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Introduction

On December 12, 1993, Russia held its first competitive parliamentary election as an independent state, three months after a violent confrontation between President Boris Yeltsin and the Congress of People's Deputies brought the young postcommunist regime to the brink of chaos. In the wake of emergency presidential rule, electoral rules were fashioned by politicians familiar with Western scholarship on electoral systems with the intent of encouraging party formation and benefiting reformist parties. They decided that a mixed electoral system combining proportional representation (PR) and single-member district (SMD) elections best met these objectives.¹ The election was expected to produce a resounding victory for reformist parties, particularly Russia's Choice, the electoral bloc headed by former prime minister Yegor Gaidar and populated by many of Yeltsin's government ministers and advisers. To the horror and dismay of the architects of the new system, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's nationalist Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) won the PR half of Russia's first election, and the new legislature was fractionalized and contained an antireformist plurality.

Lost amid dire warnings of the end of democracy in Russia was the fact that the same party that won the most votes in the PR tier performed miserably in the other half of the election, winning only 5 of the 225 seats elected in SMDs. This portion was dominated by independent candidates, who formed their own parliamentary factions after the election, multiplying the number of parties in parliament rather than consolidating the party system as expected. The next parliamentary election, held in 1995, witnessed a continuation of this disjuncture in the performance of most parties between the PR and SMD tiers. Meanwhile, party proliferation in the electoral realm increased rather than subsided. The presidential election held six months later produced another surprise—the reelection of the reformist president after two parliamentary elections that witnessed increasingly impressive electoral victories for anti-reformist forces. This book asserts that a prominent factor in all of these outcomes was the relationship between electoral systems and political actors—candidates, parties, and voters.

Objectives

This book examines the effects of electoral systems on political parties and representation in postcommunist Russia. Russia's mixed electoral structure, which combines PR and SMD arrangements in a single election, is used as a laboratory for controlled comparison of the effects of different electoral systems by holding other factors, such as culture or socioeconomic development, constant. Through this controlled comparison, I will show that electoral rules have had a profound effect on democratization in Russia, influencing the fractionalization of the party system, ascriptive representation of women and minorities, and the distribution of power among opposing ideological camps. However, the impact of electoral systems has not followed comparative experience or the expectations of the scholarly literature.

Electoral institutions have mattered greatly in Russia but often in ways we would not expect. Thus, this book contributes to the growing literature on electoral engineering and the central debate over the ability and inability of elites to fashion preferred political outcomes through institutional design. By placing Russia in comparative experience I hope to shed some light on the ability to further democratization in postcommunist states by getting the institutions right.

More than four decades ago, Maurice Duverger proposed a set of hypotheses regarding the relationship between electoral systems and the number of parties operating in a country, which came to be known collectively as Duverger's Law. He argued that plurality elections, in which the candidate with the most votes wins office in an SMD, produced two-party systems and single-party majority governments, while PR systems, in which candidates run on party lists in multimember districts, created multiparty systems and coalition governments. These hypotheses would become the basis for one of the most longstanding scholarly debates in political science. Over forty years of conceptual refinement and empirical testing in a wide number of cases have left Duverger's hypotheses relatively intact, leading scholar Arend Lijphart to imply a universal impact of electoral systems: "First of all, PR and plurality advocates disagree not so much about the respective effects of the two electoral methods as about the weight to be attached to these effects. Both sides agree that PR yields greater proportionality and minority representation and that plurality promotes two-party systems and one-party executives. Partisans disagree on which of the results is preferable."²

However, it remains to be seen whether these hypotheses, based for the most part on the experience of Western democracies, will actually hold in new democracies, particularly in the very different social and political context of postcommunist states. Much of the debate concerning the role of electoral systems in the third wave of democratization has followed the pattern suggested by Lijphart, not questioning the presumed effects of proportional representation or plurality elections and instead debating their relative merits for democra-

tizing states. Given the absence of well-institutionalized party systems in most new democracies, it is crucial to return to the question of the effects of electoral systems on new democracies, particularly those farthest removed from Western experience and thus least likely to mimic its political processes and outcomes.

The literature has not treated Duverger's Law as an ironclad sociological law having no exceptions. In his groundbreaking book, *Making Votes Count*, Gary Cox argues that certain preconditions need to be met before voters and candidates behave strategically in reaction to electoral system incentives. Voters need to be driven by short-term instrumental considerations and have adequate information regarding the relative support of competing candidates. Yet, in plurality elections these conditions are met consistently enough to produce a noticeable lack of real-world exceptions, such as Papua New Guinea, that regularly and significantly defy Duverger's Law.³ Postcommunist states, particularly Soviet successor states, may present a whole new set of cases that fail to meet the necessary preconditions for strategic behavior and thus fail to follow Duverger's hypotheses. Through the examination of Russia's mixed electoral system, the current volume shows how electoral systems have very different consequences in a political context that lacks the requisites for strategic voting.

This study offers two important findings. First, Russia is an exception; electoral systems have not had the effects predicted in the literature. In fact, Russia runs counter to some of the most well established hypotheses in electoral studies. Contrary to comparative experience, plurality elections have not been a significantly more powerful constraint on the number of parties than PR elections; in some ways the plurality tier has allowed greater party proliferation. This fractionalization is different from that found in India or Canada, where the constraining effect of plurality elections is experienced at the district level in two-candidate races but is not projected to the national level in a two-party system. In Russia, plurality elections are multicandidate affairs, with an average of nearly a half dozen significant candidates vying for office. Electoral systems have similarly surprising effects on minority representation in Russia. For example, women have been elected in greater numbers in plurality elections than in PR elections, again running counter to the well-supported hypothesis that PR promotes greater women's representation.

Second, electoral systems have been a key factor in Russian electoral politics. Electoral arrangements have affected the very status of political parties as vehicles of mobilization. Electoral rules have also helped to determine which parties win and lose parliamentary representation and have influenced the ideological composition of the legislature. Electoral systems have had important effects on political outcomes in Russia but neither the effects anticipated by the literature nor, in most cases, the institutional designers themselves.

In explaining the exceptional effects of electoral systems in Russia, this book analyzes the relationship between institutions and the social and political con-

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text in which they operate. The conclusion is simple, yet surprisingly absent from much of the neo-institutionalist research: context matters. One aspect of Russia's political context that mitigates electoral system effects is analyzed here—the weak institutionalization of political parties. Without parties to structure the vote and monopolize candidate nominations, the constraining effects of plurality elections are lost. Indeed, in states with weakly institutionalized party systems, proportional representation that utilizes a legal threshold for representation may be a more effective constraint on party fractionalization by forcing elites and voters to think of parties. Only once elites are forced to form parties can the constraining effects of disproportionality take hold.

The electoral system is particularly worthwhile to study when examining the relationship between political institutions and their environments, because comparative analysis has provided such impressive evidence of consistent effects of electoral systems (particularly plurality systems) across countries with very different social contexts. Exceptions can highlight the structural conditions necessary for institutions to have their effects, reintegrating institutional and structural approaches to democratization that might be lost when empirical examples are restricted to cases sharing similar political and social conditions. In studying Russia's distinct experience with electoral systems, this study builds on work by Cox and Sartori that examines the limits of Duverger's Law and the preconditions necessary for strategic behavior in response to electoral system constraints.⁴ I also draw heavily upon the work of Scott Mainwaring, who argues that the fundamental distinction between third-wave democracies and consolidated democracies is the weak institutionalization of the party system in the former. Indeed, this book can be seen as an empirical investigation of the implications of weak-party institutionalization for electoral system effects. Russia is an important empirical example that buttresses theories that imply electoral system effects typically found in established democracies may not hold in all contexts, particularly countries with weakly institutionalized party systems and poorly developed sources of political information.

Although this project is centrally concerned with the impact of the electoral system on the consolidation of Russian democracy, the Russian experience with electoral systems should be of interest to students of democratization in general. If the third wave of democratization is to consolidate its gains and extend to regions further removed from Western political experience, democratic institutions will have to survive in conditions more similar to Russia's than to other more propitious environments in the West. Russia may represent the future of democratization, for good or for ill; thus, it is not enough merely to acknowledge the fact that the political context in Russia mitigates the effects of electoral systems, producing very different outcomes from those found in more established democracies. Too often such acknowledgment leads to an exclusion of special cases from comparative analysis as exceptions. It is better to integrate the study of less developed democracies into comparative politics and develop

hypotheses that describe and explain patterns of behavior found in these contexts. Through direct comparison with other postcommunist states as well as other consolidated and unconsolidated democracies, I introduce a research program in need of much more empirical study—investigating the relationship between party institutionalization and electoral system effects. In order to more properly understand the impact of electoral systems on democratization we need to ask ourselves: Where does Duverger's Law seem to hold, and where does it not? Where it does not hold, what effects can electoral systems be expected to have, and is this non-Duvergerian equilibrium a stable or temporary state?⁵ This study is designed as a first step in this larger research agenda.

Russia's Mixed Electoral System

In 1993, Russia adopted a system that employs both PR and SMD electoral structures. Although still rare among electoral systems around the world, the mixed system is becoming increasingly popular. It has been adopted by many postcommunist states (for example, Hungary, Lithuania, Ukraine, Croatia, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan) as well as a number of consolidated democracies that have recently enacted electoral system reforms (for example, Italy, New Zealand, and Japan). Modeled after the German electoral system, the 450 deputies to Russia's lower house, the State Duma, are equally divided into two electoral arenas. Each voter casts two ballots, one for an individual candidate and one for a party. Half of the deputies are elected in 225 SMDs; these SMD contests are held under a plurality rule, in which the candidate with the most votes wins the seat regardless of whether he or she won a majority of the votes cast. The other half are elected in a party-list PR election in one nationwide electoral district. Not only do the two halves of the system differ in electoral formula, but more importantly they also differ dramatically in district magnitude, which has been shown to be the element of the electoral system most responsible for the level of disproportionality and the number of parties produced by an electoral system. Finally, unlike the German system, Russia's two electoral tiers are not linked in a system of compensatory seats in which the PR tier is designed to correct the disproportionality of the SMD tier. Rather, the two parts of Russia's electoral system are more like two separate elections occurring simultaneously for the same legislative body. Results for the two halves are calculated separately, and distribution of seats for the PR portion in no way affects the distribution of seats in the SMD portion, and vice versa.⁶

Classifying Mixed Electoral Systems

The best way to fully understand the mixed electoral system of Russia is to compare it with other such arrangements around the world. Countries can combine PR and SMD elections in a number of ways that have substantial effects on the relationship between the electoral rules and party systems. While all mixed electoral systems share the distinction of allowing voters to cast two votes in distinct PR and SMD tiers, four defining characteristics distinguish mixed systems from one another: whether the two tiers are linked in a system of compensatory seats, the electoral formula used in the SMD tier, the ratio of seats in each tier, and the district magnitude and legal threshold of the PR tier. Table 1.1 presents a description based on these characteristics of eight mixed electoral systems examined in this book for comparative purposes.

Linked Tiers

The most important question about a mixed electoral system is whether the two tiers are linked in an arrangement of compensatory seats. In mixed systems with linked tiers, the number of seats or votes won by a party in one tier is subtracted from its total in the other tier. Systems such as Germany's, which use the PR tier to compensate for disproportional effects of the SMD tier, should deter the constraining effect of the SMD half, in terms both of strategic voting and of mechanical effects in translating votes into seats. It is precisely this link between the two that has led scholars to describe mixed electoral systems following the German model as simply forms of proportional representation rather than as combinations of PR and SMD systems. A linked system typically prioritizes the PR tier over the SMD tier by giving the former control over the final distribution of seats in parliament. Linking the tiers also affects calculations of voters and elites, by making the vote in the PR tier more important than that in SMDs. In this arrangement, smaller parties can remain viable by targeting the PR vote in their campaigns.⁷ Moreover, although strategic voting has occurred in Germany, voters in mixed linked systems have less incentive to defect from small parties to large parties, because the SMD vote has virtually no effect on the final distribution of legislative seats.

The effects of linked tiers depend greatly on how seats are allocated and the number of seats reserved for compensation. Germany and New Zealand each have the most comprehensive system of compensation. The result is a distribution of seats fully controlled by the vote in the PR tier. Italy's compensation is less direct: if a party wins an SMD seat, the number of votes received by the second-place candidate in the district is subtracted from the winning party's vote in the PR tier. It is also less comprehensive, because Italy's PR tier does not have enough seats to fully overcome the disproportional effects of the much

Table 1.1: Description of Eight Mixed Electoral Systems

Country	Linked tiers	SMD electoral formula	SMD: PR ratio	Average PR district magnitude	PR legal threshold (percent)
Germany	yes ^b	Plurality	248:248	248 ^a	5
Italy	yes ^c	Plurality	475:155	155	4
New Zealand	yes ^b	Plurality	65:55	55	5
Japan	no	Plurality	300:200	18.18	3
Russia	no	Plurality	225:225	225	5
Hungary	yes ^d	Two-round Majority	176:210	7.60 (territorial) 58 (national)	4 (1990) 5 (1994)
Lithuania	no	Two-round Majority	71:70	70	5
Croatia	no ^e	Plurality	28:80	28	5

Sources: Gary W. Cox, *Making Votes Count* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 287–88; Kenneth Benoit, “Votes and Seats: The Hungarian Electoral Law and the 1994 Parliamentary Elections,” in *The 1994 Election to the Hungarian National Assembly: Analyses, Documents and Data*, ed. Gabor Toka (Berlin: Edition Sigma, 1999), 2–5.

- a PR mandates are distributed in ten territorial districts, but parties have the option to pool their votes for state lists at the national level—making the average district magnitude a single 248-member national district rather than a number of state districts, with an average of 24.8 members per district.
- b In Germany and New Zealand, seats won in the SMD tier are subtracted from the total of any PR seats attained.
- c In Italy a compensation system, known as the *scorporo*, links the PR and SMD tiers; if a party wins an SMD seat, its PR vote total is diminished by the number of votes received by the second-place candidate in the district.
- d In Hungary there are three levels; the SMD and territorial PR tier are not linked, but surplus votes (all votes not used to win seats in either of the lower tiers) are aggregated in a third national tier, which allocates a minimum of fifty-eight seats (plus any not distributed in the territorial PR tier) on the basis of these surplus votes.
- e Croatia also has special seats for representation of ethnic minorities, which are not included here.

larger SMD tier. Therefore, incentives for strategic voting and entry and departure by elites in the SMD tier are greater in Italy than in Germany and New Zealand.

Hungary’s is the most complicated case of linkage; a tertiary tier of compensatory seats, which stands above both the SMD and the territorial PR tiers, distributes a minimum of fifty-eight seats to parties, on the basis of surplus votes not used to win seats in either the SMD or territorial PR tier—provided that a party crosses a 5 percent legal threshold. This system does not give enough seats to make it fully proportional, but it does produce a powerful deterrent effect on strategic defection from smaller parties in the SMD tier. Since votes not used to win seats are pooled in a national-level competition for compensatory seats, vot-

ers have incentives to stick with their preferred party, no matter how small its candidate's chances in the district race. Minor parties have greater incentives to run candidates in SMDs, in order to collect surplus votes to be used for compensatory seats. Hungary's use of a dual-round majoritarian system in its SMD tier—in which any candidate with at least 15 percent of the vote is allowed in the second round—combined with its mixed system, offers very few incentives for smaller parties to consolidate in the first round of the SMD tier.

Russia belongs to another category of mixed systems that do not link their PR and SMD tiers, which includes Japan, Lithuania, and Croatia. Disproportionality and incentives for strategic voting increase significantly under these systems; voters and elites have a greater reason to behave strategically, because parties realize the benefit of every SMD seat won. Moreover, the disproportionality of these mixed systems should be greater; because mechanical effects of the SMD tier are felt in the final distribution of seats in the legislature and not overridden by the PR tier.

SMD/PR Ratio

The ratio of seats elected in the SMD and PR tiers is another crucial element of a mixed electoral system. The more seats devoted to the SMD tier, the greater the constraining effect. This is particularly true in unlinked systems; but even if the two tiers are linked, the number of parties will be influenced by the SMD tier—if it is significantly larger than the PR tier. Thus, Italy's system, which has roughly three times as many SMD seats as PR seats, has a significant constraining effect on the number of parties, even though linkage between the two allows the PR tier to directly counter the disproportionality of the SMD tier. The even distribution of SMD and PR seats in Russia, along with that country's unlinked character, allows for a significant influence of both the PR and SMD tiers on its legislature.

Electoral Formula

The electoral formulae can be different for each level of a mixed system. In fact, the PR tier can distribute seats according to a variety of different formulae that benefit different types of parties.⁸ While these differences do influence the proportionality of the PR tier and the system as a whole, they are relatively small and come into play only in the translation of votes into seats (not voter behavior) and are conditioned greatly by the district magnitude of the PR tier. The available options for electoral formulae in the SMD tier are more circumscribed and more consequential; countries can either employ a plurality system, in which the candidate with the most votes wins the seat, or a majoritarian system,

which requires a candidate to win a majority of votes in a district to win election. If no candidate wins a majority, then a second run-off election is held, usually between the two top vote getters in the first round. If two-round majority elections are used in a mixed electoral system, there is a greater number of parties produced than if plurality elections are used.

Duverger claimed that the two-round majority election “tends to produce multipartism tempered by alliances.”⁹ Parties proliferate in the first round, because minor candidates face a lower threshold to the run-off than they would to victory in a plurality race. Cox has argued that two-round majority elections actually follow the same $M + 1$ rule for district-level effects, in which M equals the number of candidates allowed in the second round.¹⁰ Disproportionality remains high, and coalition-building between rounds produces bipolar competition between broad-based alliances of parties. In a mixed system, the PR tier further reinforces the incentive for party proliferation. Therefore, more parties should exist in a mixed system that uses a two-round majority election rather than a plurality election in its SMD tier, especially with the increased opportunities for representation in the parallel competition in the PR half of the election. Conversely, the use of plurality elections in the SMD tier of Russia’s mixed system should be an additional constraint on party proliferation.

PR District Magnitude and Legal Threshold

Finally, district magnitude and the presence of a legal threshold in the PR tier influence how proportional a mixed system will be. Two of the eight cases examined here elect their PR deputies in meaningful territorial districts, while the others distribute their PR seats in one nationwide district. All the cases impose some type of minimum legal threshold to win seats in the legislature, ranging from 3 to 5 percent of the vote. As Lijphart has shown, legal thresholds and district magnitude work in the same way to constrain party proliferation by setting a vote threshold necessary to gain election.¹¹ Usually territorial districts have few enough representatives that their effective threshold is higher than the typical legal threshold imposed. For example, in Japan magnitudes in PR districts range from seven to thirty-three, making the necessary percentage to attain a seat in the smallest district much higher than the legal threshold of 3 percent. Russia’s use of a single nationwide district in its PR tier gives no effective impediment against party proliferation, but its 5 percent barrier should promote party consolidation and keep small parties out of parliament.

Based on these four elements, one can establish a continuum of the strength of mixed electoral systems’ potential constraining effect on the number of parties. These structures are strongest if they do not link the PR and SMD tiers, use a plurality rather than two-round majority system in their SMD tiers, contain a significant proportion of SMD seats relative to PR seats, and impose a signifi-

cant legal threshold in their PR tiers. Of course, different systems have different combinations of these traits, requiring an assessment of the relative importance of each distinguishing feature. While no formal weighting process is conducted, I argue that the relative influence of the various elements discussed corresponds to the amount of control over the final distribution of seats given to the SMD tier. Thus, linkage and the SMD/PR ratio are deemed most important and the effective threshold of the PR tier least important.

The mixed systems of Japan and Russia are the strongest, because both are unlinked and use plurality in their SMD tiers, with Japan's system stronger than Russia's, due to its greater share of SMD seats and low district magnitudes in its PR tier. Two other countries with unlinked tiers, Lithuania and Croatia, have systems relatively weaker than Russia's. Lithuania's uses a two-round majority method, which cuts down on strategic behavior in the SMD tier, but this does not weaken the disproportionality of the SMD tier, which is fully felt because it has direct influence on the distribution of its half of legislative seats. Croatia's system, though, has a much smaller share of SMD seats than PR ones.

All of the mixed systems with linked tiers are considered weaker than their counterparts whose are unlinked. Hungary's is the strongest of the former; its proportion of compensatory seats is the smallest, even though its complicated arrangement of compensatory seats encourages party proliferation. Nevertheless, the system does not link its SMD and territorial PR tiers, and the number of compensatory seats is not large enough to overcome the mechanical effect of the SMD tier and relatively low district magnitudes of the territorial PR tier. Italy is considered the next strongest case; its system of compensation is similar to Hungary's structure of surplus votes, but its proportion of compensatory PR seats is larger (25 percent versus 16 percent of total seats). The German and New Zealand systems are the weakest; they give the SMD tier virtually no control over the final distribution of votes.

The Russian mixed electoral system possesses two characteristics that make it an especially good case for a controlled comparison of PR and SMD electoral systems. First, its tiers are unlinked. This offers two crucial advantages. The absence of compensatory seats allows one to examine the psychological effects of strategic voting in the plurality tier more accurately, because this tier is more consequential to the final distribution of seats in the legislature; voters and elites should be more attentive to the electoral dynamics of the SMD tier in this context than in a mixed system with compensatory seats. Moreover, unlinked tiers allow one also to examine the mechanical effects of disproportionality of both tiers, because each tier of Russia's mixed system determines half of the legislative seats, untainted by the other tier.

Second, the Russian system presents one of the starkest comparisons of different types of electoral systems imaginable. Both tiers elect equal numbers of deputies to the legislature: Russia's SMD tier is a plurality system, deemed the

strongest electoral system available for constraining the number of parties, while other postcommunist cases use two-round majority elections in their SMD tiers. Conversely, Russia's PR tier has the highest district magnitude available—one nationwide district electing 225 deputies—rather than a set of territorial PR contests with much smaller district magnitudes, as in Japan, that raise the electoral threshold for smaller parties.

Russia's Emergent Party System

The bulk of this book concentrates on general aspects of the Russian party system and representation—the number of parties, the proportion of women and minorities elected, and the number of presidential candidates. One chapter is devoted to the fate of individual parties. Despite this concentration on the general over the specific, it is necessary to give some background of the parties animating Russia's emergent system to ground the information on the general aspects of the system in the concrete (and often fluid and messy) reality of Russian politics.

I focus on what has become known as the Second Russian Republic—the current period, which began in December 1993 when Russia's constitution was passed in a national referendum.¹² This is the most suitable period of postcommunist Russia's short history for the study of electoral systems, because it represents the first instance in which political parties were able to compete for political office relatively unfettered by official and unofficial restrictions on their activities.¹³ Although the First Russian Republic also witnessed competitive elections in 1990 and 1991, parties did not play a significant role in structuring the vote. The constitutional ban on alternative political parties, the Soviet constitution's infamous Article 6, was not removed early enough to give alternative parties time to organize for the 1990 parliamentary elections, and mechanisms left over from that institutional setting meant that even in the absence of legal barriers to party activity nomination procedures were controlled by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and related state organizations.¹⁴ While the electoral system used in the 1990 election probably had an impact on political outcomes, including the development of nascent prepary organizations, the primary influence (and impediment) on party development was clearly the domination of the nomination process by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and other state agencies. As M. Steven Fish argues, this initial liberalization was too premature and too partial to be as conducive to the development of a multiparty system as founding elections have been in other cases of democratization. Moreover, the fact that both the 1990 election to the Russian Congress of People's Deputies (RCPD) and the 1991 election to the Russian presidency were held while Russia was still officially part of the Soviet Union pre-

cludes either of these elections from being accurately conceived of as a “founding election.”¹⁵ Only with the elections in 1993 did political parties emerge as central agents of electoral mobilization.

This is not to say that Russia’s nascent political parties emerged fully developed in 1993. Some scholars have been hesitant to declare the fluid organizations nominating candidates for election in Russia full-fledged parties. The term “proto-parties” has been commonly used to connote the organizational weaknesses of Russia’s electoral associations, their lack of organizational and ideological coherence, their fluidity of elite membership, and their general lack of party identification within the population.¹⁶ Following Mainwaring, I prefer to conceptualize these weaknesses as deficient institutionalization of Russia’s party system rather than to define this nascent system as one composed of organizations that are something less than political parties.¹⁷ Thus, I adopt Leon Epstein’s minimalist definition of a political party as “any group, however loosely organized, seeking to elect governmental office-holders under a given label. Having a label (which may or may not be on the ballot) rather than an organization is the crucial defining element.”¹⁸ Some of the organizations that have contested elections in Russia call themselves political parties, others electoral blocs. I use these two terms interchangeably; the differences between the two types of electoral organizations in the Russian context in terms of internal cohesion and organizational longevity are viewed as differences of degree not kind.

Most important, parliamentary elections held under the Second Russian Republic were the first in which Russian electoral organizations performed the minimal functions of a political party—competing for office under a given label—in any systematic way, thanks in large part to the initiation of a PR party-list election for half of the seats to the State Duma. Moreover, unlike the electoral associations of previous elections, the nascent parties that won representation in the PR tier of the new system formed corresponding parliamentary factions that played a dominant role in the policymaking process of the newly established legislature.¹⁹ Beginning in 1993, although chronically weak, the blocs emerging out of elections formed the basis for a multiparty system in Russia after more than three years of stagnant party development, following the initial experience with competitive elections in 1989 and 1990. Thus, this study examines the period in which Russian politics began the crucial transition from a battle between social movements to a contest between political parties.²⁰

The system that has emerged since 1993 is a confusing array of literally dozens of parties. Adding to the confusion, Russian parties are constantly changing their names, personnel, and platforms—as well as experiencing dramatic changes of fortune at the ballot box. This fluid nature constitutes the system’s status as a weakly institutionalized one, which will be discussed at length in the next chapter. Yet, despite this fluidity, one can also identify certain families of parties or ideological camps that offer some order to this chaotic picture and

provide a shorthand for classifying individual parties in Russia. These ideological classifications are not perfect and can differ from one observer to the next; what follows is my classification for the major parties discussed in this book, along with basic information on party leaders, platforms, and electoral fortunes. I first discuss the parties that competed in the 1993 election and then the much larger group of parties that vied for seats in the State Duma in 1995. In the epilogue, I briefly describe the parties that competed in the 1999 election.

I divide the Russian ideological spectrum into four major categories: reformists, centrists, leftists, and nationalists. Reformists generally support the move to a free market (but not necessarily the policies followed by the Yeltsin government) and individual freedoms. Centrists occupy a vague middle ground; they support a market economy but place greater emphasis on state intervention in the market, support for industrial production, and protection of social welfare. Leftist parties have been the strongest critics of market reforms and until 1999 offered programs for substantial reversals of the privatization program and other reforms of the Yeltsin era. Nationalist parties concentrate on populist appeals concerning the need to reestablish domestic law and order and international prestige as a great power.

There are some problems classifying certain parties according to this scheme. The most notable case is the so-called party of power. Since 1993 there has been a pro-government party that has close ties to the executive branch and enjoys its financial and symbolic support. It is difficult to classify these parties according to ideology, as they have become increasingly nonideological. The success of the party of power relies instead on its connections to the executive branch and patronage. In 1993, the party of power was Russia's Choice, which gave voters a clear ideological position in favor of market reforms. But in 1995 Viktor Chernomyrdin, then prime minister, formed Our Home is Russia, a new party of power, which offered a more moderate economic and social program.²¹ The latest party of power, Unity, tied to the enormously popular Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, declared that it had no clear ideological platform and rode the nationalist appeal of a popular war in Chechnya to a surprisingly good showing in 1999 (see epilogue). This may be an indication of a more general trend in Russian politics; there has been a convergence of party platforms, which has diluted the distinctions between ideological camps that marked the polarized nature of Russian politics during most of the Yeltsin era.²²

The thirteen blocs contesting the 1993 election fit rather neatly into the four categories outlined above, considering what was to follow in subsequent elections. The reformist camp was made up of four blocs: Russia's Choice, Yabloko, the Party of Russian Unity and Accord (PRES), and the Russian Movement for Democratic Reform (RDDR). As already noted, Russia's Choice was the pro-government party of power. It was led by former prime minister Yegor Gaidar and was populated extensively by members of President Yeltsin's administrative apparatus. Russia's Choice defended the shock therapy policies undertaken

by the Yeltsin government after the collapse of the Soviet Union and promised voters more economic reforms. Yabloko also firmly supported a free market. But its leader, economist Grigory Yavlinsky, strongly criticized the Yeltsin-Gaidar economic policies. The party carved out a niche as the democratic opposition and refused to take part in the governments appointed by Yeltsin throughout the 1990s. PRES was the other reformist party with a footing in the executive branch. Led by Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Shakhrai, this group claimed the mantle of the party of Russia's regions and defender of the interests of Russians living outside the center, Moscow. PRES also offered voters a more moderate program of market reform that included greater state investment and protectionism from international competition. Finally, RDDR was led by politicians prominent in the perestroika period, including former Moscow mayor Gavriil Popov, Gorbachev advisor Alexander Yakovlev, and Saint Petersburg mayor Anatolii Sobchak. Three of these four parties managed to overcome the 5 percent legal threshold and formed factions in the State Duma. However, only one, Yabloko, would survive to contest the 1999 parliamentary election with its name and top leadership largely intact. (One of Yabloko's top triumvirate, Yuri Boldyrev, did defect.) Russia's Choice has also competed in all three post-Soviet parliamentary elections, but under different names and changing leadership. PRES and RDDR did not survive as viable parties after the 1993 election.

Six blocs that participated in the 1993 election are classified as centrist, although all parties claimed that label at some point in the campaign. The Democratic Party of Russia (DPR), led by Nikolai Travkin, was one of only three that were founded more than a year before the election. The DPR had its roots in the democratic opposition to the Soviet Union. However, the party charted a centrist position, including advocacy of a mixed economy and curtailment of presidential powers, that took it outside the reformist camp. The Civic Union for Stability, Justice, and Progress, headed by Arkadii Volsky, was the party of economic managers of large state enterprises. Civic Union advocated a mixed economy and state support for industry. I also include in the centrist camp four parties that appealed to specific social constituencies or single-issue groups. The Women of Russia was by far the most successful of these and the only one to pass the 5 percent barrier to gain representation in the Duma. It was led by Alevtina Fedulova and Yekaterina Lakhova and was based on the Soviet-era Union of Russian Women. There were also parties appealing to the young (Future of Russia—New Names), veterans and the disabled (Dignity and Charity), and environmentalists (Constructive Ecological Movement of Russia—KEDR); none of these overcame the 5 percent hurdle. Not a single party classified as centrist in 1993 won five percent of the vote in 1995, although the Women of Russia came close. However, other more popular parties, including the party of power, began to occupy this ideological space—particularly in the latest election in 1999 (see epilogue).

There were two leftist parties in 1993. The Communist Party of the Russian

Federation (KPRF), led by Gennady Zyuganov, led this ideological camp. The main successor to the CPSU, the KPRF promised a return to a largely state-controlled economy. It appealed to those most harmed by the economic reforms of the 1990s, particularly elderly and rural voters. The Agrarian Party of Russia (APR) took a similar message to its target constituency in the countryside. Led by former state farm director Mikhail Lapshin, this party was based in the old Soviet collective farm structure; its major issue was opposition to the private ownership of land, which it argued would open the door to widespread foreign ownership and misuse of the Russian countryside. These two groups displayed the greatest cooperation during the electoral campaign and most similarities in their ideological platforms.²³

The LDPR and its flamboyant nationalist leader, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, were the big stories of the 1993 election. It was the only party to occupy the nationalist part of the political spectrum, which it used to great effect to win the PR portion of the 1993 contest. Zhirinovskiy played on the people's disillusionment with both the Communist past and postcommunist reforms, providing a populist message of greater social order at home and the reestablishment of superpower status abroad. With pro-Slavic rhetoric and strains of anti-Semitism, he appealed directly to ethnic Russians. His economic program was vague and more anti- than pro-market in 1993, and in 1995 his party dropped virtually all discussion of concrete economic proposals.²⁴ Support seemed to be based primarily on the charisma of Zhirinovskiy himself and his ability to tap into widespread disillusionment with both the Communist left and the reformist right. Table 1.2 gives basic information regarding the thirteen parties of the 1993 parliamentary election.

The 1995 election witnessed a nearly three-fold increase in the number of parties, with 43 electoral blocs making it on the PR ballot, greatly increasing the redundancy within each ideological camp. This is ironic, given that President Yeltsin sponsored the formation of two political parties with the intention of establishing a two-party system from above.²⁵ In this brief overview I will introduce those parties that won at least one seat in the State Duma; I will explore the reasons behind this proliferation in chapter three.

The greatest redundancy occurred in the reformist camp, where the collapse of Russia's Choice as the party of power produced fallout that spawned no less than eight new parties.²⁶ The most direct successor was the Democratic Russia's Choice bloc, which broke with the Yeltsin government over the first war in Chechnya in 1994. Gaidar continued to lead this bloc with his message of the necessity of radical economic transformation. But voters were faced with a myriad of parties led by prominent reformers, all offering only slightly different versions of the same message. These groups included Forward Russia! (Boris Fedorov), Common Cause (Irina Khakamada), Party of Economic Freedom (Konstantin Borovoi), the Pamfilova-Gurov-Lysenko bloc (Ella Pamfilova and Vladimir Lysenko), and PRES (Sergei Shakhrai). The reformist constituency

Table 1.2: Parties in the 1993 State Duma Election

Party	Leader	Political orientation	Number of PR seats	Number of SMD seats
Russia's Choice	Y. Gaidar	Reformist	40	30
PRES	S. Shakhrai	Reformist	18	1
Yabloko	G. Yavlinsky	Reformist	20	3
RDDR	G. Popov	Reformist	0	4
Women of Russia	A. Fedulova Y. Lakhova	Centrist	21	2
DPR	N. Travkin	Centrist	14	1
Civic Union	A. Volsky	Centrist	0	1
Future of Russia–New Names	V. Lashchevsky	Centrist	0	1
KEDR	A. Panfilov	Centrist	0	0
Dignity and Charity	K. Frolov	Centrist	0	2
KPRF	G. Zyuganov	Leftist	32	16
APR	M. Lapshin	Leftist	21	12
LDPR	V. Zhirinovskiy	Nationalist	59	5

Note: PRES = Party of Russian Unity and Accord, RDDR = Russian Movement for Democratic Reform, DPR = Democratic Party of Russia, KEDR = Ecological bloc, KPRF = Communist Party of the Russian Federation, APR = Agrarian Party of Russia, LDPR = Liberal Democratic Party of Russia

was further split by other parties with more distinctive messages but a similar support base. Yabloko continued to hold its role as the democratic opposition, advocating movement to a free market but severely criticizing the policies of the Yeltsin-Gaidar period. Finally, a new party of power, Our Home is Russia, led by then prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, offered a more moderate approach to market reform and more loyal support to Yeltsin. Although often classified as centrist, I prefer to classify Our Home is Russia as reformist, given that the Chernomyrdin government continued many of the macroeconomic policies introduced by the preceding Gaidar government.²⁷ The increased fractionalization of this camp had predictable results: only two parties from the reformist camp (Yabloko and Our Home is Russia) managed to win more than 5 percent of the PR vote. Democratic Russia's Choice won less than a third of the votes gained by Russia's Choice two years earlier.

While reformist parties lost a significant number of seats from 1993 to 1995, centrist groups saw their representation in the PR tier vanish completely. No party classified as centrist managed to cross the 5 percent barrier in 1995. The largest centrist party from 1993, Women of Russia, came closest with 4.5 percent of the PR vote. This part of the spectrum saw a number of important new entrants, including world renowned eye surgeon Svyatitslav Fedorov's Worker's

Self-Government bloc and the Ivan Rybkin bloc, led by the speaker of the State Duma. A large number of special interest parties representing ethnic groups, children, pensioners, lawyers, and youth also occupied this space on the political spectrum.

The leftist camp was perhaps the most stable and consolidated part of the political spectrum. Not only did the KPRF retain its dominant position within this ideological space, but the more than two-fold increase in the Communist vote also made it the largest parliamentary party in Russia. The Agrarian party remained the second major leftist party. It failed to overcome the 5 percent legal threshold but managed to win twenty seats in SMD contests, more than any other party. Despite this stability, there were important new entrants. A more radical Communist party, Communists–Working Russia–For the Soviet Union led by Viktor Anpilov, narrowly missed the 5 percent cut-off. The Power to the People bloc, led by former Soviet prime minister Nikolai Ryzhkov and nationalist Sergei Baburin, tried to combine leftist and nationalist appeals.

Given the surprising success of the LDPR in 1993, a substantial increase in nationalist parties and appeals could be expected in 1995. While the LDPR remained the only nationalist party to gain representation in the PR tier, its support was cut in half partly due to increased competition from blocs led by prominent nationalist politicians. The most anticipated (and disappointing) new party in this camp was the Congress of Russian Communities (KRO) led by Yuri Skokov and popular former general Alexander Lebed. Former vice president Alexander Rutskoi also threw his hat in the ring, as the leader of the Derzhava bloc, as did Gen. Boris Gromov (My Fatherland bloc). Together there were a dozen nationalist parties competing in the same ideological space that the LDPR occupied alone in 1993.²⁸ Table 1.3 gives general background for parties gaining at least one seat in the State Duma in the 1995 parliamentary election. Changes in the contours of the party system in the 1999 election are discussed in the epilogue.

Plan of the Book

This volume implements a controlled comparison of Russia's mixed electoral system, examining the effects of PR and plurality elections on political parties and representation in that country. I use concepts and hypotheses found in the literature on electoral systems, covering the theories and hypotheses associated with several issues, among them the number of parties, women's representation, and minority representation. Throughout the analysis, to place the Russian experience in comparative context, I bring in comparative examples from other postcommunist countries and consolidated democracies.

Chapter 2 describes the methodological approach of controlled comparison used throughout the book. I examine the strengths and weaknesses of treating

Table 1.3: Major Parties in the 1995 State Duma Election

Party	Leader	Political orientation	Number of PR seats	Number of SMD seats
Our Home is Russia	V. Chernomyrdin	Reformist	45	10
Yabloko	G. Yavlinsky	Reformist	31	14
DVR	Y. Gaidar	Reformist	0	9
Forward Russia!	B. Fedorov	Reformist	0	3
P-G-L bloc	E. Pamfilova	Reformist	0	2
Common Cause	I. Khakamada	Reformist	0	1
PEF	K. Borovoi	Reformist	0	1
TF	E. Rossel	Reformist	0	1
PRES	S. Shakhrai	Reformist	0	1
Women of Russia	A. Fedulova Y. Lakhova	Centrist	0	3
Ivan Rybkin bloc	I. Rybkin	Centrist	0	3
Worker's Self-Government bloc	S. Fedorov	Centrist	0	1
Trade Unions and Industrialists bloc	V. Shcherbakov	Centrist	0	1
Govorukhin bloc	S. Govorukhin	Centrist	0	1
Bloc 89	P. Medvedev	Centrist	0	1
Independents bloc	V. Komchatov	Centrist	0	1
KPRF	G. Zyuganov	Leftist	99	58
APR	M. Lapshin	Leftist	0	20
Power to the People	N. Ryzhkov	Leftist	0	9
C-WR-FSU	V. Anpilov	Leftist	0	1
LDPR	V. Zhirinovskiy	Nationalist	50	1
KRO	Y. Skokov	Nationalist	0	5
My Fatherland	B. Gromov	Nationalist	0	1

Note: DVR = Democratic Russia's Choice, P-G-L = Pamfilova-Gurov-Lysenko bloc, PEF = Party of Economic Freedom, TF = Transformation of the Fatherland, PRES = Party of Russian Unity and Accord, KPRF = Communist Party of the Russian Federation, APR = Agrarian Party of Russia, C-WR-FSU = Communists–Working Russia–For the Soviet Union; LDPR = Liberal Democratic Party of Russia; KRO = Congress of Russian Communities.

the PR and SMD tiers of a mixed electoral system as separate systems operating simultaneously in the same political context. I also discuss the weak institutionalization of political parties in Russia, which is the main explanatory factor used to account for the unexpected outcomes found in the PR and plurality tiers of Russia's mixed electoral system.

Chapter 3 considers the relationship between electoral systems and the number of parties emerging out of Russia's 1993 and 1995 parliamentary elections. I examine the extent to which PR and plurality elections in Russia have con-

strained party proliferation through a psychological effect on strategic behavior and through a mechanical effect during the translation of votes into seats. Russian experience runs counter to comparative experience and the expectations of the literature.

Chapter 4 looks at electoral systems and women's representation. I show that women actually have had greater success in SMD elections than in PR elections in Russia, which also runs counter to the conventional wisdom that PR is more conducive to women's representation than plurality elections. Chapter 5 studies the connection between electoral systems and minority representation. Non-Russian minorities have been well represented in the State Duma in numbers proportional to their share of the population. Moreover, the PR and SMD tiers elect non-Russians to office at equal levels; the difference between the two lies in the type of minority group elected.

Chapter 6 examines the 1996 presidential election. Unlike the experience of SMD parliamentary elections, the SMD election for president did constrain the number of candidates. This occurred despite the fact that a weaker two-round majoritarian electoral formula was used in the presidential election. President Yeltsin's reelection can be attributed to a significant extent to the concentration of the vote produced by the presidential election. Chapter 7 looks at the impact of electoral systems on political outcomes. PR and plurality elections had a significant effect on the status of political parties in the political system. Electoral systems are also shown to affect the success of individual parties and the ideological character of the State Duma.

In chapter 8 I draw some conclusions. I argue that, although Russia is unique in many ways when compared to consolidated democracies, its experience is very applicable to new democracies, especially other postcommunist states. Under conditions of weakly institutionalized parties, a mixed electoral system offers the greatest chance for democratic consolidation, because the two tiers produce complementary incentives for party development. The PR tier elevates weak parties to center stage and forces elites and voters to think in partisan terms, and the SMD tier forces parties to develop grass-roots organizations and a strong cadre of local candidates and activists, strengthening national integration.

An epilogue brings the analysis through the 1999 parliamentary elections. I found the same general patterns of party development continued in this election. Candidate proliferation remained in SMD elections and women won more seats in SMDs than in the PR tier.