted on parties that did not cross the threshold for representation or were votes against all the parties contesting the election. The late 1990s

offered a repeat of 1995, but to a lesser degree: more than two dozen parties threw their hats into the electoral ring and more than 16% of votes were wasted. Opposition parties in the 1990s mushroomed out of control, and although a lack of coordination plagued the opposition at large, the prevalence and persistence of programmatically niche parties created an opportunity for a catch-all dominant party to fill the void and marginalize the opposition rather expeditiously.

Importantly, each member of the core party troika remained relatively niche throughout the 2000s and 2010s: the Communists, nationalists and liberals repeatedly captured exceedingly narrow electorates and altered their ideological appeals only at the margins in response to significant changes in the macro political landscape. These parties were niche in general but also compared to each other, as there was comparatively limited overlap in their platforms and pockets of support. As a collective, these parties lacked an ideological basis for coordination and were therefore patently incapable of uniting to oppose United Russia, a party with a charismatic leader and a broad-based institutional appeal. One political analyst commented that the opposition was fragmented from the beginning of the 1990s to the current period because they have "nothing in common and they have no such aim, to […] govern Russia in reality (Senior Political Analyst at INDEM Foundation 2011). For example, the KPRF is "afraid of being a ruling party and the LDPR excluded such a possibility" (*Ibid*). Another politician argued similarly that the "Communists do not want to come to power. They were able to come to power in the 1990s but they didn't want to get it" (Politician Formerly Affiliated with United Russia 2011). Therefore, the structural underpinnings in the party system that facilitated United Russia's rise also contributed to its perpetuation once in power.

Although the opposition remained virtually unchanged over time, only when other conditions fell into place were the opportunities for opposition marginalization expanded and a well institutionalized dominant party became possible. The persistence of precisely these types of niche opposition parties forestalls the development of a genuine alternative to United Russia, at least generated from the existing array of parties, in the foreseeable future. Yet the results from the most recent election to the State Duma provided some

indication that United Russia's grip on political power was weakening, despite the largely static opposition.

The Aftermath of the 2011 Legislative Elections: Crisis and Survival

The fact that United Russia's vote share in 2011 slipped considerably from 2007 despite widespread electoral manipulation "convey[ed] weakness […] emboldening social and political actors to step up demands and political challenges, and in consequence reduce[d] the party's scope for action while in office, as well as its ability to retain power in the future" (Simpser 2013: 5). Although United Russia still won the election by a landslide, the result revealed that the ruling party was more vulnerable than commonly believed because even blatant and excessive manipulation could not secure the kind of overwhelming victory the party was expected to achieve, which broadened the opportunity structure for political mobilization in opposition to the regime. The large-scale public protests that erupted across Russia in response to widely publicized electoral fraud in the December Duma elections sent a shockwave through the Kremlin. A high-ranking Yabloko party official commented after the election, "the big events on Bolotnaya [Square] show that society exists" (Senior Official in Yabloko's National Organization 2011). Cultural figures published a letter in 2011 warning the regime that, "unless the system is liberalized from above, it will be inevitably—and maybe violently—brought down from below" (Kara-Murza 2011: 55). In response, what some have called "liberalizing concessions" concerning party registration rules and the selection process of regional governors were granted in early 2012 (Golosov 2012). The Kremlin claimed that the reforms were in the works prior to the Duma contest and did not represent a concession to protestors, however the timing of Medvedev's announcement, on the eve of yet another major political protest in Moscow, suggested that United Russia's comparatively poor performance combined with increasingly undeniable public dissent provided the immediate impetus for action (*Ibid*). In his annual address to the Federal Assembly in late December 2011, Medvedev did not propose a sweeping overhaul of the existing laws on political parties, but rather limited changes that targeted two of the most restrictive elements: reducing the required membership minimum from

40,000 to 500 and removing the signature requirement for registered political parties to participate in elections (Golosov 2012: 6). In this instance, the government signaled its readiness for reform by authorizing the law to take effect immediately upon signing rather than on the date originally set, January 1, 2013 (*Ibid*).

Yet this unilateral "concession" on behalf of the Kremlin to the public and opposition political parties may actually prove advantageous for United Russia in future legislative elections and therefore may turn out to be less of a concession than originally believed. The Kremlin's ultimate goal of preserving United Russia's dominance is best served by a highly fragmented party system in which the opposition remains divided against itself. The electoral law governing the 2007 contest had already prohibited electoral coalitions, preventing opposition party coordination against the common enemy of United Russia, and the additional change to party membership requirements may further propel the party system backwards in time toward the "wild east" kind of chaos that prevailed in the 1990s. Recognizing the dangers inherent in the reduced membership requirement before it was signed into law, the KPRF and LDPR lobbied for a 5,000-member requirement for party registration to restrict factions from dividing into new parties (Herszenhorn 2012). The new membership requirements will surely make it easier for new parties with minuscule followings to register. Without the reauthorization of electoral coalitions, the entry of numerous parties, including apartment parties, may further splinter the opposition already crippled by the struggle to survive under a dominant party. Indeed, since the law went into effect, numerous parties have sought registration, including the Republican Party and the People's Freedom Party, both of which are lead in part by Vladimir Ryzhkov, one of the organizers of the post-election protests; Mikhail Prokhorov, the billionaire businessman who owns the Brooklyn Nets professional basketball team, and Mikhail Gorbachev also each expressed their intention of forming parties in the near future (*Ibid*). Widespread discontent in the electorate with the current party system may allow "even minor and little-known parties [to attract] voters seeking fresh alternatives" (Golosov 2012: 6). Therefore, the KPRF, LDPR and Yabloko, if the liberal party attempts to fight its way out of the political wilderness yet

again, may be forced to compete not only against each other and Kremlin-created spoiler parties in future elections, but with newcomers endeavoring to siphon off their votes. One Duma Deputy from the opposition commented, "the main goal of the law is to drive our political system to new levels of absurdity" (Clover 2012). Although some have argued, "with regard to the law on political parties, the regime did make a meaningful liberalizing concession," it seems more likely that this change will serve first and foremost to reinforce United Russia's dominance at the expense of the opposition (Golosov 2012: 12).

The second major change in the package of reforms announced by Medvedev after the 2011 Duma contest was the return to elections of the regional governors, which had been subject to presidential appointment since 2004. The candidates were to be selected in "voluntary consultations" between registered political parties and the Russian president, and only those candidates selected through that process would not be obliged to fulfill the signature collection requirements that were established by regional parliaments (RIA Novosti 2012). Specifically, Putin described the process as follows: "all parties achieving representation in the regional parliament by direct secret ballot will nominate their candidates for governor […] all their proposals will then pass through the presidential 'filter'; and he [the president] will pass along these candidates [for confirmation] not by the deputies of the legislative assemblies but by direct secret ballot by the entire regional population" (Golosov 2012: 10). What Putin described as a "presidential filter" for candidates was an "integral part of the proposal" and amounted to the presidential "preselection of candidates," giving the president "unrestricted power to establish the rules of the game for the operation of the 'filter'" (Golosov 2012: 10, 11). Ultimately, the proposal was changed to allow any registered party the ability to nominate candidates, rather than exclusively those represented in the regional parliaments (Golosov 2012). The bill also permitted citizens to seek the resignation of their regional governor through a referendum carried out by the regional legislature, but nevertheless allowed the recalled governor the ability to appeal to the Supreme Court (RIA Novosti 2012).

As was the case with new party registration requirements, the reform stipulating the reversion to elections as the method for selecting regional governors may have been somewhat of a concession to the electorate, albeit one that was not demanded by protestors, but also a move designed to help the Kremlin find a much-needed way out of a sticky situation. The introduction of gubernatorial appointment proved to be one of the most disliked authoritarian measures implemented by Putin, as revealed in repeated public opinion surveys (Golosov 2012). While mostly discounting increasing restrictions on political parties, the public focused on gubernatorial appointment as a key indicator of the regime's growing authoritarianism and the attitude toward this law decayed over time (*Ibid*). The Kremlin could thus reasonably expect that the public would view the return to elections favorably.

But the Kremlin also profited from this measure. The Kremlin had "ran up against an organizational and personnel problem created by previous appointments […] numerous governors who are now serving out their fourth or fifth term and approaching retirement age must be replaced" (Petrov 2011: 49). However, the absence of elections for regional governors also eliminated the mechanism for training new political leaders and exposing them to the public and, therefore, the Kremlin would have had "no choice in many regions except to appoint people who [were] poorly prepared for such a prominent role" if the appointment system was preserved (*Ibid*). By avoiding the appointment of poor candidates, the Kremlin expected that elections would increase the quality of regional executives and their legitimacy, and, of paramount importance, provide regional governors with direct experience in the electoral arena that could be leveraged to the Kremlin's advantage in future national elections (Petrov 2011; Golosov 2012). The reform also guaranteed the Kremlin and Putin specifically substantial control over the process of nomination, which protected the Kremlin's ability to control the alternatives to its favored candidates, thereby reducing the meaning of regional elections under the new format. Moreover, in reinstating elections, the Kremlin would be able to avoid taking full responsibility for the actions of regional executives in office and instead distribute the blame among the regional electorate in the event of governor's

wrongdoings (*Ibid*). Gubernatorial appointment was "potentially dangerous for the Kremlin, as it close[d] off the possibility of localizing and absorbing public protest in the event of dissatisfaction with local authorities and redirect[ed] it against those at the top" (Petrov 2011: 57). Without an institutionalized mechanism for the public to release steam by "exposing at the same time reducing social tension," the citizenry operated within a political environment akin to a pressure cooker susceptible to explosion at any moment and the regime was forced to rely more heavily on crude forms of repression to thwart nonsystemic protest (*Ibid*). Thus, the return to elections provided a mechanism of resolving what would have amounted to an intractable problem for the Kremlin moving forward.

The turbulent wake of the Duma contest may have been a crisis point for the Putin regime, but the Kremlin quickly regrouped for the presidential elections three months later and successfully pulled off Putin's return to the presidency. The Kremlin proved a quick learner: when public protests erupted again around the time of Putin's inauguration in May, the authorities opted for police repression rather than tolerance of dissent, which resulted in violent clashes between protestors and the police and hundreds detained. In 2012, Putin became the first person in post-Soviet history to re-claim the presidency after already serving two terms in office. While the 1993 Russian constitution proscribes an individual from serving more than two consecutive terms as president, there is no stipulation regarding a limit on total terms served. Thus, Putin was eligible to re-run for president after serving as prime minister. With voter turnout of over 64% and nearly the same percentage of votes cast in support of his candidacy, Putin ascended to the presidency once again in the first round. The KPRF's Zyuganov found himself in second place, capturing merely 17%, for the fourth time since the 1996 presidential election. During Medvedev's brief stint as president, he approved a bill that extended the length of the presidential term from four years to six. Interestingly, in 2012, Putin commented that he would support an amendment to Russian law that would establish a two-term maximum, but the law would not apply to him because it would not operate retroactively (Sonne 2013).

With the new six-year term in effect, if Putin wins re-election for a third time in 2018 and serves as president for the full term until 2024, he would become the country's longest-serving leader since Josef Stalin, surpassing Leonid Brezhnev by only two years. Even before Putin won the presidency, observers began likening Putin and his regime to that of Brezhnev, who ruled for 18 years and began to be seen as "depressingly immortal" in the 1970s (Reddaway 2012: 98). For its part, the Kremlin provided its own interpretation of the "Brezhnevization of Putin" that ran against the widespread view that the Brezhnev era was synonymous with stagnation: the Kremlin argued that Brezhnev was not a negative figure, but rather one who constructed the foundations of the economy and represents "political stability and a calm and steady development" (*Ibid*). Dismissing the parallels between himself and Brezhnev, Putin has preferred to compare himself to Franklin Roosevelt, who was elected four times as U.S. President (*Ibid*).

The Future of United Russia and the Putin Regime

In future elections to the State Duma, the next of which is scheduled for 2016, United Russia will likely remain a viable contender but will also likely face new challenges based on the slowly shifting tide of public opinion. United Russia's staying power is reinforced by a mix of genuine public support for the party, a lack of available alternatives, the party's capacity to carry out widespread electoral manipulation to retain its position in the legislature, and continual performance on the economic front. First, Putin and United Russia enjoy some genuine popular support. In the Russian Election Studies Survey of 2012, respondents attributed positive leadership traits to Putin, specifically intelligence (97% of respondents) and strength (93%), and, compared to the other candidates running for president in 2012, Putin was seen as the most capable of managing major issues of the day by a wide margin (Colton and Hale 2014: 11, 7). For its part, United Russia towered above the other registered parties when respondents were asked which party would do the best job of improving the economy, safeguarding human rights and democratic freedoms, and promoting Russia's international interests (Colton and Hale 2014: 11). The world financial crisis in the late 2000s impacted citizens' assessments of economic performance under the Putin regime, but not nearly as much as

one would expect if the regime's popularity depended solely on economic growth, strongly suggesting that there are other key causes of regime stability (Colton and Hale 2014). Although Putin continues to receive high marks from the public concerning his personal leadership, enduring public support for the current regime is also not based exclusively on Putin himself. United Russia's position as the dominant party continues to shore up support for the regime: astonishingly, 70% of Russians believe that United Russia has had some degree of positive influence on the condition Russia is in today, while only 14% believe that the party has had no influence and only 9% believe that its influence has been negative to some degree (Colton et. al 2014).

What explains high public approval for the regime despite economic downturn and political brouhaha in the wake of the 2011 legislative elections is the fact that the regime "retains most of the broad and deep connections with the electorate that have helped sustain it for a dozen years" (Colton and Hale 2014: 4). Unlike other parties competing in recent elections to the State Duma, there is significant congruence between the policy stands that Russians believe United Russia represents and those held by Russians themselves: when presented with a 0-10 left-right scale, Russians' average self-placement was 6.1, or somewhat right of center, and United Russia was the only parliamentary party that Russians also placed right of center with an average of 7.3, as opposed to Just Russia (average of 4.5), the LDPR (3.9) and the KPRF (3.2) (Colton and Hale 2014: 14). The congruence in policy orientation between United Russia and the citizenry will undoubtedly help the dominant party preserve its viability in the party system, because even if the public does not approve of United Russia's methods of winning legislative elections, they do largely agree with the party's policy positions once in the Duma. In short, Putin and United Russia have retained public support on a number of dimensions and that support will translate into votes come election time. These data also provide evidence showcasing how niche opposition parties are, e.g. the Communists and ultra-nationalists, compared to the more centrist United Russia. Even the most formidable opposition parties have remained perilously out of step with average voter,

who is more than two points to the right of the ultra-nationalists and nearly three points to the right of the Communists.

Second, United Russia's position in future contests will be fortified by the regime's ability to "stave off challenges by shaping people's sense of available alternatives. That is, even if people are not enthusiastic about their leaders, they can come to believe that no serious alternative exists, that no opposition party […] has the necessary experience or knowledge to run the country any more effectively than the incumbents" (Colton and Hale 2014: 7). While opposition parties certainly do not do themselves any favors by preserving niche orientations, United Russia has also cultivated a sense that no alternatives exist by further marginalizing opposition parties after the election is long over. Bracketing soft and hard coercion employed against opposition parties during electoral cycles that raises the cost of their participation, United Russia has fostered its own indispensability and undermined the potential alternatives by controlling access to opportunities for those parties already in the Duma, i.e. United Russia's most formidable competitors. While the Kremlin allows multiparty competition during legislative elections, opposition parties are systematically marginalized once in the Duma, as they are rarely granted opportunities to manage public matters independently, effectively preventing the accumulation of both experience and reputational capital to leverage in future elections (*Ibid*). One political analyst concurred, "if you have a party [like United Russia] that does not give success to other political parties, these political parties are marginals. They have no experience of working with authorities or in [a] governmental body" and therefore cannot become a viable challenger to the ruling party (Senior Political Analyst at INDEM Foundation 2011). Opposition parties face a difficult choice between cooperating with the dominant party and therefore abandoning their claim to offer a genuine alternative to it, or preserving their position as the opposition but sacrificing the few opportunities afforded that would lend much-needed experience and skills to their public profiles (Colton and Hale 2014). Regardless of their choice, opposition parties are further emasculated once in the legislature, which diminishes their

credibility in future legislative elections because voters are unlikely to support parties with little real experience despite the fact that they were members of the outgoing Duma.

United Russia's tactics vis-à-vis opposition parties in the legislature appear to be producing the desired effect in the electorate: less than one-third of survey respondents reported that any registered party other than the dominant party had a chance to come to power in the next decade and two-thirds of respondents reported that additional parties should not be allowed to contest future elections (Colton and Hale 2014: 8). The regime's changes to party registration requirements may not have enjoyed broad public support but, because many Russians reported that other parties have little chance of coming to power in the coming decade, the change may have offered the regime a low-cost way of placating a relatively small group of dissenters. Furthermore, United Russia also controls the availability of alternatives by co-opting political elites and enforcing prostration from within the party. The very existence of United Russia, i.e. a strong ruling party, ensures that "there is no serious opposition in Russia […] while the political elite is united" (Reddaway 2012: 110). United Russia can thus preserve its position in the legislature and in the political arena more generally by controlling the alternatives to it in various ways.

Third, United Russia's position will be bolstered due to its capacity to carry out widespread electoral manipulation to produce the electoral outcomes it desires. Importantly, Russians widely believed that the dominant party would have won a legislative majority in the 2011 Duma contest even if it were completely fair, providing additional evidence to the notion that United Russia was not seeking to engage in outcome changing electoral fraud but rather to exaggerate their dominance in the election for domestic political reasons (Colton and Hale 2014: 18). The capacity to engage in electoral manipulation also effects the electorate's perceptions of available alternatives since United Russia's dominance in legislative elections, with voter participation and United Russia's vote share both reaching into the high 90% range in some areas, creates a pervasive sense that the dominant party is the only game in town. Moreover, United Russia's show of dominance through fraud effectively deters potential challengers: when opposition parties face little hope of making it into the Duma and will face a barrage of

dominant party tactics during the campaign, some of which may include violence, the costs of participation are raised and the supply of parties narrows considerably. By engaging in illicit activities in future legislative elections, United Russia's invincibility will be on full display, which will send a powerful signal to voters and opposition parties alike.

Finally, with support for the regime dependent on the economy and the economy dependent on natural resources, the regime is extraordinarily vulnerable to the inescapable price cycles of oil and gas that buoy the regime in the good times but sour the public on current power holders in the bad (Goldman 2008: 88). Despite the economy's vulnerability to drastic changes in world prices of oil and gas, there is evidence that the price of natural resources will remain high in the future, undergirding United Russia's dominance. From 2000 to 2006, international demand for energy increased by 10 million barrels per day (Goldman 2008: 90). With higher international demand for oil led by China and India, the world's excess oil production capacity has been stretched to its limit: the International Energy Agency estimates that the world needs 5 million barrels per day of excess oil production to "avoid energy disruption," which is nearly half of Russia's yearly production (Goldman 2008: 89). By the mid-2000s, the world's excess petroleum capacity plunged from 15% of international consumption to merely two to three percent, strongly suggesting that energy prices are likely to remain high in the future (*Ibid*). The combination of record-setting demand and shrinking excess capacity furnishes the Kremlin with an enormous war chest that facilitates the supply of economic deliverables to the population and patronage resources to give or withhold as needed at election time.

While genuine public support, the absence of available alternatives, the capacity to conduct electoral fraud and high economic performance will likely aggrandize United Russia in the future, there are also indications that the tide of public opinion is slowly turning against the regime and the ruling party, the 2011-2012 protests offering one conspicuous manifestation. Survey data show that "after a dozen years in power some of the bloom is off the Putin rose": compared to 2008, considerably more Russians reported that they believed corruption and inequality had increased since 2000, when Putin

initially stepped into the presidency, and noticeably fewer Russians reported that stability, Russia's influence in the world, and personal freedom had increased under his reign (Colton and Hale 2014: 9). The regime's public approval ratings soared in the 2000s before the international financial crisis, but more recently, Russians are beginning to re-appraise their position vis-à-vis the state and the standard of living of the population. Sizable shares of Russians are drawing conclusions that do not portend a bright future for Putin or United Russia: 63% of respondents believe that the state's responsiveness to the needs of the population has either remained unchanged or decreased since 2000, and, strikingly, given the impressive rate of economic growth sustained under Putin, the same percentage believe that the standard of living of the population has remained unchanged or decreased since Putin took office (Colton and Hale 2014: 11). Given the "direct relationship between the popularity of the Russian president […] and income growth, both in the economy as a whole and of citizens," citizens' lackluster appraisals of their own standard of living do not bode well for the continuation of the Putin regime (Petrov 2011: 66).

In addition to a dimmer view of life in Russia, survey results from 2012 revealed for the first time a decline in the percentage of Russians who believed Putin, as a leader personally, is honest and trustworthy and really cares about people, even though he continues to make a positive impression with regard to intelligence and strength (Colton and Hale 2014: 10). Because Putin's popularity rating is of paramount importance to the Kremlin, the government will be compelled to "spend colossal sums on populist measures like […] increases in wages and pensions" to maintain the current system with Putin at the helm, despite the fact that the economy has been crippled by the international financial crisis (Petrov 2011: 66). If the economy fails to bounce back, the government may be forced to pull back on some of its key policies or else risk pursuing populist policies that are ultimately unsustainable, but either situation will likely result in depressed approval ratings for Putin.

Along with the President, United Russia has also made out poorly concerning a particular question included in a recent survey: more than one-third of respondents

believe that United Russia is a party of swindlers and thieves (Colton et. al 2014). However, when considered in conjunction with the widespread positive evaluation of the party's influence on the condition of Russia, it appears that Russians currently approve of United Russia more than the Putin regime writ large, suggesting that United Russia may be able to weather downward trends in Putin's popularity if the leadership can identify a viable successor. These survey results provide some evidence of erosion of the regime's popular support, which undoubtedly catalyzed the large-scale protests that erupted during the 2011-2012 election cycle. Although the political system constructed since the early 2000s has been designed to ensure the current regime's continued power, the system may "guarantee its own failure as hostility to the system gradually develops among the population" (Gorenburg 2011: 5). Lacking the ability to change the political system from within, anti-regime sentiment accumulates in the population until such beliefs "reach an 'explosive' level that may bring down both the leadership and the entire system of highly managed democracy" (*Ibid).* One political analyst commented that the system that Putin and United Russia built in the early 2000s was "survivable", but it "became too rigid in the late 2000s and there are few possibilities for the system to change without completely collapsing first" (Senior Political Analyst at INDEM Foundation 2011). With early signs of erosion becoming more conspicuous, the ruling party may be forced to depend more heavily on electoral manipulation in future legislative elections, potentially to actually win elections rather than to artificially exaggerate United Russia's supremacy in contests the party would have likely clinched without such machinations.

In addition to the triumphant success of the Sochi Olympics in early 2014, in which Russia won the most medals for the first time in history, Putin and the Kremlin turned the tide of public opinion back in the regime's favor by pursing the annexation of the autonomous Republic of Crimea, a region in Ukraine in the Black Sea. The pro-Russian president of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovich, was ousted in early 2014 and fled to Russia amidst anti-government protests in Kiev that turned violent. The Kremlin then moved quickly to seize control of Crimea, the only majority ethnic Russian region in Ukraine, in response to threats against ethnic Russians by radical nationalists in the

country. Ultimately, a March referendum in Crimea, with turnout of 83%, revealed that over 97% of residents favored reunifying Crimea with Russia. The Kremlin's intervention and annexation rallied support for the regime, skyrocketing President Putin's personal approval rating in a poll conducted by the Levada Center to upwards of 80%, close to the high of his first two terms in office from 2000 to 2008 when the Russian economy was booming (RIA Novosti 2014). In comparison, Putin's rating reached a low of 54% in December 2011 during the post-election protests and was 68.8% when he was inaugurated for the third time in May 2012 (RIA Novosti 2014b; RIA Novosti 2014a). A mere 18% of respondents disapproved of Putin's performance as president (RIA Novosti 2014a). Moreover, revealing the highest level of agreement since the poll began in the 2000s, 63% of respondents agreed that "modern Russia has regained the status of a superpower," one of Putin's primary goals for the country since first taking office in 2000 (*Ibid*). The majority of respondents believed that Russia had a right to intervene in former Soviet states to protect ethnic Russians while a paltry four percent reported that the intervention in Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea was illegal and a violation of Ukrainian sovereignty (Reuters 2014).

The widespread public support for the intervention in Crimea may embolden the Putin regime to make additional forays into the near abroad. As the Communist and ultra-nationalist parties both favor reconstituting the territory of the former Soviet Union in some fashion, the ruling party, claiming to be the party with the most concrete nationalist credentials, would likely poach supporters from these parties as a result of such international ventures. The combination of the grand slam in Sochi and the reclaiming of the Crimea have largely taken the wind out of the sails of the protest movement that previously haunted the Kremlin, with polls conducted in April 2014 showing that less than 20% of respondents anticipated more popular protests, a drastic decline from late 2013 (*Ibid*). Undoubtedly, Putin and United Russia will use these recent successes that have regenerated Russian national pride and seemingly strengthened Russia's position in the international system to garner support in the 2016 Duma election.

The recent events in Crimea provide one indication that authoritarianism in Russia is evolving not only domestically, but on the foreign policy front as well. Russia has a history of supporting separatist movements in the near abroad and continues to occupy the formally Georgian territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia that it invaded in 2008. At that time, Zbigniew Brzezinski commented, "Putin is putting Russia on a course that is ominously similar to Stalin's and Hitler's in the late 1930's [...] Putin's 'justification' for dismembering Georgia—because of the Russians in South Ossetia [is correctly analogized to] Hitler's tactics vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia to 'free' the Sudeten Deutsch" (Gardel 2008). Putin's rationale for intervening in Crimea was identical to that employed in the Georgian case years earlier, i.e. the protection of ethnic Russians, but unlike South Ossetia and Abkhazia, the capture of Crimea marks the first time that Russia has formally annexed a territory it occupies and thus represents an "unprecedented step" in Russia's post-communist foreign policy (Mankoff 2014). Indeed, at the time of the Russian invasion of Georgia, Brzezinski predicted that if Putin did not face resistance concerning Georgia, "we can logically anticipate that Putin […] will use the same tactics toward the Ukraine" (Gardel 2008). With the domestic political situation stabilized after the protests during the 2011-2012 election cycle, a new era of Russian authoritarianism seems to be on the horizon, characterized primarily by an increasing willingness to raise the stakes of international conflicts to arguably reckless levels: "Russia's willingness to go further in Crimea than in earlier cases appears driven by both Ukraine's strategic importance to Russia and by Russian President Vladimir Putin's newfound willingness to ratchet up his confrontation with a West that Russian elites increasingly see as hypocritical and antagonistic to their interests" (Mankoff 2014). The Kremlin's willingness to flout both international law and norms of state sovereignty signals that the Putin regime now believes the benefits of "open confrontation" outweigh those of cooperation with the West (*Ibid*). In short, under Putin, Russia has "developed a new hubris that is not based on mere bluster" (Goldman 2008: 207). The international community thus waits to see if Russia's unprecedented step in Crimea will become a foreign policy precedent for similar breaches in the future.

One additional consideration that bears upon the future of the current regime and United Russia only after the next Duma election in 2016 is presidential succession. The party may be able to revitalize the regime with a fresh face at the top if Putin decides to forego a fourth presidential term in 2018. Recent survey data reveal that 75% of Russians believe Putin is a man primarily of the present or someone who is needed right now but 60% judged that Prokhorov's time had yet to come (Colton and Hale 2014: 8). By comparison, merely two percent thought Putin's time was yet to come and only 12% thought the same about Medvedev (*Ibid*). Prokhorov entered the national political scene in 2011, framing his candidacy for president a year later as an alternative to Putin rather than in opposition to the Kremlin strongman. But because Prokhorov acquired his wealth from working within the system, he is believed to be "broadly supportive of it" (Colton and Hale 2014: 7). Prokhorov essentially makes "no secret of his loyalty to Putin and Medvedev" (Kara-Murza 2011: 52). Political analyst Alexander Kynev believes Prokhorov may be considered for appointment to a position of power even before the next presidential election (Soldak 2013). The combination of Prokhorov's future prospects, as revealed by public opinion surveys, and his general political posture that is far from outwardly hostile to the Putin regime may make him a viable successor when the time comes for Putin to pass the torch. It is also within the realm of possibility that the Kremlin will pluck a successor from political obscurity yet again, rather than promote someone with independent wealth and an independent base of support, because he or she would be more dependent on the Kremlin politically.

While the electorate undoubtedly expects United Russia to win in the future and cannot identify any viable alternatives, a potential succession crisis could provide precisely the type of shock to the system needed to precipitate more wholesale change. For example, if President Putin preserves his white-knuckled grip on political power at the highest level of Russian government rather than anointing a successor, his death would greatly destabilize Russia and remove an obstacle to greater democracy there, although some form of re-democratization would not be inevitable (Huntington 1991). Given Putin's inveterate commitment to maintaining authoritarianism in Russia, it is

highly unlikely that he would reverse course and voluntarily lead the country back down the road that he spent years systematically closing off.

Putin's death would likely unleash a bitter factional struggle between the two clans currently at odds within the Kremlin elite, i.e. the liberals and the *siloviki*. In short, the first faction includes Dmitry Medvedev and Boris Gryzlov, the former Chairman of the State Duma as well as United Russia, and this group may be more likely to reinstate some democratic measures in the future if they win a contest for supremacy because they are "committed to Western values […] and support what they regard as a democratic path of development" (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2005: 1069). It is important to note that, despite a greater orientation towards the West, the liberal clan is also not hostile to authoritarianism in Russia, believing that the body politic is simply not ready for the types of democratic reforms that might be necessary, suggesting that the execution of reforms from above is the only option (*Ibid*). The second faction includes President Putin and would be comparatively less likely to reinstate democratic reforms, if they succeeded in marginalizing the liberals in the post-Putin era. The *siloviki* clan believes that "the state is the basis of society; therefore, the state should be strong. A strong state controls everything […] Pluralism of opinions is dangerous and undermines the state from within […] Society should be passive and obedient" (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2005: 1073). The *siloviki* are increasing in number in both houses of the legislature and in the central government more broadly, and are generally believed to be the stronger of the dueling clans (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2005). If Putin appoints a successor rather than retaining power himself, a member of the *siloviki* would likely secure the nomination; for example, the former Minister of Defense and one of Putin's closest allies, Sergei Ivanov, has been named the most likely heir by some analysts of the Kremlin elite (*Ibid*).

The future course of Russian politics is far from certain. On the eve of WWII, Winston Churchill commented that Russia is a "riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma" and this statement remains as true today as in 1939. The Putin regime remains in power, but its future survival depends on how it will adapt to changing domestic circumstances, particularly growing disillusionment with the regime and the fact that its

methods of manipulation are becoming simultaneously more indispensable and somewhat less effective over time. Furthermore, the regime's continuation depends on oil and gas prices in the future, which determine the Kremlin's capacity to deliver patronage goods and social services to a population already critical of the powers that be. Opposition parties can play a potentially pivotal role in determining the regime's fate and possibly reversing the course of the political system, moving it from monopoly to competition, but integral to process of change will be opposition parties moving in leaps and bounds toward the ideological center and attempting to expand their bases of support beyond their narrow electorates. Without significant movement, opposition parties will remain at the periphery of politics and will not be able to muster a genuine challenge to the regime, leaving United Russia as the only game in town and Putin at the helm, deciding Russia's future course more or less unilaterally.

Appendix

Table 1: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-5.677 (.8679)***	-6.271 (.8218)***	-5.570 (.7665)***	-4.906 (1.013)***	-4.896 (.7155)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0419 (.0097)*** *OR 1.042*	.0237 (.0076)*** *OR 1.024*	.0166 (.0074)** *OR 1.016*	.0279 (.0105)*** *OR 1.028*	.0253 (.0071)*** *OR 1.025*
Percent Rural	.0202 (.0043)*** *OR 1.020*	.0195 (.0039)*** *OR 1.019*	.0130 (.0037)*** *OR 1.013*	.0130 (.0050)*** *OR 1.103*	.0146 (.0033)*** *OR 1.014*
Electoral Manipulation	-.5360 (.2952)* *OR .5850*	-.3570 (.2910) *OR .6997*	-.4978 (.2947)* *OR .6078*	-.5391 (.3020)* *OR .5832*	-.3957 (.2981) *OR .6731*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	1.378 (1.346) *OR 3.969*				
Muslim Region		5.674 (2.040)*** *OR 291.249*			
Caucasus Region			2.954 (1.589)* *OR 19.197*		
Economic Development				-.1555 (.5905) *OR .8559*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.8309 (1.709) *OR .4356*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0326 (.0143)** *OR .9678*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		-.0159 (.0178) *OR .9841*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.0117 (.0168) *OR 1.011*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0064 (.0067) *OR .9935*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0063 (.0243) *OR .9936*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0234 (.0065)*** *OR .9767*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0334 (.0080)*** *OR .9671*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0066 (.0064)		

			OR .9933		
*Economic Development				-.0017 (.0031) *OR .9982*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0353 (.0103) *OR .9652*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.421 (.5672)	3.462 (.5766)	3.038 (.5204)	3.282 (.5734)	3.126 (.5394)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	482.20***	492.57***	375.84***	418.60***	409.27***
AIC	749.526	748.946	772.776	734.657	753.155
Wald statistic (df)	48.78 (6)***	49.42 (6)***	33.89 (6)***	30.16 (6)***	49.96 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 2: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-4.939 (.5398)***	-5.146 (.5125)***	-4.894 (.5034)***	-3.100 (.6428)***	-4.449 (.4812)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-2.015 (5.804) *OR .1332*	-.0082 (.0098) *OR .9917*	-.0172 (.0093)* *OR .9828*	-.0070 (.0080) *OR .9929*	-.0097 (.0063) *OR .9903*
Percent Rural	.0174 (.0028)*** *OR 1.017*	.0174 (.0027)*** *OR 1.017*	.0138 (.0027)*** *OR 1.013*	.0141 (.0039)*** *OR 1.014*	.0158 (.0025)*** *OR 1.015*
Electoral Manipulation	.1835 (.2119) *OR 1.201*	.2404 (.2123) *OR 1.271*	.2043 (.2136) *OR 1.226*	.2065 (.2150) *OR 1.229*	.2497 (.2148) *OR 1.283*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	1.232 (.9245) *OR 3.429*				
Muslim Region		5.101 (1.447)*** *OR 164.21*			
Caucasus Region			3.612 (1.209)*** *OR 37.046*		
Economic Development				-1.076 (.4180)*** *OR .3407*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.9098 (1.301) *OR .4025*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region	2.009 (5.804) *OR 7.460*				
*Muslim Region		-.0023 (.0123) *OR .9976*			
*Caucasus Region			.0060 (.0122) *OR 1.006*		
*Economic Development				-.0094 (.0088) *OR .9906*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0094 (.0230) *OR 1.009*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0179 (.0053)*** *OR .9821*				
*Muslim Region		-.0287 (.0065)*** *OR .9716*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0047 (.0058) *OR .9952*		
*Economic				-.0015 (.0027)	

Development				*OR .9984*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0354 (.0086)*** *OR .9651*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.035 (.3811)	2.977 (.3740)	2.860 (.3634)	2.940 (.3996)	2.951 (.3798)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	763.91***	740.32***	682.67***	661.49***	680.67***
AIC	1261.331	1245.534	1262.839	1207.686	1247.23
Wald statistic (df)	43.29 (6)***	57.11 (6)***	43.70 (6)***	42.46 (6)***	56.17 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 3: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-5.679 (.8701)***	-6.159 (.7903)***	-5.619 (.7400)***	-4.478 (.9316)***	-4.646 (.6816)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0419 (.0097)*** *OR 1.042*	.0408 (.0090)*** *OR 1.041*	.0344 (.0082)*** *OR 1.035*	.0339 (.0099)*** *OR 1.034*	.0322 (.0068)*** *OR 1.032*
Percent Rural	.0201 (.0043)*** *OR 1.020*	.0194 (.0039)*** *OR 1.019*	.0126 (.0036)*** *OR 1.012*	.0176 (.0050)*** *OR 1.017*	.0168 (.0033)*** *OR 1.017*
Electoral Manipulation	-.5056 (.2948)* *OR .6031*	-.4261 (.2961) *OR .6530*	-.5188 (.2989)* *OR .5952*	-.5087 (.3009)* *OR .6012*	-.3587 (.2968) *OR .6985*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	1.601 (1.262) *OR 4.961*				
Muslim Region		5.765 (1.814)*** *OR 319.243*			
Caucasus Region			3.917 (1.420)*** *OR 50.257*		
Economic Development				-.3300 (.5552) *OR .7189*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.8092 (1.591) *OF .4451*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0304 (.0123)** *OR .9699*				
*Muslim Region		-.0322 (.0120)*** *OF .9682*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0166 (.0122) *OR .9834*		
*Economic Development				-.0042 (.0063) *OR .9957*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0154 (.0228) *OR .9847*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0212 (.0061)*** *OR .9790*				
*Muslim Region		-.0134 (.0073)*** *OR .9690*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0031 (.0064)		

			OR .9968		
*Economic Development				-.0039 (.0030) *OR .9960*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0342 (.0084)*** *OR .9663*
Random Effects Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.434 (.5682)	3.410 (.5628)	3.045 (.5089)	3.222 (.5621)	3.089 (.5316)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	487.07***	490.79***	425.39***	406.65***	392.01***
AIC	748.029	736.134	759.080	722.120	742.012
Wald statistic (df)	50.31 (6)***	59.76 (6)***	45.92 (6)***	38.46 (6)***	55.89 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 4: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.823	X	-2.239	-1.463	-2.094
	(.5504)***		(.5130)***	(.7535)**	(.5118)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	-.0499		-.0351	-.0270	-.0340
	(.0125)***		(.0082)***	(.0124)**	(.0082)***
	OR .9512		*OR .9654*	*OR .9733*	*OR .9665*
Percent Rural	.0037 (.0027)		.0021 (.0028)	-.0063 (.0056)	.0028 (.0027)
	OR 1.003		*OR 1.002*	*OR .9936*	*OR 1.002*
Electoral Manipulation	.3458 (.2962)		.3467 (.2956)	.4223 (.2991)	.3276 (.2945)
	OR 1.413		*OR 1.414*	*OR 1.525*	*OR 1.387*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-2.474 (1.202)**				
	OR .0841				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-.2338 (1.564)		
			OR .7914		
Economic Development				-.5316 (.4348)	
				OR .5876	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.8070 (1.495)
					OR .4461
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0345 (.0178)*				
	OR 1.035				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region					
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0740 (.0509)		
			OR .9286		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0195 (.0114)*	
				OR .9806	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0653 (.0404)
					OR .9367
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0072 (.0084)				
	OR .9927				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0068 (.0076)		
			OR 1.006		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0062 (.0034)*	
				OR 1.006	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource					.0044 (.0097)

Wealth				*OR 1.004*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.397 (.4234)	2.268 (.3962)	2.054 (.3853)	2.249 (.3960)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	248.82***	236.67***	197.13***	217.13***
AIC	890.400	892.834	841.600	889.995
Wald statistic (df)	28.79 (6)***	24.89 (6)***	32.11 (6)***	26.23 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 5: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-3.242 (.3623)***	X	-3.253 (.3463)***	-2.287 (.5172)***	-3.262 (.3528)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	3.833 (4.514) *OR 46.207*		-.0072 (.0076) *OR .9927*	-.0186 (.0114) *OR .9815*	-.0124 (.0082) *OR .9875*
Percent Rural	.0076 (.0021)*** *OR 1.007*		.0053 (.0021)** *OR 1.005*	.0009 (.0039) *OR 1.000*	.0074 (.0021)*** *OR 1.007*
Electoral Manipulation	-.0609 (.2238) *OR .9408*		-.0364 (.2239) *OR .9641*	-.0669 (.2259) *OR .9352*	-.0817 (.2244) *OR .9215*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.3623 (.7471) *OR .6960*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-.7602 (1.205) *OR .4675*		
Economic Development				-.8031 (.2958)*** *OR .4479*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.4981 (.8896) *OR .6076*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-3.829 (4.514) *OR .0217*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			-.0096 (.0229) *OR .9904*		
*Economic Development				.0068 (.0110) *OR 1.006*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0240 (.0170) *OR 1.024*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0142 (.0061)** *OR .9858*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			.0047 (.0064) *OR 1.004*		
*Economic				.0039 (.0023)	

Development			*OR 1.003*	
*Natural Resource Wealth				-.0138 (.0064)** *OR .9862*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.242 (.2813)	2.233 (.2811)	2.224 (.2978)	2.235 (.2818)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	463.64***	455.62***	418.97***	444.73***
AIC	1583.718	1589.942	1496.52	1584.725
Wald statistic (df)	16.87 (6)***	10.42 (6)	18.37 (6)***	15.67 (6)**

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 6: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.803 (.5367)***	X	-2.658 (.5536)***	-2.182 (.8299)***	-2.568 (.5535)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	-.0497 (.0125)*** *OR .9514*		-.0471 (.0119)*** *OR .9539*	-.0333 (.0209) *OR .9672*	-.0446 (.0122)*** *OR .9563*
Percent Rural	.0038 (.0027) *OR 1.003*		.0011 (.0027) *OR 1.001*	-.0103 (.0055)* *OR .9896*	.0018 (.0026) *OR 1.001*
Electoral Manipulation	.3061 (.2982) *OR 1.358*		.3369 (.2995) *OR 1.400*	.3998 (.3009) *OR 1.491*	.3162 (.2979) *OR 1.371*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-1.974 (1.165)* *OR .1388*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-1.798 (1.484) *OR .1656*		
Economic Development				-.5937 (.4801) *OR .5522*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-2.018 (1.481) *OR .1328*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0412 (.0436) *OR .9595*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			-.0391 (.0501) *OR .9616*		
*Economic Development				-.0124 (.0146) *OR .9876*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0347 (.0399) *OR .9658*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0138 (.0080)* *OR .9862*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			.0067 (.0075) *OR 1.006*		
*Economic Development				.0081 (.0034)** *OR 1.008*	

*Natural Resource Wealth				.0036 (.0095) *OR 1.003*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.323 (.4128)	2.565 (.4438)	2.593 (.4686)	2.575 (.4533)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	237.73***	260.37***	248.41***	228.25***
AIC	884.400	898.445	852.222	896.944
Wald statistic (df)	30.59 (6)***	21.66 (6)***	23.46 (6)***	21.83 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 7: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.496 (.8188)***	-3.183 (.8135)***	-2.806 (.7932)***	-3.975 (1.416)***	-3.379 (.9475)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0098 (.0155) *OR 1.009*	.0081 (.0131) *OR 1.008*	.0038 (.0012) *OR 1.003*	.0099 (.0252) *OR 1.009*	-.0015 (.0157) *OR .9984*
Percent Rural	-.0649 (.0088)*** *OR .9371*	-.0587 (.0078)*** *OR .9429*	-.0590 (.0077)*** *OR .9426*	-.0349 (.0148)** *OR .9656*	-.0562 (.0082)*** *OR .9452*
Electoral Manipulation	-1.307 (.8238) *OR .2704*	-1.207 (.8295) *OR .2990*	-1.210 (.8291) *OR .2979*	-1.170 (.8297) *OR .3100*	-1.226 (.8316) *OR .2913*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-1.387 (1.616) *OR .2498*				
Muslim Region		2.132 (2.761) *OR 8.432*			
Caucasus Region			-2.219 (2.498) *OR .1086*		
Economic Development				.7279 (.7010) *OR 2.070*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.500 (1.747) *OR 4.483*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0230 (.0267) *OR .9772*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		-.0498 (.0383) *OR .9513*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0175 (.0391) *OR .9826*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0064 (.0129) *OR .9935*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0010 (.0263) *OR 1.001*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.0345 (.0149)** *OR 1.035*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region					
Percent Rural *Economic Development				-.0171 (.0103)* *OR .9829*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0119 (.0200) *OR .9881*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.207 (.6226)	3.297 (.6334)	3.313 (.655)	3.190 (.6180)	3.366 (.6633)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	219.52***	217.36***	219.70***	211.62***	213.73***
AIC	410.018	411.940	411.531	408.112	414.707
Wald statistic (df)	69.59 (6)***	65.50 (5)***	65.72 (5)***	60.22 (6)***	63.85 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 8: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.423 (.4507)***	-1.659 (.4296)***	-1.552 (.4313)***	-2.759 (.6674)***	-1.419 (.4432)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-.0148 (.0206) *OR .9852*	-.0185 (.0215) *OR .9815*	-.0257 (.0186) *OR .9745*	.0036 (.0240) *OR 1.003*	-.0568 (.0286)** *OR .9447*
Percent Rural	-.0617 (.0055)*** *OR .9401*	-.0619 (.0055)*** *OR .9399*	-.0620 (.0055)*** *OR .9398*	-.0689 (.0101)*** *OR .9333*	-.0614 (.0057)*** *OR .9403*
Electoral Manipulation	-1.239 (.6811)* *OR .2893*	-1.246 (.6827)* *OR .2875*	-1.236 (.6820)* *OR .2904*	-1.242 (.6855)* *OR .2887*	-1.229 (.6814)* *OR .2925*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-1.385 (1.086) *OR .2502*				
Muslim Region		-.3122 (2.146) *OR .7318*			
Caucasus Region			-1.926 (1.603) *OR .1456*		
Economic Development				.7507 (.2945)** *OR 2.118*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-1.390 (1.189) *OR .2490*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0265 (.0444) *OR .9737*			
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0181 (.0168) *OR .9819*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0681 (.0379)* *OR 1.070*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic				.0043 (.0045)	

Development				*OR 1.004*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0031 (.0176) *OR .9968*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.116 (.4184)	3.146 (.4155)	3.169 (.4212)	2.974 (.4054)	3.089 (.4225)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	369.45***	383.04***	384.97***	346.95***	360.29***
AIC	880.482	883.462	880.597	865.382	882.274
Wald statistic (df)	137.35 (4)***	136.56 (5)***	136.14 (4)***	138.85 (6)***	137.56 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 9: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.497 (.8196)***	-3.234 (.7816)***	-2.947 (.7699)***	-4.448 (1.268)***	-3.697 (.8985)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0098 (.0155) *OR 1.009*	.0171 (.0147) *OR 1.017*	.0155 (.0146) *OR 1.015*	.0437 (.0308) *OR 1.044*	.0201 (.0172) *OR 1.020*
Percent Rural	-.0649 (.0088)*** *OR .9371*	-.0594 (.0077)*** *OR .9422*	-.0598 (.0078)*** *OR .9419*	-.0358 (.0145)** *OR .9647*	-.0582 (.0084)*** *OR .9434*
Electoral Manipulation	-1.332 (.8269) *OR .2637*	-1.180 (.8290) *OR .3069*	-1.206 (.8275) *OR .2991*	-1.217 (.8314) *OR .2958*	-1.208 (.8287) *OR .2986*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-2.393 (1.416)* *OR .0912*				
Muslim Region		.0726 (2.206) *OR 1.075*			
Caucasus Region			-2.723 (2.218) *OR .0656*		
Economic Development				.8888 (.6496) *OR 2.432*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.881 (1.626) *OR 6.564*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region	.0158 (.0320) *OR 1.016*				
Percent Other Minority *Muslim Region		-.0259 (.0413) *OR .9743*			
Percent Other Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0111 (.0444) *OR .9889*		
Percent Other Minority *Economic Development				-.0163 (.0150) *OR .9837*	
Percent Other Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0246 (.0317) *OR .9756*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.0293 (.0145)** *OR 1.029*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region					
Percent Rural *Economic Development				-.0176 (.0102)* *OR .9824*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0105 (.0201) *OR .9894*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.209 (.6249)	3.328 (.6395)	3.361 (.6597)	3.255 (.6262)	3.413 (.6574)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	219.66***	233.80***	234.34***	227.20***	233.32***
AIC	409.582	412.534	410.654	406.363	413.330
Wald statistic (df)	69.19 (6)***	65.84 (5)***	65.67 (5)***	59.32 (6)***	63.80 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 10: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Our Home is Russia Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-6.069 (.9253)***	-5.737 (.7293)***	-5.180 (.7001)***	-5.127 (.9329)***	-6.577 (.8028)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0381 (.0213)* *OR 1.038*	.0294 (.0093)*** *OR 1.029*	.0246 (.0083)*** *OR 1.024*	.0299 (.0107)*** *OR 1.030*	.0365 (.0093)*** *OR 1.037*
Percent Rural	-.0207 (.0107)* *OR .9794*	-.0005 (.0057) *OR .9994*	-.0026 (.0045) *OR .9973*	.0045 (.0054) *OR 1.004*	.0036 (.0048) *OR 1.003*
Electoral Manipulation	.5392 (.3245)* *OR 1.714*	.4921 (.3270) *OR 1.635*	.4963 (.3239) *OR 1.642*	.6282 (.3287)* *OR 1.874*	.6225 (.3230)* *OR 1.863*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	2.773 (1.081)*** *OR 16.007*				
Muslim Region		2.780 (1.589)* *OR 16.126*			
Caucasus Region			-12.263 (6.626)* *OR 4.72e-06*		
Economic Development				-.4119 (.5666) *OR .6623*	
Natural Resource Wealth					3.585 (1.225)*** *OR 36.080*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0167 (.0225) *OR .9834*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		-.0001 (.0157) *OR .9998*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.1558 (.0757)** *OR 1.168*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				.0020 (.0066) *OR 1.002*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0115 (.0148) *OR .9885*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.0230 (.0113)** *OR 1.023*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0007 (.0074) *OR .9992*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0005 (.0093) *OR 1.000*		
Percent Rural *Economic				-.0051 (.0031)	

Development				*OR .9948*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0121 (.0072)* *OR .9879*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.925 (.4541)	2.449 (.5309)	2.674 (.5502)	2.373 (.5289)	2.398 (.5191)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	106.58***	116.50***	148.92***	134.95***	126.07***
AIC	542.773	558.959	438.634	531.731	552.729
Wald statistic (df)	50.42 (6)***	35.23 (6)***	28.34 (6)***	34.02 (6)***	39.04 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Our Home is Russia's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 11: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Our Home is Russia Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-6.337 (.6220)***	-5.576 (.5839)***	-5.565 (.6047)***	-5.234 (.7414)***	-6.301 (.6696)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.0102 (.0046)** *OR 1.010*	.0246 (.0079)*** *OR 1.024*	.0200 (.0068)*** *OR 1.020*	.0100 (.0066) *OR 1.010*	.0156 (.0057)*** *OR 1.015*
Percent Rural	.0010 (.0031) *OR 1.001*	-.0002 (.0045) *OR .9997*	-.0014 (.0038) *OR .9985*	.0066 (.0049) *OR 1.006*	.0072 (.0041)* *OR 1.007*
Electoral Manipulation	.6852 (.2992)** *OR 1.984*	.5904 (.3034)* *OR 1.804*	.6227 (.3032)** *OR 1.864*	.6581 (.3121)** *OR 1.931*	.6829 (.3022)** *OR 1.979*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	3.872 (.7033)*** *OR 48.079*				
Muslim Region		4.595 (1.246)*** *OR 99.085*			
Caucasus Region			1.589 (1.294) *OR 4.900*		
Economic Development				-.2693 (.3666) *OR .7639*	
Natural Resource Wealth					3.534 (1.075)*** *OR 34.265*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0160 (.0097) *OR .9840*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0092 (.0094) *OR .9907*		
*Economic Development				.0062 (.0048) *OR 1.006*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0016 (.0110) *OR 1.001*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0018 (.0061) *OR 1.001*			
*Caucasus Region			.0083 (.0070) *OR 1.008*		
*Economic Development				-.0032 (.0028) *OR .9957*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0146 (.0062)** *OR .9854*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.084 (.3959)	2.441 (.4186)	2.819 (.4319)	2.728 (.4539)	2.803 (.4420)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	126.93***	134.13***	204.69***	156.21***	174.89***
AIC	693.624	712.252	723.255	664.291	713.827
Wald statistic (df)	59.05 (4)***	42.51 (6)***	26.96 (6)***	27.01 (6)***	35.56 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Our Home is Russia's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 12: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Our Home is Russia Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-6.252 (.9803)***	-5.674 (.8758)***	-5.102 (.8423)***	-4.486 (1.030)***	-6.336 (.9638)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0369 (.0218)* *OR 1.037*	-.0026 (.0130) *OR .9973*	-.0045 (.0093) *OR .9954*	.0047 (.0077) *OR 1.004*	.0014 (.0065) *OR 1.001*
Percent Rural	-.0210 (.0108)* *OR .9792*	.0074 (.0050) *OR 1.007*	.0033 (.0040) *OR 1.003*	.0094 (.0050)* *OR 1.009*	.0105 (.0045)** *OR 1.010*
Electoral Manipulation	.6649 (.3190)** *OR 1.944*	.6824 (.3169)** *OR 1.978*	.7210 (.3169)** *OR 2.056*	.8286 (.3231)*** *OR 2.290*	.7986 (.3187)** *OR 2.222*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	3.909 (1.067)*** *OR 49.857*				
Muslim Region		4.367 (1.751)** *OR 78.836*			
Caucasus Region			.1210 (1.751) *OR 1.128*		
Economic Development				-.6932 (.6699) *OR .4999*	
Natural Resource Wealth					3.976 (1.471)*** *OR 53.356*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0375 (.0226)* *OR .9631*				
*Muslim Region		.0017 (.0143) *OR 1.001*			
*Caucasus Region			.0065 (.0117) *OR 1.006*		
*Economic Development				-.0063 (.0057) *OR .9937*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0064 (.0131) *OR .9935*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	.0279 (.0113)** *OR 1.028*				
*Muslim Region		-.0041 (.0065) *OR .9959*			
*Caucasus Region			.0067 (.0074) *OR 1.006*		

*Economic Development				-.0036 (.0027) *OR .9963*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0132 (.0064)** *OR .9868*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.133 (.4905)	3.226 (.5728)	3.512 (.6105)	3.302 (.6063)	3.377 (.5840)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	124.36***	230.74***	380.54***	373.56***	324.76***
AIC	550.953	574.066	579.164	548.198	571.197
Wald statistic (df)	39.86 (6)***	17.52 (6)***	12.45 (6)*	16.89 (6)***	19.47 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Our Home is Russia's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 13: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-9.591 (1.890)***	-11.026 (2.343)***	-8.717 (1.632)***	-8.449 (1.616)***	-8.238 (1.387)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0322 (.0162)** *OR 1.032*	.0365 (.0141)*** *OR 1.037*	.0163 (.0137) *OR 1.016*	.0549 (.0165)*** *OR 1.056*	.0387 (.0119)*** *OR 1.039*
Percent Rural	.0123 (.0073)* *OR 1.012*	.0122 (.0070)* *OR 1.012*	.0096 (.0067) *OR 1.009*	.0044 (.0066) *OR 1.004*	.0060 (.0047) *OR 1.006*
Electoral Manipulation	.1384 (.4362) *OR 1.148*	.1621 (.4371) *OR 1.176*	.2264 (.4350) *OR 1.254*	.1859 (.4371) *OR 1.204*	.1900 (.4389) *OR 1.209*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	1.480 (2.067) *OR 4.393*				
Muslim Region		7.650 (3.215)** *OR 2102.064*			
Caucasus Region			2.347 (2.434) *OR 10.457*		
Economic Development				.2158 (.7425) *OR 1.240*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.879 (3.148) *OR 6.553*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0011 (.0238) *OR .9988*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		-.0287 (.0237) *OR .9716*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.0368 (.0263) *OR 1.037*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0338 (.0166)** *OR .9666*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0831 (.0797) *OR .9201*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0124 (.0093) *OR .9876*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0117 (.0093) *OR .9882*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0089 (.0091) *OR .9911*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0009 (.0040) *OR 1.000*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0434 (.0517) *OR .9574*

Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.737 (.8540)	4.206 (1.181)	3.210 (.8116)	3.479 (.8109)	3.453 (.7661)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	253.89***	262.29***	171.06***	191.64***	236.06***
AIC	320.003	313.339	313.952	314.485	312.829
Wald statistic (df)	14.88 (6)**	16.71 (6)**	19.29 (6)***	18.07 (6)***	18.68 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 14: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-7.743 (.9561)***	-8.438 (1.102)***	-7.656 (.9391)***	-5.636 (.9349)***	-6.955 (.8511)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-.0074 (.0065) *OR .9925*	.0213 (.0152) *OR 1.021*	-.0224 (.0204) *OR .9777*	.0064 (.0130) *OR 1.006*	-.0043 (.0065) *OR .9956*
Percent Rural	.0095 (.0038)** *OR 1.009*	.0142 (.0051)*** *OR 1.014*	.0132 (.0050)*** *OR 1.013*	.0116 (.0054)** *OR 1.011*	.0098 (.0038)*** *OR 1.009*
Electoral Manipulation	.8056 (.3338)** *OR 2.238*	.8274 (.3361)** *OR 2.287*	.7889 (.3334)** *OR 2.201*	.7732 (.3294)** *OR 2.166*	.7888 (.3316)** *OR 2.200*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	1.194 (1.099) *OR 3.302*				
Muslim Region		5.614 (1.823)*** *OR 274.448*			
Caucasus Region			4.121 (1.448)*** *OR 61.624*		
Economic Development				-1.112 (.6480)* *OR .3288*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-2.250 (1.997) *OR .1053*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0338 (.0168)** *OR .9667*			
*Caucasus Region			.0172 (.0215) *OR 1.017*		
*Economic Development				-.0389 (.0360) *OR .9617*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0502 (.0714) *OR .9509*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0132 (.0078)* *OR .9868*			

*Caucasus Region			-.0089 (.0076) *OR .9910*		
*Economic Development				-.0020 (.0038) *OR .9979*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.217 (.5404)	3.277 (.5989)	3.003 (.5476)	3.205 (.5169)	3.159 (.5370)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	381.38***	350.50***	305.40***	345.98***	350.21***
AIC	507.483	498.231	502.948	500.361	506.765
Wald statistic (df)	17.32 (4)***	26.57 (6)***	24.54 (6)***	22.85 (6)***	18.68 (5)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 15: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-9.660 (1.909)***	-10.143 (2.427)***	-9.121 (1.706)***	-6.338 (1.423)***	-7.251 (1.254)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0311 (.0162)* *OR 1.031*	.0219 (.0152) *OR 1.022*	.0278 (.0148)* *OR 1.028*	.0180 (.0098)* *OR 1.018*	.0170 (.0066)*** *OR 1.017*
Percent Rural	.0119 (.0073) *OR 1.011*	.0139 (.0069)** *OR 1.014*	.0088 (.0067) *OR 1.008*	.0099 (.0063) *OR 1.010*	.0091 (.0046)** *OR 1.009*
Electoral Manipulation	.3097 (.4421) *OR 1.363*	.3443 (.4422) *OR 1.411*	5.279 (2.027)*** *OR 1.433*	.4492 (.4309) *OR 1.567*	.5062 (.4350) *OR 1.659*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	3.082 (1.775)* *OR 21.817*				
Muslim Region		6.883 (3.008)** *OR 975.989*			
Caucasus Region			5.279 (2.027)*** *OR 196.320*		
Economic Development				-.9621 (.8793) *OR .3793*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.3288 (2.768) *OR 1.389*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0196 (.0179) *OR .9805*				
*Muslim Region		-.0099 (.0170) *OR .9900*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0157 (.0167) *OR .9843*		
*Economic Development				-.0037 (.0157) *OR .9962*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0693 (.0969) *OR .9330*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0083 (.0091) *OR .9916*				
*Muslim Region		-.0126 (.0091) *OR .9874*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0034 (.0088) *OR .9965*		
*Economic Development				-.0021 (.0040) *OR .9978*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0569 (.0471) *OR .9446*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.790 (.8613)	4.170 (1.259)	3.546 (.8992)	3.467 (.7386)	3.564 (.7505)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	266.23***	260.90***	223.89***	209.53***	238.73***
AIC	320.816	315.706	316.064	320.585	317.672
Wald statistic (df)	14.34 (6)**	15.62 (6)**	17.70 (6)***	13.68 (6)**	15.01 (6)**

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 16: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.850 (.5156)***	X	-3.120 (.4664)***	-3.035 (.7662)***	-3.100 (.4579)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	-.0584 (.0305)* *OR .9432*		-.0278 (.0130)** *OR .9725*	-.0108 (.0154) *OR .9891*	-.0244 (.0126)* *OR .9758*
Percent Rural	-.0053 (.0050) *OR .9946*		-.0041 (.0047) *OR .9958*	-.0015 (.0089) *OR .9984*	-.0053 (.0048) *OR .9946*
Electoral Manipulation	-.3172 (.6660) *OR .7281*		-.4051 (.6608) *OR .6668*	-.2887 (.6605) *OR .7491*	-.3279 (.6620) *OR .7203*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-2.010 (1.382) *OR .1338*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			.2981 (2.120) *OR 1.347*		
Economic Development				.1906 (.4709) *OR 1.209*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.6140 (1.649) *OR .5411*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0504 (.0366) *OR 1.051*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region					
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0993 (.2130) *OR .9054*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0400 (.0238)* *OR .9607*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0252 (.0483) *OR .9750*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.0049 (.0137) *OR 1.004*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0335 (.0464) *OR .9669*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				-.0019 (.0056) *OR .9980*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource Wealth					.0014 (.0173) *OR 1.001*

Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.177 (.3388)	1.053 (.2976)	.9828 (.2796)	1.048 (.2967)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	17.58***	15.47***	14.09***	15.54***
AIC	330.059	329.346	324.245	331.098
Wald statistic (df)	12.14 (6)*	8.84 (6)	10.97 (6)*	9.99 (6)

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 17: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-4.497 (.4490)***	X	-4.549 (.4467)***	-3.720 (.5968)***	-4.448 (.4425)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.0105 (.0159) *OR 1.010*		-.0055 (.0117) *OR .9944*	-.0016 (.0150) *OR .9983*	-.0062 (.0111) *OR .9937*
Percent Rural	-.0007 (.0038) *OR .9992*		-.0004 (.0038) *OR .9995*	-.0033 (.0066) *OR .9966*	-.0004 (.0038) *OR .9995*
Electoral Manipulation	-.1889 (.4195) *OR .8278*		-.1855 (.4191) *OR .8306*	-.1787 (.4185) *OR .8363*	-.1805 (.4176) *OR .8348*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-1.723 (1.087) *OR .1783*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-1.951 (1.397) *OR .1420*		
Economic Development				-.5783 (.3590) *OR .5608*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-1.639 (.9926)* *OR .1941*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0176 (.0245) *OR .9825*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0019 (.0044) *OR 1.001*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					

Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.687 (.3395)	1.634 (.3295)	1.566 (.3195)	1.591 (.3235)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	62.04***	58.80***	54.91***	56.32***
AIC	559.744	560.345	558.315	559.636
Wald statistic (df)	3.33 (4)	2.61 (4)	4.60 (6)	3.49 (4)

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 18: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.831 (.5088)***	X	-3.076 (.4944)***	-3.150 (.8330)***	-2.938 (.5003)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	-.0582 (.0303)* *OR .9433*		-.0574 (.0267)** *OR .9441*	-.0294 (.0386) *OR .9710*	-.0650 (.0311)** *OR .9370*
Percent Rural	-.0053 (.0050) *OR .9946*		-.0050 (.0047) *OR .9949*	-.0055 (.0085) *OR .9944*	-.0061 (.0047) *OR .9939*
Electoral Manipulation	-.3431 (.6655) *OR .7095*		-.4396 (.6639) *OR .6442*	-.3828 (.6640) *OR .6818*	-.3779 (.6619) *OR .6852*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-1.145 (1.323) *OR .3179*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-.0885 (2.117) *OR .9152*		
Economic Development				.0237 (.5113) *OR 1.023*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-1.956 (1.525) *OR .1413*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0528 (.1020) *OR .9485*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			-.0645 (.2061) *OR .9375*		
*Economic Development				-.0250 (.0320) *OR .9752*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0558 (.0548) *OR 1.057*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0007 (.0133) *OR .9992*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			-.0391 (.0467) *OR .9615*		
*Economic Development				-.0003 (.0053) *OR .9996*	

*Natural Resource Wealth				.0004 (.0169) *OR 1.000*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.141 (.3298)	1.122 (.3186)	1.142 (.3166)	1.079 (.3153)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	16.97***	17.56***	18.59***	15.64***
AIC	327.385	328.813	329.432	330.407
Wald statistic (df)	11.44 (6)*	9.22 (6)	9.01 (6)	11.27 (6)*

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 19: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	X	X	X	-13.099	-15.740
				(7.555)*	(8.286)*
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority				-.0440 (.1002)	.0498 (.0343)
				OR .9569	*OR 1.051*
Percent Rural				-.0980	-.0744
				(.0453)**	(.0169)***
				OR .9065	*OR .9282*
Electoral Manipulation				X	X
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region					
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				-1.657 (2.349)	
				OR .1906	
Natural Resource Wealth					11.063 (7.084)
					OR 63804.5
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0407 (.0499)	
				OR 1.041	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.5523 (.4443)
					OR .5755
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0130 (.0211)	
				OR 1.013	
*Natural Resource					-.0749 (.1506)

Wealth		*OR .9277*
Random Effects		
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	9.079 (5.815)	8.628 (5.616)
Model Fit:		
Likelihood Ratio Test	87.26***	89.19***
AIC	131.299	126.790
Wald statistic (df)	22.05 (5)***	21.09 (5)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 20: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-4.278 (.7205)***	X	X	-6.056 (1.262)***	-4.373 (.7362)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.0112 (.0348) *OR 1.011*			.0156 (.0375) *OR 1.015*	-.0218 (.0279) *OR .9783*
Percent Rural	-.0633 (.0090)*** *OR .9386*			-.0908 (.0174)*** *OR .9131*	-.0635 (.0090)*** *OR .9383*
Electoral Manipulation	X			X	X
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-2.440 (1.725) *OR .0870*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				.8048 (.3992)** *OR 2.236*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-2.178 (1.545) *OR .1131*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0287 (.0415) *OR .9716*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0120 (.0054)** *OR 1.012*	

*Natural Resource Wealth			
Random Effects			
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.993 (.5491)	3.015 (.6192)	3.057 (.5498)
Model Fit:			
Likelihood Ratio Test	127.49***	127.86***	130.54***
AIC	381.409	374.393	381.614
Wald statistic (df)	51.85 (3)***	48.18 (5)***	51.10 (3)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 21: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	X	X	X	-13.331 (6.319)**	-14.528 (5.857)**
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority				-.0168 (.0872) *OR .9833*	.0719 (.0310)** *OR 1.074*
Percent Rural				-.0948 (.0363)*** *OR .9095*	-.0804 (.0181)*** *OR .9226*
Electoral Manipulation				X	X
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region					
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				-1.079 (1.715) *OR .3396*	
Natural Resource Wealth					7.641 (6.676) *OR 2082.14*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0326 (.0451) *OR 1.033*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.5356 (.5265) *OR .5853*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0103 (.0162) *OR 1.010*	

*Natural Resource Wealth		-.0566 (.1374) *OR .9448*
Random Effects		
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	8.562 (4.679)	8.111 (4.271)
Model Fit:		
Likelihood Ratio Test	99.46***	104.53***
AIC	130.824	126.415
Wald statistic (df)	21.85 (5)***	20.42 (5)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 22: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Our Home is Russia Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-10.000 (1.957)***	-8.071 (1.132)***	-8.415 (1.041)***	-6.063 (1.197)***	-7.430 (.9971)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0308 (.0396) *OR 1.031*	.0309 (.0114)*** *OR 1.031*	.0342 (.0099)*** *OR 1.034*	.0317 (.0133)** *OR 1.032*	.0380 (.0112)*** *OR 1.038*
Percent Rural	.0083 (.0054) *OR 1.008*	.0095 (.0080) *OR 1.009*	.0163 (.0066)** *OR 1.016*	-.0014 (.0073) *OR .9985*	-.0003 (.0063) *OR .9996*
Electoral Manipulation	.9980 (.3852)*** *OR 2.713*	.8658 (.3960)** *OR 2.376*	.8966 (.3970)** *OR 2.451*	.8552 (.3991)** *OR 2.351*	.8590 (.3992)** *OR 2.360*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	4.323 (2.017)** *OR 75.481*				
Muslim Region		.1325 (2.214) *OR 1.141*			
Caucasus Region			-3.629 (4.917) *OR .0265*		
Economic Development				-1.644 (.7930)** *OR .1930*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-1.184 (1.742) *OR .3060*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0000 (.0407) *OR .9999*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		.0336 (.0233) *OR 1.034*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.0836 (.0572) *OR 1.087*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				.0106 (.0087) *OR 1.010*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0137 (.0201) *OR 1.013*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0051 (.0107) *OR .9948*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0324 (.0112)*** *OR .9680*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0076 (.0047) *OR 1.007*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					.0200 (.0112)* *OR 1.020*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.926 (.4905)	2.632 (.6643)	2.520 (.6107)	2.279 (.5839)	2.411 (.6061)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	98.68***	113.78***	125.87***	123.61***	118.49***
AIC	338.585	349.607	344.318	329.599	347.594
Wald statistic (df)	48.46 (5)***	45.45 (6)***	46.16 (6)***	44.47 (6)***	46.55 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Our Home is Russia's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 23: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Our Home is Russia Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-8.729 (.9963)***	-7.424 (.8839)***	-8.260 (.9458)***	-6.524 (1.122)***	-7.519 (1.012)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.0107 (.0057)* *OR 1.010*	.0342 (.0097)*** *OR 1.034*	.0270 (.0086)*** *OR 1.027*	.0105 (.0084) *OR 1.010*	.0177 (.0076)** *OR 1.017*
Percent Rural	.0103 (.0045)** *OR 1.010*	.0091 (.0068) *OR 1.009*	.0181 (.0058)*** *OR 1.018*	.0024 (.0070) *OR 1.002*	.0042 (.0055) *OR 1.004*
Electoral Manipulation	1.017 (.3515)*** *OR 2.766*	.8846 (.3524)** *OR 2.422*	.8051 (.3634)** *OR 2.237*	.9054 (.3794)** *OR 2.473*	.8242 (.3642)** *OR 2.280*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	4.553 (.9618)*** *OR 94.953*				
Muslim Region		4.419 (1.376)*** *OR 83.028*			
Caucasus Region			4.603 (1.400)*** *OR 99.817*		
Economic Development				-1.071 (.5499)* *OR .3425*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.062 (1.371) *OR 2.894*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0263 (.0119)** *OR .9739*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0166 (.0118) *OR .9834*		
*Economic Development				.0087 (.0061) *OR 1.008*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0046 (.0135) *OR 1.004*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0014 (.0088) *OR 1.001*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0255 (.0092)***		

			OR .9747		
*Economic Development				.0081 (.0043)* *OR 1.008*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0167 (.0093)* *OR 1.016*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	`1.859 (.4418)	2.181 (.5586)	2.656 (.5817)	2.820 (.6392)	2.867 (.6414)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	81.60***	80.90***	110.46***	96.51***	93.38***
AIC	417.792	436.467	435.792	391.33	442.593
Wald statistic (df)	62.11 (4)***	57.91 (6)***	47.64 (6)***	37.70 (6)***	43.46 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Our Home is Russia's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 24: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Our Home is Russia Strongholds in the 1995 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-10.751 (2.045)***	-7.895 (1.414)***	-8.445 (1.265)***	-5.644 (1.337)***	-7.442 (1.306)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0285 (.0407) *OR 1.028*	-.0175 (.0208) *OR .9825*	.0035 (.0129) *OR 1.003*	.0046 (.0103) *OR 1.004*	.0040 (.0086) *OR 1.004*
Percent Rural	.0143 (.0051)*** *OR 1.014*	.0157 (.0075)** *OR 1.015*	.0228 (.0063)*** *OR 1.023*	.0038 (.0069) *OR 1.003*	.0061 (.0059) *OR 1.006*
Electoral Manipulation	1.189 (.3773)*** *OR 3.285*	1.126 (.3825)*** *OR 3.085*	1.138 (.3868)*** *OR 3.121*	1.109 (.3903)*** *OR 3.032*	1.100 (.3905)*** *OR 3.005*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	6.490 (1.980)*** *OR 659.022*				
Muslim Region		3.713 (2.172)* *OR 40.990*			
Caucasus Region			3.538 (1.946)* *OR 34.415*		
Economic Development				-1.669 (.7784)** *OR .1883*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.0452 (1.836) *OR 1.046*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0212 (.0414) *OR .9789*				
*Muslim Region		.0286 (.0228) *OR 1.029*			
*Caucasus Region			.0033 (.0163) *OR 1.003*		
*Economic Development				.0024 (.0078) *OR 1.002*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0073 (.0186) *OR 1.007*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0012 (.0099) *OR .9987*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0270 (.0099)***		

			OR .9733		
*Economic Development				.0096 (.0045)** *OR 1.009*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0231 (.0106)** *OR 1.023*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.106 (.5363)	3.414 (.7223)	3.460 (.6814)	3.309 (.6789)	3.499 (.7035)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	98.97***	167.17***	231.83***	234.09***	208.89***
AIC	348.989	368.500	367.884	352.278	368.331
Wald statistic (df)	40.14 (5)***	33.05 (6)***	31.12 (6)***	29.22 (6)***	29.82 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Our Home is Russia's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 25: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-4.636 (.6183)***	-4.859 (.5629)***	-4.964 (.5710)***	-3.433 (.8087)***	X
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0146 (.0077)* *OR 1.014*	.0067 (.0061) *OR 1.006*	.0070 (.0064) *OR 1.007*	.0085 (.0090) *OR 1.008*	
Percent Rural	.0268 (.0035)*** *OR 1.027*	.0262 (.0032)*** *OR 1.026*	.0223 (.0034)*** *OR 1.022*	.0189 (.0053)*** *OR 1.019*	
Electoral Manipulation	.0235 (.2795) *OR 1.023*	.0078 (.2799) *OR 1.007*	-.0083 (.2833) *OR .9917*	-.0160 (.2796) *OR .9840*	
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.3744 (1.055) *OR 1.454*				
Muslim Region		2.314 (1.885) *OR 10.122*			
Caucasus Region			3.316 (1.227)*** *OR 27.559*		
Economic Development				-1.036 (.5357)* *OR .3547*	
Natural Resource Wealth					
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0140 (.0122) *OR .9860*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		-.0122 (.0201) *OR .9877*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0146 (.0155) *OR .9854*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0012 (.0067) *OR .9987*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0083 (.0061) *OR .9916*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0100 (.0074) *OR .9900*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0072 (.0063) *OR 1.007*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0049 (.0038) *OR 1.004*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource Wealth					

Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.504 (.3997)	2.536 (.4070)	2.234 (.3785)	2.476 (.4234)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	256.22	365.56***	268.43***	298.39***
AIC	931.269	933.476	922.754	877.874
Wald statistic (df)	83.34 (6)***	81.15 (6)***	88.80 (6)***	78.82 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 26: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-4.462 (.4556)***	-4.694 (.4301)***	-4.694 (.4171)***	-3.246 (.5920)***	-4.089 (.4112)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.0703 (3.816) *OR 1.072*	-.0084 (.0083) *OR .9915*	-.0179 (.0088)** *OR .9822*	.0047 (.0083) *OR 1.004*	-.0016 (.0055) *OR .9983*
Percent Rural	.0265 (.0025)*** *OR 1.026*	.0263 (.0024)*** *OR 1.026*	.0251 (.0025)*** *OR 1.025*	.0240 (.0041)*** *OR 1.024*	.0258 (.0023)*** *OR 1.026*
Electoral Manipulation	.1902 (.2435) *OR 1.209*	.1669 (.2439) *OR 1.181*	.1455 (.2457) *OR 1.156*	.1826 (.2450) *OR 1.200*	.1678 (.2460) *OR 1.182*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.3532 (.8688) *OR .7024*				
Muslim Region		1.628 (1.456) *OR 5.098*			
Caucasus Region			2.821 (1.014)*** *OR 16.799*		
Economic Development				-1.065 (.4413)** *OR .3445*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-5.457 (1.128)*** *OR .0042*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0689 (3.816) *OR .9333*				
*Muslim Region		.0104 (.0109) *OR 1.010*			
*Caucasus Region			.0221 (.0114)* *OR 1.022*		
*Economic Development				-.0204 (.0159) *OR .9797*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0084 (.0055) *OR .9916*				
*Muslim Region		-.0113 (.0069) *OR .9887*			
*Caucasus Region			.0007 (.0054) *OR 1.000*		
*Economic				.0011 (.0029)	

Development				*OR 1.001*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.637 (.3351)	2.653 (.3373)	2.356 (.3033)	2.515 (.3456)	2.653 (.3545)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	592.85***	619.02***	520.84***	501.57	553.12
AIC	1482.277	1482.133	1470.202	1416.155	1443.556
Wald statistic (df)	129.77 (6)***	129.57 (6)***	140.26 (6)***	129.56 (6)***	145.56 (4)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 27: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-4.636 (.6185)***	-4.869 (.5407)***	-5.018 (.5333)***	-3.164 (.7450)***	X
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0146 (.0077)* *OR 1.014*	.0146 (.0071)** *OR 1.014*	.0204 (.0072)*** *OR 1.020*	.0043 (.0076) *OR 1.004*	
Percent Rural	.0268 (.0035)*** *OR 1.027*	.0261 (.0031)*** *OR 1.026*	.0218 (.0034)*** *OR 1.022*	.0200 (.0052)*** *OR 1.020*	
Electoral Manipulation	.0246 (.2792) *OR 1.024*	-.0037 (.2795) *OR .9962*	-.0306 (.2838) *OR .9697*	-.0025 (.0052) *OR .9974*	
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.4240 (.9548) *OR 1.528*				
Muslim Region		2.059 (1.429) *OR 7.842*			
Caucasus Region			3.179 (1.020)*** *OR 24.044*		
Economic Development				-1.180 (.5143)** *OR .3070*	
Natural Resource Wealth					
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0158 (.0104) *OR .9843*				
*Muslim Region		-.0177 (.0103)* *OR .9823*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0278 (.0107)*** *OR .9725*		
*Economic Development				.0040 (.0063) *OR 1.004*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0082 (.0059) *OR .9917*				
*Muslim Region		-.0104 (.0071) *OR .9895*			
*Caucasus Region			.0074 (.0062) *OR 1.007*		
*Economic Development				.0043 (.0038) *OR 1.004*	

*Natural Resource Wealth				
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.505 (.3995)	2.528 (.4034)	2.172 (.3540)	2.449 (.4120)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	363.15***	372.23***	291.12***	313.37***
AIC	931.247	930.501	915.644	876.821
Wald statistic (df)	83.36 (6)***	83.76 (6)***	95.24 (6)***	79.96 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 28: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.211 (.7662)***	X	-2.696 (.6283)***	-2.387 (1.012)**	-3.351 (.7315)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	-.0619 (.0166)*** *OR .9399*		-.0511 (.0101)*** *OR .9501*	-.0276 (.0162)* *OR .9726*	-.0522 (.0133)*** *OR .9490*
Percent Rural	.0266 (.0041)*** *OR 1.026*		.0239 (.0036)*** *OR 1.024*	.0093 (.0073) *OR 1.009*	.0232 (.0042)*** *OR 1.023*
Electoral Manipulation	.0985 (.4457) *OR 1.103*		.1002 (.4399) *OR 1.105*	.0961 (.4422) *OR 1.100*	.1341 (.4426) *OR 1.143*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.0267 (1.314) *OR 1.027*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-2.497 (2.537) *OR .0822*		
Economic Development				-.6930 (.5972) *OR .5000*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.7875 (1.444) *OR 2.198*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0264 (.0218) *OR 1.026*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region					
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			-.2967 (.4857) *OR .7432*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0239 (.0119)** *OR .9763*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0003 (.0206) *OR .9996*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0162 (.0083)* *OR .9839*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region					
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0104 (.0050)** *OR 1.010*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0002 (.0077) *OR .9997*

Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.236 (.5131)	3.018 (.4909)	2.844 (.4864)	3.197 (.5098)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	407.72***	363.70***	330.68***	392.91***
AIC	660.408	649.696	625.268	664.058
Wald statistic (df)	56.36 (6)***	57.40 (5)***	56.27 (6)***	55.42 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 29: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-3.879 (.4769)***	X	-3.700 (.4197)***	-4.198 (.6239)***	-4.105 (.4793)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-5.641 (6.033) *OR .0035*		-.0164 (.0083)** *OR .9836*	-.0332 (.0160)** *OR .9672*	-.0431 (.0144)*** *OR .9577*
Percent Rural	.0184 (.0025)*** *OR 1.018*		.0180 (.0023)*** *OR 1.018*	.0214 (.0036)*** *OR 1.021*	.0173 (.0027)*** *OR 1.017*
Electoral Manipulation	.3820 (.3061) *OR 1.465*		.3907 (.3055) *OR 1.478*	.3194 (.3121) *OR 1.376*	.4390 (.3091) *OR 1.551*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.2659 (.9059) *OR .7664*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-4.376 (1.637)*** *OR .0125*		
Economic Development				.1111 (.3255) *OR 1.117*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.089 (.8428) *OR 2.972*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region	5.629 (6.033) *OR 278.411*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0129 (.0129) *OR 1.013*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0468 (.0190)** *OR 1.048*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0053 (.0064) *OR .9946*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0017 (.0014) *OR .9982*	

*Natural Resource Wealth				.0005 (.0052) *OR 1.000*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.876 (.3571)	2.789 (.3504)	2.831 (.3656)	2.996 (.3796)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	617.38***	587.80***	575.71***	615.66***
AIC	1360.264	1346.9	1304.167	1350.521
Wald statistic (df)	63.76 (6)***	68.66 (4)***	64.95 (6)***	69.42 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 30: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-3.262 (.7926)***	X	-3.482 (.6538)***	-3.718 (1.051)***	-4.424 (.7576)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	-.0621 (.0166)*** *OR .9397*		-.0383 (.0126)*** *OR .9623*	.0234 (.0224) *OR 1.023*	-.0196 (.0147) *OR .9805*
Percent Rural	.0269 (.0041)*** *OR 1.027*		.0210 (.0035)*** *OR 1.021*	.0040 (.0072) *OR 1.004*	.0200 (.0040)*** *OR 1.020*
Electoral Manipulation	-.0146 (.4406) *OR .9854*		-.1389 (.4336) *OR .8702*	-.1797 (.4353) *OR .8355*	-.1252 (.4353) *OR .8822*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-1.336 (1.324) *OR .2626*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-4.961 (2.725)* *OR .0070*		
Economic Development				-.4413 (.6217) *OR .6431*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.448 (1.490) *OR 4.225*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	.0663 (.0271)** *OR 1.068*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			-.0894 (.2605) *OR .9144*		
*Economic Development				-.0422 (.0154)*** *OR .9586*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0504 (.0275)* *OR .9508*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0246 (.0076)*** *OR .9756*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0120 (.0050)**	

			OR 1.012	
*Natural Resource Wealth				-.0010 (.0076) *OR .9989*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.378 (.5359)	3.257 (.5366)	3.254 (.5468)	3.466 (.5565)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	422.87***	410.50***	409.38***	451.25***
AIC	667.015	671.128	643.617	682.181
Wald statistic (df)	50.61 (6)***	45.98 (5)***	41.02 (6)***	41.26 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 31: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-.3705 (.6300)	-.7110 (.5924)	-.7043 (.6029)	-1.928 (1.011)*	-.8877 (.5930)
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	-.0503 (.0254)** *OR .9509*	-.0385 (.0182)** *OR .9621*	-.0131 (.0168)* *OR .9692*	-.0348 (.0228) *OR .9657*	-.0361 (.0197)* *OR .9644*
Percent Rural	-.0693 (.0087)*** *OR .9330*	-.0672 (.0082)*** *OR .9349*	-.0675 (.0082)*** *OR .9347*	-.0124 (.0125) *OR .9876*	-.0761 (.0104)*** *OR .9266*
Electoral Manipulation	-1.032 (1.176) *OR .3559*	-1.041 (1.234) *OR .3529*	-.6136 (1.145) *OR .5413*	-.6749 (1.157) *OR .5091*	-.7311 (1.156) *OR .4813*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-2.388 (1.443)* *OR .0917*				
Muslim Region		-2.577 (2.703) *OR .0759*			
Caucasus Region			-1.147 (1.647) *OR .3174*		
Economic Development				.7877 (5740) *OR 2.198*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.5540 (1.217) *OR 1.740*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0544 (.0352) *OR 1.055*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		.0551 (.0419) *OR 1.056*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.0152 (.0339) *OR 1.015*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0016 (.0127) *OR .9983*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0188 (.0270) *OR 1.019*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.0127 (.0202) *OR 1.012*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region					
Percent Rural *Economic Development				-.0457 (.0117)*** *OR .9552*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource Wealth					.0297 (.0145)**

					OR 1.030
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.530 (.4565)	2.617 (.4750)	2.565 (.4648)	2.337 (.4301)	2.269 (.4333)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	134.89***	134.40***	133.75***	130.63***	99.00***
AIC	435.85	435.948	437.206	405.755	432.648
Wald statistic (df)	76.53 (6)***	75.21 (5)***	75.27 (5)***	68.92 (6)***	76.12 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 32: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	X	-.9386 (.3062)***	-.8671 (.3107)***	-1.497 (.4735)***	-1.119 (.3019)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority		-.0315 (.0211) *OR .9689*	-.0353 (.0201)* *OR .9652*	-.0030 (.0206) *OR .9969*	-.0173 (.0188) *OR .9828*
Percent Rural		-.0666 (.0052)*** *OR .9355*	-.0667 (.0052)*** *OR .9354*	-.0749 (.0085)*** *OR .9277*	-.0719 (.0060)*** *OR .9305*
Electoral Manipulation		-1.231 (.8437) *OR .2917*	-1.195 (.8444) *OR .3025*	-.9762 (.8476) *OR .3767*	-1.161 (.8443) *OR .3130*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region					
Muslim Region		-1.121 (1.636) *OR .3257*			
Caucasus Region			-1.433 (1.140) *OR .2385*		
Economic Development				.3386 (.2456) *OR 1.403*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.334 (.6956)* *OR 3.799*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0299 (.0398) *OR 1.030*			
*Caucasus Region			.0451 (.0359) *OR 1.046*		
*Economic Development				-.0174 (.0170) *OR .9826*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0411 (.0348) *OR .9596*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0048 (.0029)* *OR 1.004*	
*Natural Resource					.0268

Wealth				(.0101)*** *OR 1.027*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.063 (2.715)	2.058 (.2728)	2.086 (.2918)	1.809 (.2508)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	242.78***	238.96***	205.27***	211.34***
AIC	986.854	985.293	947.212	977.486
Wald statistic (df)	172.63 (5)***	172.85 (5)***	165.68 (6)***	177.02 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 33: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-.2722 (.6322)	-1.059 (.5664)*	-1.144 (.5541)**	-1.947 (1.041)*	-.7601 (.6007)
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	-.0504 (.0255)** *OR .9508*	-.0314 (.0204) *OR .9690*	-.0158 (.0172) *OR .9842*	-.0638 (.0446) *OR .9381*	-.0818 (.0362)** *OR .9214*
Percent Rural	-.0693 (.0087)*** *OR .9330*	-.0683 (.0082)*** *OR .9338*	-.0683 (.0081)*** *OR .9339*	-.0214 (.0124)* *OR .9787*	-.0756 (.0105)*** *OR .9271*
Electoral Manipulation	-1.206 (1.180) *OR .2993*	-1.033 (1.161) *OR .3555*	-.8827 (1.132) *OR .4136*	-1.132 (1.154) *OR .3223*	-1.089 (1.143) *OR .3362*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-2.862 (1.151)** *OR .0571*				
Muslim Region		-1.703 (1.806) *OR .1820*			
Caucasus Region			-.2441 (1.485) *OR .7833*		
Economic Development				.5550 (.5799) *OR 1.741*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.0853 (.0403) *OR .7813*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region	.0881 (.0382)** *OR 1.092*				
Percent Other Minority *Muslim Region		.0486 (.0418) *OR 1.049*			
Percent Other Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0500 (.0586) *OR .9511*		
Percent Other Minority *Economic Development				.0160 (.0190) *OR 1.016*	
Percent Other Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0853 (.0403)** *OR 1.089*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.0110 (.0196) *OR 1.011*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region					
Percent Rural *Economic Development				-.0388 (.0115)*** *OR .9618*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource					.0298

Wealth					(.0144)** *OR 1.030*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.541 (.4593)	2.662 (.4751)	2.579 (.4562)	2.520 (.4517)	2.369 (.4401)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	134.63***	145.75***	142.72***	148.26***	117.28***
AIC	434.137	438.775	438.880	409.101	430.661
Wald statistic (df)	76.06 (6)***	73.98 (5)***	76.10 (5)***	66.92 (6)***	76.16 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 34: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Fatherland-All Russia Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	X	-14.916 (4.595)***	-13.103 (3.619)***	-8.407 (2.185)***	-10.132 (2.246)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority		.0096 (.0168) *OR 1.009*	.0244 (.0139)* *OR 1.024*	.0174 (.0153) *OR 1.017*	.0218 (.0133) *OR 1.022*
Percent Rural		.0331 (.0157)** *OR 1.033*	.0221 (.0079)*** *OR 1.022*	-.0017 (.0075) *OR .9982*	-.0013 (.0067) *OR .9986*
Electoral Manipulation		2.051 (.4523)*** *OR 7.783*	2.140 (.4452)*** *OR 8.504*	2.084 (.4443)*** *OR 8.038*	2.108 (.4532)*** *OR 8.237*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region					
Muslim Region		6.962 (5.045) *OR 1056.104*			
Caucasus Region			1.641 (3.261) *OR 5.160*		
Economic Development				-1.622 (.9398)* *OR .1974*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-1.235 (2.637) *OR .2907*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0727 (.0296)** *OR 1.075*			
*Caucasus Region			.0798 (.0450)* *OR 1.083*		
*Economic Development				.0265 (.0120)** *OR 1.026*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0781 (.0306)** *OR 1.081*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0345 (.0166)** *OR .9660*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0402 (.0110)*** *OR .9605*		
*Economic Development				.0043 (.0041) *OR 1.004*	

*Natural Resource Wealth				.0133 (.0105) *OR 1.013*
Random Effects Parameter: Intercept (sd)	5.585 (2.714)	4.988 (2.084)	4.135 (1.134)	4.063 (1.302)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	130.87***	202.70***	149.33***	110.53***
AIC	264.878	265.775	272.825	265.172
Wald statistic (df)	60.17 (6)***	67.78 (6)***	56.97 (6)***	59.53 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Fatherland-All Russia's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 35: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Fatherland-All Russia Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-11.673 (1.820)***	-10.474 (2.241)***	-12.410 (3.491)***	-14.783 (4.242)***	-11.092 (2.671)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-.0030 (.0062) *OR .9969*	.0302 (.0133)** *OR 1.030*	.0284 (.0126)** *OR 1.028*	-.0219 (.0084)*** *OR .9782*	-.0093 (.0068) *OR .9906*
Percent Rural	.0054 (.0044) *OR 1.005*	-.0041 (.0070) *OR .9959*	.0066 (.0057) *OR 1.006*	.0063 (.0070) *OR 1.006*	-.0031 (.0052) *OR .9968*
Electoral Manipulation	2.262 (.4104)*** *OR 13.826*	2.704 (.4207)*** *OR 14.593*	2.587 (.4170)*** *OR 13.303*	2.412 (.4137)*** *OR 11.159*	2.315 (.4182)*** *OR 10.131*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	5.517 (1.734)*** *248.960*				
Muslim Region		8.190 (2.899)*** *OR 3607.681*			
Caucasus Region			6.988 (3.276)** *OR 1084.492*		
Economic Development				-.0496 (.7410) *OR .9515*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.8031 (2.523) *OR 2.232*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0404 (.0153)*** *OR .9604*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0423 (.0148)*** *OR .9584*		
*Economic Development				.0341 (.0099)*** *OR 1.034*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0800 (.0254)*** *OR 1.083*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0131 (.0085) *OR 1.013*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0149 (.0088)*		

			OR .9851		
*Economic Development				-.0018 (.0031) *OR .9981*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0187 (.0090)** *OR 1.018*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	4.346 (1.014)	4.366 (1.374)	5.442 (2.221)	7.815 (2.882)	5.185 (.1663)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	389.83***	310.44***	444.02***	351.94***	359.13***
AIC	433.043	428.548	429.656	430.700	420.455
Wald statistic (df)	72.99 (4)***	75.94 (6)***	70.29 (6)***	60.42 (6)***	62.90 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Fatherland-All Russia's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 36: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Fatherland-All Russia Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	X	-15.132 (4.925)***	-18.184 (5.143)***	-15.483 (5.751)***	-15.985 (5.288)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority		-.0150 (.0316) *OR .9850*	.0143 (.0205) *OR 1.014*	.0223 (.0100)** *OR 1.022*	.0215 (.0082)*** *OR 1.021*
Percent Rural		.0348 (.0152)** *OR 1.035*	.0284 (.0073)*** *OR 1.028*	.0009 (.0071) *OR 1.000*	.0023 (.0064) *OR 1.002*
Electoral Manipulation		2.519 (.4403)*** *OR 12.422*	2.220 (.4432)*** *OR 9.210*	2.254 (.4359)*** *OR 9.528*	2.253 (.4400)*** *OR 9.518*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region					
Muslim Region		11.562 (5.252)** *OR 105078.5*			
Caucasus Region			10.320 (4.834)** *OR 30345.54*		
Economic Development				-1.093 (.9862) *OR .3349*	
Natural Resource Wealth					6.057 (4.091) *OR 427.231*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0405 (.0328) *OR 1.041*			
*Caucasus Region			.0105 (.0226) *OR 1.010*		
*Economic Development				.0006 (.0106) *OR 1.000*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0120 (.0275) *OR 1.012*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0262 (.0160) *OR .9741*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0370 (.0098)*** *OR .9636*		

*Economic Development			.0085 (.0039)** *OR 1.008*	
*Natural Resource Wealth				.0244 (.0098)** *OR 1.024*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	5.893 (2.783)	8.460 (3.561)	8.778 (3.965)	8.124 (3.805)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	148.21***	316.91***	289.37***	200.89***
AIC	271.512	270.433	282.377	276.176
Wald statistic (df)	69.80 (6)***	68.53 (6)***	66.68 (6)***	68.41 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Fatherland-All Russia's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 37: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Unity Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.892 (.5363)***	-2.614 (.4341)***	-2.791 (.4744)***	-2.127 (.6411)***	-2.709 (.4811)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0040 (.0092) *OR 1.004*	.0010 (.0064) *OR 1.001*	.0009 (.0066) *OR 1.000*	.0152 (.0091)* *OR 1.015*	.0086 (.0069) *OR 1.008*
Percent Rural	.0049 (.0030) *OR 1.005*	.0047 (.0027)* *OR 1.004*	.0062 (.0029)** *OR 1.006*	-.0038 (.0047) *OR .9961*	.0025 (.0028) *OR 1.002*
Electoral Manipulation	.2885 (.3211) *OR 1.334*	.2286 (.3254) *OR 1.256*	.2869 (.3202) *OR 1.332*	.2254 (.3180) *OR 1.252*	.2555 (.3186) *OR 1.291*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.2791 (.9403) *OR 1.322*				
Muslim Region		-33.664 (18.775)* *OR 2.40e-15*			
Caucasus Region			-.3768 (1.323) *OR .6860*		
Economic Development				-.4256 (.3674) *OR .6533*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.4213 (1.082) *OR .6561*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0016 (.0134) *OR .9983*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		.3646 (.2020)* *OR 1.440*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.0057 (.0187) *OR 1.005*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0132 (.0068)* *OR .9868*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0325 (.0160)** *OR .9679*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0053 (.0058) *OR .9946*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0312 (.0139)** *OR .9692*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0152 (.0066)** *OR .9848*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0054 (.0028)* *OR 1.005*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					.0078 (.0077) *OR 1.007*
Random Effects Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.306 (.3659)	2.143 (.3464)	2.899 (.3638)	1.035 (.3427)	2.190 (.3484)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	253.34***	221.31***	250.84***	193.65***	242.34***
AIC	927.034	914.187	921.460	902.837	922.099
Wald statistic (df)	4.96 (6)	8.52 (6)	10.19 (6)	11.26 (6)*	9.37 (6)

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Unity's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 38: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Unity Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.881 (.3555)***	-.2660 (.3097)***	-2.755 (.3212)***	-2.480 (.4371)***	-2.724 (.3305)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-7.884 (3.178)** *OR .0003*	.0015 (.0066) *OR 1.001*	.0023 (.0068) *OR 1.002*	.0151 (.0073)** *OR 1.015*	.0039 (.0056) *OR 1.003*
Percent Rural	.0064 (.0021)*** *OR 1.006*	.0063 (.0020)*** *OR 1.006*	.0075 (.0021)*** *OR 1.007*	.0043 (.0031) *OR 1.004*	.0048 (.0021)** *OR 1.004*
Electoral Manipulation	.1631 (.2499) *OR 1.177*	.2223 (.2508) *OR 1.248*	.1834 (.2497) *OR 1.201*	.1808 (.2521) *OR 1.198*	.1790 (.2511) *OR 1.196*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.5740 (.6650) *OR 1.775*				
Muslim Region		-1.658 (1.386) *OR .1903*			
Caucasus Region			-.2870 (1.000) *OR .7505*		
Economic Development				-.1618 (.2482) *OR .8505*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.1545 (.7131) *OR .8568*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region	7.886 (3.178)** *OR 2662.418*				
*Muslim Region		.0052 (.0103) *OR 1.005*			
*Caucasus Region			.0014 (.0101) *OR 1.001*		
*Economic Development				-.0218 (.0097)** *OR .9783*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0123 (.0125) *OR .9877*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0038 (.0047) *OR .9961*				
*Muslim Region		-.0108 (.0075) *OR .9891*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0138 (.0055)** *OR .9862*		
*Economic Development				.0008 (.0015) *OR 1.000*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					.0063 (.0056) *OR 1.006*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.196 (.2654)	2.179 (.2623)	2.205 (.2655)	2.056 (.2550)	2.211 (.2693)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	446.98***	439.44***	455.34***	384.14***	445.98
AIC	1643.449	1639.304	1636.785	1596.332	1642.937
Wald statistic (df)	18.04 (6)***	15.98 (6)**	18.40 (6)***	15.97 (6)**	12.37 (6)*

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Unity's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 39: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Unity Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.89 (.5366)***	-2.669 (.4373)***	-2.805 (.4629)***	-1.743 (.6131)***	-2.528 (.4476)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0040 (.0092) *OR 1.004*	.0036 (.0082) *OR 1.003*	.0024 (.0083) *OR 1.002*	.0010 (.0076) *OR 1.001*	.0039 (.0059) *OR 1.003*
Percent Rural	.0049 (.0030) *OR 1.004*	.0045 (.0026)* *OR 1.004*	.0062 (.0028)** *OR 1.006*	-.0022 (.0045) *OR .9977*	.0033 (.0027) *OR 1.003*
Electoral Manipulation	.2972 (.3184) *OR 1.346*	.3516 (.3182) *OR 1.421*	.3076 (.3170) *OR 1.360*	.2565 (.3175) *OR 1.292*	.2747 (.3170) *OR 1.316*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.4361 (.8439) *OR 1.546*				
Muslim Region		-1.398 (1.447) *OR .2470*			
Caucasus Region			-.0202 (1.088) *OR .9799*		
Economic Development				-.6693 (.3658)* *OR .5120*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.2965 (1.111) *OR .7433*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0068 (.0117) *OR .9931*				
Percent Other Minority *Muslim Region		-.0058 (.0114) *OR .9941*			
Percent Other Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0055 (.0115) *OR .9944*		
Percent Other Minority *Economic Development				-.0013 (.0058) *OR .9986*	
Percent Other Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0481 (.0272)* *OR .9529*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0049 (.0054) *OR .9951*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0085 (.0075) *OR .9914*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0148 (.0064) *OR .9852*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0044 (.0028) *OR 1.004*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource					.0016 (.0070)

Wealth					*OR 1.001*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.308 (.3661)	2.246 (.3558)	2.311 (.3657)	2.177 (.3551)	2.206 (.3536)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	255.19***	244.50***	251.32***	230.84***	237.42***
AIC	926.937	923.991	921.388	907.119	922.706
Wald statistic (df)	5.06 (6)	7.77 (6)	10.29 (6)	7.47 (6)	8.32 (6)

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Unity's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 40: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-11.292 (1.907)***	-11.598 (2.028)***	-10.330 (2.021)***	-9.326 (2.064)***	X
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0519 (.0175)*** *OR 1.053*	.0483 (.0153)*** *OR 1.049*	.0433 (.0172)** *OR 1.044*	.0727 (.0217)*** *OR 1.075*	
Percent Rural	.0376 (.0131)*** *OR 1.038*	.0295 (.0106)*** *OR 1.029*	.0191 (.0148) *OR 1.019*	.0105 (.0115) *OR 1.010*	
Electoral Manipulation	-.0112 (.5327) *OR .9888*	-.0555 (.5437) *OR .9460*	-.1400 (.5461) *OR .8693*	-.0431 (.5279) *OR .9577*	
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.3260 (2.733) *OR 1.385*				
Muslim Region		4.001 (3.294) *OR 54.697*			
Caucasus Region			3.757 (2.410) *OR 42.824*		
Economic Development				-1.133 (1.331) *OR .3220*	
Natural Resource Wealth					
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0042 (.0302) *OR 1.004*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		-.0162 (.0306) *OR .9839*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0062 (.0249) *OR .9937*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0361 (.0200)* *OR .9645*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0229 (.0165) *OR .9773*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0079 (.0162) *OR .9920*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0096 (.0177) *OR 1.009*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0155 (.0113) *OR 1.015*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource Wealth					

Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.327 (.7499)	3.569 (.8696)	2.691 (.8059)	3.276 (.8876)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	85.72***	90.40***	37.31***	68.56***
AIC	277.777	278.789	270.232	270.084
Wald statistic (df)	25.09 (6)***	23.13 (6)***	25.96 (6)***	24.12 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 41: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-8.761 (1.014)***	-9.038 (1.090)***	-8.489 (1.004)***	-5.086 (1.162)***	X
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	2.508 (4.970) *OR 12.283*	.0155 (.0146) *OR 1.015*	-.0132 (.0163) *OR .9868*	.0156 (.0141) *OR 1.015*	
Percent Rural	.0310 (.0068)*** *OR 1.031*	.0284 (.0063)*** *OR 1.028*	.0277 (.0070)*** *OR 1.028*	.0134 (.0097) *OR 1.013*	
Electoral Manipulation	.7302 (.4108)* *OR 2.075*	.6701 (.4103) *OR 1.954*	.7123 (.4088)* *OR 2.038*	.7447 (.4056)* *OR 2.105*	
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.9758 (1.439) *OR 2.653*				
Muslim Region		3.546 (2.114)* *OR 34.681*			
Caucasus Region			3.574 (1.557)** *OR 35.684*		
Economic Development				-3.750 (1.429)*** *OR .0234*	
Natural Resource Wealth					
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-2.501 (4.970) *OR .0819*				
*Muslim Region		-.0131 (.0164) *OR .9869*			
*Caucasus Region			.0208 (.0178) *OR 1.021*		
*Economic Development				-.0337 (.0394) *OR .9668*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0126 (.0116) *OR .9873*				
*Muslim Region		-.0065 (.0135) *OR .9934*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0006 (.0116) *OR .9993*		
*Economic Development				.0207 (.0129) *OR 1.020*	

*Natural Resource Wealth				
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.082 (.5264)	3.160 (.5644)	2.704 (.5230)	2.939 (.5862)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	195.14***	197.94***	137.89***	146.52***
AIC	474.483	472.226	464.198	456.568
Wald statistic (df)	32.41 (6)***	33.55 (6)***	40.98 (6)***	33.57 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 42: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-22.786 (5.778)***	-10.409 (1.783)***	-10.012 (1.829)***	-18.009 (8.171)**	X
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0617 (.0202)*** *OR1.063*	.0418 (.0161)*** *OR 1.042*	.0586 (.0170)*** *OR 1.060*	-.0053 (.0134) *OR .9946*	
Percent Rural	.0415 (.0142)*** *OR 1.042*	.0304 (.0102)*** *OR 1.030*	.0214 (.0150) *OR 1.021*	.0201 (.0127) *OR 1.020*	
Electoral Manipulation	.3108 (.5520) *OR 1.364*	.1078 (.5272) *OR 1.113*	.1061 (.5300) *OR 1.112*	.3389 (.5406) *OR 1.403*	
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	2.862 (11.728) *OR 17.509*				
Muslim Region		5.039 (2.542)** *OR 154.410*			
Caucasus Region			5.529 (2.065)*** *OR 251.899*		
Economic Development				-3.202 (4.832) *OR .0406*	
Natural Resource Wealth					
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0623 (.0216)*** *OR .9395*				
*Muslim Region		-.0417 (.0178)** *OR .9591*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0610 (.0186)*** *OR .9407*		
*Economic Development				.0336 (.0273) *OR 1.034*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0182 (.0180) *OR .9819*				
*Muslim Region		-.0066 (.0158) *OR .9933*			
*Caucasus Region			.0069 (.0177) *OR 1.006*		

*Economic Development				.0137 (.0119) *OR 1.013*
*Natural Resource Wealth				
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	96.783 (1.484)	3.445 (.8136)	2.598 (.7383)	97.537 (1.728)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	52.54***	94.50***	46.99***	18.55***
AIC	330.947	285.375	269.684	335.911
Wald statistic (df)	21.91 (6)***	21.19 (6)***	29.95 (6)***	16.12 (6)**

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 43: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-6.375 (1.154)***	X	X	-2.664 (1.662)	X
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	-.0047 (.0198) *OR .9952*			-.0825 (.0431)* *OR .9208*	
Percent Rural	.0105 (.0060)* *OR 1.010*			-.0024 (.0120) *OR .9975*	
Electoral Manipulation	1.156 (.6519)* *OR 3.177*			1.083 (.6560)* *OR 2.954*	
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-3.416 (2.113) *OR .0328*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				-2.308 (1.179)** *OR .0994*	
Natural Resource Wealth					
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region					
Percent Minority *Muslim Region					
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region					
Percent Minority *Economic Development				.0115 (.0306) *OR 1.011*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region					
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0134 (.0106) *OR 1.013*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource Wealth					

Random Effects		
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.219 (.7747)	2.436 (.6792)
Model Fit:		
Likelihood Ratio Test	101.48***	67.13***
AIC	248.000	230.798
Wald statistic (df)	11.58 (4)**	15.81 (6)**

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 44: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-6.270 (.7447)***	X	-6.486 (.7706)***	-5.587 (1.014)***	-6.487 (.7807)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.0283 (.0259) *OR 1.028*		-.0060 (.0153) *OR .9939*	-.0394 (.0406) *OR .9613*	-.0066 (.0148) *OR .9934*
Percent Rural	.0079 (.0048)* *OR 1.008*		.0080 (.0047)* *OR 1.008*	.0048 (.0082) *OR 1.004*	.0080 (.0047)* *OR .1008*
Electoral Manipulation	1.093 (.5219)** *OR 2.985*		1.051 (.5190)** *OR 2.861*	1.149 (.5174)** *OR 3.157*	1.058 (.5201)** *OR 2.881*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-3.799 (2.074)* *OR .0223*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-1.851 (1.874) *OR .1569*		
Economic Development				-.4243 (.5548) *OR .6542*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.8542 (1.040) *OR .4255*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0166 (.0455) *OR .9834*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0019 (.0054) *OR 1.001*	
*Natural Resource					

Wealth				
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.735 (.5033)	2.657 (.4858)	2.396 (115.41)	2.645 (.4843)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	133.50***	132.57***	115.41***	132.61***
AIC	400.047	404.094	389.509	404.559
Wald statistic (df)	12.41 (4)**	10.19 (4)**	11.97 (6)*	9.94 (4)**

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 45: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	X	X	X	-5.422 (1.781)***	X
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority				-.0247 (.0450) *OR .9755*	
Percent Rural				-.0044 (.0119) *OR .9955*	
Electoral Manipulation				.9327 (.6597) *OR 2.541*	
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region					
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				-1.656 (1.155) *OR .1908*	
Natural Resource Wealth					
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0045 (.0359) *OR .9954*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0140 (.0105) *OR 1.14*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					

Random Effects	
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.166 (.7790)
Model Fit:	
Likelihood Ratio Test	104.00***
AIC	239.439
Wald statistic (df)	9.47 (6)

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 46: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.388 (1.162)**	-2.801 (1.202)**	X	-.4979 (2.560)	-2.326 (1.371)*
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	-.0938 (.0570) *OR .9104*	-.1173 (.0537)** *OR .8892*		-.3458 (.1477)** *OR .7075*	-.2092 (.0986)** *OR .8112*
Percent Rural	-.0953 (.0184)*** *OR .9090*	-.0938 (.0179)*** *OR .9104*		-.0374 (.0508) *OR .9632*	-.2857 (.1311)** *OR .7514*
Electoral Manipulation	X	X		X	X
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-6.174 (3.830) *OR .0020*				
Muslim Region		-2.131 (4.790) *OR .1186*			
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				-1.216 (1.455) *OR .2962*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.4069 (2.461) *OR .6656*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0954 (.0824) *OR 1.100*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		.0903 (.0884) *OR 1.094*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region					
Percent Minority *Economic Development				.1125 (.0597)* *OR 1.119*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.1792 (.1077)* *OR 1.196*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region					
Percent Rural *Economic Development				-.0563 (.0492) *OR .9451*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource Wealth					.2289 (.1316)* *OR 1.257*

Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.995 (1.070)	3.872 (.9338)	3.964 (1.077)	3.964 (1.014)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	85.31***	86.93***	83.34***	80.36***
AIC	204.743	207.481	196.137	192.903
Wald statistic (df)	28.02 (4)***	28.04 (4)***	19.56 (5)***	19.79 (5)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 47: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	X	-2.881 (.4632)***	-2.786 (.4608)***	-3.805 (.7497)***	-3.022 (.4993)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority		-.1806 (.1359) *OR .8347*	-.1280 (.0747)* *OR .8797*	-.2136 (.2032) *OR .8075*	-.2236 (.2162) *OR .7995*
Percent Rural		-.0809 (.0114)*** *OR .9222*	-.0813 (.0114)*** *OR .9218*	-.0622 (.0227)*** *OR .9396*	-.1064 (.0192)*** *OR .8990*
Electoral Manipulation		X	X	X	X
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region					
Muslim Region		1.041 (2.768) *OR 2.832*			
Caucasus Region			-1.395 (1.588) *OR .2478*		
Economic Development				.5670 (.3116)* *OR 1.763*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.630 (.9195)* *OR 5.107*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0431 (.1920) *OR 1.044*			
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0421 (.0828) *OR 1.043*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0706 (.2331) *OR 1.073*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0124 (.0149) *OR .9876*	
*Natural Resource					.0571

Wealth				(.0228)** *OR 1.058*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.259 (.4188)	2.247 (.4190)	2.315 (.4449)	2.094 (.3942)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	91.94***	90.26***	91.21***	87.11***
AIC	502.570	500.168	474.450	492.522
Wald statistic (df)	52.63 (4)***	52.84 (3)***	52.42 (5)***	48.16 (5)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 48: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.369 (1.146)**	-3.560 (1.216)***	X	-3.300 (2.589)	-3.285 (1.419)**
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	-.0926 (.0565) *OR .9114*	-.0906 (.0560) *OR .9133*		-.3032 (.1670)* *OR .7383*	-.1808 (.1042)* *OR .8345*
Percent Rural	-.0948 (.0182)*** *OR .9094*	-.0930 (.0175)*** *OR .9111*		-.0540 (.0417) *OR .9473*	-.2857 (.1314)** *OR .7514*
Electoral Manipulation	X	X		X	X
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-7.162 (3.164)** *OR .0007*				
Muslim Region		-3.946 (3.617) *OR .0193*			
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				-.2320 (1.303) *OR .7929*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.4361 (2.209) *OR .6465*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region	.1428 (.0880) *OR 1.153*				
Percent Other Minority *Muslim Region		.1256 (.0873) *OR 1.133*			
Percent Other Minority *Caucasus Region					
Percent Other Minority *Economic Development				.1046 (.0675) *OR 1.110*	
Percent Other Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.1812 (.1092)* *OR 1.198*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region					
Percent Rural *Economic Development				-.0392 (.0385) *OR .9614*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource					.2308 (.1319)*

Wealth				*OR 1.259*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.935 (1.035)	3.920 (.9084)	4.260 (1.128)	4.007 (.9659)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	85.16***	94.16***	98.66***	95.98***
AIC	204.133	211.168	202.691	197.490
Wald statistic (df)	28.80 (4)***	28.53 (4)***	20.63 (5)***	19.51 (5)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 49: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Fatherland-All Russia Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	X	-19.133 (6.686)***	-13.938 (2.762)***	-9.107 (2.989)***	-9.326 (1.875)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority		.0034 (.0196) *OR 1.003*	.0401 (.0139)*** *OR 1.040*	.0095 (.0178) *OR 1.009*	.0176 (.0149) *OR 1.017*
Percent Rural		.0405 (.0185)** *OR 1.041*	.0223 (.0093)** *OR 1.022*	-.0103 (.0107) *OR .9897*	-.0093 (.0093) *OR .9907*
Electoral Manipulation		3.515 (.7752)*** *OR 33.636*	3.539 (.6880)*** *OR 34.466*	3.323 (.6830)*** *OR 27.760*	3.592 (.7211)*** *OR 36.335*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region					
Muslim Region		8.292 (6.513) *OR 3992.459*			
Caucasus Region			4.798 (2.898)* *OR 121.334*		
Economic Development				-2.035 (1.168)* *OR .1305*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-2.222 (2.519) *OR .1083*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0696 (.0291)** *OR 1.072*			
*Caucasus Region			.0027 (.0301) *OR 1.002*		
*Economic Development				.0253 (.0110)** *OR 1.025*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0673 (.0264)* *OR 1.069*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0460 (.0203)** *OR .9550*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0539 (.0148)*** *OR .9474*		
*Economic Development				.0099 (.0058)* *OR 1.010*	

*Natural Resource Wealth				.0264 (.0141)* *OR 1.026*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	7.280 (4.572)	4.294 (1.541)	4.331 (1.662)	2.864 (1.112)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	119.55***	124.73***	87.46***	43.26***
AIC	199.052	197.695	201.341	194.271
Wald statistic (df)	55.28 (6)***	52.14 (6)***	46.87 (6)***	52.45 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Fatherland-All Russia's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 50: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Fatherland-All Russia Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	X	-20.465 (7.359)***	-18.487 (6.605)***	-16.685 (6.337)***	-11.213 (2.372)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority		.0158 (.0190) *OR 1.015*	.0323 (.0150)** *OR 1.032*	.0014 (.0117) *OR 1.001*	.0086 (.0106) *OR 1.008*
Percent Rural		.0301 (.0176)* *OR 1.030*	.0184 (.0088)** *OR 1.018*	-.0094 (.0105) *OR .9906*	-.0075 (.0093) *OR .9924*
Electoral Manipulation		3.973 (.7565)*** *OR 53.165*	3.537 (.6572)*** *OR 34.364*	3.398 (.6490)*** *OR 29.912*	3.747 (.6949)*** *OR 42.395*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region					
Muslim Region		13.353 (6.572)** *OR 630188.7*			
Caucasus Region			5.734 (2.565)** *OR 309.372*		
Economic Development				-.8556 (1.014) *OR .4250*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.875 (2.109) *OR 6.523*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0013 (.0215) *OR .9986*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0257 (.0199) *OR .9746*		
*Economic Development				.0170 (.0086)** *OR 1.017*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0507 (.0208)** *OR 1.052*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0304 (.0192) *OR .9699*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0450 (.0139)*** *OR .9559*		

*Economic Development			.0089 (.0052)* *OR 1.009*	
*Natural Resource Wealth				.0195 (.0128) *OR 1.019*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	8.272 (4.969)	7.922 (4.652)	8.943 (4.585)	3.973 (1.523)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	112.19***	166.71***	111.16***	50.73***
AIC	220.620	212.611	219.942	214.719
Wald statistic (df)	58.21 (6)***	52.55 (6)***	48.43 (6)****	54.56 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Fatherland-All Russia's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 51: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Fatherland-All Russia Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	X	-18.242 (6.492)***	-19.988 (6.285)***	-16.065 (6.483)**	-11.477 (3.098)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority		-.0474 (.0416) *OR .9536*	.0011 (.0163) *OR 1.001*	-.0032 (.0140) *OR .9967*	-.0008 (.0123) *OR .9991*
Percent Rural		.0383 (.0178)** *OR 1.039*	.0280 (.0089)*** *OR 1.028*	-.0098 (.0104) *OR .9902*	-.0070 (.0091) *OR .9930*
Electoral Manipulation		4.201 (.8045)*** *OR 66.759*	3.685 (.7183)*** *OR 39.881*	3.600 (.6890)*** *OR 36.615*	3.790 (.7132)*** *OR 44.258*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region					
Muslim Region		11.737 (6.070)* *OR 125191.9*			
Caucasus Region			6.009 (2.717)** *OR 407.209*		
Economic Development				-1.485 (1.115) *OR .2264*	
Natural Resource Wealth					2.557 (2.848) *OR 12.907*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0546 (.0429) *OR 1.056*			
*Caucasus Region			.0067 (.0241) *OR 1.006*		
*Economic Development				.0056 (.0089) *OR 1.005*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0108 (.0224) *OR 1.010*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0352 (.0197)* *OR .9653*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0541 (.0137)*** *OR .9473*		
*Economic				.0126	

Development			(.0053)** *OR 1.012*	
*Natural Resource Wealth				.0321 (.0130)** *OR 1.032*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	6.945 (3.984)	9.034 (4.476)	9.216 (4.632)	4.392 (1.882)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	111.00***	205.04***	166.20***	82.18***
AIC	212.228	207.582	217.921	213.848
Wald statistic (df)	53.28 (6)***	48.19 (6)***	46.13 (6)***	49.72 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Fatherland-All Russia's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 52: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Unity Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-11.800 (3.826)***	X	X	-9.608 (2.886)***	X
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0144 (.0306) *OR 1.014*			.0631 (.0287)** *OR 1.065*	
Percent Rural	.0056 (.0141) *OR 1.005*			-.0023 (.0165) *OR .9976*	
Electoral Manipulation	1.704 (.9686)* *OR 5.496*			1.577 (.8967)* *OR 4.842*	
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-3.737 (4.460) *OR .0238*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				-.6562 (1.330) *OR .5187*	
Natural Resource Wealth					
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0592 (.0593) *OR 1.061*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region					
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region					
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0423 (.0271) *OR .5187*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.0070 (.0287) *OR 1.007*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region					
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0095 (.0121) *OR 1.009*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource Wealth					

Random Effects		
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	5.262 (2.244)	4.076 (1.298)
Model Fit:		
Likelihood Ratio Test	116.31***	56.85***
AIC	153.620	148.855
Wald statistic (df)	7.12 (6)	11.87 (6)*

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Unity's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 53: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Unity Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-7.961 (1.224)***	-7.667 (1.116)***	X	-6.201 (1.282)***	-7.776 (1.170)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.0208 (.0136) *OR 1.021*	.0313 (.0147)** *OR 1.031*		.0694 (.0231)*** *OR 1.071*	.0339 (.0136)** *OR 1.034*
Percent Rural	.0012 (.0072) *OR 1.001*	.0005 (.0072) *OR 1.000*		-.0062 (.0113) *OR .9937*	.0016 (.0079) *OR 1.001*
Electoral Manipulation	1.139 (.6423)* *OR 3.124*	1.192 (.6430)* *OR 3.294*		1.090 (.6351)* *OR 2.976*	1.156 (.6475)* *OR 3.179*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.4720 (1.318) *OR 1.603*				
Muslim Region		-1.067 (2.563) *OR .3437*			
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				-.9005 (.8037) *OR .4063*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.6681 (1.890) *OR 1.950*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0152 (.0239) *OR .9849*			
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.1631 (.0817)** *OR .8494*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.1556 (.1474) *OR .8558*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0070 (.0084) *OR 1.007*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0023 (.0203) *OR 1.002*

Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.197 (.6926)	3.070 (.6705)	2.752 (.6881)	3.100 (.6813)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	103.55***	89.88***	43.45***	88.93***
AIC	252.436	253.546	242.067	250.819
Wald statistic (df)	9.32 (4)*	10.32 (5)*	17.40 (6)***	12.27 (6)*

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Unity's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 54: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Unity Strongholds in the 1999 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-11.294 (3.648)***	-12.873 (9.219)	-11.211 (5.414)**	-7.033 (2.450)***	X
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0148 (.0306) *OR 1.014*	.0042 (.0280) *OR 1.004*	.0016 (.0279) *OR 1.001*	-.0140 (.0197) *OR .9860*	
Percent Rural	.0049 (.0141) *OR 1.004*	.0148 (.0127) *OR 1.015*	.0143 (.0119) *OR 1.014*	.0125 (.0164) *OR 1.012*	
Electoral Manipulation	1.812 (.9303)* *OR 6.125*	1.765 (.8883)** *OR 5.846*	1.786 (.8855)** *OR 5.966*	1.735 (.8836)** *OR 5.673*	
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.1860 (2.935) *OR 1.204*				
Muslim Region		-.6580 (4.465) *OR .5178*			
Caucasus Region			-.6056 (2.662) *OR .5456*		
Economic Development				-2.098 (1.414) *OR .1226*	
Natural Resource Wealth					
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0260 (.0348) *OR .9742*				
*Muslim Region		-.0162 (.0333) *OR .9838*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0130 (.0333) *OR .9870*		
*Economic Development				.0104 (.0224) *OR 1.010*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	.0232 (.0274) *OR 1.023*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0004 (.0121) *OR 1.000*	
*Natural Resource					

Wealth				
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	4.943 (2.079)	5.999 (5.640)	5.097 (2.921)	3.972 (1.106)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	117.83***	131.97***	133.95***	85.86***
AIC	156.971	156.629	156.608	154.203
Wald statistic (df)	8.02 (6)	7.66 (5)	7.82 (5)	9.66 (6)

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Unity's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 55: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-3.412 (.3753)***	-3.532 (.3659)***	-3.498 (.3725)***	-2.715 (.4985)***	-3.141 (.3545)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0013 (.0069) *OR 1.001*	-.0048 (.0056) *OR .9951*	-.0069 (.0058) *OR .9930*	.0040 (.0082) *OR 1.004*	-.0038 (.0055) *OR .9961*
Percent Rural	.0129 (.0019)*** *OR 1.013*	.0120 (.0018)*** *OR 1.012*	.0101 (.0020)*** *OR 1.010*	.0029 (.0032) *OR 1.002*	.0098 (.0018)*** *OR 1.009*
Electoral Manipulation	-.8124 (.2998)*** *OR .4437*	-.8032 (.3030)*** *OR .4478*	-.9097 (.3018)*** *OR .4026*	-.8416 (.2973)*** *OR .4309*	-.8772 (.2998)*** *OR .4159*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.2262 (.8561) *OR .7975*				
Muslim Region		.8831 (1.742) *OR 2.418*			
Caucasus Region			1.068 (1.085) *OR 2.911*		
Economic Development				-.5864 (.3873) *OR .5563*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-2.371 (1.126)** *OR .0933*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0032 (.0120) *OR 1.003*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		.0050 (.0208) *OR 1.005*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.0032 (.0134) *OR 1.003*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0097 (.0074) *OR .9902*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0011 (.0156) *OR 1.001*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0202 (.0050)*** *OR .9799*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0228 (.0065)*** *OR .9774*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0005 (.0043) *OR 1.000*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0063 (.0025)** *OR 1.006*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					.0029 (.0064) *OR 1.002*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.240 (.2889)	2.255 (.2899)	2.189 (.2832)	2.134 (.2783)	2.177 (.2800)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	511.57***	511.94***	495.14***	490.65***	518.22***
AIC	1708.137	1715.243	1726.265	1715.28	1722.306
Wald statistic (df)	55.41 (6)***	48.97 (6)***	39.15 (6)***	43.70 (6)***	42.19 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 56: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-3.217 (.3646)***	-3.526 (.3552)***	-3.454 (.3563)***	-2.579 (.4604)***	-3.141 (.3355)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-.0044 (.0055) *OR .9955*	-.0127 (.0084) *OR .9873*	-.0245 (.0093)*** *OR .9757*	.0002 (.0095) *OR 1.000*	-.0052 (.0052) *OR .9947*
Percent Rural	.0100 (.0017)*** *OR 1.010*	.0120 (.0018)*** *OR 1.012*	.0104 (.0019)*** *OR 1.010*	.0031 (.0032) *OR 1.003*	.0097 (.0018)*** *OR 1.009*
Electoral Manipulation	-.8691 (.2969)*** *OR .4193*	-.8256 (.2977)*** *OR .4379*	-.9652 (.2987)*** *OR .3808*	-.8667 (.2938)*** *OR .4202*	-.8533 (.2968)*** *OR .4260*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.9963 (.7061) *OR .3692*				
Muslim Region		.9634 (1.125) *OR 2.260*			
Caucasus Region			.8461 (.9070) *OR 2.330*		
Economic Development				-.7254 (.3580)** *OR .4841*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-1.594 (1.049) *OR .2030*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0111 (.0109) *OR 1.011*			
*Caucasus Region			.0245 (.0113)** *OR 1.024*		
*Economic Development				-.0123 (.0132) *OR .9877*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0903 (.0766) *OR .9136*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0226 (.0063)*** *OR .9776*			
*Caucasus Region			.0002 (.0043) *OR 1.000*		
*Economic				.0060	

Development				(.0024)** *OR 1.006*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0037 (.0061) *OR 1.003*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.240 (.2886	2.256 (.2892)	2.180 (.2801)	2.089 (.2725)	2.123 (.2759)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	520.93***	520.28***	494.61***	467.22***	482.62***
AIC	1721.298	1713.578	1720.174	1714.83	1717.713
Wald statistic (df)	39.85 (4)***	50.50 (6)***	44.57 (6)***	44.78 (6)***	42.08 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 57: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-3.415 (.3767)***	-3.621 (.3611)***	-3.689 (.3698)***	-2.794 (.4751)***	-3.213 (.3410)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0013 (.0069) *OR 1.001*	.0005 (.0066) *OR 1.000*	.0051 (.0066) *OR 1.005*	.0169 (.0104) *OR 1.017*	.0012 (.0050) *OR 1.001*
Percent Rural	.0129 (.0019)*** *OR 1.013*	.0116 (.0018)*** *OR 1.011*	.0094 (.0019)*** *OR 1.009*	.0026 (.0032) *OR 1.002*	.0095 (.0018)*** *OR 1.009*
Electoral Manipulation	-.7991 (.2983)*** *OR .4497*	-.8245 (.2979)*** *OR .4384*	-.9776 (.2981)*** *OR .3762*	-.8904 (.2951)*** *OR .4104*	-.9119 (.2971)*** *OR .4017*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.0276 (.7235) *OR 1.028*				
Muslim Region		.9379 (1.106) *OR 2.554*			
Caucasus Region			1.134 (.9132) *OR 3.108*		
Economic Development				-.6164 (.3796) *OR .5398*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-2.613 (1.051)** *OR .0732*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0015 (.0096) *OR .9984*				
Percent Other Minority *Muslim Region		.0012 (.0098) *OR 1.001*			
Percent Other Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0071 (.0095) *OR .9928*		
Percent Other Minority *Economic Development				-.0149 (.0095) *OR .9851*	
Percent Other Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0119 (.0163) *OR 1.011*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0197 (.0046)*** *OR .9804*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0223 (.0063)*** *OR .9778*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0009 (.0043) *OR 1.000*		
Percent Rural *Economic				.0063	

Development				(.0024)** *OR 1.006*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0017 (.0063) *OR 1.001*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.250 (.2900)	2.271 (.2920)	2.240 (.2883)	2.160 (.2805)	2.163 (.2803)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	507.25***	512.48***	509.97***	483.25***	493.97***
AIC	1707.073	1715.254	1726.307	1714.172	1721.290
Wald statistic (df)	55.41 (6)***	47.99 (6)***	38.05 (6)***	43.82 (6)***	42.21 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 58: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.802 (.3255)***	-1.770 (.2978)***	-1.754 (.3046)***	-1.170 (.3544)***	-1.903 (.3302)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	-.0251 (.0086)*** *OR .9751*	-.0216 (.0064)*** *OR .9786*	-.0220 (.0065)*** *OR .9782*	-.0498 (.0100)*** *OR .9513*	-.0357 (.0087)*** *OR .9648*
Percent Rural	-.0049 (.0020)** *OR .9950*	-.0060 (.0019)*** *OR .9939*	-.0064 (.0020)*** *OR .9935*	-.0025 (.0032) *OR .9974*	-.0048 (.0021)** *OR .9951*
Electoral Manipulation	-.7970 (.4266)* *OR .4506*	-.7488 (.4317)* *OR .4729*	-.7794 (.4250)* *OR .4586*	-.9115 (.4355)** *OR .4019*	-.8522 (.4283)** *OR .4264*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.1887 (.7833) *OR .8279*				
Muslim Region		-1.163 (2.412) *OR .3124*			
Caucasus Region			-.7117 (1.239) *OR .4907*		
Economic Development				-.5102 (.1717)*** *OR .6003*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.7999 (.7612) *OR 2.225*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0064 (.0139) *OR 1.006*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		-.0219 (.0386) *OR .9782*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0247 (.0276) *OR .9755*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				.0174 (.0053)*** *OR 1.017*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0233 (.0131)* *OR 1.023*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0077 (.0059) *OR .9922*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		.0088 (.0171) *OR 1.008*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0062 (.0064) *OR 1.006*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				-.0023 (.0022) *OR .9976*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource					-.0034 (.0044)

Wealth					*OR .9965*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.049 (.2381)	2.021 (.2312)	2.026 (.2312)	1.966 (.2263)	2.007 (.2280)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	485.14***	501.86***	502.51***	446.70***	495.33***
AIC	1535.806	1534.694	1534.700	1519.162	1530.535
Wald statistic (df)	37.42 (6)***	37.17 (6)***	37.16 (6)***	47.51 (6)***	41.07 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 59: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.022 (.3001)***	-1.935 (.2770)***	-1.928 (.2815)***	-1.703 (.3142)***	-2.126 (.3048)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-.0437 (.0138)*** *OR .9571*	-.0376 (.0131)*** *OR .9630*	-.0414 (.0125)*** *OR .9594*	-.0439 (.0156)*** *OR .9569*	-.0744 (.0265)*** *OR .9282*
Percent Rural	-.0059 (.0018)*** *OR .9940*	-.0061 (.0019)*** *OR .9938*	-.0059 (.0018)*** *OR .9940*	-.0042 (.0033) *OR .9957*	-.0055 (.0021)*** *OR .9944*
Electoral Manipulation	-.8664 (.4211)** *OR .4204*	-.8008 (.4286)* *OR .4489*	-.8431 (.4198)** *OR .4303*	-.8486 (.4211)** *OR .4280*	-.8860 (.4235)** *OR .4122*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.1251 (.6477) *OR 1.133*				
Muslim Region		-1.999 (1.859) *OR .1353*			
Caucasus Region			-1.026 (.9639) *OR .3583*		
Economic Development				-.2314 (.1320)* *OR .7933*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.9098 (.6830) *OR 2.484*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region		-.0012 (.0411) *OR .9987*			
Percent Titular Minority *Muslim Region					
Percent Titular Minority *Caucasus Region					
Percent Titular Minority *Economic Development				.0004 (.0127) *OR 1.000*	
Percent Titular Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0495 (.0310) *OR 1.050*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region		.0055 (.0164) *OR 1.005*			
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region					
Percent Rural *Economic Development				-.0016 (.0023) *OR .9983*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0019 (.0044) *OR .9980*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.942 (.2247)	1.943 (.2230)	1.947 (.2235)	1.880 (.2171)	1.932 (.2210)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	469.85***	481.09***	477.96***	430.54***	471.38***
AIC	1532.256	1534.169	1531.11	1531.273	1530.072
Wald statistic (df)	31.53 (4)***	33.91 (6)***	32.44 (4)***	35.89 (6)***	31.82 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 60: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.813 (.3342)***	-1.988 (.2945)***	-2.010 (.3051)***	-1.567 (.3571)***	-2.278 (.3312)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	-.0253 (.0086)*** *OR .9749*	-.0117 (.0070)* *OR .9883*	-.0113 (.0071) *OR .9886*	-.0429 (.0125)*** *OR .9579*	-.0221 (.0095)** *OR .9781*
Percent Rural	-.0049 (.0020)** *OR .9950*	-.0069 (.0018)*** *OR .9931*	-.0073 (.0019)*** *OR .9926*	-.0054 (.0031)* *OR .9945*	-.0057 (.0021)*** *OR .9942*
Electoral Manipulation	-.9450 (.4345)** *OR .3886*	-.8415 (.4329)* *OR .4310*	-.9526 (.4258)** *OR .3857*	-1.105 (.4384)** *OR .3309*	-1.015 (.4298)** *OR .3620*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-1.396 (.7261)* *OR .2473*				
Muslim Region		-3.445 (1.730)** *OR .0318*			
Caucasus Region			-1.741 (1.095) *OR .1752*		
Economic Development				-.4865 (.1711)*** *OR .6147*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.7890 (.7473) *OR 2.201*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	.0482 (.0168)*** *OR 1.049*				
*Muslim Region		.0179 (.0374) *OR 1.018*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0073 (.0302) *OR .9926*		
*Economic Development				.0187 (.0063)*** *OR 1.018*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0215 (.0143) *OR 1.021*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0098 (.0057)* *OR .9902*				
*Muslim Region		.0021 (.0163) *OR 1.002*			
*Caucasus Region			.0060 (.0063) *OR 1.006*		
*Economic Development				-.0006 (.0022) *OR .9993*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0034 (.0043) *OR .9965*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.118 (.2446)	2.050 (.2370)	2.099 (.2423)	2.087 (.2443)	2.099 (.2415)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	500.29***	497.79***	504.30***	459.06***	502.80***
AIC	1534.200	1543.594	1546.478	1535.037	1545.124
Wald statistic (df)	37.53 (6)***	30.69 (6)***	29.24 (6)***	36.07 (6)***	30.25 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 61: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.120 (.2836)***	-1.184 (.2827)***	-1.074 (.2785)***	-1.472 (.3104)***	-1.278 (.3007)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0167 (.0094)* *OR 1.016*	.0016 (.0075) *OR 1.001*	.0019 (.0074) *OR 1.001*	-.0027 (.0098) *OR .9972*	.0020 (.0075) *OR 1.002*
Percent Rural	-.0605 (.0050)*** *OR .9412*	-.0587 (.0047)*** *OR .9429*	-.0589 (.0047)*** *OR .9427*	-.0651 (.0069)*** *OR .9369*	-.0572 (.0049)*** *OR .9443*
Electoral Manipulation	-.1726 (.5994) *OR .8413*	-.4516 (.6534) *OR .6365*	-.2693 (.6035) *OR .7638*	-.4662 (.5898) *OR .6273*	-.3428 (.6014) *OR .7090*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.3679 (.7853) *OR .6921*				
Muslim Region		-1.676 (2.002) *OR .1870*			
Caucasus Region			-2.992 (1.347)** *OR .0501*		
Economic Development				.2302 (.1112)** *OR 1.258*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.3891 (.8217) *OR 1.475*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0336 (.0161)** *OR .9669*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		.0069 (.0270) *OR 1.007*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.0132 (.0202) *OR 1.013*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				.0017 (.0048) *OR 1.001*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0141 (.0170) *OR .9859*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.0208 (.0102)** *OR 1.021*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		.0182 (.0141) *OR 1.018*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0285 (.0140)** *OR 1.028*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0068 (.0031)** *OR 1.006*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource					.0010 (.0120)

Wealth					*OR 1.001*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.667 (.2178)	1.741 (.2250)	1.675 (.2203)	1.557 (.2266)	1.735 (.2260)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	299.40***	337.10***	305.07***	109.86***	331.85***
AIC	1110.364	1118.98	1112.769	1105.392	1121.421
Wald statistic (df)	176.63 (6)***	169.76 (6)***	171.99 (6)***	169.52 (6)***	163.56 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 62: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-.9836 (.2683)***	-1.073 (.2561)***	-.9324 (.2492)***	-1.391 (.2564)***	-1.081 (.2698)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-.0112 (.0137) *OR .9888*	-.0205 (.0167) *OR .9796*	-.0235 (.0157) *OR .9767*	-.0093 (.0128) *OR .9907*	-.0283 (.0154)* *OR .9720*
Percent Rural	-.0570 (.0045)*** *OR .9445*	-.0583 (.0047)*** *OR .9433*	-.0585 (.0047)*** *OR .9431*	-.0648 (.0068)*** *OR .9372*	-.0568 (.0049)*** *OR .9447*
Electoral Manipulation	-.1517 (.5896) *OR .8592*	-.3191 (.6188) *OR .7268*	-.0678 (.5935) *OR .9344*	-.2155 (.5819) *OR .8060*	-.2589 (.5950) *OR .7718*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.7730 (.6599) *OR .4616*				
Muslim Region		-.4341 (1.222) *OR .6478*			
Caucasus Region			-2.508 (1.038)** *OR .0813*		
Economic Development				.2549 (.0746)*** *OR 1.290*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.1376 (.6612) *OR .8713*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0025 (.0264) *OR 1.002*			
*Caucasus Region			.0282 (.0238) *OR 1.028*		
*Economic Development				-.0129 (.0132) *OR .9871*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0225 (.0249) *OR 1.022*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0218 (.0132)* *OR 1.022*			
*Caucasus Region			.0283 (.0140)** *OR 1.028*		
*Economic Development				.0067 (.0031)**	

				OR 1.006	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0008 (.0117) *OR 1.000*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.707 (.2217)	1.713 (.2232)	1.634 (.2176)	1.499 (.2185)	1.688 (.2195)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	321.38***	324.11***	286.82***	109.40***	318.95***
AIC	1113.094	1116.41	1110.648	1101.783	1117.65
Wald statistic (df)	166.19 (4)***	170.46 (6)***	172.10 (6)***	170.67 (6)***	166.21 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 63: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.122 (.2849)***	-1.246 (.2726)***	-1.168 (.2669)***	-1.661 (.3120)***	-1.408 (.2842)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0168 (.0094)* *OR 1.016*	.0079 (.0084) *OR 1.008*	.0104 (.0083) *OR 1.010*	.0124 (.0151) *OR 1.012*	.0165 (.0093)* *OR 1.016*
Percent Rural	-.0604 (.0050)*** *OR .9413*	-.0587 (.0047)*** *OR .9429*	-.0590 (.0047)*** *OR .9426*	-.0653 (.0069)*** *OR .9367*	-.0574 (.0049)*** *OR .9441*
Electoral Manipulation	-.3534 (.5907) *OR .7022*	-.5446 (.6398) *OR .5800*	-.2534 (.5881) *OR .7761*	-.5732 (.5769) *OR .5637*	-.4948 (.5880) *OR .6096*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.9939 (.6478) *OR .3701*				
Muslim Region		-1.803 (1.105) *OR .1646*			
Caucasus Region			-2.450 (1.043)** *OR .0862*		
Economic Development				.2789 (.1229)** *OR 1.321*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.4061 (.7345) *OR 1.500*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0216 (.0205) *OR .9785*				
Percent Other Minority *Muslim Region		.0254 (.0252) *OR 1.025*			
Percent Other Minority *Caucasus Region			.0079 (.0278) *OR 1.008*		
Percent Other Minority *Economic Development				-.0016 (.0063) *OR .9983*	
Percent Other Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0298 (.0213) *OR .9705*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.0180 (.0101)* *OR 1.018*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		.0175 (.0136) *OR 1.017*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0287 (.0139)** *OR 1.029*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0069 (.0031)**	

				OR 1.006	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0009 (.0119) *OR 1.000*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.677 (.2181)	1.734 (.2237)	1.674 (.2195)	1.549 (.2239)	1.710 (.2218)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	302.87***	333.79***	303.75***	111.57***	322.82***
AIC	1111.592	1115.778	1111.134	1103.586	1117.895
Wald statistic (df)	176.19 (6)***	170.63 (6)***	173.13 (6)***	170.72 (6)***	166.82 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 64: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-7.755 (.7259)***	-6.834 (.5830)***	-7.128 (.6063)***	-5.448 (.6919)***	-5.948 (.5400)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0323 (.0107)*** *OR 1.032*	.0279 (.0072)*** *OR 1.028*	.0274 (.0069)*** *OR 1.027*	.0409 (.0093)*** *OR 1.041*	.0296 (.0072)*** *OR 1.030*
Percent Rural	.0233 (.0053)*** *OR 1.023*	.0213 (.0041)*** *OR 1.021*	.0264 (.0042)*** *OR 1.026*	.0023 (.0047) *OR 1.002*	.0105 (.0034)*** *OR 1.010*
Electoral Manipulation	2.413 (.2979)*** *OR 11.174*	2.349 (1.462)*** *OR 10.483*	2.349 (.3060)*** *OR 10.479*	2.396 (.3018)*** *OR 10.985*	2.445 (.3050)*** *OR 11.541*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	4.046 (1.000)*** *OR 57.174*				
Muslim Region		3.127 (1.462)** *OR 22.820*			
Caucasus Region			2.887 (1.520)* *OR 17.953*		
Economic Development				-.7860 (.5197) *OR .4556*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-2.276 (1.360)* *OR .1026*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0141 (.0132) *OR .9859*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		.0012 (.0143) *OR 1.001*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.0107 (.0169) *OR 1.010*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0083 (.0074) *OR .9916*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0117 (.0146) *OR 1.011*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0105 (.0065) *OR .9894*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0135 (.0064)** *OR .9865*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0337 (.0074)*** *OR .9668*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0129 (.0039)***	

				OR 1.013	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0271 (.0088)*** *OR 1.027*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.549 (.3539)	2.678 (.3739)	2.784 (.3871)	2.608 (.3660)	2.721 (.3832)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	449.05***	442.49***	457.25***	426.61***	448.25***
AIC	865.339	875.019	859.893	866.745	871.444
Wald statistic (df)	161.83 (6)***	158.41 (6)***	155.16 (6)***	154.14 (6)***	147.20 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 65: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-6.918 (.6198)***	-6.477 (.5845)***	-6.934 (.6145)***	-4.594 (.6798)***	-5.545 (.5779)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.0065 (.0056) *OR 1.006*	.0137 (.0088) *OR 1.013*	.0264 (.0078)*** *OR 1.026*	.0100 (.0088) *OR 1.010*	-.0007 (.0067) *OR .9992*
Percent Rural	.0182 (.0030)*** *OR 1.018*	.0232 (.0041)*** *OR 1.023*	.0272 (.0043)*** *OR 1.027*	.0057 (.0047) *OR 1.005*	.0135 (.0033)*** *OR 1.013*
Electoral Manipulation	2.519 (.2952)*** *OR 12.416*	2.490 (.2982)*** *OR 12.061*	2.577 (.3080)*** *OR 13.157*	2.528 (.3016)*** *OR 12.533*	2.610 (.3088)*** *OR 13.599*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	3.666 (.8047)*** *OR 39.112*				
Muslim Region		4.260 (1.281)*** *OR 70.854*			
Caucasus Region			5.069 (1.254)*** *OR 159.057*		
Economic Development				-1.155 (.5256)** *OR .3149*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-2.317 (1.376)* *OR .0985*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0034 (.0115) *OR .9965*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0311 (.0107)*** *OR .9692*		
*Economic Development				.0051 (.0076) *OR 1.005*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0534 (.0145)*** *OR 1.054*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0135 (.0063)** *OR .9865*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0313		

			(.0071)*** *OR .9691*		
*Economic Development				.0122 (.0041)*** *OR 1.012*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0242 (.0093)*** *OR 1.024*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.551 (.3567)	2.828 (.4101)	2.974 (.4113)	2.968 (.4332)	3.253 (.4613)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	435.09***	425.55***	452.57***	422.11***	442.69***
AIC	876.823	890.889	869.029	889.413	877.564
Wald statistic (df)	157.14 (4)***	147.53 (6)***	145.60 (6)***	132.13 (6)***	135.50 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 66: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-7.832 (.7377)***	-6.922 (.6327)***	-6.995 (.6502)***	-5.170 (.7573)***	-5.924 (.6007)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0323 (.0108)*** *OR 1.032*	.0259 (.0088)*** *OR 1.026*	.0050 (.0081) *OR 1.005*	.0441 (.0126)*** *OR 1.045*	.0258 (.0069)*** *OR 1.026*
Percent Rural	.0233 (.0053)*** *OR 1.023*	.0243 (.0041)*** *OR 1.024*	.0298 (.0042)*** *OR 1.030*	.0059 (.0047) *OR 1.006*	.0128 (.0034)*** *OR 1.012*
Electoral Manipulation	2.499 (.2966)*** *OR 12.181*	2.454 (.2998)*** *OR 11.638*	2.572 (.3121)*** *OR 13.094*	2.623 (.3088)*** *OR 13.781*	2.682 (.3114)*** *OR 14.620*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	5.026 (.9229)*** *OR 152.366*				
Muslim Region		5.220 (1.334)*** *OR 184.975*			
Caucasus Region			4.552 (1.329)*** *OR 94.889*		
Economic Development				-.8432 (.5720) *OR .4302*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.1538 (1.325) *OR .8574*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0293 (.0130)** *OR .9711*				
*Muslim Region		-.0249 (.0119)** *OR .9753*			
*Caucasus Region			.0138 (.0121) *OR 1.013*		
*Economic Development				-.0277 (.0103)*** *OR .9726*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0548 (.0161)*** *OR .9465*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0079 (.0064) *OR .9920*				
*Muslim Region		-.0138 (.0062)** *OR .9862*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0344		

			(.0072)*** *OR .9661*		
*Economic Development				.0133 (.0042)*** *OR 1.013*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0272 (.0087)*** *OR 1.027*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.610 (.3610)	3.089 (.4118)	3.292 (.4374)	3.343 (.4518)	3.316 (.4389)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	450.18***	523.18***	534.11***	515.46***	513.84***
AIC	870.527	886.741	875.403	882.736	879.852
Wald statistic (df)	157.77 (6)***	147.01 (6)***	139.48 (6)***	130.79 (6)***	138.36 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 67: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-5.749 (.5243)***	-5.915 (.5673)***	-5.831 (.5801)***	-4.974 (.7280)***	-5.774 (.5509)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0192 (.0101)* *OR 1.019*	.0056 (.0089) *OR 1.005*	-.0003 (.0095) *OR .9996*	-.0137 (.0120) *OR .9863*	.0044 (.0090) *OR 1.004*
Percent Rural	.0124 (.0039)*** *OR 1.012*	.0133 (.0038)*** *OR 1.013*	.0136 (.0039)*** *OR 1.013*	.0116 (.0060)* *OR 1.011*	.0138 (.0038)*** *OR 1.013*
Electoral Manipulation	.0994 (.4733) *OR 1.104*	.0655 (.4794) *OR 1.067*	-.1089 (.4795) *OR .8968*	-.1229 (.4754) *OR .8842*	-.0769 (.4816) *OR .9259*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.0022 (1.295) *OR 1.002*				
Muslim Region		1.283 (2.502) *OR 3.608*			
Caucasus Region			1.212 (1.410) *OR 3.361*		
Economic Development				-.6737 (.5292) *OR .5097*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.1163 (1.270) *OR .8901*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0293 (.0206) *OR .9710*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		-.0203 (.0322) *OR .9798*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.0005 (.0208) *OR 1.000*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				.0150 (.0082)* *OR 1.015*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0052 (.0201) *OR .9947*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0037 (.0084) *OR .9962*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0093 (.0091) *OR .9906*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0072 (.0079) *OR .9928*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0001 (.0047) *OR 1.000*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0107 (.0085) *OR .9893*

Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.982 (.3604)	2.033 (.3789)	1.923 (.3682)	1.937 (.3620)	1.957 (.3568)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	126.98***	118.92***	108.63***	124.31***	128.42***
AIC	646.178	650.269	651.210	648.155	649.572
Wald statistic (df)	19.23 (6)***	14.60 (6)**	13.76 (6)**	15.20 (6)**	15.35 (6)**

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 68: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-5.449 (.4884)***	-5.624 (.5002)***	-5.519 (.4916)***	-5.199 (.5953)***	-5.453 (.4859)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-.0051 (.0076) *OR .9948*	-.0170 (.0157) *OR .9830*	-.0670 (.0381)* *OR .9351*	-.0051 (.0135) *OR .9948*	-.0082 (.0070) *OR .9918*
Percent Rural	.0123 (.0034)*** *OR 1.012*	.0141 (.0037)*** *OR 1.014*	.0147 (.0039)*** *OR 1.014*	.0113 (.0058)* *OR 1.011*	.0124 (.0034)*** *OR 1.012*
Electoral Manipulation	.0774 (.4691) *OR 1.080*	.0695 (.4663) *OR 1.072*	.0282 (.4596) *OR 1.028*	.0128 (.4579) *OR 1.012*	.0274 (.4626) *OR 1.027*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.9071 (.8675) *OR .4036*				
Muslim Region		.2961 (1.394) *OR 1.344*			
Caucasus Region			1.063 (1.022) *OR 2.895*		
Economic Development				-.2466 (.3137) *OR .7814*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.9332 (.9502) *OR .3932*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0121 (.0178) *OR 1.012*			
*Caucasus Region			.0643 (.0388)* *OR 1.066*		
*Economic Development				-.0058 (.0166) *OR .9942*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0110 (.0086) *OR .9889*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0082 (.0078) *OR .9917*		
*Economic Development				.0006 (.0046) *OR 1.000*	
*Natural Resource					

Wealth					
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.952 (.3588)	1.902 (.3488)	1.779 (.3228)	1.824 (.3369)	1.895 (.3448)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	124.52***	117.50***	108.93***	116.30***	125.43***
AIC	645.908	649.154	643.668	649.311	646.063
Wald statistic (df)	15.04 (4)***	15.70 (6)**	17.79 (6)***	14.71 (6)**	14.97 (4)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 69: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-5.735 (.5224)***	-5.931 (.5248)***	-6.041 (.5487)***	-5.066 (.6945)***	-5.742 (.5100)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0192 (.0101)* *OR 1.019*	.0167 (.0099)* *OR 1.016*	.0177 (.0099)* *OR 1.017*	-.0064 (.0110) *OR .9935*	.0090 (.0069) *OR 1.009*
Percent Rural	.0124 (.0039)*** *OR 1.012*	.0130 (.0037)*** *OR 1.013*	.0127 (.0039)*** *OR 1.012*	.0098 (.0060) *OR 1.009*	.0138 (.0038)*** *OR 1.013*
Electoral Manipulation	.0377 (.4646) *OR 1.038*	-.0100 (.4649) *OR .9900*	-.1547 (.4584) *OR .8566*	-.1449 (.4585) *OR .8650*	-.0490 (.4672) *OR .9521*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.5355 (.9934) *OR .5853*				
Muslim Region		.2359 (1.394) *OR 1.266*			
Caucasus Region			1.398 (1.069) *OR 4.050*		
Economic Development				-.6508 (.5063) *OR .5216*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.4164 (1.163) *OR .6594*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0163 (.0129) *OR .9837*				
Percent Other Minority *Muslim Region		-.0129 (.0130) *OR .9871*			
Percent Other Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0152 (.0128) *OR .9848*		
Percent Other Minority *Economic Development				.0151 (.0083)* *OR 1.015*	
Percent Other Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0056 (.0201) *OR 1.005*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0051 (.0080) *OR .9948*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0102 (.0086) *OR .9898*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0063 (.0078) *OR .9936*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0015 (.0049) *OR 1.001*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource					-.0120 (.0085)

Wealth					*OR .9880*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.965 (.3600)	1.958 (.3566)	1.941 (.3543)	1.884 (.3560)	1.901 (.3488)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	114.36***	113.97***	112.68***	107.61***	114.94***
AIC	646.293	647.935	648.071	646.328	647.440
Wald statistic (df)	19.09 (6)***	17.17 (6)***	17.08 (6)***	17.29 (6)***	17.46 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 70: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-5.452 (.6799)***	X	X	-4.798 (.7492)***	-5.560 (.7356)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0046 (.0175) *OR 1.004*			-.0372 (.0205)* *OR .9634*	-.0192 (.0176) *OR .9809*
Percent Rural	-.0076 (.0047) *OR .9923*			-.0043 (.0075) *OR .9956*	-.0027 (.0050) *OR .9972*
Electoral Manipulation	.1965 (.8905) *OR 1.217*			.0277 (.8864) *OR 1.028*	.0836 (.8806) *OR 1.087*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-4.117 (2.350)* *OR .0162*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				-.4178 (.2473)* *OR .6584*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.2025 (1.453) *OR .8166*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0245 (.0318) *OR 1.024*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0177 (.0072)** *OR 1.017*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0428 (.0284) *OR 1.043*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0016 (.0055) *OR .9983*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.1236 (.1741) *OR .8837*

Random Effects			
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.426 (.4713)	2.164 (.4360)	2.340 (.4648)
Model Fit:			
Likelihood Ratio Test	93.17***	80.79***	90.75***
AIC	364.594	364.059	362.548
Wald statistic (df)	6.33 (5)	8.71 (6)	4.49 (6)

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 71: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	X	X	X	X	X
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority					
Percent Rural					
Electoral Manipulation					
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region					
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development					
Natural Resource Wealth					
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development					
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development					
*Natural Resource Wealth					

Random Effects **Parameter:** Intercept (sd) **Model Fit:** Likelihood Ratio Test AIC Wald statistic (df)
Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 72: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-5.544 (.6449)***	X	-5.733 (.6718)***	-5.284 (.7576)***	-5.843 (.7208)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0200 (.0122) *OR 1.020*		.0175 (.0121) *OR 1.017*	-.0109 (.0210) *OR .9890*	.0013 (.0177) *OR 1.001*
Percent Rural	-.0081 (.0047)* *OR .9918*		-.0078 (.0047)* *OR .9921*	-.0074 (.0074) *OR .9925*	-.0037 (.0049) *OR .9962*
Electoral Manipulation	.2593 (.8709) *OR 1.296*		-.0499 (.8698) *OR .9512*	-.2038 (.8743) *OR .8156*	-.0399 (.8731) *OR .9607*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-2.472 (1.348)* *OR .0843*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-1.779 (1.678) *OR .1686*		
Economic Development				-.3422 (.2386) *OR .7101*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.1435 (1.367) *OR .8663*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0134 (.0075)* *OR 1.013*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0408 (.0304) *OR 1.041*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0005 (.0056) *OR 1.000*	
*Natural Resource					-.1118 (.1676)

Wealth				*OR .8942*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.315 (.4496)	2.279 (.4533)	2.214 (.4549)	2.319 (.4650)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	90.97***	88.40***	81.49***	88.35***
AIC	361.361	364.598	365.581	361.608
Wald statistic (df)	7.73 (4)	5.59 (4)	7.60 (6)	5.44 (6)

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 73: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-3.743 (.6023)***	X	X	-3.948 (.6670)***	-4.129 (.6786)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	-.0006 (.0157) *OR .9993*			-.0116 (.0226) *OR .9883*	-.0035 (.0154) *OR .9964*
Percent Rural	-.0718 (.0151)*** *OR .9306*			-.0957 (.0275)*** *OR .9087*	-.0641 (.0146)*** *OR .9378*
Electoral Manipulation	-.8104 (1.335) *OR .4446*			-.8252 (1.309) *OR .4381*	-.7879 (1.346) *OR .4547*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-1.984 (1.241) *OR .1374*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				.3038 (.1699)* *OR 1.355*	
Natural Resource Wealth					2.471 (1.293)* *OR 11.844*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0019 (.0095) *OR .9980*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0727 (.0430)* *OR .9298*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0122 (.0083) *OR 1.012*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.4949 (.4419) *OR .6096*

Random Effects			
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.133 (.4522)	1.668 (.4095)	2.117 (.4470)
Model Fit:			
Likelihood Ratio Test	245.15***	52.82***	263.28***
AIC	535.491	529.236	534.971
Wald statistic (df)	26.22 (4)***	31.81 (6)***	26.03 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 74: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-3.738 (.5695)***	X	X	-3.827 (.5286)***	-3.894 (.5995)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-.2166 (.2290) *OR .8051*			-.0212 (.1754) *OR .9789*	-.2536 (.2028) *OR .7759*
Percent Rural	-.0715 (.0151)*** *OR .9309*			-.0972 (.0279)*** *OR .9073*	-.0711 (.0151)*** *OR .9313*
Electoral Manipulation	-.7088 (1.367) *OR .4922*			-.5884 (1.371) *OR .5551*	-.7205 (1.356) *OR .4864*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.2086 (1.478) *OR .8117*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				.2535 (.0802)*** *OR 1.288*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.8859 (.9973) *OR 2.425*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.4208 (.7460) *OR .6564*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0136 (.0086) *OR 1.013*	
*Natural Resource					

Wealth			
Random Effects			
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.116 (.4475)	1.622 (.4003)	2.110 (.4455)
Model Fit:			
Likelihood Ratio Test	247.08***	49.12***	249.99***
AIC	532.453	523.720	531.684
Wald statistic (df)	24.07 (4)***	30.15 (6)***	24.69 (4)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 75: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-3.827 (.5975)***	X	X	-4.559 (.7639)***	-4.446 (.6850)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0068 (.0149) *OR 1.006*			.0246 (.0327) *OR 1.024*	.0112 (.0161) *OR 1.011*
Percent Rural	-.0716 (.0151)*** *OR .9308*			-.0944 (.0273)*** *OR .9098*	-.0639 (.0146)*** *OR .9380*
Electoral Manipulation	-.8465 (1.322) *OR .4288*			-1.147 (1.250) *OR .3175*	-1.087 (1.273) *OR .3370*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-2.050 (1.145)* *OR .1286*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				.4451 (.2220)** *OR 1.560*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.674 (1.217) *OR 5.334*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0110 (.0134) *OR .9890*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0586 (.0444) *OR .9429*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0117 (.0083) *OR 1.011*	
*Natural Resource					-.4209 (.4224)

Wealth			*OR .6563*
Random Effects			
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.129 (.4514)	1.763 (.4320)	2.248 (.4674)
Model Fit:			
Likelihood Ratio Test	243.91***	54.99***	264.03***
AIC	535.175	529.442	537.386
Wald statistic (df)	26.49 (4)***	30.51 (6)***	23.77 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 76: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-11.584 (1.597)***	-10.928 (1.406)***	-11.195 (1.267)***	-9.022 (1.297)***	-9.563 (1.131)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0376 (.0186)** *OR 1.038*	.0363 (.0135)*** *OR 1.037*	.0357 (.0111)*** *OR 1.036*	.0573 (.0137)*** *OR 1.059*	.0508 (.0113)*** *OR 1.052*
Percent Rural	.0321 (.0134)** *OR 1.032*	.0209 (.0089)** *OR 1.021*	.0273 (.0069)*** *OR 1.027*	-.0059 (.0064) *OR .9940*	.0006 (.0049) *OR 1.000*
Electoral Manipulation	3.421 (.5326)*** *OR 30.607*	3.295 (.5329)*** *OR 26.990*	3.325 (.5368)*** *OR 27.818*	3.649 (.5486)*** *OR 38.468*	3.832 (.5650)*** *OR 46.155*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	2.749 (1.814) *OR 15.642*				
Muslim Region		3.978 (2.082)* *OR 53.441*			
Caucasus Region			2.782 (2.195) *OR 16.159*		
Economic Development				-.6323 (.7399) *OR .5313*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-1.642 (1.889) *OR .1935*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0054 (.0223) *OR 1.005*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		.0029 (.0192) *OR 1.002*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.0224 (.0236) *OR 1.022*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0122 (.0088) *OR .9878*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0165 (.0204) *OR .9835*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0283 (.0141)** *OR .9720*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0171 (.0100)* *OR .9830*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0367 (.0092)*** *OR .9639*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0118 (.0044)*** *OR 1.011*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					.0243 (.0100)** *OR 1.024*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.946 (.5866)	3.165 (.6497)	3.184 (.6111)	2.957 (.5917)	3.090 (.6128)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	224.48***	239.46***	260.08***	247.06***	243.49***
AIC	420.014	418.508	406.494	415.753	418.415
Wald statistic (df)	79.02 (6)***	79.06 (6)***	83.47 (6)***	83.40 (6)***	80.45 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 77: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-9.469 (1.088)***	-10.263 (1.313)***	-11.000 (1.243)***	-7.095 (1.094)***	-8.336 (1.015)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-.0046 (.0057) *OR .9953*	.0345 (.0159)** *OR 1.035*	.0396 (.0124)*** *OR 1.040*	.0000 (.0091) *OR 1.000*	-.0061 (.0062) *OR .9938*
Percent Rural	.0113 (.0041)*** *OR 1.011*	.0209 (.0088)** *OR 1.021*	.0278 (.0070)*** *OR 1.028*	-.0011 (.0061) *OR .9988*	.0053 (.0047) *OR 1.005*
Electoral Manipulation	3.758 (.5270)*** *OR 42.867*	3.519 (.5194)*** *OR 33.781*	3.634 (.5423)*** *OR 37.887*	4.000 (.5589)*** *OR 54.603*	4.125 (.5737)*** *OR 61.881*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	3.211 (1.082)*** *OR 24.815*				
Muslim Region		6.667 (1.749)*** *OR 786.695*			
Caucasus Region			7.127 (1.658)*** *OR 1245.867*		
Economic Development				-1.358 (.7011)* *OR .2571*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-2.642 (1.751) *OR .0711*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0438 (.0170)*** *OR .9570*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0554 (.0143)*** *OR .9460*		
*Economic Development				-.0008 (.0079) *OR .9991*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0406 (.0170)** *OR 1.041*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0131 (.0100) *OR .9868*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0326		

			(.0091)*** *OR .9679*		
*Economic Development				.0108 (.0044)** *OR 1.010*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0209 (.0100)** *OR 1.021*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.952 (.5909)	3.017 (.6289)	3.264 (.6326)	3.131 (.5659)	3.301 (.5897)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	215.76***	217.26***	225.33***	232.10***	227.90***
AIC	437.356	427.500	409.861	442.440	438.721
Wald statistic (df)	77.80 (4)***	78.82 (6)***	83.86 (6)***	70.93 (6)***	72.04 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 78: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia Strongholds in the 2003 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-11.803 (1.632)***	-10.670 (1.382)***	-10.605 (1.219)***	-7.739 (1.158)***	-8.959 (1.050)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0387 (.0190)** *OR 1.039*	.0208 (.0177) *OR 1.021*	.0019 (.0156) *OR 1.001*	.0366 (.0154)** *OR 1.037*	.0295 (.0079)*** *OR 1.030*
Percent Rural	.0318 (.0136)** *OR 1.032*	.0242 (.0086)*** *OR 1.024*	.0303 (.0067)*** *OR 1.030*	-.0005 (.0061) *OR .9994*	.0052 (.0048) *OR 1.005*
Electoral Manipulation	3.639 (.5318)*** *OR 38.074*	3.480 (.5221)*** *OR 32.475*	3.629 (.5367)*** *OR 37.711*	3.997 (.5565)*** *OR 54.460*	4.090 (.5645)*** *OR 59.777*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	5.148 (1.659)*** *OR 172.096*				
Muslim Region		6.014 (1.840)*** *OR 409.486*			
Caucasus Region			5.407 (1.644)*** *OR 223.148*		
Economic Development				-1.223 (.7461)* *OR .2913*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.7170 (1.656) *OR .4881*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0172 (.0203) *OR .9829*				
*Muslim Region		.0035 (.0192) *OR 1.003*			
*Caucasus Region			.0290 (.0180) *OR 1.029*		
*Economic Development				-.0124 (.0146) *OR .9875*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0419 (.0235)* *OR .9588*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0234 (.0143) *OR .9768*				
*Muslim Region		-.0168 (.0098)* *OR .9832*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0360 (.0090)*** *OR .9645*		

*Economic Development				.0107 (.0043)** *OR 1.010*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0227 (.0098)** *OR 1.022*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.043 (.5928)	3.305 (.6406)	3.317 (.6060)	3.321 (.5613)	3.395 (.5873)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	225.42***	274.08***	276.42***	299.75***	282.54***
AIC	414.603	421.820	411.19	427.820	427.908
Wald statistic (df)	77.49 (6)***	82.48 (6)***	88.18 (6)***	80.16 (6)***	81.10 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 79: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.317 (.2846)***	-1.432 (.2733)***	-1.429 (.2887)***	-1.299 (.3174)***	-1.177 (.2789)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	-.0148 (.0095) *OR .9852*	-.0149 (.0074)** *OR .9852*	-.0111 (.0078) *OR .9888*	-.0174 (.0101)* *OR .9827*	-.0154 (.0078)** *OR .9846*
Percent Rural	-.0197 (.0020)*** *OR .9804*	-.0197 (.0020)*** *OR .9804*	-.0242 (.0023)*** *OR .9760*	-.0262 (.0033)*** *OR .9740*	-.0219 (.0021)*** *OR .9783*
Electoral Manipulation	-2.573 (.5863)*** *OR .0762*	-2.697 (.6145)*** *OR .0673*	-2.595 (.5992)*** *OR .0746*	-2.622 (.5914)*** *OR .0726*	-2.628 (.5907)*** *OR .0722*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-1.027 (.8015) *OR .3580*				
Muslim Region		-.2969 (1.946) *OR .7430*			
Caucasus Region			.2358 (1.009) *OR 1.265*		
Economic Development				-.1002 (.1306) *OR .9045*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-1.938 (.8308)*** *OR .1439*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0143 (.0161) *OR 1.014*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		.0100 (.0269) *OR 1.010*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0087 (.0172) *OR .9913*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				.0050 (.0063) *OR 1.005*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0127 (.0162) *OR 1.012*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0013 (.0078) *OR .9986*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		.0064 (.0138) *OR 1.006*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0217 (.0048)*** *OR 1.021*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0049 (.0019)** *OR 1.004*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					.0171 (.0059)*** *OR 1.017*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.689 (.2091)	1.689 (.2070)	1.739 (.2127)	1.753 (.2193)	1.650 (.2036)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	360.81***	369.70***	370.44***	371.22***	357.35***
AIC	1712.638	1713.777	1692.983	1707.638	1701.98
Wald statistic (df)	129.72 (6)***	129.75 (6)***	138.45 (6)***	130.34 (6)***	136.38 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 80: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.475 (.2670)***	-1.630 (.2563)***	-1.579 (.2693)***	-1.567 (.2862)***	-1.372 (.2613)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-.1361 (.6791) *OR .8726*	-.0094 (.0113) *OR .9906*	-.0080 (.0121) *OR .9920*	-.0070 (.0120) *OR .9929*	-.0094 (.0106) *OR .9905*
Percent Rural	-.0200 (.0020)*** *OR .9801*	-.0201 (.0020)*** *OR .9800*	-.0246 (.0023)*** *OR .9756*	-.0268 (.0033)*** *OR .9735*	-.0222 (.0021)*** *OR .9779*
Electoral Manipulation	-2.615 (.5841)*** *OR .0731*	-2.753 (.6174)*** *OR .0637*	-2.717 (.6083)*** *OR .0660*	-2.740 (.5965)*** *OR .0645*	-2.738 (.5961)*** *OR .0646*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-1.048 (.6817) *OR .3505*				
Muslim Region		-.5814 (1.514) *OR .5591*			
Caucasus Region			-.3131 (.9343) *OR .7311*		
Economic Development				-.0228 (.0800) *OR .9773*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-1.943 (.7555)*** *OR .1431*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region	.1418 (.6792) *OR 1.152*				
Percent Titular Minority *Muslim Region		.0134 (.0252) *OR 1.013*			
Percent Titular Minority *Caucasus Region			.0036 (.0206) *OR 1.003*		
Percent Titular Minority *Economic Development				.0037 (.0117) *OR 1.003*	
Percent Titular Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0177 (.0218) *OR 1.017*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0023 (.0078) *OR .9976*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		.0064 (.0136) *OR 1.006*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0220 (.0048)*** *OR 1.022*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0050 (.0019)***	

				OR 1.005	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0168 (.0058)*** *OR 1.017*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.697 (.2098)	1.719 (.2100)	1.775 (.2161)	1.774 (.2201)	1.675 (.2052)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	364.25***	378.84***	383.49***	382.38***	369.24***
AIC	1714.76	1717.172	1696.184	1710.847	1705.088
Wald statistic (df)	129.01 (6)***	128.52 (6)***	136.71 (6)***	129.68 (6)***	135.43 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 81: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.314 (.2825)***	-1.473 (.2703)***	-1.486 (.2826)***	-1.222 (.3200)***	-1.210 (.2772)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	-.0147 (.0095) *OR .9853*	-.0177 (.0094)* *OR .9824*	-.0114 (.0023) *OR .9885*	-.0330 (.0149)** *OR .9675*	-.0208 (.0110)* *OR .9793*
Percent Rural	-.0197 (.0020)*** *OR .9804*	-.0200 (.0020)*** *OR .9801*	-.0244 (.0023)*** *OR .9758*	-.0268 (.0033)*** *OR .9735*	-.0221 (.0021)*** *OR .9781*
Electoral Manipulation	-2.541 (.5831)*** *OR .0787*	-2.747 (.6169)*** *OR .0640*	-2.789 (.6118)*** *OR .0614*	-2.743 (.5932)*** *OR .0643*	-2.751 (.5907)*** *OR .0638*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.4201 (.7424) *OR .6569*				
Muslim Region		-.2406 (1.279) *OR .7861*			
Caucasus Region			.1989 (.9004) *OR 1.220*		
Economic Development				-.1718 (.1363) *OR .8421*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-1.819 (.7614)** *OR .1620*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0286 (.0366) *OR .9717*				
Percent Other Minority *Muslim Region		.0003 (.0385) *OR 1.000*			
Percent Other Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0364 (.0312) *OR .9642*		
Percent Other Minority *Economic Development				.0106 (.0071) *OR 1.010*	
Percent Other Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0117 (.0202) *OR 1.011*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0027 (.0075) *OR .9972*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		.0072 (.0138) *OR 1.007*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0213 (.0048)*** *OR 1.021*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0053 (.0019)***	

				OR 1.005	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0176 (.0059)*** *OR 1.017*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.672 (.2070)	1.706 (.2078)	1.761 (.2138)	1.761 (.2170)	1.661 (.2039)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	358.15***	386.12***	386.50***	387.88***	363.45***
AIC	1710.298	1713.422	1691.562	1705.233	1701.353
Wald statistic (df)	130.34 (6)***	130.30 (6)***	138.87 (6)***	132.22 (6)***	136.88 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 82: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.604 (.3662)***	X	-1.488 (.3403)***	-1.347 (.3981)***	-1.723 (.3640)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	-.0192 (.0089)** *OR .9809*		-.0210 (.0068)*** *OR .9791*	-.0175 (.0093)* *OR .9826*	-.0354 (.0094)*** *OR .9651*
Percent Rural	-.0186 (.0022)*** *OR .9815*		-.0182 (.0022)*** *OR .9819*	-.0188 (.0034)*** *OR .9813*	-.0177 (.0024)*** *OR .9823*
Electoral Manipulation	-.6552 (.4399) *OR .5193*		-.5922 (.4348) *OR .5530*	-.7088 (.4374) *OR .4922*	-.7304 (.4404)* *OR .4817*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.1392 (.8370) *OR 1.149*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-1.323 (1.546) *OR .2662*		
Economic Development				-.1927 (.1752) *OR .8247*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.515 (.8228)* *OR 4.551*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0107 (.0143) *OR .9893*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region					
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0257 (.0389) *OR .9745*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0038 (.0047) *OR .9961*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0222 (.0138) *OR 1.022*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.0031 (.0060) *OR 1.003*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0013 (.0075) *OR .9986*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0002 (.0022) *OR 1.000*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource					-.0012 (.0045)

Wealth				*OR .9987*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.321 (.2711)	2.306 (.2682)	2.270 (.2652)	2.212 (.2596)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	623.78***	629.98***	562.64***	562.01***
AIC	1403.696	1400.735	1399.915	1394.126
Wald statistic (df)	101.28 (6)***	100.75 (6)***	105.01 (6)***	107.62 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 83: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.814 (.3530)***	X	-1.739 (.3237)***	-1.476 (.3622)***	-2.095 (.3439)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-.4364 (3.832) *OR .6463*		-.0207 (.0101)** *OR .9794*	-.0215 (.0132) *OR .9787*	-.0366 (.0161)** *OR .9640*
Percent Rural	-.0187 (.0022)*** *OR .9814*		-.0183 (.0021)*** *OR .9818*	-.0197 (.0035)*** *OR .9804*	-.0189 (.0024)*** *OR .9821*
Electoral Manipulation	-.7067 (.4401) *OR .4932*		-.6430 (.4347) *OR .5256*	-.7301 (.4374)* *OR .4818*	-.7764 (.4408)* *OR .4600*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.3233 (.7537) *OR .7237*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-2.119 (1.217)* *OR .1201*		
Economic Development				-.2850 (.1587)* *OR .7519*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.664 (.7569)** *OR 5.284*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region	.4139 (3.832) *OR 1.512*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0041 (.0134) *OR .9958*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0209 (.0211) *OR 1.021*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	.0030 (.0062) *OR 1.003*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0012 (.0023) *OR 1.001*	

*Natural Resource Wealth				-.0006 (.0046) *OR .9993*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.320 (.2716)	2.294 (.2677)	2.214 (.2586)	2.201 (.2582)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	618.94***	632.13***	565.15***	567.90***
AIC	1407.338	1401.451	1404.245	1401.647
Wald statistic (df)	96.05 (6)***	97.92 (4)***	99.54 (6)***	100.51 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 84: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.636 (.3754)***	X	-1.637 (.3421)***	-1.634 (.3977)***	-1.991 (.3659)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	-.0182 (.0089)** *OR .9819*		-.0179 (.0080)** *OR .9821*	-.0069 (.0034) *OR .9930*	-.0314 (.0112)*** *OR .9690*
Percent Rural	-.0186 (.0022)*** *OR .9815*		-.0193 (.0022)*** *OR .9808*	-.0197 (.0034)*** *OR .9804*	-.0184 (.0024)*** *OR 9816*
Electoral Manipulation	-.7229 (.4431) *OR .4853*		-.7209 (.4356)* *OR .4862*	-.8578 (.4403)* *OR .4240*	-.9023 (.4433)** *OR .4056*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.6503 (.7963) *OR .5218*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-2.390 (1.372)* *OR .0915*		
Economic Development				-.1617 (.1756) *OR .8506*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.486 (.8136)* *OR 4.421*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0019 (.0199) *OR .9980*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			-.0005 (.0445) *OR .9994*		
*Economic Development				-.0052 (.0052) *OR .9948*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0270 (.0167) *OR 1.027*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0044 (.0059) *OR .9955*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			-.0005 (.0074) *OR .9994*		
*Economic Development				.0001 (.0022) *OR 1.000*	

*Natural Resource Wealth				-.0017 (.0045) *OR .9982*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.391 (.2801)	2.363 (.2766)	2.328 (.2736)	2.283 (.2685)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	632.96***	638.73***	568.80***	582.07***
AIC	1407.065	1404.515	1404.92	1400.165
Wald statistic (df)	97.96 (6)***	100.03 (6)***	100.99 (6)***	104.36 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 85: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.010 (.3756)	X	-2.266 (.4161)***	-2.465 (.4351)***	-2.264 (.4061)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0353 (.0129)*** *OR 1.036*		.0137 (.0097) *OR 1.013*	-.0025 (.0145) *OR .9974*	.0183 (.0096)* *OR 1.018*
Percent Rural	-.1743 (.0293)*** *OR .8400*		-.1093 (.0133)*** *OR .8963*	-.0970 (.0176)*** *OR .9075*	-.1066 (.0133)*** *OR .8988*
Electoral Manipulation	-1.304 (1.159) *OR .2713*		-2.609 (1.310)** *OR .0735*	-2.869 (1.237)** *OR .0567*	-3.117 (1.334)** *OR .0442*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-1.188 (1.400) *OR .3046*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-.7461 (2.298) *OR .4741*		
Economic Development				.2215 (.1305)* *OR 1.124*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.422 (1.190) *OR 4.148*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.1041 (.0394)*** *OR .9011*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region					
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			-.1449 (.1628) *OR .8650*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				.0043 (.0060) *OR 1.004*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.1082 (.0419)*** *OR .8974*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.1654 (.0326)*** *OR 1.179*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region					
Percent Rural *Economic Development				-.0055 (.0088) *OR .9944*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource					-.3349 (.3029)

Wealth				*OR .7153*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.995 (.3035)	2.148 (.3323)	1.839 (.3049)	2.032 (.3128)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	341.51***	363.37***	113.77***	355.13***
AIC	666.905	711.318	708.701	707.303
Wald statistic (df)	60.42 (6)***	71.29 (5)***	81.05 (6)***	73.13 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 86: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.589 (.3335)***	X	-1.786 (.3384)***	-2.211 (.3315)***	-1.801 (.3552)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.1473 (.9159) *OR 1.158*		-.0514 (.0330) *OR .9498*	-.0084 (.0379) *OR .9916*	-.0504 (.0309) *OR .9507*
Percent Rural	-.1762 (.0297)*** *OR .8384*		-.1071 (.0131)*** *OR .8983*	-.0934 (.0171)*** *OR .9107*	-.1077 (.0132)*** *OR .8978*
Electoral Manipulation	-1.427 (1.151) *OR .2399*		-2.511 (1.343)* *OR .0811*	-2.339 (1.274)* *OR .0963*	-2.667 (1.342)** *OR .0694*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-3.068 (1.140)*** *OR .0465*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-2.526 (1.522)* *OR .0799*		
Economic Development				.2795 (.0794)*** *OR 1.322*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.9035 (.8514) *OR .4051*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.1805 (.9164) *OR .8347*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.1088 (.1307) *OR .8968*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	.1637 (.0239)*** *OR 1.177*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic				-.0068 (.0089)	

Development			*OR .9932*	
*Natural Resource Wealth				
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.959 (.2980)	1.941 (.2917)	1.658 (.2692)	1.999 (.2959)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	340.85***	338.19***	109.85***	354.93***
AIC	679.353	708.801	702.727	710.775
Wald statistic (df)	56.62 (6)***	73.50 (4)***	84.66 (6)***	72.36 (4)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 87: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.069 (.3960)***	X	-2.316 (.3865)***	-2.750 (.4368)***	-2.374 (.3906)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0359 (.0130)*** *OR 1.036*		.0245 (.0107)** *OR 1.024*	.0220 (.0199) *OR 1.022*	.0359 (.0127)*** *OR 1.036*
Percent Rural	-.1748 (.0294)*** *OR .8396*		-.1089 (.0132)*** *OR .8968*	-.0976 (.0176)*** *OR .9069*	-.1065 (.0132)*** *OR .8988*
Electoral Manipulation	-1.674 (1.177) *OR .1873*		-2.741 (1.299)** *OR .0645*	-3.039 (1.224)** *OR .0478*	-3.145 (1.312)** *OR .0430*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-1.628 (1.370) *OR .1962*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-.9684 (2.147) *OR .3796*		
Economic Development				.3075 (.1423)** *OR 1.360*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.5235 (1.081) *OR 1.688*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region	-.1780 (.0954)* *OR .8368*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			-.1488 (.1555) *OR .8616*		
*Economic Development				-.0015 (.0074) *OR .9984*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0971 (.0432)** *OR .9074*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.1536 (.0325)*** *OR 1.166*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0054 (.0088) *OR .9945*	

*Natural Resource Wealth				-.2701 (.2863) *OR .7632*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.133 (.3326)	2.099 (.3165)	1.841 (.2995)	2.044 (.3067)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	350.55***	364.52***	117.64***	350.83***
AIC	667.986	708.006	705. 877	705.203
Wald statistic (df)	63.34 (6)***	76.10 (5)***	83.08 (6)***	75.98 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 88: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia's Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-7.672 (.7791)***	-6.572 (.5942)***	-7.001 (.6038)***	-5.238 (.7835)***	-6.470 (.6146)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	-.0089 (.0139) *OR .9910*	.0139 (.0082)* *OR 1.014*	.0162 (.0077)** *OR 1.016*	.0409 (.0111)*** *OR 1.041*	.0246 (.0085)*** *OR 1.024*
Percent Rural	.0163 (.0050)*** *OR 1.016*	.0101 (.0041)** *OR 1.010*	.0161 (.0037)*** *OR 1.016*	-.0065 (.0066) *OR .9934*	.0075 (.0041)* *OR 1.007*
Electoral Manipulation	3.972 (.3724)*** *OR 53.125*	3.926 (.3645)*** *OR 50.710*	4.006 (.3729)*** *OR 54.977*	4.037 (.3720)*** *OR 56.688*	4.024 (.3704)*** *OR 55.962*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	3.010 (1.121)*** *OR 20.302*				
Muslim Region		2.981 (1.578)* *OR 19.720*			
Caucasus Region			1.140 (1.800) *OR 3.129*		
Economic Development				-1.168 (.5839)** *OR .3109*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.3701 (1.260) *OR .6906*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0334 (.0168)** *OR 1.033*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		.0239 (.0174) *OR 1.024*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.0606 (.0256)** *OR 1.062*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0155 (.0084)* *OR .9845*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0027 (.0162) *OR 1.002*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0049 (.0070) *OR .9950*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		.0093 (.0075) *OR 1.009*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0233 (.0119)* *OR .9769*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0144 (.0044)***	

				OR 1.014	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0143 (.0073)* *OR 1.014*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.805 (.4264)	2.581 (.4080)	2.758 (.4191)	2.733 (.4126)	2.842 (.4381)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	281.78***	244.23***	263.58***	276.83***	273.01***
AIC	639.588	639.316	645.349	644.689	656.789
Wald statistic (df)	169.88 (6)***	179.69 (6)***	168.29 (6)***	173.09 (6)***	168.36 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 89: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia's Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-7.711 (.7475)***	-6.494 (.5817)***	-6.940 (.6114)***	-5.011 (.7721)***	-6.373 (.6147)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.0195 (.0081)** *OR 1.019*	.0271 (.0097)*** *OR 1.027*	.0219 (.0088)** *OR 1.022*	.0453 (.0119)*** *OR 1.046*	.0327 (.0097)*** *OR 1.033*
Percent Rural	.0144 (.0034)*** *OR 1.014*	.0097 (.0041)** *OR 1.009*	.0162 (.0037)*** *OR 1.016*	-.0041 (.0066) *OR .9958*	.0091 (.0041)** *OR 1.009*
Electoral Manipulation	3.952 (.3692)*** *OR 52.088*	3.910 (.3597)*** *OR 49.944*	4.008 (.3731)*** *OR 55.058*	4.057 (.3720)*** *OR 57.843*	4.029 (.3691)*** *OR 56.205*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	3.499 (.9761)*** *OR 33.083*				
Muslim Region		3.940 (1.369)*** *OR 51.421*			
Caucasus Region			2.367 (1.624) *OR 10.675*		
Economic Development				-1.262 (.5596)** *OR .2830*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.0375 (1.171) *OR 1.038*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0056 (.0172) *OR 1.005*			
*Caucasus Region			.0151 (.0268)* *OR 1.052*		
*Economic Development				-.0155 (.0094)* *OR .9845*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0012 (.0179) *OR .9987*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0131 (.0073)* *OR 1.013*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0120 (.0121) *OR .9879*		
*Economic Development				.0132 (.0043)***	

				OR 1.013	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0125 (.0073)* *OR 1.012*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.858 (.4285)	2.512 (.3863)	2.880 (.4263)	2.836 (.4105)	2.865 (.4218)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	292.47***	248.00***	291.73***	303.16***	294.73***
AIC	636.730	634.456	642.718	641.656	652.181
Wald statistic (df)	169.43 (4)***	182.81 (6)***	166.77 (6)***	173.64 (6)***	169.84 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 90: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia's Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-7.809 (.8054)***	-6.339 (.6166)***	-7.048 (.6718)***	-4.208 (.8236)***	-6.180 (.6668)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	-.0094 (.0141) *OR .9906*	-.0113 (.0110) *OR 9.887*	-.0036 (.0096) *OR .9963*	-.0081 (.0166) *OR .9919*	-.0063 (.0109) *OR .9936*
Percent Rural	.0164 (.0050)*** *OR 1.016*	.0118 (.0041)*** *OR 1.011*	.0189 (.0037)*** *OR 1.019*	-.0017 (.0064) *OR .9982*	.0102 (.0042)** *OR 1.010*
Electoral Manipulation	4.017 (.3751)*** *OR 55.542*	4.025 (.3719)*** *OR 56.014*	4.069 (.3817)*** *OR 58.504*	4.166 (.3841)*** *OR 64.464*	4.138 (.3836)*** *OR 62.682*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	4.427 (1.047)*** *OR 83.745*				
Muslim Region		5.239 (1.428)*** *OR 188.597*			
Caucasus Region			5.602 (1.571)*** *OR 270.984*		
Economic Development				-1.913 (.6631)*** *OR .1475*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.0337 (1.341) *OR 1.034*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	.0040 (.0179) *OR 1.004*				
*Muslim Region		.0033 (.0201) *OR 1.003*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0192 (.0276) *OR .9809*		
*Economic Development				.0029 (.0122) *OR 1.002*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0024 (.0198) *OR 1.004*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0002 (.0068) *OR .9997*				
*Muslim Region		.0143 (.0073)** *OR 1.014*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0184 (.0112) *OR .9817*		
*Economic				.0131	

Development				(.0042)*** *OR 1.013*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0168 (.0072) *OR 1.017*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.928 (.4439)	2.814 (.4254)	3.293 (.4734)	3.404 (.4892)	3.449 (.4919)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	287.70***	256.57***	329.79***	349.31***	333.71***
AIC	646.175	646.801	660.136	659.379	667.583
Wald statistic (df)	163.11 (6)***	171.32 (6)***	154.23 (6)***	152.96 (6)***	150.23 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 91: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-4.742 (.6410)***	X	-5.003 (.7603)***	-4.208 (.8518)***	-4.707 (.6940)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0261 (.0131)** *OR 1.024*		.0082 (.0145) *OR 1.008*	-.0070 (.0160) *OR .9929*	.0096 (.0120) *OR 1.009*
Percent Rural	-.0262 (.0040)*** *OR .9741*		-.0275 (.0042)*** *OR .9728*	-.0301 (.0066)*** *OR .9703*	-.0254 (.0040)*** *OR .9748*
Electoral Manipulation	X		X	X	X
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-3.549 (1.421)** *OR .0141*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-2.099 (2.222) *OR .1224*		
Economic Development				-.5630 (.4403) *OR .5694*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-2.918 (1.631)* *OR .0540*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			-.0030 (.0313) *OR .9969*		
*Economic Development				.0102 (.0094) *OR 1.010*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			.0340 (.0157)** *OR 1.034*		
*Economic Development				.0050 (.0051) *OR 1.005*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					

Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.499 (.4728)	2.580 (.4897)	2.401 (.4812)	2.424 (.4748)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	118.23***	117.15***	98.53***	111.21***
AIC	505.897	512.547	513.998	509.411
Wald statistic (df)	44.54 (3)***	43.54 (5)***	42.99 (5)***	42.77 (3)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 92: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-4.334 (.5689)***	X	-4.538 (.6122)***	-4.145 (.6796)***	-4.343 (.5773)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.0395 (.0290) *OR 1.040*		-.0434 (.0412) *OR .9574*	.0013 (.0222) *OR 1.001*	-.0104 (.0189) *OR .9895*
Percent Rural	-.0250 (.0039)*** *OR .9752*		-.0266 (.0041)*** *OR .9737*	-.0301 (.0065)*** *OR .9703*	-.0248 (.0039)*** *OR .9754*
Electoral Manipulation			X	X	X
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-4.215 (2.169)* *OR .0147*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-2.693 (1.954) *OR .0676*		
Economic Development				-.3084 (.2848) *OR .7345*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-3.403 (2.002)* *OR .0332*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			.0584 (.0479) *OR 1.060*		
*Economic Development				-.0360 (.0508) *OR .9645*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0377 (.0437) *OR 1.038*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			.0327 (.0156)** *OR 1.033*		
*Economic Development				.0056 (.0051) *OR 1.005*	

*Natural Resource Wealth				
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.350 (.4448)	2.398 (.4496)	2.245 (.4380)	2.291 (.4377)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	115.55***	117.84***	98.13***	111.29***
AIC	507.464	510.798	513.744	511.292
Wald statistic (df)	43.40 (3)***	43.26 (5)***	42.37 (5)***	42.59 (4)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 93: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-4.691 (.6404)***	X	-5.164 (.7086)***	-4.261 (.8024)***	-4.766 (.6431)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0249 (.0145)* *OR 1.025*		.0227 (.0147) *OR 1.022*	-.0056 (.0239) *OR .9943*	.0212 (.0144) *OR 1.021*
Percent Rural	-.0267 (.0041)*** *OR .9736*		-.0281 (.0042)*** *OR .9722*	-.0307 (.0067)*** *OR .9697*	-.0259 (.0040)*** *OR .9743*
Electoral Manipulation	X		X	X	X
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-1.070 (2.074) *OR .3428*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-.5003 (2.064) *OR .6063*		
Economic Development				-.5942 (.4324) *OR .5519*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.9562 (2.257) *OR .3843*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.1656 (.1693) *OR .8473*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			-.1522 (.1609) *OR .8587*		
*Economic Development				.0125 (.0109) *OR 1.012*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.1385 (.1654) *OR .8706*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	.0126 (.0202) *OR 1.012*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			.0345 (.0161)** *OR 1.035*		
*Economic Development				.0054 (.0052) *OR 1.005*	

*Natural Resource Wealth				
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.477 (.4681)	2.615 (.4773)	2.428 (.4692)	2.442 (.4605)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	117.45***	127.08***	105.98***	116.36***
AIC	508.282	509.295	512.660	509.083
Wald statistic (df)	44.89 (5)***	44.76 (5)***	44.06 (5)***	43.19 (4)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 94: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-6.006 (.8329)***	X	-6.170 (.9146)***	-5.699 (.9905)***	-6.326 (.9667)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0030 (.0168) *OR 1.003*		-.0117 (.0152) *OR .9883*	-.0343 (.0200)* *OR .9662*	-.0185 (.0168) *OR .9816*
Percent Rural	-.0088 (.0047)* *OR .9911*		-.0086 (.0047)* *OR .9914*	-.0035 (.0079) *OR .9964*	-.0058 (.0051) *OR .9941*
Electoral Manipulation	1.753 (.6982)** *OR 5.777*		1.618 (.7024)** *OR 5.044*	1.567 (.7024)** *OR 4.794*	1.534 (.7026)** *OR 4.637*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.9359 (2.084) *OR .3922*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-.0604 (2.703) *OR .9413*		
Economic Development				-.3246 (.2933) *OR .7227*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.6589 (1.655) *OR 1.932*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0353 (.0406) *OR .9652*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			-.0628 (.1024) *OR .9390*		
*Economic Development				.0113 (.0085) *OR 1.011*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0000 (.0344) *OR .9999*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0043 (.0062) *OR .9956*	
*Natural Resource					-.0144 (.0135)

Wealth				*OR .9856*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.744 (.5388)	2.814 (.5479)	2.744 (.5506)	2.833 (.5589)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	121.08***	120.88***	110.32***	121.74***
AIC	373.369	375.52	376.616	377.789
Wald statistic (df)	10.75 (5)*	8.49 (5)	9.98 (6)	8.76 (6)

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 95: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-5.989 (.8064)***	X	-5.863 (.7864)***	-5.643 (.8518)***	-6.063 (.8327)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-.2785 (.2649) *OR .7568*		-.2669 (.2241) *OR .7657*	-.1333 (.3223) *OR .8751*	-.2784 (.2248) *OR .7569*
Percent Rural	-.0084 (.0047)* *OR .9915*		-.0085 (.0047)* *OR .9915*	-.0052 (.0085) *OR .9947*	-.0084 (.0047)* *OR .9915*
Electoral Manipulation	1.848 (.7027)*** *OR 6.351*		1.877 (.7013)*** *OR 6.538*	1.800 (.6949)*** *OR 6.055*	1.850 (.7024)*** *OR 6.364*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.1106 (1.689) *OR 1.117*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-1.416 (2.019) *OR .2425*		
Economic Development				-.1705 (.2350) *OR .8432*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.5394 (1.355) *OR 1.715*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.3953 (1.121) *OR .6734*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0034 (.0070) *OR .9965*	

*Natural Resource Wealth				
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.739 (.5288)	2.710 (.5274)	2.647 (.5238)	2.746 (.5315)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	121.02***	118.05***	105.63***	120.98***
AIC	366.990	366.478	369.443	366.836
Wald statistic (df)	9.79 (4)**	10.23 (4)**	10.40 (6)	9.92 (4)**

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 96: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-6.073 (.8546)***	X	-6.554 (.9223)***	-6.459 (1.030)***	-6.847 (1.001)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0034 (.0168) *OR 1.003*		.0081 (.0147) *OR 1.008*	-.0013 (.0225) *OR .9986*	.0058 (.0175) *OR 1.005*
Percent Rural	-.0090 (.0047)* *OR .9909*		-.0092 (.0046)** *OR .9907*	-.0061 (.0077) *OR .9938*	-.0066 (.0051) *OR .9933*
Electoral Manipulation	1.706 (.7126)** *OR 5.507*		1.448 (.7070)** *OR 4.255*	1.313 (.7141)* *OR 3.719*	1.344 (.7094)* *OR 3.834*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-3.288 (1.703)* *OR .0373*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-1.546 (2.180) *OR .2130*		
Economic Development				-.1921 (.2683) *OR .8251*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.3029 (1.524) *OR 1.353*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	.0260 (.0356) *OR 1.026*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			-.0294 (.0855) *OR .9709*		
*Economic Development				.0042 (.0092) *OR 1.004*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0011 (.0331) *OR 1.001*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0028 (.0061) *OR .9971*	

*Natural Resource Wealth				-.0140 (.0133) *OR .9860*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.818 (.5478)	2.895 (.5688)	2.892 (.5775)	2.956 (.5796)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	122.37***	125.29***	114.74***	127.54***
AIC	373.368	376.926	379.548	379.209
Wald statistic (df)	10.61 (5)*	7.87 (5)	7.35 (6)	7.39 (6)

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 97: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-4.828 (.7379)***	X	X	-5.230 (.8246)***	-5.384 (.8738)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0285 (.0159)* *OR 1.028*			-.0118 (.0206) *OR .9882*	.0166 (.0134) *OR 1.016*
Percent Rural	-.1510 (.0611)** *OR .8597*			-.0181 (.0168) *OR .9819*	-.0527 (.0120)*** *OR .9785*
Electoral Manipulation	X			X	X
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-1.739 (1.948) *OR .1755*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				.2136 (.1634) *OR 1.238*	
Natural Resource Wealth					2.376 (1.694) *OR 10.764*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0681 (.0369)* *OR .9340*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0086 (.0085) *1.008*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.1174 (.0715) *OR .8892*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.1609 (.0634)** *OR 1.174*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0361 (.0216)* *OR .9645*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.1199 (.2429) *OR .8869*

Random Effects			
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.440 (.5090)	2.076 (.5193)	2.517 (.5273)
Model Fit:			
Likelihood Ratio Test	323.30***	79.15***	357.17***
AIC	433.172	439.822	452.783
Wald statistic (df)	15.98 (5)***	29.61 (5)***	22.41 (5)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 98: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-4.933 (.7678)***	X	X	-5.027 (.6835)***	-5.017 (.8077)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.0144 (.0318) *OR 1.014*			.0019 (.0309) *OR 1.001*	-.0139 (.0269) *OR .9861*
Percent Rural	-.0535 (.0119)*** *OR .9478*			-.0194 (.0165) *OR .9807*	-.0527 (.0118)*** *OR .9486*
Electoral Manipulation	X			X	X
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-2.235 (1.779) *OR .1069*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				.3337 (.0932)*** *OR 1.396*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.1894 (1.184) *OR .8274*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0541 (.0912) *OR .9473*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0353 (.0213)* *OR .9652*	
*Natural Resource					

Wealth			
Random Effects			
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.660 (.5466)	1.863 (.4406)	2.532 (.5236)
Model Fit:			
Likelihood Ratio Test	362.60***	75.07***	347.75***
AIC	451.69	439.229	453.687
Wald statistic (df)	22.05 (3)***	32.04 (5)***	20.50 (3)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 99: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-5.053 (.8102)***	X	X	-5.317 (.8159)***	-5.399 (.8218)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0288 (.0161)* *OR 1.029*			-.0081 (.0310) *OR .9919*	.0255 (.0155) *OR 1.025*
Percent Rural	-.1508 (.0611)** *OR .8599*			-.0202 (.0161) *OR .9799*	-.0519 (.0119)*** *OR .9494*
Electoral Manipulation	X			X	X
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-2.016 (1.986) *OR .1331*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				.2096 (.1852) *OR 1.233*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.349 (1.586) *OR 3.854*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region	-.1536 (.1256) *OR .8575*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0090 (.0107) *OR 1.009*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0969 (.0779) *OR .9075*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.1524 (.0634)** *OR 1.164*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0344 (.0209) *OR .9661*	
*Natural Resource					-.1039 (.2143)

Wealth			*OR .9012*
Random Effects			
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.661 (.5645)	2.086 (.5269)	2.523 (.5233)
Model Fit:			
Likelihood Ratio Test	330.66***	81.08***	354.88***
AIC	433.130	439.377	453.830
Wald statistic (df)	15.25 (5)***	30.07 (5)***	22.29 (5)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 100: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia's Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-10.766 (1.630)***	-10.319 (1.336)***	-11.272 (1.200)***	-10.273 (1.493)***	-10.961 (1.338)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0192 (.0261) *OR 1.019*	.0344 (.0139)** *OR 1.035*	.0402 (.0097)*** *OR 1.041*	.0626 (.0157)*** *OR 1.064*	.0552 (.0131)*** *OR 1.056*
Percent Rural	-.0015 (.0115) *OR .9984*	.0049 (.0077) *OR 1.004*	.0180 (.0056)*** *OR 1.018*	.0005 (.0077) *OR 1.000*	.0055 (.0057) *OR 1.005*
Electoral Manipulation	3.850 (.7590)*** *OR 47.002*	3.563 (.6947)*** *OR 35.297*	3.764 (.7029)*** *OR 43.158*	3.848 (.7100)*** *OR 49.908*	3.955 (.7266)*** *OR 52.206*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.8663 (1.769) *OR 2.378*				
Muslim Region		3.241 (2.027) *OR 25.582*			
Caucasus Region			2.305 (2.102) *OR 10.032*		
Economic Development				-.4398 (.7816) *OR .6441*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.7936 (1.704) *OR 2.211*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0260 (.0281) *OR 1.026*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		.0128 (.0184) *OR 1.012*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.0302 (.0250) *OR 1.030*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0095 (.0088) *OR .9905*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0123 (.0179) *OR .9877*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.0195 (.0126) *OR 1.019*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		.0168 (.0099)* *OR 1.016*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0075 (.0097) *OR .9924*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0096 (.0045)** *OR 1.009*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource					.0209 (.0095)

Wealth					*OR 1.021*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.169 (.7266)	2.828 (.6661)	2.809 (.6162)	2.897 (.6384)	2.980 (.6577)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	151.34***	162.84***	167.07***	158.73***	153.80***
AIC	423.277	411.999	421.776	426.504	424.964
Wald statistic (df)	84.17 (6)***	89.34 (6)***	87.55 (6)***	86.36 (6)***	83.96 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 101: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia's Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	X	-9.748	-10.376	-8.350	-9.413
		(1.273)***	(1.114)***	(1.170)***	(1.104)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority		.0399	.0231	.0294	.0230
		(.0149)***	(.0084)***	(.0098)***	(.0070)***
		OR 1.040	*OR 1.023*	*OR 1.029*	*OR 1.023*
Percent Rural		.0037 (.0080)	.0209	.0033 (.0075)	.0079 (.0058)
		OR 1.003	(.0055)***	*OR 1.003*	*OR 1.008*
			OR 1.021		
Electoral Manipulation		3.609	3.943	4.037	4.123
		(.7047)***	(.7211)***	(.6998)***	(.7332)***
		OR 36.956	*OR 51.602*	*OR 56.682*	*OR 61.795*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region					
Muslim Region		5.190			
		(1.831)***			
		OR 179.585			
Caucasus Region			4.991		
			(1.530)***		
			OR 147.158		
Economic Development				-.8601 (.6640)	
				OR .4231	
Natural Resource Wealth					.6976 (1.438)
					OR 2.009
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0264 (.0162)			
		OR .9738			
*Caucasus Region			-.0064 (.0111)		
			OR .9936		
*Economic Development				-.0068 (.0067)	
				OR .9931	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0048 (.0119)
					OR .9952
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0222 (.0099)**			
		OR 1.022			
*Caucasus Region			-.0083 (.0093)		
			OR .9916		
*Economic				.0101	

Development			(.0044)** *OR 1.010*	
*Natural Resource Wealth				.0216 (.0093)** *OR 1.021*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.741 (.6784)	2.684 (.6704)	2.836 (.6761)	2.945 (.7128)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	116.99***	118.17***	112.35***	109.31***
AIC	422.630	439.785	447.075	444.406
Wald statistic (df)	86.80 (6)***	88.03 (6)***	80.35 (6)***	80.15 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 102: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia's Strongholds in the 2007 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-10.936 (1.664)***	-9.700 (1.333)***	-11.174 (1.279)***	-8.330 (1.325)***	-9.971 (1.301)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0198 (.0264) *OR 1.020*	-.0029 (.0204) *OR .9970*	.0143 (.0104) *OR 1.014*	-.0180 (.0129) *OR .9821*	-.0071 (.0074) *OR .9928*
Percent Rural	-.0030 (.0118) *OR .9969*	.0090 (.0077) *OR 1.009*	.0250 (.0053)*** *OR 1.025*	.0081 (.0074) *OR 1.008*	.0112 (.0056)** *OR 1.011*
Electoral Manipulation	4.146 (.7634)*** *OR 63.226*	3.715 (.7020)*** *OR 41.070*	3.965 (.7273)*** *OR 52.740*	4.239 (.7080)*** *OR 69.393*	4.197 (.7384)*** *OR 66.498*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	3.470 (1.664)** *OR 32.165*				
Muslim Region		5.725 (1.937)*** *OR 306.682*			
Caucasus Region			6.436 (1.753)*** *OR 624.296*		
Economic Development				-1.515 (.7711)** *OR .2196*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.5850 (1.746) *OR 1.795*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0204 (.0271) *OR .9797*				
*Muslim Region		.0026 (.0213) *OR 1.002*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0217 (.0128)* *OR .9784*		
*Economic Development				.0162 (.0099) *OR 1.016*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0233 (.0135)* *OR 1.023*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	.0278 (.0128)** *OR 1.028*				
*Muslim Region		.0193 (.0096)** *OR 1.019*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0101 (.0092) *OR .9898*		

*Economic Development				.0090 (.0043)** *OR 1.009*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0220 (.0092)** *OR 1.022*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.202 (.7294)	2.993 (.7627)	3.273 (.7756)	3.533 (.6915)	3.675 (.7589)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	123.44***	134.66***	164.50***	188.87***	187.55***
AIC	444.067	435.206	449.485	459.829	455.744
Wald statistic (df)	72.76 (6)***	80.94 (6)***	76.13 (6)***	66.33 (6)***	69.49 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 103: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.295 (.3377)***	-2.356 (.3246)***	-2.437 (.3376)***	-1.695 (.3290)***	-2.244 (.3281)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0106 (.0080) *OR 1.010*	.0081 (.0065) *OR 1.008*	.0081 (.0067) *OR 1.008*	.0092 (.0085) *OR 1.009*	.0126 (.0066)* *OR 1.012*
Percent Rural	-.0218 (.0022)*** *OR .9783*	-.0210 (.0021)*** *OR .9791*	-.0218 (.0023)*** *OR .9783*	-.0251 (.0033)*** *OR .9751*	-.0227 (.0023)*** *OR .9775*
Electoral Manipulation	-2.729 (.5900)*** *OR .0652*	-3.167 (.6712)*** *OR .0420*	-3.081 (.6693)*** *OR .0458*	-2.827 (.5915)*** *OR .0591*	-2.817 (.5976)*** *OR .0597*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.8794 (.8483) *OR .4149*				
Muslim Region		-6.445 (3.698)* *OR .0015*			
Caucasus Region			-.0910 (1.234) *OR .9130*		
Economic Development				-.2580 (.1233)** *OR .7725*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-1.384 (.9310) *OR .2504*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0015 (.0136) *OR .9984*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		.0618 (.0416) *OR 1.063*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.0137 (.0175) *OR 1.013*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				.0012 (.0060) *OR 1.001*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0086 (.0153) *OR .9913*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.0139 (.0066)** *OR 1.014*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		.0330 (.0171)* *OR 1.033*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0146 (.0061)** *OR 1.014*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0036 (.0021)* *OR 1.003*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource					.0182

Wealth					(.0058)*** *OR 1.018*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.073 (.2631)	2.092 (.2643)	2.087 (.2642)	1.880 (.2453)	2.050 (.2594)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	397.00***	401.18***	400.60***	345.94***	393.61***
AIC	1509.506	1502.669	1506.183	1493.194	1503.542
Wald statistic (df)	116.53 (6)***	118.26 (6)***	114.85 (6)***	124.45 (6)***	118.97 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 104: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.156 (.3158)***	-2.232 (.2979)***	-2.327 (.3111)***	-1.572 (.2908)***	-2.083 (.3039)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.0053 (.0237) *OR 1.005*	.0067 (.0093) *OR 1.006*	.0081 (.0098) *OR 1.008*	.0144 (.0101) *OR 1.014*	.0114 (.0082) *OR 1.011*
Percent Rural	-.0213 (.0022)*** *OR .9789*	-.0206 (.0021)*** *OR .9795*	-.0215 (.0022)*** *OR .9786*	-.0248 (.0033)*** *OR .9754*	-.0223 (.0022)*** *OR .9779*
Electoral Manipulation	-2.689 (.5811)*** *OR .0679*	-2.931 (.6241)*** *OR .0533*	-2.934 (.6338)*** *OR .0531*	-2.818 (.5910)*** *OR .0597*	-2.790 (.5916)*** *OR .0613*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.8060 (.7303) *OR .4466*				
Muslim Region		-2.406 (1.858) *OR .0901*			
Caucasus Region			.4995 (1.027) *OR 1.648*		
Economic Development				-.2268 (.0688)*** *OR .7970*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-1.586 (.8545)* *OR .2045*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region	.0023 (.0257) *OR 1.002*				
Percent Titular Minority *Muslim Region		.0120 (.0200) *OR 1.012*			
Percent Titular Minority *Caucasus Region			.0025 (.0163) *OR 1.002*		
Percent Titular Minority *Economic Development				-.0081 (.0128) *OR .9919*	
Percent Titular Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0033 (.0212) *OR 1.003*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.0133 (.0067)** *OR 1.013*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		.0372 (.0159)** *OR 1.037*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0148 (.0061)** *OR 1.015*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0038 (.0021)* *OR 1.003*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					.0175 (.0057)*** *OR 1.017*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.033 (.2579)	2.039 (.2569)	2.058 (.2595)	1.807 (.2326)	2.021 (.2578)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	397.07***	404.12***	403.91***	356.15***	394.41***
AIC	1511.141	1507.003	1508.064	1494.177	1504.827
Wald statistic (df)	115.79 (6)***	118.14 (6)***	114.84 (6)***	124.30 (6)***	118.78 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 105: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.301 (.3396)***	-2.312 (.3203)***	-2.388 (.3301)***	-1.497 (.3244)***	-2.139 (.3232)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0109 (.0084) *OR 1.010*	.0071 (.0080) *OR 1.007*	.0065 (.0082) *OR 1.006*	-.0013 (.0123) *OR .9986*	.0093 (.0087) *OR 1.009*
Percent Rural	-.0217 (.0022)*** *OR .9784*	-.0206 (.0021)*** *OR .9795*	-.0214 (.0022)*** *OR .9787*	-.0243 (.0033)*** *OR .9759*	-.0221 (.0022)*** *OR .9781*
Electoral Manipulation	-2.662 (.5811)*** *OR .0698*	-2.873 (.6225)*** *OR .0565*	-2.862 (.6292)*** *OR .0571*	-2.663 (.5688)*** *OR .0696*	-2.658 (.5800)*** *OR .0700*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.4730 (.7527) *OR .6231*				
Muslim Region		-1.533 (1.616) *OR .2158*			
Caucasus Region			.7393 (.9980) *OR 2.094*		
Economic Development				-.3389 (.1302)*** *OR .7124*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-1.300 (.8775) *OR .2723*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0116 (.0185) *OR .9884*				
Percent Other Minority *Muslim Region		-.0020 (.0217) *OR .9979*			
Percent Other Minority *Caucasus Region			.0023 (.0209) *OR 1.002*		
Percent Other Minority *Economic Development				.0063 (.0068) *OR 1.006*	
Percent Other Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0133 (.0182) *OR .9867*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.0158 (.0061)*** *OR 1.015*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		.0391 (.0151)*** *OR 1.039*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0151 (.0060)** *OR 1.015*		
Percent Rural *Economic				.0035 (.0021)*	

Development				*OR 1.003*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0183 (.0057)*** *OR 1.018*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.073 (.2641)	2.081 (.2649)	2.087 (.2632)	1.868 (.2430)	2.052 (.2632)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	395.25***	404.35***	411.39***	355.30***	379.91***
AIC	1510.23	1507.987	1508.651	1494.611	1506.083
Wald statistic (df)	116.28 (6)***	117.55 (6)***	113.98 (6)***	124.02 (6)***	117.93 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 106: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.700	X	-2.652	-1.653	-3.050
	(.3865)***		(.3803)***	(.4054)***	(.3836)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	-.0211		-.0201	-.0468	-.0210
	(.0079)***		(.0068)***	(.0123)***	(.0080)***
	OR .9791		*OR .9800*	*OR .9542*	*OR .9791*
Percent Rural	-.0064		-.0091	-.0075	-.0047
	(.0020)***		(.0021)***	(.0034)**	(.0022)**
	OR .9935		*OR .9909*	*OR .9924*	*OR .9952*
Electoral Manipulation	-2.530		-2.500	-2.662	-2.614
	(.7014)***		(.6980)***	(.7109)***	(.7012)***
	OR .0796		*OR .0820*	*OR .0697*	*OR .0732*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.1384 (1.009)				
	OR 1.148				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-.1271 (1.523)		
			OR .8806		
Economic Development				-.5216	
				(.1541)***	
				OR .5935	
Natural Resource Wealth					3.164
					(.8690)***
					OR 23.683
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0035 (.0168)				
	OR 1.003				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region					
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0345 (.0341)		
			OR .9660		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				.0168	
				(.0066)**	
				OR 1.017	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0125 (.0150)
					OR .9875
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0135 (.0085)				
	OR .9865				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			.0146		
			(.0060)**		
			OR 1.014		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0002 (.0021)	
				OR 1.000	

*Natural Resource Wealth				-.0095 (.0045)** *OR .9905*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.389 (.3080)	2.417 (.3078)	2.231 (.2897)	2.168 (.2818)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	447.96***	465.43***	399.34***	377.80***
AIC	1371.422	1367.731	1354.285	1358.676
Wald statistic (df)	45.76 (6)***	50.17 (6)***	54.80 (6)***	58.46 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 107: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.912	X	-2.848	-2.131	-3.190
	(.3704)***		(.3578)***	(.3644)***	(.3610)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-1.851 (9.472)		-.0534	-.0587	-.0552
	OR .1570		(.0169)***	(.0233)**	(.0217)**
			OR .9479	*OR .9429*	*OR .9462*
Percent Rural	-.0065		-.0070	-.0086	-.0045
	(.0020)***		(.0019)***	(.0035)**	(.0022)**
	OR .9934		*OR .9930*	*OR .9914*	*OR .9954*
Electoral Manipulation	-2.506		-2.502	-2.546	-2.486
	(.6972)***		(.6971)***	(.6940)***	(.6921)***
	OR .0815		*OR .0819*	*OR .0783*	*OR .0832*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.2565 (.8717)				
	OR 1.292				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-.1169 (1.261)		
			OR .8896		
Economic Development				-.2697	
				(.1099)**	
				OR .7635	
Natural Resource Wealth					2.746
					(.7795)***
					OR 15.591
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region	1.817 (9.472)				
	OR 6.155				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0032 (.0169)	
				OR 1.003	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0066 (.0370)
					OR .9933
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0091 (.0088)				
	OR .9909				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0008 (.0023)	
				OR 1.000	

*Natural Resource Wealth				-.0090 (.0045)** *OR .9910*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.328 (.3023)	2.325 (.2987)	2.167 (.2806)	2.107 (.2761)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	425.09***	442.60***	408.52***	362.84***
AIC	1363.901	1364.588	1354.247	1354.734
Wald statistic (df)	37.34 (6)***	41.71 (4)***	49.28 (6)***	52.93 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 108: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.780 (.3853)***	X	-2.891 (.3800)***	-2.083 (.4086)***	-3.331 (.3913)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	-.0128 (.0081) *OR .9872*		-.0071 (.0075) *OR .9928*	-.0244 (.0144)* *OR .9758*	-.0063 (.0088) *OR .9937*
Percent Rural	-.0068 (.0020)*** *OR .9931*		-.0098 (.0020)*** *OR .9901*	-.0101 (.0033)*** *OR .9898*	-.0055 (.0022)** *OR .9944*
Electoral Manipulation	-2.604 (.6997)*** *OR .0739*		-2.712 (.6956)*** *OR .0663*	-2.906 (.6980)*** *OR .0546*	-2.818 (.6953)*** *OR .0596*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-.7213 (.9437) *OR .4860*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			-.9010 (1.322) *OR .4061*		
Economic Development				-.4070 (.1538)*** *OR .6656*	
Natural Resource Wealth					2.810 (.8454)*** *OR 16.626*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	.0268 (.0232) *OR 1.027*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			-.0322 (.0358) *OR .9682*		
*Economic Development				.0101 (.0071) *OR 1.010*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0128 (.0161) *OR .9872*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0154 (.0081)* *OR .9846*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			.0147 (.0060)** *OR 1.014*		
*Economic Development				.0014 (.0022) *OR 1.001*	

*Natural Resource Wealth				-.0097 (.0045)** *OR .9902*
Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.364 (.3068)	2.430 (.3118)	2.247 (.2935)	2.238 (.2902)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	434.77***	460.02***	399.54***	401.22***
AIC	1377.74	1378.423	1370.513	1371.619
Wald statistic (df)	41.75 (6)***	44.27 (6)***	46.74 (6)***	50.22 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 109: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.066 (.3231)***	-1.341 (.3395)***	-1.269 (.3432)***	-1.798 (.3513)***	-1.205 (.3435)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0474 (.0127)*** *OR 1.048*	.0239 (.0091)*** *OR 1.024*	.0208 (.0089)** *OR 1.021*	.0061 (.0129) *OR 1.006*	.0248 (.0095)*** *OR 1.025*
Percent Rural	-.0878 (.0082)*** *OR .9158*	-.0755 (.0068)*** *OR .9272*	-.0748 (.0068)*** *OR .9278*	-.0705 (.0093)*** *OR .9318*	-.0788 (.0074)*** *OR .9241*
Electoral Manipulation	-2.047 (.8383)** *OR .1291*	-2.400 (.8810)*** *OR .0906*	-2.272 (.8684)*** *OR .1030*	-2.581 (.8859)*** *OR .0756*	-3.306 (1.012)*** *OR .0366*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-2.315 (1.098)** *OR .0987*				
Muslim Region		.2027 (3.578) *OR 1.224*			
Caucasus Region			-1.712 (1.791) *OR .1803*		
Economic Development				.1511 (.0897)* *OR 1.163*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.6571 (1.013) *OR .5183*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0641 (.0235)*** *OR .9378*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		-.0666 (.0640) *OR .9354*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0423 (.0482) *OR .9585*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				.0029 (.0054) *OR 1.002*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0360 (.0228) *OR .9645*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	.0741 (.0136)*** *OR 1.077*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0375 (.1064) *OR .9631*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0000 (.0045) *OR 1.000*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					.0223 (.0177) *OR 1.022*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.997 (.2746)	2.229 (.3078)	2.232 (.3094)	1.642 (.2508)	2.115 (.2970)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	211.11***	232.86***	220.78***	102.80***	212.65***
AIC	929.420	968.974	971.156	943.344	970.489
Wald statistic (df)	152.64 (6)***	133.30 (5)***	132.05 (6)***	157.97 (6)***	133.68 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 110: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-.5534 (.2793)**	-.8336 (.2780)***	-.7379 (.2741)***	-1.484 (.2590)***	-.6758 (.2853)**
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.0004 (.0232) *OR 1.000*	-.0338 (.0283) *OR .9666*	-.0416 (.0245)* *OR .9591*	-.0314 (.0280) *OR .9689*	-.0456 (.0302) *OR .9556*
Percent Rural	-.0750 (.0068)*** *OR .9277*	-.0745 (.0068)*** *OR .9281*	-.0744 (.0068)*** *OR .9282*	-.0690 (.0092)*** *OR .9332*	-.0774 (.0074)*** *OR .9254*
Electoral Manipulation	-2.026 (.8478)** *OR .1317*	-2.087 (.8516)** *OR .1239*	-1.998 (.8368)** *OR .1355*	-2.007 (.8226)** *OR .1342*	-2.247 (.8607)*** *OR .1056*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-2.828 (.9341)*** *OR .0596*				
Muslim Region		-1.589 (2.212) *OR .2041*			
Caucasus Region			-2.409 (1.281)* *OR .0898*		
Economic Development				.1822 (.0310)*** *OR 1.199*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-1.257 (.7925) *OR .2843*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		.0037 (.0601) *OR 1.003*			
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0032 (.0174) *OR .9967*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0187 (.0462) *OR 1.018*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic				-.0005 (.0045)	

Development				*OR .9994*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0220 (.0175) *OR 1.022*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.000 (.2749)	2.038 (.2806)	1.978 (.2759)	1.469 (.2231)	1.974 (.2711)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	206.38***	213.19***	195.72***	99.32***	203.16***
AIC	962.599	974.266	969.259	941.597	973.711
Wald statistic (df)	138.17 (4)***	129.22 (5)***	130.09 (4)***	163.50 (6)***	132.21 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 111: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.078 (.3252)***	-1.390 (.3225)***	-1.340 (.3231)***	-2.119 (.3570)***	-1.351 (.3277)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0486 (.0129)*** *OR 1.049*	.0341 (.0103)*** *OR 1.034*	.0330 (.0103)*** *OR 1.033*	.0353 (.0172)** *OR 1.035*	.0463 (.0124)*** *OR 1.047*
Percent Rural	-.0875 (.0082)*** *OR .9161*	-.0749 (.0067)*** *OR .9278*	-.0744 (.0068)*** *OR .9282*	-.0704 (.0093)*** *OR .9319*	-.0786 (.0073)*** *OR .9243*
Electoral Manipulation	-2.128 (.8397)** *OR .1189*	-2.233 (.8561)*** *OR .1071*	-2.249 (.8549)*** *OR .1054*	.2634 (.1072)** *OR .0758*	-2.945 (.9357)*** *OR .0525*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-3.030 (.9739)*** *OR .0480*				
Muslim Region		-2.003 (1.974) *OR .1348*			
Caucasus Region			-2.329 (1.668) *OR .0973*		
Economic Development				.2634 (.1072)** *OR 1.301*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.7434 (.9117) *OR .4754*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0448 (.0278) *OR .9561*				
*Muslim Region		-.0415 (.0655) *OR .9593*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0244 (.0577) *OR .9758*		
*Economic Development				-.0048 (.0068) *OR .9951*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0502 (.0262)* *OR .9509*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	.0706 (.0132)*** *OR 1.073*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			-.0385 (.1081) *OR .9622*		
*Economic Development				-.0001 (.0045) *OR .9998*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					.0224 (.0175) *OR 1.022*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.005 (.2756)	2.154 (.2919)	2.149 (.2926)	1.632 (.2445)	2.021 (.2790)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	212.32***	234.87***	227.43***	105.93***	210.07***
AIC	929.750	964.684	965.634	937.775	961.344
Wald statistic (df)	153.83 (6)***	139.17 (5)***	138.27 (6)***	161.73 (6)***	141.63 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 112: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia's Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-6.145 (.5630)***	-5.875 (.4832)***	-5.639 (.4750)***	-5.158 (.5827)***	-6.055 (.5174)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0041 (.0117) *OR 1.004*	.0202 (.0073)*** *OR 1.020*	.0129 (.0070)* *OR 1.013*	.0370 (.0093)*** *OR 1.037*	.0294 (.0074)*** *OR 1.029*
Percent Rural	.0077 (.0038)** *OR 1.007*	.0066 (.0034)* *OR 1.006*	.0072 (.0034)** *OR 1.007*	-.0003 (.0051) *OR .9996*	.0062 (.0037)* *OR 1.006*
Electoral Manipulation	4.190 (.3211)*** *OR 66.035*	4.282 (.3278)*** *OR 72.405*	4.211 (.3223)*** *OR 67.474*	4.298 (.3271)*** *OR 73.615*	4.387 (.3312)*** *OR 80.411*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	3.280 (.9433)*** *OR 26.589*				
Muslim Region		6.645 (1.533)*** *OR 769.539*			
Caucasus Region			2.107 (1.414) *OR 8.227*		
Economic Development				-.0109 (.3341) *OR .9891*	
Natural Resource Wealth					2.992 (1.037)*** *OR 19.932*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0034 (.0147) *OR 1.003*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		-.0391 (.0171)** *OR .9616*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.0164 (.0176) *OR 1.016*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0217 (.0079)*** *OR .9784*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0436 (.0148)*** *OR .9572*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0043 (.0065) *OR .9956*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0018 (.0086) *OR .9981*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0101 (.0088) *OR .9898*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0045 (.0034) *OR 1.004*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0012 (.0069) *OR .9987*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.262 (.3252)	2.200 (.3129)	2.307 (.3324)	2.313 (.3308)	2.356 (.3334)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	263.71***	256.86***	254.96***	265.21***	270.76***
AIC	760.523	757.375	772.066	764.534	767.864
Wald statistic (df)	228.11 (6)***	231.02 (6)***	221.51 (6)***	216.73 (6)***	221.02 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 113: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia's Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-6.020 (.5264)***	-5.676 (.4680)***	-5.546 (.4688)***	-4.605 (.5612)***	-5.697 (.4892)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.0061 (.0072) *OR 1.006*	.0284 (.0091)*** *OR 1.028*	.0161 (.0081)** *OR 1.106*	.0284 (.0094)*** *OR 1.028*	.0306 (.0084)*** *OR 1.031*
Percent Rural	.0063 (.0031)** *OR 1.006*	.0068 (.0034)** *OR 1.006*	.0075 (.0033)** *OR 1.007*	.0020 (.0050) *OR 1.002*	.0074 (.0036)** *OR 1.007*
Electoral Manipulation	4.184 (.3189)*** *OR 65.662*	4.230 (.3238)*** *OR 68.736*	4.237 (.3241)*** *OR 69.264*	4.280 (.3238)*** *OR 72.242*	4.366 (.3286)*** *OR 78.740*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	3.157 (.7897)*** *OR 23.506*				
Muslim Region		5.709 (1.303)*** *OR 301.586*			
Caucasus Region			2.854 (1.235)** *OR 17.370*		
Economic Development				-.3930 (.3325) *OR .6750*	
Natural Resource Wealth					2.178 (.9259)** *OR 8.831*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0370 (.0144)** *OR .9636*			
*Caucasus Region			.0022 (.0156) *OR 1.002*		
*Economic Development				-.0119 (.0077) *OR .9880*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0323 (.0143)** *OR .9681*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0043 (.0083) *OR .9957*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0093 (.0086) *OR .9906*		

*Economic Development				.0027 (.0034) *OR 1.002*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0043 (.0068) *OR .9956*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.273 (.3257)	2.208 (.3140)	2.363 (.3348)	2.325 (.3307)	2.321 (.3264)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	266.96***	254.32***	275.77***	267.29***	276.82***
AIC	756.836	755.809	772.62	770.680	770.873
Wald statistic (df)	226.96 (4)***	230.55 (6)***	217.81 (6)***	213.36 (6)***	223.08 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 114: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia's Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (1 Standard Deviation Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-6.194 (.5654)***	-5.517 (.4730)***	-5.568 (.4989)***	-4.618 (.6235)***	-5.613 (.5156)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0056 (.0120) *OR 1.005*	.0009 (.0102) *OR 1.000*	-.0003 (.0089) *OR .9996*	.0250 (.0154) *OR 1.025*	.0074 (.0108) *OR 1.007*
Percent Rural	.0076 (.0038)** *OR 1.007*	.0084 (.0033)** *OR 1.008*	.0086 (.0033)*** *OR 1.008*	.0040 (.0049) *OR 1.004*	.0087 (.0036)** *OR 1.008*
Electoral Manipulation	4.229 (.3223)*** *OR 68.661*	4.283 (.3280)*** *OR 72.515*	4.294 (.3297)*** *OR 73.329*	4.373 (.3327)*** *OR 79.308*	4.438 (.3355)*** *OR 84.656*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	3.786 (.8544)*** *OR 44.115*				
Muslim Region		5.227 (1.237)*** *OR 186.295*			
Caucasus Region			3.511 (1.262)*** *OR 33.485*		
Economic Development				-.2780 (.4146) *OR .7572*	
Natural Resource Wealth					2.285 (1.015)** *OR 9.828*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0118 (.0164) *OR .9882*				
*Muslim Region		-.0046 (.0179) *OR .9953*			
*Caucasus Region			.0053 (.0295) *OR 1.005*		
*Economic Development				-.0197 (.0109)* *OR .9804*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0210 (.0170) *OR .9791*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0028 (.0063) *OR .9971*				
*Muslim Region		-.0077 (.0081) *OR .9922*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0095 (.0085) *OR .9905*		
*Economic				.0017 (.0034)	

Development				*OR 1.001*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0058 (.0067) *OR .9941*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.289 (.3282)	2.266 (.3228)	2.548 (.3506)	2.550 (.3634)	2.561 (.3535)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	268.04***	258.72***	305.57***	299.96***	300.39***
AIC	760.839	766.283	778.286	777.07	783.064
Wald statistic (df)	226.92 (6)***	225.80 (6)***	208.63 (6)***	198.03 (6)***	205.55 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than one standard deviation above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 115: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	X	X	X	X	X
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority					
Percent Rural					
Electoral Manipulation					
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region					
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development					
Natural Resource Wealth					
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development					
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development					
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Random Effects					

Parameter: Intercept (sd) **Model Fit:** Likelihood Ratio Test AIC Wald statistic (df)
Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 116: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	X	X	X	X	X
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority					
Percent Rural					
Electoral Manipulation					
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region					
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development					
Natural Resource Wealth					
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development					
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development					
*Natural Resource Wealth					

Random Effects **Parameter:** Intercept (sd) **Model Fit:** Likelihood Ratio Test AIC Wald statistic (df)
Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 117: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of KPRF Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	X	X	X	X	X
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority					
Percent Rural					
Electoral Manipulation					
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region					
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development					
Natural Resource Wealth					
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development					
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development					
*Natural Resource Wealth					

Random Effects **Parameter:** Intercept (sd) **Model Fit:** Likelihood Ratio Test AIC Wald statistic (df)
Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the KPRF's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 118: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-5.940 (.6002)***	X	-5.623 (.5934)***	-4.701 (.6337)***	-5.762 (.6175)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0208 (.0151) *OR 1.021*		-.0003 (.0122) *OR .9996*	-.0187 (.0197) *OR .9813*	-.0035 (.0150) *OR .9964*
Percent Rural	.0036 (.0065) *OR 1.003*		.0002 (.0057) *OR 1.000*	-.0093 (.0081) *OR .9907*	.0043 (.0071) *OR 1.004*
Electoral Manipulation	-.2649 (.8374) *OR .7672*		-.3788 (.8583) *OR .6846*	-.7784 (.9307) *OR .4591*	-.5920 (.8716) *OR .5532*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	3.143 (1.114)*** *OR 23.195*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			1.883 (1.504) *OR 6.579*		
Economic Development				-.1810 (.1254) *OR .8343*	
Natural Resource Wealth					2.536 (.9893)*** *OR 12.630*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0647 (.0279)** *OR .9848*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region					
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0615 (.0753) *OR .9403*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				.0082 (.0065) *OR 1.008*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0178 (.0237) *OR .9823*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0152 (.0142) *OR .9848*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region					
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0058 (.0032)* *OR 1.005*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0114 (.0118) *OR .9886*
Random Effects					

Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.194 (.3363)	1.386 (.3359)	1.068 (.3770)	1.142 (.3235)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	11.84***	19.70***	4.23**	11.32***
AIC	257.293	261.694	260.994	259.455
Wald statistic (df)	8.92 (6)	1.91 (5)	4.87 (6)	8.48 (6)

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 119: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-5.394 (.5204)***	X	-5.562 (.5682)***	-5.014 (.5663)***	-5.691 (.5724)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-.1057 (.0606)* *OR .8996*		-.0533 (.0416) *OR .9480*	-.1242 (.1413) *OR .8831*	-.0726 (.0956) *OR .9299*
Percent Rural	.0025 (.0057) *OR 1.002*		.0015 (.0058) *OR 1.001*	-.0090 (.0087) *OR .9910*	.0052 (.0070) *OR 1.005*
Electoral Manipulation	-.4475 (.8591) *OR .6392*		-.1626 (.8663) *OR .8498*	-.2719 (.8854) *OR .7619*	-.2309 (.8467) *OR .7937*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	2.014 (.7857)*** *OR 7.498*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			.6858 (1.035) *OR 1.985*		
Economic Development				-.0658 (.0829) *OR .9362*	
Natural Resource Wealth					2.180 (.8271)*** *OR 8.852*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0143 (.0348) *OR 1.014*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0154 (.1064) *OR 1.015*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0057 (.0041) *OR 1.005*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0111 (.0119) *OR .9889*

Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	.9979 (.3364)	1.407 (.3351)	1.306 (.3486)	1.069 (.3276)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	6.13***	21.19***	12.13***	9.06***
AIC	252.983	257.214	257.604	255.327
Wald statistic (df)	6.91 (4)	2.18 (4)	3.53 (6)	8.99 (6)

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 120: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of LDPR Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-6.121 (.6529)***	X	-5.771 (.5839)***	-5.118 (.6746)***	-6.089 (.6612)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0268 (.0155)* *OR 1.027*		.0174 (.0132) *OR 1.017*	.0102 (.0220) *OR 1.010*	.0210 (.0165) *OR 1.021*
Percent Rural	.0039 (.0065) *OR 1.003*		.0005 (.0057) *OR 1.000*	-.0112 (.0081) *OR .9888*	.0036 (.0070) *OR 1.003*
Electoral Manipulation	-.5805 (.8681) *OR .5595*		-.7408 (.8406) *OR .4766*	-1.013 (.8703) *OR .3628*	-.9334 (.8597) *OR .3931*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	1.776 (1.042)* *OR 5.908*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region			1.117 (1.199) *OR 3.056*		
Economic Development				-.1080 (.1331) *OR .8975*	
Natural Resource Wealth					2.326 (.9779)** *OR 10.240*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.0384 (.0280) *OR .9623*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region			-.0439 (.0615) *OR .9570*		
*Economic Development				.0029 (.0070) *OR 1.002*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0275 (.0262) *OR .9728*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region	-.0199 (.0144) *OR .9802*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0068 (.0033)** *OR 1.006*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0105 (.0118) *OR .9895*

Random Effects				
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.315 (.3793)	1.289 (.3315)	1.118 (.3818)	1.184 (.3522)
Model Fit:				
Likelihood Ratio Test	11.60***	15.43***	4.83**	10.06***
AIC	260.958	261.870	260.743	259.533
Wald statistic (df)	6.23 (6)	2.77 (5)	5.81 (6)	7.95 (6)

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if the LDPR's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 121: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-1.840 (.8299)**	X	X	-3.598 (.5893)***	-3.142 (.5095)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	.0160 (.0098) *OR 1.016*			-.0185 (.0227) *OR .9816*	.0241 (.0130)* *OR 1.024*
Percent Rural	-.0820 (.0164)*** *OR .9211*			-.0746 (.0241)*** *OR .9280*	-.1035 (.0198)*** *OR .9016*
Electoral Manipulation	-.8349 (1.036) *OR .4339*			-1.275 (1.210) *OR .2792*	-2.625 (1.488)* *OR .0724*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	.0931 (2.051) *OR 1.097*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				-.0270 (.1337) *OR .9733*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.3235 (1.515) *OR 1.381*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	-.1159 (.0681)* *OR .8904*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region					
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region					
Percent Minority *Economic Development				.0144 (.0086)* *OR 1.014*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0855 (.0503)* *OR .9180*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
Percent Rural *Muslim Region					
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region					
Percent Rural *Economic Development				-.0133 (.0118) *OR .9866*	
Percent Rural *Natural Resource Wealth					-.2084 (.3312) *OR .8118*

Random Effects			
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	1.374 (.5241)	2.210 (.3769)	2.456 (.3780)
Model Fit:			
Likelihood Ratio Test	137.21***	115.12***	185.00***
AIC	595.985	541.210	561.011
Wald statistic (df)	33.72 (5)***	55.14 (6)***	34.58 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 122: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-2.564 (.4269)***	X	X	-3.353 (.4504)***	-2.538 (.4358)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	-.1345 (.1816) *OR .8740*			-.0510 (.2281) *OR .9502*	-.3098 (.2272) *OR .7335*
Percent Rural	-.1040 (.0196)*** *OR .9011*			-.0735 (.0239)*** *OR .9290*	-.1047 (.0197)*** *OR .9005*
Electoral Manipulation	-.7953 (1.189) *OR .4514*			-.7172 (1.162) *OR .4880*	-.9463 (1.200) *OR .3881*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-2.384 (1.765) *OR .0921*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				.1704 (.0380)*** *OR 1.185*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-1.170 (1.148) *OR .3102*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.4446 (.8509) *OR .6410*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0142 (.0118) *OR .9858*	
*Natural Resource					

Wealth			
Random Effects			
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.497 (.3842)	1.981 (.3294)	2.459 (.3756)
Model Fit:			
Likelihood Ratio Test	187.58***	108.60***	184.65***
AIC	553.145	537.479	554.144
Wald statistic (df)	33.88 (4)***	54.22 (6)***	31.53 (4)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 123: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of Yabloko Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-3.163 (.4884)***	X	X	-3.975 (.5892)***	-3.353 (.5061)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	.0454 (.0155)*** *OR 1.046*			.0132 (.0266) *OR 1.013*	.0454 (.0153)*** *OR 1.046*
Percent Rural	-.1023 (.0194)*** *OR .9027*			-.0747 (.0239)*** *OR .9280*	-.1018 (.0197)*** *OR .9032*
Electoral Manipulation	-.9051 (1.193) *OR .4044*			-1.573 (1.223) *OR .2073*	-2.184 (1.358) *OR .1124*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	-2.354 (2.068) *OR .0949*				
Muslim Region					
Caucasus Region					
Economic Development				.0291 (.1481) *OR 1.096*	
Natural Resource Wealth					-.2644 (1.412) *OR .7676*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority					
*Ethnic Region	-.1022 (.1219) *OR .9028*				
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				.0063 (.0097) *OR 1.006*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0815 (.0530) *OR .9216*
Percent Rural					
*Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region					
*Caucasus Region					
*Economic Development				-.0132 (.0117) *OR .9868*	
*Natural Resource					-.1748 (.3032)

Wealth			*OR .8396*
Random Effects			
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.501 (.3850)	2.159 (.3635)	2.458 (.3760)
Model Fit:			
Likelihood Ratio Test	189.25***	113.32***	186.33***
AIC	546.982	540.133	556.417
Wald statistic (df)	44.91 (5)***	57.74 (6)***	39.80 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if Yabloko's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 124: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia's Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-13.412 (2.384)***	-12.184 (1.724)***	-12.772 (1.679)***	-10.960 (1.781)***	-12.317 (1.758)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Minority	-.0042 (.0274) *OR .9957*	.0256 (.0138)* *OR 1.025*	.0330 (.0109)*** *OR 1.033*	.0457 (.0149)*** *OR 1.046*	.0515 (.0134)*** *OR 1.052*
Percent Rural	.0290 (.0183) *OR 1.029*	.0173 (.0080)** *OR 1.017*	.0228 (.0064)*** *OR 1.023*	-.0026 (.0069) *OR .9973*	.0012 (.0062) *OR 1.001*
Electoral Manipulation	5.450 (1.253)*** *OR 232.803*	5.433 (1.242)*** *OR 229.060*	5.626 (1.284)*** *OR 277.745*	5.807 (1.297)*** *OR 332.620*	5.976 (1.305)*** *OR 394.093*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	2.579 (2.257) *OR 13.188*				
Muslim Region		3.330 (2.023)* *OR 27.949*			
Caucasus Region			2.938 (2.269) *OR 18.881*		
Economic Development				-.0274 (.8433) *OR .3955*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.280 (1.761) *OR 3.596*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Minority *Ethnic Region	.0466 (.0298) *OR 1.047*				
Percent Minority *Muslim Region		.0138 (.0193) *OR 1.013*			
Percent Minority *Caucasus Region			.0168 (.0243) *OR 1.017*		
Percent Minority *Economic Development				-.0043 (.0094) *OR .9957*	
Percent Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					-.0237 (.0192) *OR .9765*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0198 (.0190) *OR .9803*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0079 (.0099) *OR .0021*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0278 (.0103)*** *OR .9725*		
Percent Rural *Economic Development				.0123 (.0048)** *OR 1.012*	

*Natural Resource Wealth					.0234 (.0099)** *OR 1.023*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	2.944 (.6690)	2.741 (.6195)	2.871 (.6265)	2.877 (.6073)	2.898 (.6254)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	148.74***	152.75***	153.54***	168.97***	153.29***
AIC	354.314	352.979	351.196	353.998	353.039
Wald statistic (df)	51.13 (6)***	54.95 (6)***	57.10 (6)***	54.99 (6)***	54.79 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 125: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia's Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-13.140 (1.996)***	-12.639 (1.857)***	-12.873 (1.705)***	-11.148 (1.874)***	-12.418 (1.891)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Titular Minority	.0328 (.0087)*** *OR 1.033*	.0390 (.0161)** *OR 1.039*	.0371 (.0105)*** *OR 1.037*	.0447 (.0138)*** *OR 1.045*	.0464 (.0118)*** *OR 1.047*
Percent Rural	.0132 (.0045)*** *OR 1.013*	.0159 (.0083)* *OR 1.016*	.0228 (.0065)*** *OR 1.023*	-.0008 (.0069) *OR .9991*	.0050 (.0061) *OR 1.005*
Electoral Manipulation	6.060 (1.283)*** *OR 428.590*	5.803 (1.266)*** *OR 331.364*	6.024 (1.286)*** *OR 413.441*	6.447 (1.319)*** *OR 631.008*	6.671 (1.326)*** *OR 789.378*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	2.621 (1.521)* *OR 13.757*				
Muslim Region		4.654 (1.917)** *OR 105.049*			
Caucasus Region			4.545 (1.745)*** *OR 94.227*		
Economic Development				-.8580 (.7859) *OR .4239*	
Natural Resource Wealth					1.294 (1.688) *OR 3.650*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Titular Minority *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0083 (.0186) *OR .9916*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0090 (.0166) *OR .9909*		
*Economic Development				-.0053 (.0088) *OR .9946*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					-.0194 (.0169) *OR .9807*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region					
*Muslim Region		-.0038 (.0100) *OR .9961*			
*Caucasus Region			-.0240 (.0100)** *OR .9762*		
*Economic				.0122	

Development				(.0048)** *OR 1.012*	
*Natural Resource Wealth					.0202 (.0100)** *OR 1.020*
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.202 (.7308)	3.003 (.6959)	3.032 (.6350)	3.086 (.6336)	3.108 (.6602)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	168.93***	165.82***	169.21***	197.08***	204.40***
AIC	348.898	347.455	347.320	349.206	348.811
Wald statistic (df)	47.71 (4)***	49.53 (6)***	56.35 (6)***	51.97 (6)***	51.12 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

Table 126: Multilevel Logistic Analysis of United Russia's Strongholds in the 2011 Russian Parliamentary Elections (2 Standard Deviations Threshold)

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
Intercept	-13.928 (2.478)***	-11.754 (1.708)***	-12.701 (1.766)***	-9.687 (1.700)***	-11.548 (1.739)***
Raion-level Fixed Effects:					
Percent Other Minority	-.0036 (.0277) *OR .9963*	-.0189 (.0213) *OR .9812*	-.0133 (.0130) *OR .9867*	-.0241 (.0184) *OR .9761*	-.0191 (.0125) *OR .9812*
Percent Rural	.0289 (.0186) *OR 1.029*	.0207 (.0081)** *OR 1.021*	.0279 (.0064)*** *OR 1.028*	.0025 (.0066) *OR 1.002*	.0083 (.0058) *OR 1.008*
Electoral Manipulation	5.847 (1.267)*** *OR 346.447*	5.838 (1.287)*** *OR 343.337*	6.471 (1.458)*** *OR 646.332*	6.567 (1.507)*** *OR 711.872*	7.001 (1.441)*** *OR 1098.57*
Region-level Fixed Effects:					
Ethnic Region	5.658 (2.186)*** *OR 286.661*				
Muslim Region		5.718 (1.726)*** *OR 304.574*			
Caucasus Region			5.544 (1.651)*** *OR 255.908*		
Economic Development				-1.501 (.8396)* *OR .2228*	
Natural Resource Wealth					.9329 (1.602) *OR 2.541*
Cross-level Interactions:					
Percent Other Minority *Ethnic Region	-.0130 (.0294) *OR .9870*				
Percent Other Minority *Muslim Region		.0038 (.0236) *OR 1.003*			
Percent Other Minority *Caucasus Region			-.0007 (.0177) *OR .9992*		
Percent Other Minority *Economic Development				.0075 (.0126) *OR 1.007*	
Percent Other Minority *Natural Resource Wealth					.0104 (.0186) *OR 1.010*
Percent Rural *Ethnic Region	-.0137 (.0192) *OR .9863*				
Percent Rural *Muslim Region		-.0063 (.0097) *OR .9937*			
Percent Rural *Caucasus Region			-.0279 (.0098)*** *OR .9724*		

*Economic Development				.0121 (.0046)*** *OR 1.012*	.0201 (.0097)** *OR 1.020*
*Natural Resource Wealth					
Random Effects					
Parameter: Intercept (sd)	3.068 (.7026)	2.855 (.6249)	3.136 (.6337)	3.398 (.7339)	3.276 (.6303)
Model Fit:					
Likelihood Ratio Test	153.86***	172.75***	188.03***	235.35***	221.77***
AIC	365.798	362.755	364.292	370.826	371.268
Wald statistic (df)	41.62 (6)***	47.12 (6)***	44.67 (6)***	37.69 (6)***	40.24 (6)***

Notes: The reported coefficients were estimated in STATA; the dependent variable is 1 if United Russia's vote share is more than two standard deviations above the raion-level average, and zero otherwise; ***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.1.

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