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Inside or Outside the System: Communist Opposition in the Russian Regions[2]

In some authoritarian regimes, the opposition is excluded from participation in the system of power relations. In others, it is fully coopted and takes part in the decision-making process as a smaller partner of ruling party or is used in political manipulations. Also some mix of cooptation and repression might be employed. Scholars of comparative politics have done ample work on the consequences of these different cooptation strategies on regime survival, but there is little or no work on why authoritarian leaders choose these strategies. There are even less works on the strategies of the moderate (that is open for cooperation) opposition in authoritarian regime.

Using case studies and original data on the distribution of leadership positions in Russian regional legislatures, and the cases of "red" governors and mayors as well, we examine the variation in how the authorities have related to the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) in the Russian regions. Indeed, as we show there is no one pattern of cooptation across the Russian regions: in some regions the CPRF is coopted with positions, rents, and influence, in others it is almost wholly excluded, while in still others a mixed strategy is employed. Besides, with the emergence of dominant party, United Russia, a part of power-seeking communists joined United Russia. Using our original data and case studies, we attempt to explain this variation.

As far as the theory is concerned we analyze the Russian party system as a dominant party system (though with certain reservations, since United Russia has limited own powers being rather a dependent part of the whole state machine). But usually such studies are focused on the dominant party itself, and the opposition is less studied (see Magaloni, 2006 on Mexico etc.). Also we do not see the reason to apply such concepts as robust party competition (Grzymala-Busse, 2007), which says about strong challenges from the opposition with its own alternative program. This concept is suitable for emerged democratic regimes, where robust party competition also serves against state exploitation and rent seeking, while we need to explain the opportunistic behavior of opposition under authoritarian conditions.

We also use the theory of electoral authoritarianism (Schedler, 2006 etc.), which gives an excellent insight into the mechanism of electoral competition when the result is more or less known before the elections and the systems works to ensure the incumbent's victory. However, being concerned with regional studies and variations we are more interested in what happens if the opposition wins locally.

The key issue of this paper is the opposition's cooptation in authoritarian regime that is in Russia. From comparative studies we know that it's good to be average in terms of power and support if the opposition wants to be coopted (Gandhi, 2008). Russian case should be fruitful to be added to the international comparisons of this kind, as CPRF is found in this very position. Recent electoral gains still do not give CPRF any chance to become a ruling party, but rather they increase the probability of new attempts to coopt communists into the regime. The CPRF leaders refer to the same strategy from their side and usually agree to be coopted for the tactical reasons seeing this not as surrender but as a political achievement for themselves. Since 1990s Russian experts have always refer to the "systemic" vs. "non-systemic" / "anti-systemic" divide

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of the opposition and the very term of "systemic" opposition has been coined to explain the role of more or less coopted parties.

Taking into consideration time-space variations of CPRF positions in power and behavior the author adds his own concept of "oppositionness" that is about the scale of inclusion/exclusion into decision-making power bodies instead of robust competition and ruling elite / opposition divide. Besides we argue that instead of simple cooptation/repression choice the weaker parties can just be deprived and/or neglected in many cases and the regime has no need to repress and fight them.

Thus the theme of "systemic" opposition and mutual cooptation policy needs to be better explored. It does not seem to be nor less intriguing theme than the usual analysis of both dominant parties and "repressed" and fighting for power (if not for the revolution) opposition.

Sub-national cross-regional studies let us find rules and exceptions in the political regime's common political institutions and practices. That is why we make a comprehensive study of all 83 Russian regions.

In the emerging party system in Russia the communists play significant role as the biggest oppositional party. Recent elections proved that the popularity of communists started to increase again almost reaching the heights of the 1990s. Let us remember that CPRF had rising electoral support in the 1990s: it gathered 12.4% of the votes at 1993 State Duma elections, then 22.3% in 1995 and 24.29% at 1999, which was the best result ever. Then came their crisis of Putin years when CPRF dropped down to 12.65% in 2003 and 11.57% in 2007. However 2011 elections gave reasons to rejoice again as CPRF went up to 19.19%.

Similar, but not the same dynamics was shown at the presidential elections where CPRF candidate (party leader Zyuganov, except for 2004 elections) could have more votes than his party always being the main oppositional candidate and uniting more votes and forces than CPRF itself did at State Duma elections. However the best result was the first one: 32.03% in first round of 1996 elections and 40.3% in the second round. In 2000 Zyuganov got less, which was 29.21%, while in 2004 CPRF nominated Kharitonov who got only 12.65%. After that Zyuganov returned as a candidate but performed poorly: 17.72% in 2008 and 17.18% in 2012. The case of presidential elections showed that CPRF lost the only chance to come to power in 1996 and it has never been considered as a would-be ruling party since then. Moreover its leader lost much of his popular support, and while his own popularity drops CPRF can perform better than him.

In this situation the need to adapt to existing regime becomes especially important. Otherwise the electoral support of CPRF and smaller power positions coming with it can be totally wasted. The strategy of CPRF after 1996 failure at the presidential elections was actually aimed at the local victories (see below) and the use of State Duma as main federal power body where communists could have a share of power. Thus the conditions for communists' cooptation formed right after summer of 1996 and there has been a long story since then. Before we shift to the sub-national politics let us see how it looked like in the State Duma. As our calculations show CPRF peaked in 1995-1999 convocations where its share was 34.67% (the figures cover the breakdown right after elections, as small changes could happen later due to by-elections and changes of party/faction by certain deputies) as compared with 9.33% in 1993-1995 convocation. However this share dropped after 1999 elections to 25.11% and it worsened in 2003 (11.33%). 2007 did not bring much better results (12.67%). Only 2011 elections changed this situation for better, when CPRF managed to get 20.44% of the seats. Again it was not like in the 1990s but not bad at all as compared with 2003 and 2007 failures. However, as we can see, the faction of CPRF has never held than the third of the seats except for 1995-1999 convocation and it is one fifth at the moment. This is the second largest faction but its size is too small. This is the case of "average" situation coinciding with what Gandhi studied.

Unfavorable federal conditions mentioned above (no chance to become a ruling party, fluctuating electoral support and share of State Duma seats, impossibility to block State Duma decisions in all but one convocations) has always made communists to pay much attention to the

sub-national level. This paper analyses the reasons and the consequences of most cases when the communists came to power on the regional level in Russia (regional governors, mayors of major cities, deputies of regional legislatures). Communist opposition in Russia may be strong and weak, repressed and co-opted in different regions and/or time periods, and that fact reflects the complicated nature of both Russian authoritarianism and Russian left movement.

The analysis shows that CPRF has always been seeking the ways to get and keep power on the regional / local level but under conditions of hybrid regime the party could not avoid the deals with the ruling elite (federal authorities, United Russia etc). Gradually the regime eradicated all the representatives of CPRF in executive power: "red" governors and mayors were forced either to leave the office or the party. The less significant legislative power is still open for communists who are able to create their (usually small) factions. Analysis of spoils distribution in State Duma and regional legislatures shows that very often the rulers seek to neutralize CPRF by giving it some positions in the legislative leadership.

Dissolving Communist Governors in the System: No Happy End of the Story

The executive power has all the importance in Russian political regime where the system of checks and balances has never been applied but formally. The neo-patrimonial regime with its typical features of rent-seeking and clientelist informal relations turns the executive power into a system of closed circles of influential groups seeking control over money flows. Such a system hardly opens for opposition which can undermine it.

Politics on regional level is crucially important both for formation and for the constraints of opposition-building in Russia. With the beginning of governors' and mayors' elections in 1996, the left-wing opposition as well as other oppositional groups got an opportunity to grab some power (table 2). More favorable institutional conditions (fairer and not so authoritarian, though not purely democratic elections) and higher level of communists' electoral support (see above) made that short period of time the first and the last starting point for the "oppositional" regional governments (almost all of them were headed by CPRF and its supporters).

There is extensive literature on the transformation of Russian political regime after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Initially the authors used the theory of democratic transition viewing Russia as a political system on its way to democracy (Karl, Schmitter, 1994; Linz, Stepan, 1996). The governors' and mayors' elections were understood as one of the crucial turning points to democratic development. But obvious flaws in the democratic transition has led to the change of main paradigms as the transition to democracy stopped on the way and failed. As a result, Russian political regime has been analyzed ever since in terms of hybrid regime, or authoritarian regime (with the use of new-born concepts of electoral authoritarianism, competitive authoritarianism and alike; see Levitsky, Way, 2002; Schedler, 2006; Golosov, 2008; Ross, 2009). In our studies of sub-national Russian politics, we argued that the elements of centralization (instead of federalization) and the formation of hybrid regime marked the post-Soviet regional politics from the very start in 1991 (Turovsky, 2007).

Two strong limitations for "oppositional" rule on sub-national level appeared almost from the very start, authoritarian and centralist. The first is the limitation on political pluralism that led to the impossibility to create any sub-national regime that could differ ideologically from the national regime. Kremlin clearly opposed those politicians who ran for governors from the oppositional side, as was shown at 1996 governors' elections, when the presidential administration supported its list of candidates (mainly the incumbents, appointed by Yeltsin before). It easily proved to be impossible to create any isolated local regime that could even partly promote the program of CPRF.

The second limitation is the inability of autonomous and self-sustained sub-national rule. This limitation is caused by deep socioeconomic contrasts of Russian regions and by centralized resource redistribution needed badly to decrease these contrasts and help the backward to survive. Such distributive policy also had clear political and electoral reasons, since it helped to boost the support for the regime in the vast periphery. It has become a common knowledge that

such distributive policy was heavily influenced by patron-client ties between the centre and the certain governors, was seen as a reward for loyalty and electoral results, as the elections started to show even from 1993 referenda and Duma elections. Oppositional regional/local regimes started with populist and paternalist programs, which gave them a popular support. However, lack of resources and financial dependence on the federal government made impossible vast expenditures that such programs needed.

Such contradictions led to the very unpleasant situation for the oppositional leaders who became governors. Oppositional governors could not follow their ideology and their electoral promises without fatal conflicts with the federal authorities.

At first, we start with the empirical data on the "communist" rule in the Russian regions. Our sample consists of 33 "oppositional" governors elected in 1993-2001 and belonging to (16 members) or supported by (17 with no party affiliation) CPRF. While running for the second term 18 of them were re-elected, while 7 lost, three did not participate, one was banned from running, and four did not run because the elections were ceased from 2005 and up to 2012. Among those 18 who won the second term, only four won the third term while two lost. For others the story ended as two were banned from running, while for nine of them the electoral period ended with the end of elections themselves (one more governor was murdered).

It is no surprise, that in the time of presidential nominations started in 2005 the head of state was not eager to appoint many of "oppositional" governors. However, the cooptation policy worked for some time. Six "oppositional" governors were appointed once and five were even twice, while six were denied. Moreover, among the appointed two were CPRF members. One of them was appointed once and another was even twice (he declared that he "froze" CPRF membership when he was appointed for the second time, but it was not proved by any documents).

We can see that the appointment policy of Putin and Medvedev went not so badly for the "oppositional" governors, and if they suffered that was the same as for the others, since most governors were changed in the course and especially at the time of second nominations done under Medvedev. But this policy drew the line between those who kept affiliation with CPRF and those who broke with this party. If we take 16 governors with the initial CPRF membership, we see that two of them joined United Russia (and both are still in power), two declared "frozen" membership (one is still in power and clearly retains CPRF membership), then three more were excluded from CPRF (but their game with Kremlin did not help to get another term), and finally nine stayed in CPRF but without prolonged governorship. As for 17 governors supported by CPRF without its membership, six joined United Russia (and three of them are still in power), while 11 stayed out of parties and they are not governors anymore. So, the ruling regime embraced those who joined United Russia but did not deny those with CPRF affiliation fully. However, due to many reasons only six governors from our sample of 33 stay in power. Among them five joined United Russia and only one is CPRF member and a showcase of cooptation policy (the one who once declared that he "frozen" CPRF membership).

The history of CPRF electoral results at the gubernatorial elections under Putin/Medvedev shows that the main oppositional party ran out of strong candidates proving that (as many left parties) it has a significant ideological support but lacks personalities. Most of success came in the second half of the 1990s when CPRF support and personal popularity of more or less known and experienced politicians who started under Soviets could be combined. By the 2000s CPRF resource of strong candidates had been almost over. In other words, CPRF proved to be a rather weak competitor at the gubernatorial elections, and after the impossibility to win presidential race was proved in 1996 it took about 4-5 years to show that the resource of successful gubernatorial races was exhaustible too.

If we take only new gubernatorial candidates (not to mention incumbents) CPRF in 2000-2005 was both passive and unsuccessful. As for the passivity the statistics goes like this. In 2000 in 22 regions CPRF nominated only 10 candidates and only 8 of them ran (two were denied by

electoral commissions)[3]. In 2001, however, CPRF was more active and participated in 10 regions out of 13 (actually 9 candidates ran and one was denied). In 2002 the breakdown consisted of 6 runs and three "no-runs". But in 2003 CPRF again missed a lot of campaigns, namely 10 (and had candidates in 12). In 2004 CPRF continued to miss. It supported 8 candidates (one of them was denied) and did not participate in 7 regional campaigns. In 2005 CPRF took part in the only gubernatorial campaign held that year before the appointments started. Thus CPRF abstained from 35 gubernatorial campaigns.

Results of campaigns where CPRF participated were extremely poor. It won four elections in the beginning of the 2000s. New communist governors came to power in three regions in 2000 (Kursk, Kamchatka and Krasnodar) and it all ended in Nizhny Novgorod in 2001. Nor less surprising is very small number of second places: three in 2000, two in 2001, one in 2002, three in 2003, again three in 2004. In some regions the results were extremely poor, for example in 16 regions CPRF candidates could not get 10% of the vote and some of them appeared with results down to 1-2%.

So, the number of "oppositional" governors diminished in the beginning of the 2000s due to "natural" reasons, such as insufficient popularity of communist incumbents to win another term and lack of new and strong personalities in the party. Putin's regime caught a lucky chance to dissolve communist governors using their own and their party's weakness rather than to repress them. However, the mechanism of repression was also used at the elections when some of unwanted incumbents found themselves banned from running for some formal reasons. But the cooptation policy was also used. However, regarding the vital importance of regional executive power the cooptation policy was very limited.

The very first wave of appointments in 2005 gave mixed results. Two communists did not get the appointment along with two other governors excluded from CPRF. However two communists were appointed. Also Putin appointed four governors who moved from opposition to United Russia (one former CPRF member among them). Later, in 2006-2008 two governors who moved to United Russia were appointed as well (one of them former communist), while another governor with communist background was not appointed, and one more governor (appointed in 2005 and excluded from CPRF later) was forced to resign. Second wave of appointments in 2010 under Medvedev led to reappointments of four governors, three of them staying United Russia members, and one of them being CPRF member (but declaring "frozen" membership). However, despite United Russia membership, three governors were not appointed for the second time. Also in 2010 the first appointment in Volgograd brought about the resignation of another former communist (who said he "froze" CPRF membership). In 2011 and 2012 two more former "oppositional" governors, both United Russia members were happily appointed again.

We can see that at the time of appointments the number of CPRF members in regional power gradually decreased to one, and there are only five former oppositional candidates who survive at the cost of joining United Russia. This is the empirical result. Now it is time to understand its reasons which seem to be very important for studies of sub-national regimes. Our analysis reveals five crucial problems of "oppositional" regional regime in authoritarian and centralist environment making it almost impossible:

1. Problem of legitimacy: weak legitimacy, inability to meet the voters' expectations and fulfill the promises (this produces rather low electoral support and following losses),
2. Problem of elite cohesion (hence elites' fragmentation and governors' conflicts with other powerful groups),
3. Problem of center-regional relations: conflict with the federal authorities (leading to possible money transfer cuts),
4. Problem of party support: conflict with the own party (leading to the expulsion from the party and the opposition from within the party),

[3] We take all the candidates who were more or less clearly supported by CPRF. Some of them ran as independents for tactical reasons and many did not have CPRF membership.

5. Problem of professionalism: limits in professional team building (i.e. problems with both "political" and "professional", Weberian team, in other words this is lack of loyal bureaucracy combined with the low professionalism of governor's "political" team).

The problem of legitimacy of "oppositional" sub-national regime is very interesting and not the one that lies on the surface. For critics of Russian regime it may seem "good" if the opposition comes to power in the regions, and oppositional winners may seem strong and popular figures. In fact this is far from truth, like it or not. First of all it was not the high popularity of CPRF but strong battle under conditions of loyalty/opposition divide that pushed some of the communists to power. The 1990s were marked by strong anti-communist sentiments of the other part of the society. As we can see from electoral data CPRF always had limits in its public support. Besides, former Soviet elite split, and many bureaucrats in ruling elite of the 1990s were conservative enough to satisfy the oppositional-minded voters. So, the left-leaning incumbent could be more attractive than "unknown" oppositional politician. These assumptions are supported by electoral statistics. For example, the average percent of votes cast for 33 oppositional winners we study at their first election, was at 48.7%. 19 of them won only in the second round.

The problem of legitimacy can be worsened by the low effectiveness of the "oppositional" sub-national regime. Under authoritarianism such a regime can easily be alienated and deprived of resources coming from the center. In other words there is a strong probability that starting with limited support the "oppositional" sub-national regime can make it even worse.

In fact, some of the "oppositional" governors failed quickly when they could not be re-elected for the second term (among CPRF members, these were Belonogov in Amur region, Shabanov in Voronezh region, Kislitsyn in Mariy El, Ryabov in Tambov region: among the left-wing non-members the example was Prokhorov in Smolensk region). Some of them lingered longer but lost their third terms, like communist Lyubimov in Ryazan region.

The problem of party support also can look unexpected, but again it is caused by overall regime conditions when it is impossible to fulfill the oppositional program on the weak and dependent sub-national level.

On the regional level, the "oppositional" governors lost support from CPRF partly or fully soon after their victories in 1996-1997, as they turned down ideology in their policies and refused to fill up the regional administration with communists. Considering their policies there was no clear evidence that "red" governors were different from the "regulars" (Lavrov, Kuznetsova, 1997). Most governors, no matter how they were affiliated with the parties, tried to use their limited financial resources to please the public sector and get the electoral support by means of their social policies in order to win the next term (usual pork barrel politics, or the feedback in political system cycle). In other terms, most governors under poor economic conditions of the 1990s were "socially-oriented" due at least to the electoral reasons as much as they could under financial limitations (most governors alike the federal government followed the typical political business cycle rising social expenditures before the elections). Meanwhile they could not change much in the region and it showed up to the dissatisfaction of CPRF and its supporters.

The result was in the widespread, sometimes open and harsh critics of governors from the side of CPRF activists and even the leaders of CPRF regional branches. There were even reported cases when local communists thought about nominating another candidate, and some communists even could try to take part in the elections as independents and critics of the incumbent communist (for example, in Ryazan the CPRF member Lyubimov faced challenge from other communists, State Duma deputy Kanaev at the second tem run in 2000 and city mayor Mamatov while running for the third term in 2004). In 2004 CPRF decided to nominate its candidate Pelyak against Yevdokimov in Murmansk.

New "strange" phenomenon appeared; it was the communist opposition to the "communist" governor. Often regional branches of CPRF split into loyalists and critics and this internal struggle could lead to the instability within CPRF and changes of its regional leaders.

Such instability within CPRF existed even in Tula region where the famous federal-level communist leader Starodubtsev came to power in 1997. Therefore, while the color of the "red" governor faded he faced the new opposition from his former supporters.

On the federal level, the "red" governors initially enjoyed the full support from the Central committee of CPRF. In the 1990s and after Zyuganov's failure at the 1996 presidential elections, the strategy of CPRF was aimed at getting as much power on the sub-national level as possible (to grow into the power from below, as it was commonly said by party officials in 1996) in order to boost the support of the party itself and maybe to win the next federal elections as a result[4]. In regional conflicts within the party, the highest party officials usually backed the governors protecting them from the critics. Even in the 2000s it was only Murmansk region where CPRF in 2004 nominated another (and very weak) candidate against its former affiliate who joined United Russia. However, this "honeymoon" ended in the 2000s, since the cautious governors showed no signs of love towards the federal party leadership. The typical case of the 2000s was the growing and uncovered tension between "red" governors and CPRF leader Zyuganov. As the federal centre became stronger and CPRF weakened, some "red" governors started to criticize Zyuganov pleasing the federal authorities with such critics. Most prominent critics were Mashkovtsev in Kamchatka and Tikhonov from Ivanovo region. Tikhonov was one of the main players in an attempt to break up CPRF from within and change its leader in 2004. After that, he headed new leftist party VKPB, but it ended soon. Growing tensions of that period led to three cases of governors' expulsion from CPRF.

The problem of professionalism comes from the rather low professional competence of "oppositional" regimes and/or their inadequacy in terms of emerging (capitalist) economic regime. Many "oppositional" governors came to power as populists with no experience in regional governance. It was hard for them to recruit both party activists (who could be incompetent) and professional bureaucracy (that could be disloyal). In our studies, we found out that in the 1990s most "red" governors either left untouched significant part of the previous government (which they strongly criticized before the election and even promised to send to jail) or recruited new officials from different elite groups but not from CPRF (Turovsky, 1998). Anyway, their administrations were often unstable with constant change of officials.

Professional weakness of "oppositional" regimes resulted from the uneven split of former Soviet elite. It was only part of former Soviet nomenclature that could fill the gap in the "red" governors' administrations. Many experienced bureaucrats stayed away from the parties after the ban on CPSU and many of them continued to work in power bodies after 1991 becoming loyal to the new regime. On the other hand, there were rather few Soviet bureaucrats who joined CPRF in order to regain power with its help. When Yeltsin appointed regional governors in 1991 and after, he recruited experienced, but loyal officials rather than newcomers from democratic movement, building up the system of pragmatic loyalty (Turovsky, 1998). Surely, such governors formed their administrations with their kind. That created initial conditions under which Soviet-born center-left or just pragmatic nomenclature could be included into the ruling elite on the regional level or could wait for the chance to be appointed without going to the opposition and revenging at the election, if lucky enough (let us remember that very few gubernatorial elections were held before 1996, and the election was not the way to regional power for a long time).

The problem of elite cohesion derives from the clientelist structure of power relations in Russia, which has become one of the main features of Russian politics (Biryukov, 2009). The "oppositional" regimes were usually the most fragmented. The elections won by new governors were usually highly competitive and the losers with their clienteles did not disappear after them. Moreover, the regional opposition towards the "oppositional" governor could be very strong and

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[4] Electoral statistics prove that CPRF usually had better results in the regions where "red" governors ruled. It was clear in the 2000s in such regions as Vladimir and Volgograd where "last communists" stayed in power.

supported by business and/or federal centre. Rarely the "red" governor could arrange all the clienteles existing to an order. Rather, he built his own clientele that just complicated the structure. Apparently, after the governors' elections were abolished, the struggle for appointment in such regions was usually the fiercest, with the strong candidates on the official list, not to mention the fight "under the carpet".

The problem of center-regional relations is the most obvious. Apparently "red" governors came to power as unwanted "guests" and the federal center had no reasons to fully support them. It is sufficient to mention only the crucial question of keeping the federal power, when the leaders of the state were interested in those governors who could ensure their local support. Even if other governors were tolerated and incorporated into the system, it was clear that their efficiency in terms of ensuring political support for the president was limited.

Thus, the "oppositional" governor had to meet and fight back a lot of challenges that could be lethal for the career. In worst cases the governor had problems from all sides, i.e. in the relations with a) the public, b) the federal authorities, c) the own party (CPRF), d) the oppositional regional clienteles, e) part of own government. That brought about instability and risks not only for the governor but also for the regional political and economic development.

So, if the authoritarian political regime and centralist politics in the formal federation did not allow the "oppositional" sub-national regime, those who came to power from the opposition did not have much choice either. We suppose that the only way to the success (i.e. stability in power) for the "oppositional" governor was the choice of adaptation strategy and usually break-up with the oppositional party. The goal was to fit more or less smoothly into the regime, both on institutional and individual levels. In other words, strategies of CPRF and communist governors became opposite. If CPRF was searching for the ways to become a ruling party creating its network of governors and mayors, the latter were adapting to the existing regime.

In terms of the famous Hirschman triad of reactions on unstable organizational conditions (voice, exit, loyalty), Russian "oppositional" governors rather chose the last one (Hirschman, 1970). The voice (of opposition) in theory could bring more electoral support at the next elections, but under authoritarian regime could lead to an end, one way or another. The critics of the federal authorities at the sub-national elections of 1995-1999 could be very fierce even from the side of the established regional officials. But it was self-censored anyway and meant to attract voters at the certain electoral periods.

The exit (freewill resignation) was tried by some governors, who refused to run for the second term. The best example was highly popular left-nationalist Krasnodar governor Kondratenko who did not participate at the 2000 elections. However, the exit actually was combined with the loyalty. Those who left the governor's office and ceded to those who were backed by the federal authorities, were often rewarded by smaller power positions. Kondratenko is still a senator from his region, appointed by the United Russia's regional authorities. Moreover, at 2012 regional elections he was found on the United Russia party list. Another governor who refused to run in 2000, Kaluga's Sudarenkov is also a senator.

Undoubtedly, the loyalty is the main way of adaptation for the "oppositional" governor. The loyalty towards the federal government was obviously the most needed one that should be combined with the building of clientelist ties with the federal bureaucrats.

Back in 1996, those governors who came to power with the support of the opposition but were not party members found themselves in more flexible situation to shake off an undesirable leftist support. Soon after elections, in 1996, Gustov from Leningrad region and Tsvetkov from Magadan region held press conference where they expressed explicit loyalty towards the federal centre (Turovsky, 1998). Both were rewarded. Tsvetkov found federal support for his project of free economic zone in Magadan. Gustov became federal vice prime minister in 1998 (in the 2000s he was a senator).

Public rhetoric of "oppositional" governors also changed after the elections. New regional officials clearly expressed their loyalty to hierarchical power structure (let us remember that the oppositional leaders were mainly supporters of CPRF and descendents from the

centralist while formally federative Soviet regime). While interviewed by the author, one of high-ranking regional bureaucrats, and the leader of the regional CPRF branch at the same time in the early 2000s pointed at the president Putin's portrait saying that Putin became a supreme leader for him. Regarding the "new" policy of his administration Volgograd's communist governor Maksyuta said in public once that it did not matter what method he would use, "communist" or "capitalist". The main thing for him was to use the "effective" method as he pointed it out.

The topic of centre-regional clientelist connections is still poorly examined in Russia, being mainly the matter for experts and media commentators. However, there is much empirical evidence proving that the "red" governors tried to become a part of the whole clientelist system emerging in the process of privatization. They understood that being alienated in this system would be political death for them. It is interesting that some of them indicated in public their desire to be "like others" and not some kind of "red sheep in the family". Rather radical communist governor of Bryansk region Lodkin in his interview to government's "Rossijskaja gazeta" said that he was a "normal man" and not an "orthodox" (Turovsky, 1998). "Normal" was understood as being part of the system emerged.

The politics of clientelist integration had two dimensions. Firstly, the governors were looking for their partners and patrons in the federal government. It would be correct to talk about mutual strategies. While the federal government was becoming more conservative and pragmatic, it was easier to cooperate for both sides. It showed under Prime Minister Chernomyrdin and continued under Putin. One way or another, all the "oppositional" governors tried to be loyal and to be a part of big patron-client system that developed in place of formal federative relations. There is much evidence on the interactions of "red" governors and Chernomyrdin (visits to the regions, favorable decisions etc) who conducted more pragmatic policy in comparison with Gaidar's.

Secondly, the "oppositional" governors under new "capitalist" regime were inevitably engaged in privatization processes (that was going on under bureaucratic control) and could not escape relations with business (otherwise risking to get it in opposition to them which could be fatal). Business-power relations is the theme widely discussed in Russian and international sources. Often the authors come to conclusion that the business groups have been playing very important role in regional politics and even controlling regional governments (Zubarevich, 2002). The case of a "red' governor is specific from this point, since such governors "in theory" should stay away from oligarchs. But some "communist" governors created close links with "capitalist" tycoons. One of the examples is found in Volgograd where experts say that governor Maksyuta, CPRF member, who ruled from 1996 until 2010, was a supporter of LUKOIL, one of the biggest Russian oil companies. LUKOIL owns oil refinery and deposits in the region and is a chief taxpayer there. LUKOIL managers got job in Maksyuta government, while the company itself employed the governor's own son. Another example was Lyubimov with its ties with TNK (Tyumen Oil Company) that owns the oil refinery in Ryazan. Lyubimov used to be a member of its directors' board.

Expression of loyalty and integration into the emerging political and economic regime was one part of the adaptation strategies used by the "oppositional" governors. Another part can be found in their party politics and role in the transformation of party system. The institutionalization of post-Soviet parties has been a gradual process. In the 1990s as the electoral results showed, CPRF was the most popular party but its public support was limited due to widespread anticommunist sentiments. Executive power heads preferred to stay "beyond" or "above" parties seeing parties as the limitation for the legitimacy of the personalist regimes. Most regional regimes also tended to be personalist and clientelist as studies of the 1990s' regimes examined (Gel'man, Ryzhenkov, Bri, 2000).

Focusing on "oppositional" regimes one can see the same trend in their party and electoral politics, despite the fact that some governors were the members of CPRF. "Red" governors changed their policy towards the federal elections. It was naïve to think that they

would support CPRF and grant it with their "administrative resource". Even in the early times at the 1996 presidential elections, the only CPRF affiliate of that time, Ryabov in Tambov region stayed away from the campaign while letting two of his deputies head campaigns of two main rivals, Yeltsin and Zyuganov. Later on, at 1999 Duma elections "red" governors usually let the communists campaign freely but rarely gave them open or any support. After 2000, such support became even more limited or ceased.

Under Putin regime "oppositional" governors apparently changed their electoral policy. Some of them did it from the very start. On the 9th of December, 1999, ten days before State Duma elections there was a statement in Putin's support signed by several governors more or less close to CPRF (but not party members). The most sensational was the signature of famous and popular Kemerovo governor Tuleev, who was number 4 on CPRF party list at the same time. Also the statement was supported by Kaluga governor Sudarenkov, Kostroma's Shershunov, Magadan's Tsvetkov and Evenki's Bokovikov.

Later it became even worse. Since 2003 no governor has ever been on CPRF party list at State Duma elections. It can be mentioned that four governors visited CPRF convention before 2003 elections but showed no intentions to join the campaign. At the elections in single-mandate districts the same year most "red" governors did not prevent the victories of United Russia candidates. The only exception was in Vladimir region where both districts were won by communists. At the gubernatorial elections all the governors we study ran as independents (however, it was a common practice for all the governors).

At the regional elections "oppositional" governors also did not give CPRF full support. Sometimes they created their own centrist "parties of power", which they supported along with CPRF or instead. When regional legislatures were elected in single-mandate districts governor-supported candidates did not match completely the list of CPRF candidates. At the regional elections when party lists were introduced after 2003, communist governors could share their support. Starodubtsev in Tula region, while being CPRF member, created his own "party of power", bloc "For Tula *krai*" with his deputy Bogomolov in the lead. In terms of elections, this bloc took away votes both from CPRF and United Russia. It is worth to remember that this was Starodubtsev who was one of the symbols of communist movement. This example showed that each governor preferred to create centrist "party of power" (be it United Russia branch or regional bloc) rather than support a party with ideological bias.

The drastic change in adaptation strategies of "oppositional" governors came along with the change of party system and the creation of United Russia in 2001. Previously the party politics of the federal centre was more flexible and allowed the governors being members of different parties, paying more attention to their loyalty. Gradually it changed. Governors had to choose the new adaptation strategy. They could insist on their CPRF membership and run the risk to lose the job (in the meantime trying to combine CPRF affiliation with the loyalty to the centre). Alternatively, they could leave the "wrong" party and then to decide whether to stay beyond parties or join United Russia.

The change of party affiliation was not the news of the 2000s as it appeared in the 1990s as well. In 1997, Bronevich who in 1996 became a governor in Koryaki autonomous region with the support of CPRF, headed the regional branch of that time's "party of power", Chernomyrdin's "Our Home is Russia". It is worthwhile to mention that it appeared in the very beginning of gubernatorial elections. Koryaki AO was a remote region fully dependent on the federal financial support, and its governor needed much attention from the federal government. So, Bronevich's decision was strongly motivated by her region's economic dependency.

After Putin's centralization and the introduction of dominant party regime, the factor of political dependency became relevant for all the regions. This factor also meant the empirical test on the very allowance of the governors from "other" parties in more centralized system of executive power.

Choice of new strategy of communists' adaptation should be analyzed in a broader historical perspective. Before United Russia, most governors preferred to stay away from parties

and follow the rules of personalist regional regimes (governor "for all the people" as some of them repeated), while the dominant "party of power" was not created. They could cling to "Our Home is Russia", "Unity", "Fatherland – All Russia", conditions depending, but they followed the most widespread tactics of Russian political leaders to be "above" parties in order to rise up the legitimacy, be it in Russia as a whole (for the Russian presidentialism) or in the region (for governors). Drastic federal-influenced change in party politics driven by Putin's policy of elite consolidation forced self-proclaimed "above parties" and "all people's" governors to join United Russia in 2003-2005 (Reuter, 2010). By the March of 2006, 70 governors had joined the party. Reuter's study proved that the "weaker" governors tried to join United Russia first, and obviously most "oppositional" governors were among the "weaker".

Under the new party system, in 2002-2004 while strong United Russia was emerging the communists faced the hardest decision ever. As we mentioned above four governors were excluded by communists themselves for their distinct change of loyalty and harm they started to bring to CPRF. Two governors changed CPRF for United Russia (one of them was excluded from United Russia later). In 2003, before the first Duma elections with United Russia participation, CPRF was abandoned by Krasnodar governor Tkachev (who joined United Russia without any hesitations as he was not considered a true communist before). The latest of all was the controversial case of Kursk governor Mikhailov who had a long story of very active communist (he had been elected Duma deputy since 1993 and was a member of party's Central committee at the time of his governor election in 2000). However, Mikhailov left CPRF for United Russia and in reward got another term being appointed by Putin in 2005 (and then by Medvedev in 2010).

For the "pink" governors (we call the "pinks" those, who came to power with communist support but were not party members) the task was much easier both politically and psychologically. Usually they followed "pragmatic" path from the beginning of their governors' careers and distanced themselves from CPRF (though the distance could be different). The most interesting was the case of very popular Kemerovo governor Tuleev who was included in the top CPRF party list at 1995 and 1999 Duma elections. However, Tuleev always had his own ambitions; he ran for president in 1991 and was going to but then refused to run in 1996 in Zyuganov's favor. Tuleev combined oppositional populist rhetoric with the search of the ways of cooptation, and that was clearly shown in 1996-1997, when he became federal minister in Chernomyrdin government (in charge of CIS integration) and was appointed governor in 1997 as a federal bureaucrat and not an oppositional leader. At 1999 federal elections, he was caught in double-dealing: while in CPRF party list he gave part of his support to "Unity" which did very well in his region. That was the most painful for CPRF, because Tuleev had a huge popularity and could really manage voters' behavior in his region. In the 2000s, it was no surprise when Tuleev joined United Russia. Other "pinks" also joined United Russia without much hesitation. In 2004 Kurgan governor Bogomolov became a member and later was appointed for another term. The same happened in Orenburg region with Chernyshev (former supporter of CPRF and Agrarian party), Sumin in Chelyabinsk, Yevdokimov in Murmansk and Korolev in Lipetsk.

So, probably the best way of adaptation after the change of party system was to join United Russia. But apparently not all the "oppositional" governors were ready for that because of their ideological views and fearing to lose all the public support (despite the abolishment of elections they did care about it) after such a radical overturn. The main aim of Putin's regime was not to exclude communists or "pinks" completely but rather to co-opt those who proved to be adaptable, at least for a while. As we argued, initially Putin tried to change the system of center-regional relations rather than to change the governors on the personal level, and that brought about a lot of decisions in favor of incumbents (Turovsky, 2009). This showed in the case of two communists who were appointed governors in 2005 (Vinogradov in Vladimir region, Chernogorov in Stavropol region). Putin demonstrated his (limited) readiness to work with communists.

Thus two communist governors were coopted and appointed for their terms by president. However, one of them later was excluded from CPRF, and Vladimir region was left alone as an example of CPRF cooptation into the regional executive power.

The main reason of cooptation's end, as we suggest, was not the ideology (as Putin's regime became rather conservative itself, and CPRF used to claim that it "stole" some of its values), but the inability to fit into the new clientelist system and low electoral efficiency in the system of electoral authoritarianism. Analysis of those governors, who lost power under Putin, shows that the federal centre threw away many populists and political activists with bad record of regional conflicts and mismanagement. On the first stage, the emerging authoritarian regime used dependent judicial power and electoral commissions to get rid of unwanted governors before the elections and turned the system of electoral authoritarianism against regional incumbents. Firstly, Rutskoi in Kursk region and then Lodkin in Bryansk region were excluded from the run, which in earlier days seemed impossible for the incumbent governor in his "own" region. At the same time, pressure was used to ban from running some of the stronger CPRF-supported candidates (in Saratov and Ulyanovsk in 2000, in Rostov in 2001, in Pskov in 2004). Other incumbents could not survive appointment policy and were replaced.

The gradual formation of dominant party system could not make cooptation last long too. Chernogorov ended up badly being unpopular and unable to stabilize the region. He lost at both ends, was excluded from CPRF and then was forced to leave the governor's office finishing his political career. Vinogradov declared in the beginning of 2008, before Medvedev's election that he froze his CPRF membership (the same was done by another "last communist" Maksyuta in Volgograd region) and was appointed again, that time by Medvedev, despite protests from United Russia.

The centralization and the dominant party regime brought about the new and final step in the evolution of "oppositional" regional regimes – the extinction. Studies prove that the electoral performance became the main reason for governors' appointments. Surely, that meant the performance of United Russia. As Reuter and Robinson argued, the loyalty of governors and the electoral results as its proof opened the way to re-appointments (Reuter, Robinson, 2011). After changes to the legislation on the governors' appointments under Medvedev it became even clearer, because the party winning the regional elections (i.e. United Russia) got the right to propose candidates to the president. For "reds" all that meant forced "exit" (they usually were not included in the list of candidates) rather than a new term. For success, the loyalty had to be at its fullest (Mikhailov case in Kursk region) and even such loyalty was not a guarantee (hence the continuous talks about Mikhailov's soon resignation).

Creating regional elites, the federal centre, however, used policy that was a little bit more sophisticated that it could be in a "regular" dominant party regime. Kremlin never wanted all the governors to be United Russia members. We see two reasons for that. The first coincides with Reuter's point on the sequence of governors' membership. It is also based on the suggestion that United Russia has limited power and is a political tool rather than a strong party. So, some influential federal-level politicians have a privilege not to join and feel free with it. Another reason is the policy of the federal authorities that is still aimed at the demonstration of the presence of formal democratic institutions and ideological diversity. This results in policy allowing very limited but still diversity among the governors.

If we take closer look at Vladimir region where CPRF's Vinogradov still rule (since 1996) we can see that he could not do without serious concessions. He never criticizes Kremlin and his policy does not differ from the one any United Russia governor follows. Characteristically enough Vinogradov adapted his policy to federal government's requirements and his region took the place among the regions with the most effective regional executive power. Also he actually surrendered regional legislative power to United Russia (also United Russia dominates municipal power). At 2005 regional elections United Russia and CPRF got almost the same number of votes (20.5% and 20.3%) and CPRF member Bobrov became a speaker. But in 2009 United Russia won the absolute majority of seats and 51.3% of the votes,

while CPRF got 27.75%. Bobrov became a deputy of new United Russia's speaker Kiselev. Since United Russia follows Kremlin's policy it split into governor's supporters and enemies, and the latter started to gain force, threating governor with resignation. As a result the situation in the last communist stronghold becomes very unstable.

So, it is very hard to find a successful story of "oppositional" governor in authoritarian regime as in Russia. Mainly it is a story of failures and conflicts. We suggest that even the loyalty and United Russia membership could not guarantee new appointment. As we pointed out, governor's fate depended mainly on the involvement in the clientelist system.

More radical "reds" (communists) were usually alien to the patron-client system and this led to their failures while they were alienated and pressed to leave sooner or later. One only can mention that former CPRF member Tkachev in very important Krasnodar region has become one of the strongest governors. But Tkachev has a long story of his own adaptation strategy, changing many parties (before CPRF he had close relations with Agrarian Party and "Our Home is Russia") on his way. There is also a showcase of Mikhailov in Kursk region who moved from active communists to United Russia. Both have ruled their regions since 2000.

Among more pragmatic "pinks" (i.e. left-leaning independents), there are few cases of successful adaptation. All of them meant joining United Russia. These are Korolev in Lipetsk region (elected governor in 1998), Tuleev in Kemerovo region (since 1997) and Bogomolov in Kurgan region (since 1996). All of them used to have CPRF support and control this party's branches. The federal centre appreciated great electoral support of Tuleev and Korolev, who in their turn created an effective network of relations on the federal level. Korolev used to be a deputy of Federation Council head. Tuleev created his very strong authoritarian regime and enjoyed good relations with most of the companies working in his important industrial region.

But all these cases may end rather soon, since former "oppositional" governors become older and most of them become weaker. Even Tkachev went under fierce critics in 2012 when experts started to talk that his political career in the region became uncertain. With the return of gubernatorial elections it is expected that United Russia will nominate new candidates in these regions. This also means that communists will need to try luck at the elections from the scratch what they started to do in 2012. But with the new phase of governors' elections due to start in the end of 2012 one should not expect victories of opposition not only because of serious limitations on the election procedure but also because of the huge deficit of popular political leaders.

Our analysis shows that the regional victory of CPRF turned into a trap for the winner. Resulting regime was weak, fragmented and widely criticized from almost all of the sides. In their adaptation strategies, the "oppositional" governors came to three results: the full loyalty, the failure or what we would call the failed loyalty, i.e. the inability to adapt to the new Putin/Medvedev regime, despite serious attempts to do so. And the regime itself starting under Yeltsin and changing further in the 2000s did not allow oppositional parties to rule in the regions. It is different from federal regimes of PRI's Mexico and modern Nigeria with their strong oppositional governors.

Repression Policy against Communist Mayors: How Badly It Feels Under Pressure

The analysis of "oppositional" local regimes shows almost the same results (table 3). Since mayors are elected by popular vote in many municipalities, it is still possible to win elections with the help or being member of oppositional party, and was possible in the period when regional governors were appointed in 2005-2012. Actually, this was the only opportunity to win the executive office for the opposition at the time of governors' appointments which makes the indicated period especially interesting.

Sadly enough the oppositional parties rarely used this chance paying more attention to the more prestigious governors' elections. In the 2000s, after party reform parties became deeper involved in mayoral elections, but still their presence there is limited due to lack of strong

candidates or CPRF support for acting mayors (Turovsky, 2010). Regarding mayoral elections less important and fighting for bigger prizes, CPRF has not managed to prepare well for municipal electoral competition.

Our analysis of CPRF participation in the elections of municipal heads in the regional capitals showed that CPRF held surprisingly small number of these positions, even if compared with the number of "red" governors elected. In the 1990s CPRF managed to get only two mayoral positions in the regional capitals. This "breakthrough" happened in 1996, the same year, when most "red" governors came to power for the first time. Both cases located in Central Russia, so called "red belt", where communists were especially strong. In 1996 Mamatov was elected Ryazan mayor, firstly by city council, and shortly after, with the first popular elections held, by popular vote. The same year in Bryansk Sarviro was elected mayor by city council to win the popular election in 1997. If we compare their electoral results with those "red" governors delivered at the same time, they are almost identical, not too small, but not huge. Mamatov won with 45.2%, Sarviro got 47.03% of the vote (both elections were held on one-round basis). It also should be mentioned that in the very same regions at the same time CPRF won gubernatorial elections with Lyubimov in Ryazan region and Lodkin in Bryansk region. In other words, in these two regions it was the trend in CPRF's favor. But strangely enough, it was in two regions only.

In our opinion mayoral elections from the very beginning revealed the typical weakness of CPRF, its weakness at the elections held on majoritarian basis, when voters choose the person and not just the party. The number of strong personalities was very limited, most of them ran for governors, and the mayoral elections fell victim of this deficit of personalities. Maybe, but wrongly CPRF's strategy could also regard mayoral elections as less important.

This is CPRF to blame for the lack of activity on the municipal level. Often CPRF supported the acting mayors preferring to strike some deal with them than to run and lose (another showcase of structural regime limitations on oppositional activities). There have been many cases since the 1990s and up to now when the oppositional parties have been supporting the incumbent or abstained from any active role, in fact helping incumbent to win. With the electoral reform, however, "parliamentary" (i.e. residing in State Duma) parties got an opportunity to participate in the elections with "automatic" registration of the candidate. Under such favorable conditions of registration, it would be strange not to run. Nevertheless, our analysis of the elections of municipal heads held in regional capitals from December 2007 until the end of 2009 gave humble results for oppositional parties (this analysis was presented by author at the international conference held in Higher School of Economics, Moscow in April 2010). In 38 regional capitals where the elections were held in that period, CPRF participated only 16 times, and Fair Russia only 7 times. LDPR was formally the most active with 23 candidates, but with worse results. Overall, no party except for United Russia ever won in these 38 cases.

More comprehensive analysis of mayoral elections held in the 2000s ensured us in the same conclusions. As we found out studying gubernatorial elections CPRF in the 2000s started to miss many electoral campaigns or nominate weak candidates. No wonder that it was the same at mayoral elections. CPRF delivered just eight electoral victories in 2000-2012, plus Mamatov was elected for the second term in 2001. To name these few winners, they were Priz (Krasnodar) and Golenischev (Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy) in 2000, Yakush in 2001 (Cherkessk), Sablin in 2005 (Naryan-Mar), Kasyanov in 2006 (Oryol), Grebennikov in 2007 (Volgograd), Kondrashov in 2010 (Irkutsk) and Fedorova in 2012 (Naryan-Mar). Some of the cities won were rather small, and in terms of cities' importance the biggest victories were in Volgograd, Krasnodar and Irkutsk. Among the winners were important party figures of regional level, Yakush was the leader of CPRF branch in Karachaevo-Cherkessia and Sablin in Nenets autonomous district.

It would be wrong to hypothesize that CPRF started to pay much more attention to the mayoral elections after gubernatorial elections were suspended. In 2004 (when the gubernatorial elections were still held) CPRF nominated or supported (sometimes CPRF candidates ran as

independents) only three candidates, while the elections were held in 20 cities. In 2005, after the suspension of gubernatorial elections CPRF participated in 6 campaigns out of 15. In 2006 the number of elections was small, they were held in six cities, where CPRF nominated only two candidates (in one more city it supported incumbent mayor along with United Russia, and lost).

CPRF started to wake up on municipal level only in 2007 and have been using its right to nominate candidates more actively since then. In 2007 it participated in four campaigns out of six (one was won), in 2008 in 6 out of 17 (not too many again), in 2009 in 8 out of 15, in 2010 in 6 out of 9 (in one more city CPRF candidate was nominated but withdrew), in 2011 was present in the only campaign held, in spring of 2012 in 6 out of 8 (in one more city it refused its candidate in support but formally he stayed on the ballot). All in all in 2005-2012 CPRF participated in 39 campaigns out of 77, i.e. about in a half of them (including a few independents). Only five campaigns were won. However, the number of second places appeared to be good (18). Nevertheless, some results were extremely humble (less than 10% in 13 cities).

It was be mentioned that after new electoral reform political parties presented in State Duma got the privilege to have their candidates registered automatically, and this led to the rise in their formal activity. As a result much more candidates ran as officially nominated CPRF candidates and not as independents as it was before. In 2005-2012 CPRF officially nominated 37 candidates (however, candidate in Makhachkala withdrew later, and in Krasnoyarsk he was refused in CPRF support after the registration). But it is interesting that two of the five winners of that time ran as independents (despite being CPRF members) with CPRF support. It was still thought that running as an independent would help enhance the voters' support.

CPRF has not been too active and has been far from being successful at mayoral elections for all the time. Partly it can be explained by the lack of strong candidates. Sometimes it was a result of cooptation policy. Not having its own candidate CPRF could support an incumbent, even if he was with United Russia. We mentioned earlier the controversial case of Samara, where CPRF supported incumbent mayor Limanskiy in 2006 together with United Russia, and this unpopular mayor lost to Fair Russia' oppositional candidate. CPRF abstained from many mayoral campaigns where acting mayors were especially strong or favorable for the communists.

So, the number of cases of "oppositional" local regimes is just a few and it is striking being compared with many hundreds of cities and towns in Russia. The sustainability of such regime is even worse than the governor's. After the successful election, oppositional mayor faces the same challenges. In our opinion, since CPRF lost its chance to create a solid network of mayoral regimes in the 1990s, it was not counted for at all in the 2000s. As we described before the network of "red" governors was much more solid, and it took time to dissolve it, while it was rather easy to destroy weak attempts to create the mayoral network without much hesitation. Moreover, mayors find themselves under hardest pressure for several reasons: a) their financial resources are usually too small; b) governors (who are usually United Russia members or supporters) use any chance to suppress undesired mayors; c) the federal authorities do not care about most mayors; and d) mayors are vulnerable to criminal charges due to both real corruption and their political weakness. All this makes the story even more dramatic.

At first, let's take a look at the "red" mayors' electoral performance thinking about legitimacy problem. On the contrary to the governors' case there were few cases when they ran for the second term. Mamatov was successful in that in 2001 and Priz in 2004. But two mayors who were formerly dismissed tried to regain the job later and very unsuccessfully. The most sensational case of failure was Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky's Golenischev who got 2.6% of the vote. He lost support of CPRF and such a result was logical, as his entire rule was considered a total failure. This also reminds us of the problem of professionalism. Problem of party support can also be demonstrated on Golenischev's case, as this mayor was expelled from CPRF in 2003. As for the other winners, those who could end up the first term decided not to run (Sablin), or popular elections were abolished in favor of so called city-manager model (Cherkessk).

So, there is no good empirical base on how "red" mayors survive re-election and how the problem of legitimacy looks like for them. We just have two cases of successful re-election (plus

Antropov in smaller town of Apatity, see below) and two cases when formerly dismissed mayors showed very bad results.

Problem of party support seems not so important, apart from Golenischev's case. Usually communist governors could not do without close relations with the federal center, thus being accused of collaboration by party activists. Mayors were more flexible in terms of their personal ideological sympathies, and their local economic policy did not depend much on their political affiliation. As a result CPRF did not have many reasons to call them "traitors". Moreover, such mayors as Priz and Mamatov had, according to our expert interviews, solid support in regional CPRF branches. For example, regional communists preferred Mamatov to "red" governor Lyubimov. In Krasnodar Priz stayed with CPRF, while governor Tkachev went to United Russia.

Probably the worst for the municipal level is the problem of regional-local relations (and center-local relations to a lesser extent). The problem is that in multi-tier structure of sub-national politics mayor could become successful in a rare case combining two conditions: to have federal-level support (helping defend from the governor) and to create strong and self-sustainable local regime. And it is almost impossible to become really loyal to governor without being part of his clientele initially. In the 1990s we can found many cases when the center supported the mayors in order to counter-balance popularly elected and "too strong" governors (Primorsky region, Sverdlovsk region etc.). But in the 2000s with the municipal reform and the abolishment of governors' elections the federal center refused from this strategy of regional counter-balancing (Turovsky, 2003). Direct relations between the federal center and a certain mayor have become less widespread; as we can see from very rare cases of direct federal-local interaction (executed by president, prime minister etc.). So, the mayors had to face the governors with little hope of support "from above". However, the center (and the federal leaders of United Russia) intruded into the regional conflicts (making official decisions to support certain candidates at the elections and sending inspections to the regions) but often did it in appointed governor's favor to ensure his prevalence.

Conflicts with the governors also worsened the problem of elite cohesion, as powerful groups within the city could prefer the governor as their patron. Such groups could reside in city council, for example and claim mayor's resignation.

It is interesting that conflicts, caused by economic reasons, existed even within pairs of communist governors and mayors of regional capitals (Ryazan governor Lyubimov and mayor Mamatov, Kamchatka governor Mashkovtsev and Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy mayor Golenischev). Mamatov even ran against Lyubimov at 2004 gubernatorial elections (when both failed).

So, on the municipal level it is possible for the oppositional candidate to win the election, but such local regime becomes highly vulnerable. Monocentric character of governor-led regional political regimes and conflicts between governors and mayors are the popular themes and commonplace of Russian regional research (on the theme of Russian regime's monocentrism see Zudin, 2003). Intra-regional centralization has deep roots in Russian sub-national politics. In the first half of the 1990s, the local heads were even appointed. But the main reason for centralization lies in regional political economy and is caused by immense inequality of municipalities, most of them being poor and dependent on regional budget. More independent municipalities, in their turn, are considered "dangerous" by governors, and this leads to severe conflicts and attempts to subdue "strong" municipalities.

Problem of regional-local relations partly refers to the problem of professionalism. It is hard to say which tier of Russian politics is more corrupted. But in terms of a number of criminal cases for corruption and mismanagement the municipal level is definitely in the lead. For our paper, it is important that the "oppositional" mayors have become victims of authoritarian politics that formally was aimed at the corruption's eradication but politically erased unwanted mayors wherever possible. Partly such politics was made easy by the widespread coordination between governors and law-enforcement structures, especially typical for the 1990s. In the 2000s, when the central authorities took a grip on their regional substructures, they probably

coordinated this politics with governors. Anyway, both federal and regional authorities were interested in minimizing the presence of "oppositional" mayors, especially in more or less meaningful towns.

In fact, municipal level is the most interesting as an example of repression policy conducted by United Russia's governors with the support (explicit or not) of the federal authorities. Opposition was not allowed even for the weaker mayoral offices as compared with more important gubernatorial jobs. This is interesting since mayors are not so "dangerous" for the whole system. But they are dangerous for governor's political monopoly. The fail of cooptation policy had a number of reasons. First, as we mentioned earlier, CPRF did not create a strong network of local regimes to be counted with. Second, in hierarchical regional politics of Russia regional governors did their best (or worst) to subdue the municipal level in order to control it politically and financially. Both CPRF's mayors and any mayors representing oppositional or independent interest groups were the obvious targets of political and anticorruption campaigns launched by governors.

Third, and sadly enough, "oppositional" mayors did not manage to create strong and effective power and to escape any accusations in corruption (that reminds us of the problems of professionalism and legitimacy). Symbolically one of the first CPRF's mayors, Sarviro in Bryansk was forced to resign back in 1999 after the scandal on the buy of buses (but at that time he was not sentenced, and even tried his chance at 2005 elections, as CPRF's candidate, but came only fifth with 9.62% of the vote; this partly refers to the legitimacy problem revealed in Golenischev's case).

The policy of repression of "red" mayors started in 2004, when United Russia was gaining more and more power on the regional level[5]. Ryazan mayor, CPRF member Mamatov lost his job in 2004 by the court decision (investigation started in 2003) and was charged in 2006 (for 2 years nominally, i.e. without going to jail for misuse of power in relations with developers). Investigation started for another communist mayor, Priz in Krasnodar, in 2004 and led to his resignation in 2005 (he got 3 years nominally, again for misuse of power in choice of developers). Oryol's mayor Kasyanov, elected in 2006, was accused in tax evasion three months after the election. He was arrested in 2009 and sentenced for 2.5 years in jail (however, they set him free in 2010). In all these cases regional governors more or less openly supported the attack on the mayors. For example, one can find published information on the threats from the then Ryazan governor Shpak, who insisted on Mamatov's resignation in their private conversation.

Close to the repression policy is the case of Cherkessk. In this city in the course of municipal reform started in Russia in 2003 with the new federal law adopted, popular mayoral election was abolished. This led to the scandalous suspension of mayoral election due in 2005 in the course of campaign, where Yakush was one of the registered candidates. Yakush was unable to revise this decision and lost his power eventually.

If we tackle smaller but still important municipalities we should also mention the case of large industrial town of Bratsk in Irkutsk region (one of the biggest centers of aluminum and pulp production). There Serov won mayoral election in March 2011 with the support of CPRF and was charged with bribe right after. In order to ensure its local victory United Russia changed city legislation and abolished mayoral election by popular vote.

Unsurprisingly some of the "red" mayors preferred to cede the power and not to run anymore. Such was the decision of Sablin in Naryan-Mar who did not participate in 2008 election (his deputy and CPRF member Fedorova ran instead and came only third that time, however wining in 2012).

The policy of cooptation had few reasons in mayors' case since the repression proved to be rather easy and did not bother the public. Rather mayors themselves, along with the

[5] Before that, in 2003 Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy mayor Golenischev went under investigation and was dismissed from his job by court decision. But he was in conflict with the communist governor.

governors, could try to adapt to the emerging party system and join United Russia. This was started by Kasyanov who was even included in United Russia party list at 2007 State Duma election (he was not CPRF member). New Volgograd mayor Grebennikov who was CPRF member and prominent activist moved to Untied Russia in 2008 after being elected mayor in 2007 (resembling the case of Kursk governor Mikhailov). Finally, Kondrashov elected Irkutsk mayor in 2010 joined United Russia after the election (as contrary to Serov in Bratsk[6]). All these cases meant that CPRF "lost" almost all its mayors because they proved to be disloyal to the party and loyal to United Russia. Partly it was result of CPRF own strategy, when it started to nominate businessmen with no CPRF membership (such as Kasyanov and Kondrashov). With no close ties to CPRF and no feeling of safety for their business and power such people preferred to cling to United Russia.

However, the system was unfavorable for mayors even if they joined United Russia. Again we see the reason in the system of patron-client relations in which new mayors could not fit, while governors wanted to control the capital city. Despite United Russia membership Kasyanov was sentenced, and really went to jail (as contrary to Priz and Mamatov before him who got nominal sentences). Grebennikov seemed closer to success. He even managed to create his influence group within United Russia and held for some time an important job of the head of Putin's public reception office in the region. But after the governor's change (when communist Maksyuta left; under Maksyura rule Grebennikov could try to create one of United Russia's groups in the region) the regional regime has become much harder. In 2010 Grebennikov lost his position of the regional Putin's reception head and in 2011 he was expelled from United Russia and dismissed as a mayor by new governor in a controversial case. This led to more turbulence in Volgograd politics but Grebennikov did not manage to return to his former office, though he appealed to the court. His federal support proved to be small and he also lost public support in his city where he was elected as an opposition member.

It should be mentioned that dismissed mayors did not have much public support and this stimulated repressive decisions. Kasyanov won with 28.94% and Grebennikov got 32.47% of the vote. However, even Priz and Mamatov, successfully re-elected earlier (Priz won with 54.18% in the first round) disappeared without a trace for the public, which proved overall small importance of mayoral job for the people, along with the coming of United Russia's "era" marked with growing political loyalty. In other words, problem of legitimacy (and professionalism as well) undermined "oppositional" local regimes, thus easing the task for the governors.

As a result there is only one case of cooptation left, which is Kondrashov's in Irkutsk. Probably he will stay successful in that, however it has been only two years since his election. His electoral result was solid (62.32%) and he can also avoid legitimacy problem, while avoiding problems in regional-local elections. But Kondrashov has nothing to do with opposition at the moment.

Also there is only one and very new case of "real" CPRF mayor in the regional capital, which is in small Naryan-Mar. There Fedorova won the election in 2012 from the second attempt. The battle was hard, and she got 39.61% of the vote, which can create legitimacy problem. But still it is too early to make any conclusions.

Besides Naryan-Mar at the moment, only a handful of CPRF mayors hold power in some more or less important towns. Regarding CPRF, these are Potapov in Berdsk (Novosibirsk region) and Pereverzev in Pervouralsk (Sverdlovsk region, since 2011). These mayors cannot avoid repression policy too. For example, in 2012 criminal investigation started against one of Potapov's deputies. Pereverzev is involved in the conflict with the town's main plant, producing steel pipes and being part of one of the leading and politically influential business groups in this

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[6] While Kondrashov went to United Russia and stayed in power, the arrested Serov kept ties with CPRF and was included in its party list at 2011 State Duma election. His supporters believe that his case is forged.

field. Other mayors of important industrial towns were forced to leave. Novocherkassk mayor Kondratenko (Rostov region, elected in 2010) found himself under pressure of United Russia and its local deputies and resigned in September 2012. Earlier, in 2010 another communist Antropov left his mayoral job in Apatity (Murmansk region) after long story of investigations and charges against him (he was very successfully re-elected in 2008 defeating United Russia and candidates representing powerful business groups). Antropov was considered an important mayor and politician by his party, since he was a member of CPRF Central Committee and led regional party branch for some time. After his resignation, as in Bratsk United Russia abolished popular mayoral elections in Apatity.

A Case of Cooptation Policy in Regional Legislatures

The legislative power in Russia has much more political diversity thanks to the electoral system (especially to the elections held on party lists) and representation of CPRF and other important parties but gives fewer opportunities for the individual's political career. The case of executive power on regional and municipal levels shows clear "power – opposition" divide when it is almost impossible to keep this power without either losing power or changing the political loyalty of the winner. Legislative power is much more flexible, despite the formation of dominant party system analyzed in many studies both in Russia and abroad (Bogaards, 2004; Liechtenstein, 2002; Reuter, Turovsky, 2011). Russian regional legislatures still enjoy limited multiparty diversity due to both legislation (at least two parties should be presented according to law) and widespread oppositional voting resulting in a number of mandates (mostly obtained by means of party list voting).

Before analyzing the cooptation policy in the regional legislatures, we should start with the electoral results and the shares of party factions. United Russia is fully dominating the regional party systems. However, its electoral results still can be very different. In this paper, we cover all the existing regional legislatures elected from 2007 up to December 2011.

United Russia is an obvious leader dominating both the voting and the deputies' number. The magnitude of United Russia electoral results differs from 30.1% in Karelia up to 90.4% in Mordovia. In 46 regions, United Russia got more than a half of the votes (among them in nine regions it got more than two thirds). The number of regions where its result could not reach 50% is smaller; it decreased significantly after more successful 2007-2010 elections, but started to rise again in 2011. It is interesting that in 40 regions, i.e. in about half of Russian regions the result of United Russia was around 50% (at 40-60%). This marks almost even divide of the voters into United Russia supporters and opposition, but those who do not support United Russia are divide in turn, and CPRF can draw only part of them.

Nevertheless, the positions of United Russia within the legislatures are much stronger than in voting breakdown. The main reason is the widespread use of so-called mixed electoral system (in most Russian regions half of the seats are kept by those elected in single-mandate (or sometimes multi-mandate) districts where United Russia candidates usually win). However, taking into consideration rather high electoral threshold (usually 7%, however now dropping again to 5%) party lists voting usually gives United Russia an opportunity to win more than a half seats too. Combining those elected on party lists with those elected in districts, United Russia can easily create the biggest faction in the legislature. Now in all the regions except for Saint-Petersburg, Karelia, and Amur region United Russia holds an absolute (more than 50%) majority (in three regions mentioned it has the biggest faction though). It is worth to mention that in most regions United Russia's factions have more than two thirds of the seats (in 55 regions as our calculations show). The disproportion ratio (share of faction in the legislature divided by share of votes at the elections) is significant and reaches 1.89 in one of the regions.

Such a party structure of regional legislative bodies might have led to the deep polarization between "party of power" and opposition. This could create situation typical for

many regimes with dominant parties in Africa and Middle East, where the electoral authoritarianism combines one-party rule with the presence of much smaller opposition.

But the real political practices in Russia are more complicated. Undoubtedly, United Russia has all the rights to take the leadership in regional legislatures under its full control. Actually, that is partly proved by the fact that almost all the speakers are United Russia members. The only exception is a case of famous Russian business tycoon Roman Abramovich who formally keeps the office of regional Duma speaker in Chukotka (where he used to be a governor). Abramovich is the only non-party speaker, but he and his team supported United Russia at the regional elections. His case shows that some of the influential figures in Russian politics do not need to join United Russia for carrier boosting reasons. In other words, this is another case of political privilege not to join United Russia, a party that does not fall under the definition of typical ruling party and rather is a political instrument.

CPRF holds the second place in terms of voters support and factions size throughout the whole number of regions, though in certain regions its results could be worse, and in some regions CPRF even did not manage to become represented at all. On one hand, introduction of party lists voting in all the regions after 2003 legislation gave CPRF an opportunity to be presented almost in all the legislatures. On the other hand, CPRF managed to create only small, even tiny factions and got only formal representation. Nowhere after this reform it could control legislatures fully (there was only one case when CPRF elected its chairman, that was in Koryaki autonomous district). In this case CPRF again fell victim of majoritarian system lacking strong candidates in the districts (for the same reason as we shown above it had poor results at presidential, gubernatorial and mayoral elections).

As far as electoral statistics concerned CPRF got enough votes to be represented in 79 regional legislatures out of 83. Its electoral result (for current convocations) is found between 0.33% in Chechen Republic and 32.41% in Oryol region. Oryol is the only region where CPRF got more than 30% of the vote. The number of regions where CPRF attracted 20-30% of voters is rather large, 29. These regions are considered most favorable. In 26 regions CPRF got 15-20%. Among unfavorable regions are those where CPRF got 10-15% (17), 7-10% (5) and even less (5). On average CPRF got 17.6% of the vote.

However, mixed electoral system creates disproportion and results in smaller share of deputies elected from CPRF. This does not apply to a small group of regions where elections are held entirely on party list basis. But in this very group most regions are unfavorable for CPRF. Maximum share of deputies elected from CPRF is found in Oryol region and it is 28% (actual faction can be slightly different if some deputies come to CPRF being independently elected or leave the faction). There is no region where CPRF holds even one third of seats. One quarter share is beaten in two regions only, Oryol and Kalmykia. In 10 more regions it is 20-25%. And in 11 regions is 15-20%. The largest are the groups of regions with 10-15% share of CPRF deputies (25) and 5-10% (29). In two regions it is even less. The average share is 12.4%. As for the disproportion ratio it is 63.7% (including regions with zero number of deputies), i.e. share of CPRF deputies is more than 1.5 times smaller than share of votes. This disproportion ratio is smallest (i.e. unfavorable) in Mordovia (35.6%), Saratov region (39.2%), and Kamchatka region at 40.5%. There are 12 regions with disproportion less than 50% meaning that the share of deputies is less than a half of voters' share.

However, the situation with the leadership is different reflecting elements of cooptation policy. If CPRF under existing electoral system and voting breakdown can create only small, though usually second-largest factions it may be considered weak enough. On the other hand, CPRF has significant electoral support to be counted with. In this situation reasons for cooptation can be rather strong; since this cooptation gives CPRF only small share of smaller (i.e. legislative) power.

We analyzed the distribution of the main posts in legislatures taking into consideration their chairpersons, vice-chairpersons and chairs of committees and commissions. Such group of leaders has been analyzed in all the existing legislatures. Our analysis shows that the regional

legislatures fall into a system of patronage rather than reflect "typical" cleavage between the ruling party and the opposition. That is the system of United Russia's patronage over the party system, as a subsystem of executive power's patronage over both United Russia and all other parties. In other words, it is a system of multi-tier patronage executed by federal authorities, regional governors and United Russia's federal and regional structures. Under existing political system, CPRF can play two roles at a time, being the main oppositional party (for voters, in self-identity, in rhetoric and program) and a client of higher-ranking authorities (achieving tactical goals of political involvement with the help of cooptation policy).

In our opinion, Russian party system cannot be called a classic dominant (or hegemonic) party system. We mentioned before that the privileged people like Abramovich (or president Putin himself) do not need to join United Russia. The executive power being strongest as compared with its legislative counterpart still forms on non-party basis, however involving United Russia members (with prime minister being party's leader at the moment). The principal feature of such party system is that the role of "dominant" party is limited. Its "dominance" is confined to the weaker power bodies, such as the legislative power, regional governors and municipal heads, where United Russia members prevail. On the federal level, "non-party" presidential and executive structures influence on United Russia staying above and behind the party. Moreover, what is especially important for this paper, they try to manipulate the whole party system and all the parties, not just one. Parties play their specific roles at the elections and for the elite recruitment. Such features tell Russian party system from many well-studied and more typical examples in Africa, Asia, and post-communist states of Central Asia, Azerbaijan etc. (Bogaards, 2004; Magaloni, 2006)

Recently there has been change in widespread expert opinion on the possible long-term development of Russian party system. In the 1990s and in the beginning of the 2000s experts used to talk about possible two-party system based on strong left and centre-right parties, with its precursors found in CPRF and "party of power" subsequently. Such party system was meant to produce "normal" polarization between two leading parties, i.e. typical opposition known by many examples in the established democracies. More recently, experts started to compare Russian party system with formal multiparty systems in communist states, such as former GDR, where Putin used to work. Such opinion reflected the creation of United Russia's satellites and cases of cooperation between United Russia and all other parties.

Hardly Russia's party system resembles GDR or China, since the oppositional parties and their activists are still rather different from United Russia and radical in their critics. But the truth is that United Russia carries on the distributive politics in spoils distribution. Such politics is no news for studying of authoritarian regimes where cooptation of opposition is often seen as a primary tool to enhance political stability and regime's legitimacy. Some authors point out at the very importance of elections in authoritarian regimes for its legitimating (though, there is another point that democratic elections can undermine the regime). At the same time researchers of the Middle East mention that the importance of elections for authoritarian regimes is explained also by the fact that the elections has become a tool to manage elite (Blaydes, 2011). Elections are also seen in terms of competitive clientelism (Lust-Okar, 2004) rather than multiparty competition, and this point seems useful for Russian studies too. Blaydes analyzes Egyptian elite under Mubarak's rule as rent-seeking elite. However, not only rent-seeking but also struggle for social status and prestige influenced elite's political participation (this is very important for post-Soviet Russia with its newly emerging political establishment where personal ambitions and culture of emphasized supremacy in social relations still shape the political environment).

The analysis shows that United Russia uses two opposite strategies instead of the choice in favor of one. This is another proof of incompleteness and in-betweenness of Russian dominant party system. In some cases, it is "the winner takes it all" strategy (an analogue of majoritarian rule); while in others, it is a consensus rule. By now the score is in favor of consensus rule based on cooptation policy (48 regions use consensus rule, and in 35 regions, the winner really took it all).

CPRF still tries to balance its ideological nature and historical pride with the adaptation to the existing regime. Many analysts come to the conclusion that the nature of Russian parties has changed from ideological to clientelist representation (we analyzed it on the example of regional legislative power and its elections, see Turovsky, 2006). So, competitive clientelism may be an appropriate concept to cover the structure of Russian party system. In this system, patronage relations evolve both inside United Russia as the biggest party with the large number of controlled spoils and in its relations with other parties. Spoils distribution is obviously a tool to buy off the opposition.

On the federal level, it is a standard to distribute leadership positions in parliament among all the presented parties including CPRF. In 1993 and 1995 convocations left-wing forces were very strong and controlled speaker's position along with a lot of committees. CPRF member Seleznev was a speaker of 1995-1999 convocation. This was interrupted in 1999-2003 convocation with the formation of United Russia. It led to the overturn in State Duma in 2002 when CPRF lost all its spoils it got after 1999 election. It is interesting to mention that there were communists who actually changed their loyalty and kept positions of committees' heads in reward (Nikitin kept his position as the head of nationalities' committee). CPRF lost six committees and one commission then.

However, the practice of spoils distribution with CPRF participation was revived after 2003 elections. With each new election, cooptation of CPRF was getting stronger and stronger. After 2003 election CPRF got vice-chairman position held by Kuptsov, one of most prominent party functionaries. In 2007-2011 convocation all the parties in State Duma kept at least one vice-chairperson position and one committee chair position. CPRF, LDPR and Fair Russia got one vice-chairperson and one committee head each (United Russia's share in State Duma leadership was 88%).

After 2011 elections when United Russia lost two thirds majority and all other parties increased their factions it was decided to give more concessions to the parliamentary opposition and United Russia's share in the leadership dropped significantly: United Russia holds positions of chairman, first vice-chairman, four vice-chairmen, 15 committee heads, CPRF got another first vice-chairman and 6 committees (resembling situation on 1999-2002), Fair Russia – vice-chairman and 4 committees, LDPR – vice-chairman and 4 committees too (United Russia's share dropped to 55%).

From this point, regional party systems are more polarized, because as for 2012 summer in 34 regions there are oppositional parties deprived of any significant leadership positions such as vice-chairmen and committees heads (it may be correct to take into consideration also deputy chairpersons of committees and commissions, but these positions are of too small importance and we do not consider them in our study). Regional authoritarianism looks less flexible than the federal one. Regional authorities opt for repression or neglect of opposition in the legislative power more often. However, cooptation policy prevails statistically in the regional legislative power (being presented in 49, i.e. 60% of the regions) and is on the rise as we will show later. CPRF is the main beneficiary of this cooptation policy having spoils in 33 regions. The most (and strongest) oppositional party is more often coopted. It is interesting that it is coopted more often than more dependent parties which are seen as United Russia satellites. In other words, spoils distribution works to please the opposition rather than to support the satellites. Fair Russia has spoils in 24 regions. 25 regions are favorable for LDPR from this point. Left-nationalist Patriots of Russia have leadership position in one region; socio-liberal Yabloko in one region too and this ends the list.

But as we can see this policy in CPRF's favor covers minority of the regions, only 40% of them. Also there is a limitation on the number of spoils which United Russia is ready to give. In most cases (22 regions out of 33), CPRF holds only one spoil. This number reaches two in 8 regions and tops at three in 3 regions. There are just 47 CPRF deputies in all the regions directly involved in cooptation system. Among them 15 hold rather formal position of vice-chairman (usually one of two or more existing) which gives status but does not give any significant power.

Others chair committees and commissions. Informal status of these committees and commissions is usually of less significance (the most significant budget committee is usually out of reach for CPRF). Of course, leadership distribution is far from fair as it is disproportional as compared with the seats distribution. Therefore, it is not a proportional distribution but a decision of a patron to grant some parties with a very few positions and try to make clients out of them.

Then it is important to understand why and where United Russia chooses CPRF in its distributive policy. In most regions, where cooptation policy is applied, United Russia pleases not all the other parties with leadership positions but chooses its partners among them. For Russian regions State Duma is not a standard, while regions tend more to one-party rule. Rare use of "full" coalition (only in nine regions all parties presented in the legislature have spoils) indicates important feature. United Russia patronage is not at all a guarantee that each party presented will get an important spoil. Rather it is a regional/local choice of "friends" and "foes" depending on the relations between regional party organizations and their loyalty or readiness for collaboration. This is the better way to divide and rule the party system. The reasons for: a) the choice of strategy itself; and b) the choice of specific partners (on party level and on individual level) are very interesting. Also logically there are two reasons to choose a specific partner: a) to reward its loyalty; and b) to pay respect to its electoral success (bearing in mind the need to neutralize it).

In our opinion, this is a "soft" kind of strategy for the dominant party (being different from the "hard" strategy when the winner takes it all and represses the others). Such "soft" strategies surely do not mean more or less proportional consensus rule resembling Swiss party system or con-social democracies studied by Lijphart in plural societies (Lijphart, 1997). The main task of authoritarian dominant party in Russian regime is to neutralize an opposition giving it a small (or even the smallest) piece of power. In our opinion, there are three possible reasons for United Russia to use cooptation policy in regional legislatures: a) to reduce critics; b) to share responsibility for unpopular decisions; c) to legitimate unfair electoral results. However, all these reasons apply to the whole country and cannot explain regional decisions for/against cooptation. From this point we can just say that some regional authorities see these reasons and others do not.

The political opposition from its side faces the hard choice between more open and radical "oppositionness" and partial inclusion into the ruling group. Pros and contras are as follow.

Full "oppositionness" (i.e. freewill or forced exclusion) has electoral and ideological reasons helping to mobilize the voters and local party activists for political struggle. In case of fairer elections and stronger opposition, this can theoretically lead to victory. In fact, these victories can be found at the mayoral elections and in the smaller part of single-mandate districts. This is not much but still is an opportunity for many members of opposition to convert radicalism into votes and votes into local electoral victories.

Inclusion has its own set of motives. Under restrictions of electoral authoritarianism, it gives a chance to win a spoil (i.e. the power and the status). This creates a motive for higher-ranking party leaders (who usually get the spoils, see below). Also opportunism helps to attract elites (business elites mainly) that may seek the way to get a mandate and a spoil and are ready to sponsor the party for that goal. Rent-seeking elites sometimes face electoral and clientelist confines of United Russia and look for easier (and cheaper) ways to get power through other parties. Being rational in its decision-making business elite can choose and "buy" (sometimes literally) almost any party branch in the region. It is especially interesting in the CPRF case when Zyuganov talks about its support for "patriotic" business. The problem of business elite's inclusion is that the business can be extremely vulnerable in a corrupt and state-controlled system and no businessperson can be successful while openly criticizing the authorities. Resolving the urgent sponsorship problem an oppositional party has no other way than to collaborate with the authorities since most sponsors cannot and do not want to withstand the state's pressure.

Collaboration means less pressure on the party and its sponsors and gives more access to media (due to lack of independent media) and to the electorate (since police can block oppositional gatherings and regional/local authorities can disapprove meetings for whatever reason). But choice in inclusion's favor creates new problems. The electorate may turn away from such party. The very distribution of spoils builds tensions within the party, since only party elite and rent-seeking newcomers get a handful of spoils.

Thus, each party makes its choice. United Russia decides to take it all or to select the partners. CPRF decides whether to take a spoil or refuse. However, the latter choice is not that hard. Our expert interviews did not reveal any cases when the opposition openly turned down the invitation. Rather it tries to explain its voters and activists why it deals with the "enemy". As cooptation strategies are widespread, it is important to hypothesize on the reasons of their choice (see also Reuter, Turovsky, 2011).

First group of reasons are electoral. Let us see how the decision is connected with the electoral support of CPRF and the share of its faction. It may seem that the stronger the opposition the more reasons United Russia has to make it a partner, while CPRF has more arguments to claim a spoil (taking into consideration Gandhi's argument and remembering that CPRF is too weak to win the election).

In our analysis, we calculated the effective number of electoral parties (ENP) using formula of Juan Molinar (this formula better suits dominant party systems, as it returns indices, which are very close to the real number of relevant parties; see Molinar, 1991). In 33 regions, ENP is less than 1.5, a proof of United Russia dominance. In 17 regions out of these 33 United Russia uses majoritarian rule. If the level of electoral competition rises, United Russia starts to use cooptation policy more often. If ENP exceeds 2.0 there are only 10 regions out of 32 where United Russia takes it all. Also there is a positive correlation between United Russia's share of leadership positions and share of deputies (Pearson coefficient at +0.53, with share of votes it is less and at +0.41)

Therefore, the situation seems clear at the first glance. If the electoral competition is low, it stimulates United Russia decision not to share leadership positions with the others. However, one should remember that United Russia controls most legislatures, and there is no urgent need to share the leadership positions. Under higher electoral competition, United Russia probably feels that it is better to let the steam off. But, as United Russia is not obliged to do so, it can keep all the leadership positions even if it got less votes and the competition was rather high. On the contrary, there are regions with very low electoral competition and high United Russia support but characterized by cooptation policy.

Despite many exceptions, the level of electoral competition is the strongest factor explaining the choice of United Russia strategy. However, there is no strong evidence that CPRF benefits from its high electoral results. Regions where it has spoils are distributed rather evenly (in 14 of 30 regions with more than 20% of votes, in 17 of 43 regions with 10-20% of votes, in 2 of 5 regions with 7-10% of votes). Thus, more accurate descriptive pattern connects United Russia strategy not with overall competition but with its relations with parties and the level of these parties' support. CPRF case shows that for getting a spoil a medium-level result is better but really good result can be a reason for successful bargaining.

There should be another group of factors to fill the gap in our explanation. There is a strong need for individual level analysis. It is important not only where CPRF gets spoils but who personally gets them. One can propose a number of hypotheses to explain the individual level of choice. Since this is a job that needs certain skills the professional experience can be one of the reasons. Because the choice is made by party (however, under certain control maybe) the position inside the party can be important and higher ranks certainly have more chances. Also important is clientelist structure of party regional branch and faction in the legislature: party can represent certain interest group and/or co-opt businessmen. These interest groups and businessmen can have special interest in spoils.

Our analysis shows that it is famous and/or influential persons and representatives of certain clienteles who usually get the leadership positions and are included into the system. CPRF should be the most complicated case because in many regions it stands openly against governors and does not bargain with United Russia for leadership positions. Partly this is explained by the position of ordinary party members, the majority of them being against any double-dealing with regional authorities (while party leaders are more likely to do so). If CPRF gets leadership positions then usually they are reserved for the well-known and experienced politicians who are also professional deputies and have many personal ties in regional elite. Many of them held positions in Soviet nomenclature and would like to keep some leadership position, one way or another. "Partnership at the distance" with United Russia suits many CPRF regional leaders better than "robust" opposition.

Unsurprisingly the biggest group of spoils' keepers in regional legislatures consists of the first party secretaries in the regions. They keep vice-chairmen or committees' heads positions in 12 regions out of 33 where CPRF has spoils. This number could be higher but a number of regional party leaders reside in State Duma.

Also there are communists with their own political experience who are also present in the legislative leadership. Among them are former Soviet culture minister Gubenko (Moscow), former regional speakers (Salov in Adyghea, Sazhinov in Murmansk region, Bobrov in Vladimir region, Semenov in Kaliningrad region). Semenov also was a leader of CPSU in his region and headed regional Soviet then. Among the former Soviet leaders is also Sergienko who head the executive committee of the regional Soviet in Krasnoyarsk region. Cooptation policy embraces former State Duma deputies (Grishin in Arkhangelsk region), former mayors (Sablin in Nenets AO, Antropov in Murmansk region). Thus almost half of those communists who got spoils in the regional legislatures are more or less well-known persons in their regions, sometimes having rich political career behind.

Thus electoral success of CPRF is not the only reason for cooptation. Another reason is professional and political capacity of regional party organization. If it has personalities ready to hold important positions CPRF is more likely to get them. This reminds us of the problems we indicated in previous chapters. For example, problem of professionalism can either prevent or stimulate cooptation depending on professional skills of communist deputies. Problem of party support sometimes arises in the regions where cooptation policy is applied because this policy can create tensions between holders of the spoils and the others, especially those who stand against any cooperation with the "regime".

Finally, current political situation at the moment of spoils distribution can also be important and explain the choice. For example, it may be bargaining involving United Russia, CPRF, and other parties with a certain result. Overall political reasons mentioned above can appear to be especially strong in a certain regional situation. For example, sometimes regional governors and United Russia neutralize active communist leaders giving them some power, as it was in Karachaevo-Cherkesia with Bidzhev who protested against electoral results but got committee chair position then. And in Ivanovo region the governor Men' forced former convocation to dissolve and after new elections United Russia gave leadership positions to well-known leaders of CPRF (Kovaleva) and LDPR (Sirotkin) trying to legitimize the new legislature.

Surely, cooptation depends on the governor's policy. For example, it is interesting that governors formerly supported by CPRF have to demonstrate more loyalty towards United Russia. In such regions as Krasnodar, Kemerovo, Kurgan, Kursk, Lipetsk CPRF do not hold any positions in the legislative power and usually only United Russia has them. On the contrary, governors who never had oppositional support do not need to demonstrate extra loyalty and feel free to manipulate their regional party system and play with CPRF too. Only Vladimir region is the case where CPRF is presented by governor and has spoils in the regional legislature, and this is logical too.

Overall, the evolution of choice between cooptation policy and one-party rule is still unclear (see table 1). As we can see in regional legislatures elected in 2007 (when United

Russian triumphed at State Duma elections) CPRF was deprived of spoils, but then their number started to rise in 2008 and 2009. However, 2010 was unfavorable again.

The year 2011 became an important turning point for cooptation policy and stimulated United Russia to share its legislative power with the others. The clear reason was electoral, as United Russia started to lose support. This made United Russia become more flexible in its relations with the others and especially with CPRF. We mentioned earlier that CPRF seriously strengthened its positions in State Duma. As we can see from table 3 it also got spoils in 17 regions. However, we also can see that in 21 regional legislatures elected in 2011 no party got any spoils. Nevertheless, the balance was favorable for CPRF. Clearly enough CPRF is not welcome everywhere and United Russia goes on with one-party rule in many regional legislatures. But in terms of evolution in six regions after 2011 regional elections CPRF got spoils without having them in the previous convocation (Karelia, Krasnoyarsk region, Kirov region, Nizhny Novgorod region, Omsk region, Oryol region), while in two regions it lost them (Astrakhan region and Lipetsk region). Positive balance can be illustrated by Murmansk example where the number of spoils increased from one to three. Cooptation policy went on in 2012 when CPRF got vice-chairman position in Bashkirian legislature (elected in 2008).

Table 1. Number of regions chosen cooptation or one-party rule in legislatures[7].

Year of Election	One-party rule	CPRF coopted (alone or with other parties)
2007	7	0
2008	9	4
2009	4	8
2010	9	4
2011	21	17

However, cooptation policy still mixes with repressions. In State Duma it was clearly seen in 2012, when United Russia voted to deprive famous communist from Rostov region Bessonov of his mandate accusing him in supposed clashes with police during oppositional meeting.

In the end of this chapter it would be interesting to look how cooptation policy influences relations between legislative and executive power. This policy can be aimed at making CPRF more loyal towards the governor who usually takes active part in decision-making on the spoils distribution.

The procedure of governors' appointment (now abolished in favor of authoritarian-styled elections of regional governors started in October 2012) has become recently one of the key issues of Russian regional politics. The role of the regional legislature has proved to be very limited. Actually, in terms of our study that was another test on "oppositionness" in regional politics. The matter is the president's right to dissolve the oppositional legislature if it does not approve the candidate proposed for the second or the third time by president. Practice of appointments has shown that most deputies have never even tried to put to risk their mandates voting against the presidential nominee. However, the oppositional parties can vote against without much risk knowing that the majority of United Russia would vote for the candidate anyway. So, it's up to them to decide.

There was only one case when deputies disapproved the candidate. It happened in 2007 in Koryaki autonomous district on its way to unification with Kamchatka region. Deputies in both

[7] Author's calculation based on the official data taken from the web sites of the regional legislatures.

regions had to approve the governor of the new emerging region. Koryaki autonomous district was the only region with communist-controlled legislature (CPRF held half of the seats and elected its speaker). So, the legislature did not approve the presidential nominee Kuz'mitskiy, but did it at the second try when part of the communists changed their voting. All other cases showed that not only United Russia majority but other factions often voted for the nominated candidate, no matter that he/she usually was United Russia member.

Such behavior of "oppositional" factions may be seen logically as a reciprocity politics resulting from United Russia decisions to give other factions some spoils. If governors and United Russia buy off the deputies from other parties, they should be loyal in turn.

But before we come to any conclusions let us analyze the data. It should be said first that this data cannot be accurate. Often the deputies cast their ballots secretly. So the only way is to check the official position of the party/faction in their public reports to media and to compare it with the actual breakdown of the deputies voting. Sometimes the comparison gives "strange" results, as the number of negative ballots is less than the number of deputies that had to vote against according to the parties' statements. Often the party cannot work out any position and let their deputies decide on their own. All this cases show that the voting against is also a matter of personal courage.

In our opinion, the voting at the governor's appointment is a clear case of low level of institutionalization of political opposition in Russia. More institutionalized is the practice of power hierarchy when most deputies agree that the executive power prevails over legislative and the federal power prevails over regional. Such a practice is deeply rooted in Russian politics with its imperial and Soviet legacy rather than federalist and democratic.

CPRF is the most interesting case. As contrary to loyal Fair Russia and LDPR, the score of its positions is in favor of negative. In 34 regions, CPRF faction was against the presidential nominees. But in 23 regions communists did approved the governor. There are many controversial cases which cannot be identified clearly. In a number of regions part of communist deputies voted for the approval despite the official decision. In two regions positions of federal party leadership and the regional branch appeared to be contrary. This could lead to scandals and in some regions even to the expulsions from the party. However, threating with expulsion communist leadership often was reluctant to make the final step, rationalizing that it could only do harm to small political resource of the party, such as faction in the regional legislature numbering just a handful of deputies.

CPRF support for United Russia's governors may seem a rational choice policy resulting in reciprocity when spoils in legislature are traded for voting in governor's favor. But one of the most interesting tricks is that politics of reciprocity looks asymmetrical. In 13 regions out of 23 where CPRF approved the governor it did not have any spoils. There are two possible reasons. One of them is a possible "shadow" deal between the governor and the party. But actually governors do not have to go this way, since they control the majority of deputies through United Russia. As we suppose, there is another, institutional reason: "the refusal from oppositionness" is a widespread form of behavior of "oppositional" parties. It is a demonstration of readiness to cooperate with the regional leader and the acceptance of the hierarchical political relations. In our opinion, governor's approval is an institutionalized ritual resulting from the sense of supremacy of federal / executive power over regional / legislative. Part of communists seems to follow this ritual.

Only in 2010, CPRF federal leaders decided to put an end to this regional mess feeling that such politics undermined the status of "truly" oppositional party. CPRF's presidium of Central Committee ruled that all the factions in regional legislatures and all the communist deputies must vote against United Russia's candidates for governors. Otherwise, they run the risk of being excluded from the party. This decision strengthened party discipline for a while but could not erase the politics of regional reciprocity and actually failed and was forgotten. After this decision there were numerous scandals.

Hard choice between "oppositionness" and "collaboration" leads to the numerous conflicts both within the CPRF regional branches and between its central and regional leaders. For example, in Sverdlovsk region communists decided to vote against the presidential nominee Misharin. But party leader Zyuganov insisted that they should vote in approval of this candidate due to some possible consultations on the federal level. The opposite case is the denial of Central committee's decision and approval of the governor by some communist deputies in the regions. As a result, there were reported cases when such deputies were excluded from the party but others stayed in the party and the scandal was finished soon. It seems that the central leadership of CPRF cannot fully control the regional deputies and just let it go.

Conflicts are also widespread within the regional branches of CPRF. For example, in Chelyabinsk region communists split in their relations to the new governor Yurevich. That led to the struggle for leadership in the regional organization and ended with the election of the leader loyal to Zyuganov and not to the governor. The communists were split while voting at the approval of Voronezh new governor Gordeev, but they managed to keep the organization and its leadership untouched.

So, CPRF is actually very far from Fair Russia and LDPR on the scale of the "oppositionness". But it gives too many examples of collaborative politics in the regional legislatures and is open for cooptation deals. Maybe this is that minimum of political influence it can get under existing institutional restrictions. It should be added that cooptation policy in regional legislatures does not seem to bother voters who either do not care about it or do not think that this is shameful for the oppositional party. As a result we do not see that cooptation has negative outcome for CPRF's electoral results in the regions where it is applied.

Conclusion

All the cases of oppositional governors and mayors show that under Putin/Medvedev regime there is much less sense in joining the oppositional parties for those seeking the leading place in executive power. As our study shows the structural features of electoral authoritarianism not only ensure the victories of "approved" candidates but also make the rare oppositional winners to adapt to the existing regime and change the political affiliation.

The elections give the opposition opportunity (or its illusion) to win but a number of possible elections to win diminished with the (temporary) abolishment of governors' elections and of many mayors' direct elections. Moreover, authoritarian practices led to numerous cases when unwanted candidates were refused to run or the counting of votes was "corrected". Obviously such cases lead to widespread disbelief that the oppositional candidate can win an executive office anywhere at all.

Thus, practices of both electoral authoritarianism and pressure over oppositional winners have played an important role in strengthening regional authoritarianism and dominant party regime. There are both external and internal reasons for numerous failures of oppositional regional/local regimes, even if such regimes shifted to full loyalty.

External reasons are ideological to a small extent. Rather it is an impossibility to include oppositional regime into the system of patron-client relations. Russian politics, especially in the 2000s, tend to produce simple neo-patrimonial mechanisms of power relations based on close personal ties and distribution of resources within such closed systems. Even those who tried to fit in using formal ways (United Russia membership etc), were often rejected. Since ruling elite still needs high level of control over regional finances and privatization it uses all the ways to block unwanted newcomers into the executive power. The complication of regional clientelist structure in "oppositional" regimes has usually become a problem and source of conflicts which were decided by administrative (appointment of new governor, abolishment of elections) and authoritarian (criminal charges, electoral manipulations) ways.

But there are also internal reasons, such as low legitimacy of oppositional regimes and loss of their leaders' popularity, weak and unprofessional governance, and impossibility to change the regional policy.

So, in authoritarian regime the oppositional party can still be a tool to win the local election, but its affiliation is too heavy a burden to bear after the victory. After being elected, the winner finds himself in another political environment of existing patron-client relations, and has no other choice than to become a dependent member, or an agent (according to principal-agent theory) in higher-level clientele.

As a result, oppositional party has become useless in the recruitment of influential executive power elite. However, while blocking unwanted "invasion" of opposition into the executive power the regime allows opposition to be presented in the leadership of regional legislative power. This policy reflects the necessity to make an opposition more loyal and included into the system of power relations in most safe and efficient for the ruling elite way.

We suggest that CPRF strategy after this party lost the chances to win at the federal elections back in 1996 is not a strategy of "robust oppositionness" but a strategy of survival. Unfortunately, the studies of CPRF are very few. But those authors who are specialized in communist studies (Chernyakhovsky, 2003) argue that CPRF leaders have always wanted to cooperate with the "regime" and refused from any kind of revolutionary strategy leaving it for the rhetoric only. What is left for CPRF in the regions consists of one governor, one mayor of the regional capital (and a couple of other important mayors) and more or less small factions in most of the regional legislatures (with leadership positions in 33 of them). Being victim of repression policy aimed at "red" governors and mayors and/or their "treasons" CPRF is left to take part in cooptation policy in legislative power where United Russia is open for it. Returned gubernatorial elections with their municipal and presidential filters give CPRF only a handful chances to win and only with informal approval of Kremlin (otherwise it is impossible for the strong candidate to overcome filters and be registered). This institutional design again makes CPRF even more sensible for cooptation policy.

Finally, there are main conclusions to this paper:

- Under authoritarian regime local victory is almost useless for strengthening the opposition (because of not only external pressure, but also internal instability of such local regime).
- Political opposition is poorly institutionalized in Russia and cannot play the role of "robust" opposition.
- Institutionalized practices of loyalty, power hierarchy, cooptation, consensus / power sharing politics, shadow bargaining strongly affect the opposition.
- Regime keeps opposition off the executive power (i.e. off the money flows) and punish the (elected) trespassers (but giving them a chance to change the color).
- Opposition is allowed (and partly coopted) in weaker (i.e. legislative) power bodies where spoils distribution is practiced.

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This paper is also based on the numerous expert interviews the author has conducted since the mid-1990s in the regions and/or with the oppositional (or maybe "oppositional") politicians.

Appendix.

Table 2. The rise and fall of the "oppositional" governors in Russia[8].

Region	Governor	First election	Following elections	Nominations
Buryatia	Potapov (CPRF member, excluded in 2012)	1994 (46.2% 1st round, 71.7% 2nd round)	1998 won (63.25%↑); 2002 won (68.79%↑)	No, changed in 2007
Mariy El	Kislitsin (CPRF member)	1997 (47.37% 1st round, 58.89% 2nd round)	2000, lost (25.19% 1st round↓, 33.4% 2nd round)	
Altai krai	Surikov (CPRF support)	1996 (46.9% 1st round, 49.4% 2nd round)	2000 won (77.41%↑); 2004 lost (47.46% 1st round↓, 46.29% 2nd round)	
Krasnodar krai	Tkachev (CPRF member, excluded in 2003, UR member since 2005)	2000 (81.78%)	2004 won (83.98%↑), after leaving CPRF and joining UR	2007 2012
Krasnodar krai	Kondratenko (CPRF support)	1996 (82%)	2000, did not participate	
Stavropol krai	Chernogorov (CPRF member, excluded in 2006, joined United Russia in 2006, excluded in 2007)	1996 (47.8% 1st round, 55.1% 2nd round)	2000 won (28.58% 1st round↓, 56.57% 2nd round)	2005 Resigned in 2008

[8] Official data of Central Electoral Commission, author's sources.

Amur oblast	Belonogov (CPRF member)	1997 (60.51%)	2001 lost (45% 1st round↓, 42.9% 2nd round)	
Bryansk oblast	Lodkin (CPRF member)	1993 (29.3% 1st round, 51.4% 2nd round), fired in October 1993. 1996 (54.54%)	2000 won (29.21%↓) 2004, registration denied	
Vladimir oblast	Vinogradov (CPRF member)	1996 (62.2%)	2000 won (65.62%↑)	2005 2010
Volgograd oblast	Maksyuta (CPRF member)	1996 (28.51% 1st round, 50.96% 2nd round)	2000 won (36.72%↑) 2004 won (41.42% 1st round↑, 51.1% 2nd round)	No, changed in 2010
Voronezh oblast	Shabanov (CPRF member)	1996 (48.97%)	2000 lost (15.21%↓)	
Ivanovo oblast	Tikhonov (CPRF member, excluded in 2004)	2000 (48.54% 1st round, 62.36% 2nd round)		No, changed in 2005
Kaluga oblast	Sudarenkov (CPRF support)	1996 (45.76% 1st round, 63.51% 2nd round)	2000, did not participate	
Kamchatka oblast	Mashkovtsev (CPRF member)	2000 (20% 1st round, 45.83% 2nd round)	2004 won (38.4% 1st round↑, 49.6% 2nd round)	No, changed in 2005
Kemerovo oblast	Tuleev (CPRF support, UR member since 2005)	1997 (94.54%)	2001 won (93.5%↓)	2005 2010
Kirov oblast	Sergeenkov (CPRF support)	1996 (39.64% 1st round, 50.46% 2nd round)	2000 won (58.03%↑); 2003, not entitled to participate	
Kostroma oblast	Shershunov (CPRF support)	1996 (41.72% 1st round, 64.1% 2nd round)	2000 won (43.74% 1st round↑, 63.09% 2nd round)	2005 Killed in road accident in 2007
Kurgan oblast	Bogomolov (CPRF support, UR member since 2004)	1996 (40.87% 1st round, 66.29% 2nd round)	2000 won (43.23% 1st round↑, 50.38% 2nd round) 2004 won (35.08%↓)	2010
Kursk oblast	Mikhailov (CPRF member until 2004, UR member since 2005)	2000 (39.52% 1st round, 55.54% 2nd round)		2005 2010
Kursk oblast	Rutskoi (CPRF support)	1996 (76.85%)	2000, registration denied	
Leningrad oblast	Gustov (CPRF support)	1996 (53.37%)	1998, appointed to federal government 1999, lost (22.68%)	
Lipetsk oblast	Korolev (CPRF support, UR member since 2005)	1998 (79.28%)	2002 won (73.1%↓)	2006 2011

Magadan oblast	Tsvetkov (CPRF support)	1996 (45.96%)	2000 won (62.76%↑) Murdered in 2003	
Murmansk oblast	Yevdokimov (CPRF support, UR member since 2006)	1996 (20.1% 1st round, 43.45% 2nd round)	2000 won (86.71%↑) 2004 won (76.99%↓, no CPRF support)	No, changed in 2010
Nizhny Novgorod oblast	Khodyrev (CPRF member, excluded in 2002)	2001 (24.4% 1st round, 59.8% 2nd round)		No, changed in 2005
Orenburg oblast	Chernyshev (CPRF and APR support, UR member then)	1999 (23.86% 1st round, 52.5% 2nd round)	2003 won (63.38%↑)	2005 Changed in 2010
Ryazan oblast	Lyubimov (CPRF member)	1996 (38.29% 1st round, 56.06% 2nd round)	2000 won (40.09% 1st round↑, 65.14% 2nd round) 2004 lost (21.08%↓)	
Smolensk oblast	Prokhorov (CPRF support)	1998 (46.52% 1st round, 67.39% 2nd round)	2002 lost (34.4%↓)	
Tambov oblast	Ryabov (CPRF member)	1995 (36.8% 1st round, 52.62% 2nd round)	1999 lost (29.29% 1st round↓, 44.16% 2nd round)	
Tula oblast	Starodubtsev (CPRF member)	1997 (62.82%)	2001 won (49.1% 1st round↓, 71.4% 2nd round)	No, changed in 2005
Chelyabinsk oblast	Sumin (CPRF support, UR member since 2004)	1996 (50.79%)	2000 won (58.68%↑)	2005 Changed in 2010
Koryaki AO	Bronevich (CPRF support, OHiR support then)	1996 (47.13%)	2000 lost (32.99%↓)	
Evenki AO	Bokovikov (CPRF support)	1997 (49%)	2001, did not participate	

Table 3. The rise and fall of the "oppositional" mayors in Russia[9].

Municipality (Region)	Mayor	First election	Following elections
Regional capitals			
Cherkessk (Karachaevo-Cherkessia)	Yakush (CPRF member)	2001 (27.29% 1st round, 66.25% 2nd round)	Elections suspended and abolished in 2005
Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy (Kamchatka region)	Golenischev (CPRF member, excluded in 2003)	2000 (50.24%)	Left in 2003 under criminal investigation (ran as independent in 2004 with 2.59%)
Krasnodar (Krasnodar region)	Priz (CPRF member)	2000 (43% 1st round, 64.86% 2nd round)	2004 (54.18%↑) Left in 2005 under criminal

[9] Official data of Central Electoral Commission, author's sources. Only mayors elected by popular vote present.

			investigation
Bryansk (Bryansk region)	Sarviro (CPRF member)	1997 (47.03%)	Resigned in 1999 (ran in 2005 with 9.62%)
Volgograd (Volgograd region)	Grebennikov (CPRF member, UR member since 2008, excluded in 2011)	2007 (32.47%, ran as independent)	Dismissed by governor in 2011
Irkutsk (Irkutsk region)	Kondrashov (CPRF support, UR member since 2010)	2010 (62.32%)	Serving first term
Oryol (Oryol region)	Kasyanov (CPRF support, UR member since 2007)	2006 (28.94%)	Left in 2008 under criminal investigation
Ryazan (Ryazan region)	Mamatov (CPRF member)	1996 (45.2%)	2001 (60.5%↑) Left in 2004 under criminal investigation
Naryan-Mar (Nenets AO)	Sablin (CPRF member)	2005 (50.43%, ran as independent)	Did not participate
Naryan-Mar (Nenets AO)	Fedorova (CPRF member)	2012 (39.61%)	Serving first term
Other important municipalities			
Apatity (Murmansk region)	Antropov (CPRF member)	2004 (37.24% 1st round, 60.26% 2nd round)	2008 (51%↑) Left in 2010 under criminal investigation
Berdsk (Novosibirsk region)	Potapov (CPRF member)	2011 (30.81% 1st round, 59.67% 2nd round)	Serving first term
Bratsk (Irkutsk region)	Serov (CPRF member)	2010 (39.71%)	Left in 2010 under criminal investigation
Novocherkassk (Rostov region)	Kondratenko (CPRF member)	2010 (44.15%)	Resigned in 2012
Pervouralsk (Sverdlovsk region)	Pereverzev (CPRF member)	2011 (41.78%)	Serving first term

Table 4. Share of votes cast for CPRF (share of deputies elected from CPRF) at the regional elections (%). (S) indicates spoils (note: data on spoils at previous convocations is preliminary).

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Adyghea				14.88 (12.96) (S)					18.76 (11.11) (S)
Altay Republic				8.96 (9.76)				24.83 (12.2)	
Bashkortostan						7.24 (5) (S			

						from 2012)			
Buryatia					12.81 (7.58)				
Dagestan					7.22 (6.94)				7.27 (6.67)
Ingushetia	0					7.34 (7.41)			7.13 (7.41)
Kabardino-Balkaria	*8.69 (6.36)*						8.36 (8.33) (S)		
Kalmykia	*10.48 (11.11)*					22.63 (25.93)			
Karachaevo-Cherkesia		*15.57 (10.96)*					10.17 (6.85) (S)		
Karelia				12.77 (8)					19.05 (16) (S)
Komi Republic					14.26 (6.67) (S)				16.06 (6.67) (S)
Mariy El		*17.89 (13.46*)					19.53 (12.5)		
Mordovia	9.56 (6.25)				5.52 (4.17)				5.84 (2.08)
Sakha (Yakitia)						15.97 (10) (S)			
North Ossetia					14.33 (8.57)				
Tatarstan		6.34 (4)					11.15 (6)		
Tuva				5.45 (0)				4.45 (0)	
Udmurtia					13.3 (8)				
Khakasia		*18.32 (14.67)*					14.69 (9.33) (S)		
Chehen Republic			*12.2 (5.17)*			0.33 (0)			
Chuvashia				19.49 (11.36)					19.65 (9.09)
Altay krai		*26.88 (26.47)*				19.6 (10.29)			25.4 (13.24)
Zabaykalski krai		*18.68 (19.05)*				13.41 (10) (S)			
Kamchatski krai					11.38 (8)				17.63 (7.14)
Krasnodar					14.99 (8.57)				
Krasnoyarsk					20.32 (15.38)				23.66 (15.38) (S)
Perm				8.59 (5)					20.14 (11.67)
Primorski krai				12.14 (7.5)					23.81 (22.5)
Stavropol					14.13 (10) (S)				19.53 (10) (S)
Khabarovsk			*15.51 (7.69)*					18.93 (11.54)	

Amur			*13.15 (11.11)*			17.54 (19.44)			19.78 (22.22)
Arkhangelsk		*8.61 (8.06)*					16.64 (9.68) (S)		
Astrakhan				13.58 (13.79) (S)					14.97 (8.62)
Belgorod			18.44 (11.43)					17.68 (8.57)	
Bryansk		*18.57 (15)*					23.68 (13.33)		
Vladimir			20.33 (18.42) (S)				27.75 (18.42) (S)		
Volgograd	*25.83 (34.21)*						23.57 (15.79)		
Vologda	*11.84 (8.82)*				13.44 (5.88)				18.27 (8.82)
Voronezh			*13.65 (8.93)*					18.52 (8.93) (S)	
Ivanovo			*11.12 (8.33)*			15.34 (10.42) (S)			
Irkutsk		12.86 (8.89) (S)				13.25 (10.42)			
Kaliningrad				15.09 (10) (S)					21.4 (15) (S)
Kaluga		*13.4 (10)*						21.17 (22.5) (S)	
Kemerovo						3.47 (0)			
Kirov				15.11 (11.11)					22.35 (18.52) (S)
Kostroma			17.48 (13.89) (S)					19.57 (11.11) (S)	
Kurgan		*10.9 (5.88)*						25.21 (17.65)	
Kursk				11.28 (11.11)					21.54 (13.33)
Leningrad oblast					17.07 (12) (S)				17.95 (10) (S)
Lipetsk				10.66 (7.14) (S)					23.46 (14.29)
Magadan			*13.56 (8)*					15.97 (9.52)	
Moscow *oblast*					18.61 (24) (S)				27.16 (22) (S)
Murmansk					17.47 (9.38) (S)				22.91 (13.89) (S)
Nizhni Novgorod				17.81 (10)					28.79 (24) (S)
Novgorod				14.68 (11.54)					21.16 (15.38)

Novosibirsk			*21.66 (21.43)*					25.03 (21.05) (S)	
Omsk					22.41 (13.64)				26.11 (22.73) (S)
Orenburg				16.6 (12.77) (S)					21.44 (12.77) (S)
Oryol					23.78 (26)				32.41 (28) (S)
Penza					15.94 (8)				
Pskov					19.46 (11.36)				24.77 (20.45)
Rostov						15.81 (10)			
Ryazan			*15.16 (13.89)*					19.01 (11.11)	
Samara					18.98 (12) (S)				22.57 (16) (S)
Saratov					14.19 (5.56)				
Sakhalin		*15.92 (14.29)*				23.11 (14.29)			
Sverdlovsk		*9.02 (14.29)*		*7.27 (10.71)*		*12.2 (10.71)*		21.69 (17.86) (S)	17.45 (16) (S)
Smolensk					17.88 (12.5)				
Tambov			19.95 (18)						18.24 (8)
Tver			14.69 (15.15)						24.65 (20)
Tomsk					13.37 (7.14)				22.84 (14.29)
Tula		*10.84 (10.42)*					18.33 (20.83) (S)		
Tyumen					8.37 (2.94)				13.11 (6.25)
Ulyanovsk	*11.25 (10)*					15.95 (10)			
Chelyabinsk			*12.6 (8.33)*					11.81 (6.67)	
Yaroslavl		*7.04 (6)*				14.6 (8)			
Moscow city			16.75 (11.43) (S)				13.3 (8.57) (S)		
St. Petersburg					16.02 (18) (S)				13.69 (14) (S)
Yevreyskaya AO				18.54 (12.5)					20.13 (10.53)
Nenets AO			25.86 (15) (S)				20.51 (18.18) (S)		
Khanty-Mansi AO				9.24 (7.14)					13.38 (5.71)
Chukotski AO			0						4.83 (0)

Yamalo-Nenets AO			7.02 (4.55)					8.57 (4.55)	
Koryaki AO		35.05 (50) (S)							
Ust'-Orda Buryat AO		*22.72 (11.11)*							
Taymyr AO		0							
Aga Buryat AO			*15.07 (5.56)*						