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RUSSIA'S ELECTORAL SPACE: CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN POST-SOVIET PERSPECTIVE

BASIC RESEARCH PROGRAM
WORKING PAPERS

Rostislav Turovsky[1]

RUSSIA'S ELECTORAL SPACE: CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN POST-SOVIET PERSPECTIVE[2]

This paper tests the methods of electoral analysis elaborated by the author previously and based on the concept of nationalization that is used to measure the spatial homogeneity of voting patterns. The study of nationalization scores leads to the conclusion about rather high degree of nationalization of the post-Soviet party system from its very beginning while short and small-scale upsurges of regionalization were coming along with anti-government protests of 1995-1995 and 2011. To deepen the analysis of the electoral space the author has analyzed the phenomenon of deviant and typical regions where ethnic cleavage has appeared to produce the main deviations. Finally, the analysis of dynamic nationalization brings about the better understanding of nationalization revealing the changing territorial patterns of voting for the same actors masked by the same overall national scores.

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Introduction

Despite all the years of electoral research in Russia, nationalization of the Russia's party system remains a relatively unexplored topic. Most scholars have paid attention towards general structural features of the party system delving into the matters such as competition, and ideological cleavages. The very concept of electoral space has become widely spread in Russian studies with different methods (both quantitative and qualitative) and implications (Akhremenko 2007; Akhremenko 2008). Analysis of party system in time-space continuum has been partial and often dedicated to the structure of the Russia's electoral space. Hence, one of the most developed topics in Russia's electoral studies, that is electoral geography, covering spatial features of electoral support, their patterns, and reasons (Taylor, Johnston 1979). In our view, dynamic spatial model of electoral space should combine electoral geography and temporal volatility of electoral support. While electoral geography focuses mainly on the description of spatial electoral patterns and traces causal links explaining how different social cleavages translate into their spatial representations in the elections, studies of nationalization create an ample analytical framework (Turovsky 2016).

Nationalization is a general feature of a party system, which implies both the current state of the national party system and its spatial structure. It considers the spatial homogeneity of parties' activities and electoral support in the regions and usually sees homogeneity as an indicator of ripeness and consolidation in party system. That is why nationalization and regionalization (sometimes but not necessarily as its contrary feature, see Turovsky 2016) serve as a framework for this analysis, where we track the development of the Russia's party system in the evolving electoral space. Obviously, we do not see nationalization as a predestined and only positive historic development since the party system can move back towards more regionalization under certain circumstances or change from time to time in these terms.

Nationalization of Russia's party system: fluctuations in a unified social system

Studies of nationalization use very many different indices (Caramani 2004; Kasuya, Moenius 2008). Empirical tests let us to the conclusion that two indices looked the most appropriate, both with their advantages and flaws. One of them is Gini-based Party nationalization score (PNS) while another is variance coefficient (VC). Both are calculated for every party (or candidate) and measure the dispersion of regional breakdown of the electoral results. The advantage of PNS is that it also allows measuring the index for the whole party system such as Party system nationalization score (PSNS). Besides PNS and PSNS have a strict

and clear upper limit at 1 as long as the lowest limit at 0 (Jones, Mainwaring 2003). However Gini index seems more appropriate for the studies of social differences (where it comes from) having much bigger magnitude there as compared with most electoral regional breakdowns which are more humble in terms of diversity. This is why PNS usually is closer to its upper limit (meaning small differences) and do not fluctuate much it time. VC is criticized for not having its upper limit and it is a bit harder for interpretation. But it gives more vivid picture in terms of differences among the parties and in temporal developments. The problem of upper limit is not too serious as VC rarely exceeds 1.

The State Duma elections in 2016 have become a new step in the process of nationalization in Russia's party system. As in most party systems, nationalization should not be considered a one-track development (towards more nationalization or just stabilized forever at a certain level). Rather it is a dynamic process with its ups and downs. It is particularly strange to expect that the nationalization will only rise in the developing party systems where new players may appear and disappear.

Russian case is particularly interesting to study nationalization of party system. Russia has started to develop its multiparty system after many decades of one-party regime, which was producing a high degree of ideological unity. In the huge and rather heterogeneous space, this could lead to the upsurge of all the social, cultural, and regional differences hidden under the cover of the Soviet regime. But as we will prove later the relative homogeneity of Russia's electoral space appeared instead, contrasting all the typical assumptions about the vastness of Russia as seemingly (but a bit wrongly) synonymous to its diversity. Probably we do not have to underestimate the Soviet legacy with its not only ideological but also cultural unification of the Soviet people along with the ethnic assimilation under predominance of Russian culture. Moreover, this is not just Soviet but imperial legacy dating back to the Russian Empire where cultural assimilation was all but official policy of the regime. It is often said that the ethnic nationalism was an inevitable reaction to the breakdown of the Soviet system with nationalism coming to the fore as a substitute for communism and new mode of ideological unification of society. But in the core of the former empire (in the area of modern Russian Federation) regionalism and ethnic nationalism have not proved to be so strong to blow the formerly unified territory to pieces.
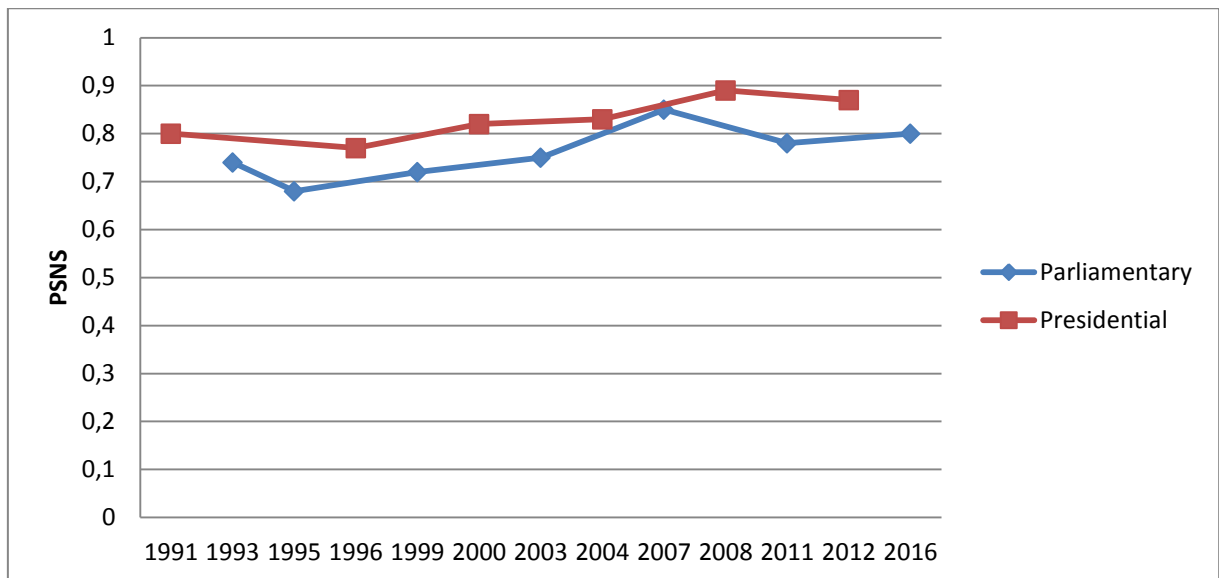
Fig 1. Party System Nationalization Scores in Russia's Parliamentary and Presidential Elections. Source: Central Election Commission, author's own archives (for earlier elections). Calculated by author.

Our calculation of PSNS and its post-Soviet development does not show any serious problem with parties' nationalization in Russia undermining assumption (or maybe a myth) about the decisive role of Russia's extreme diversity. We can see that PSNS for presidential elections was a bit higher than for the parliamentary ones (fig. 1). This can be explained by the usual presence of the dominant player (an incumbent or quasi-incumbent such as Yeltsin as a chair of the Russia's Supreme Soviet in the first presidential elections in 1991). PSNS in presidential elections has started on the high level at 0.8 in 1991 and was lower only once, in the highly competitive elections in 1996 when an incumbent lost his popularity giving the way to more regional cleavages. The spatial unity was restored then with the election of Putin reaching highest PSNS numbers in 2008 (the election of Medvedev) and 2012 (the third election of Putin). But it is not only about dominant player since other candidates also demonstrated rather even level of support all over the state.

PSNS in parliamentary elections shows a bit more regional diversity but it remains high. Again, we see that the post-Soviet development is not towards more or less nationalization but changes its direction regularly (but not crucially). The level of nationalization was significant from the very beginning. It is interesting that without any dominant party it was rather high in the very first election in 1993 and dropped down then. With the coming of "United Russia" as a dominant party, the previous level of nationalization was restored again and peaked in 2007, along with the highest electoral result ever achieved by "United Russia". Two waves of PSNS decrease in 1995 and 2011 clearly coincide with two waves of electoral protest bringing about

more diversity in the regional support of different parties, both loyal to the Kremlin and oppositional.

The analysis of PSNS proves that Russia's electoral space is rather integrated. On the level of national party system, we see the prevalence of more or less strong federal-level actors while regional-based and ethnic nationalist parties have not achieved popularity. This also proves that the previous social and cultural unification was strong enough to prevent regionalism and nationalism to tear the Russia's space apart. In such spatial system the regions did not produce many own parties and proto-party groups. Rather they responded (however with very different enthusiasm) to the appeals of different centre-based ideologically biased or personalist parties. In other words, most of the elements of Russia's space were searching for an alternative to the late Soviet regime looking at the programs and leaders of the biggest national parties but not for any separatist substitutes. In addition, the role of unified communication space proved to be high from the very beginning and even before the Internet. The attention of the people to the central media being another common feature of the Soviet regime remained significant too. For that reason, it was possible to perform greatly in the elections without developed network of party branches and supporters in the regions. An example of Zhirinovsky and LDPR proved it many times starting in 1991 and 1993.

The rise of regionalism in the 1995 Duma elections was also the heyday of a number of weak yet regionalist movements, which quickly dissolved later. That temporary and weak regionalism was a momentary reaction to the unpopularity of the federal government. Instead, two most persistent parties born in the 1990s such as CPRF and LDPR managed to become national parties with the significant support in most of the regions. Sure, the electoral space has become more consolidated with the creation of "United Russia". But it also should be mentioned that the predecessors of "United Russia" were far from the status of truly national parties and rather acted as the agents of regionalization being supported by specific groups of regional elites. Surprisingly or not but it was the elite (both federal and regional) which used to split the electoral space creating political movements with strictly localized support.

Parties and candidates in the presidential elections can play different roles in the process of nationalization. Some of them act as agents of nationalization creating networks of support all over Russia. Some of them become agents of regionalization but this type of actors has two different reasons to appear. In our view, genuine agents of regionalization are regionalist parties, which clearly appeal to regional identities. But in Russia this kind of actors is very rare. Rather agents of regionalization are the failed agents of nationalization such as the actors either based in the regions or confined to very narrow frames of local support due to the local popularity of their

ideological stands. One way or another we can compare Russian parties as agents of nationalization or regionalization in time and space.

Since no common interpretation on what is high and low has been elaborated in the electoral studies we propose our own empirical scale for this. An agent of regionalization has PNS lower than 0.7 and VC higher than 0.5. On the contrary, an agent of nationalization keeps PNS more than 0.8 and VC lower than 0.3. Those in between do not have such clear identification.

Despite many changes in the structure of electoral actors in the analysis we can easily focus on such constant actors as bureaucratic (elite-based) "parties of power" ("Our Home is Russia", "Fatherland – All Russia", and "United Russia"[3]), CPRF, LDPR, social-liberal Yabloko, right liberals (with most changes of the actors themselves such as "The Choice of Russia", "The Democratic Choice of Russia", "The Union of Right Forces", "The Right Cause", and finally PARNAS), plus left-of-centre "Just Russia" as an addition since 2007 (fig. 2 and 3, tab. 1 and 2). Similarly the analysis of presidential campaigns can be simplified by dividing candidates into incumbents, left-wing candidates, LDPR, and liberals (usually only one liberal was present). "Just Russia" did not play any significant role in the presidential campaigns actually supporting an incumbent (even if Mironov was running).
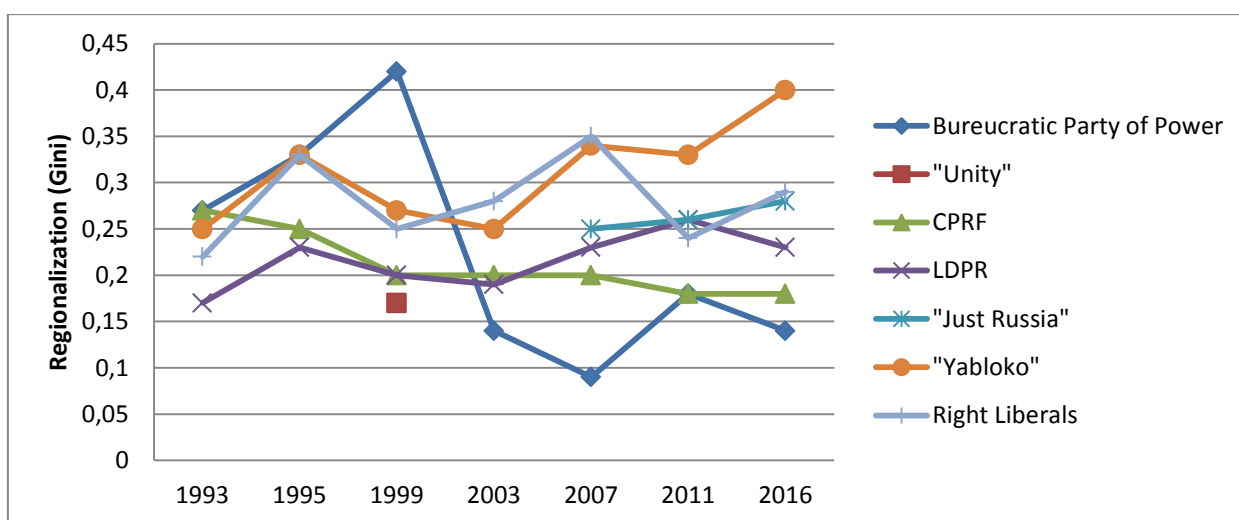

Fig 2. Regionalization Scores of Russian Parties in Parliamentary Elections[4].
Source: Central Election Commission, author's own archives (for earlier elections). Calculated by author.

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[3]   Also we consider Party of Russian Unity and Concord in 1993 as their most genuine predecessor.
[4]   In this paper, regionalization score is simply Gini index as different from PNS (which is calculated as 1 – Gini index). We use regionalization score in this paper to make the graphs visually comparable (because higher regionalization scores relate to higher variance coefficients).
         Bureaucratic "parties of power" are Party of Russian Unity and Concord in 1993, "Our Home is Russia" in 1995, "Fatherland – All Russia" in 1999, "United Russia" then. Right liberals are "The Choice of Russia" in 1993, "The Democratic Choice of Russia" in 1995, "Union of Right Forces" in 1999, 2003, and 2007, "The Right Cause" in 2011, PARNAS (Party of People's Freedom) 2016.

Tab 1. Regionalization Scores of Russian Parties in Parliamentary Elections[5].

	1993	1995	1999	2003	2007	2011	2016
Bureaucratic Party of Power	0.27 (6.7%)	*0.33 (10.1%)*	*0.42 (13.3%)*	**0.14 (37.4%)**	**0.09 (64.2%)**	**0.18 (49.3%)**	**0.14 (54.2%)**
"Unity"			**0.17 (23.3%)**				
CPRF	0.27 (12.4%)	0.25 (22.3%)	0.2 (24.3%)	0.2 (12.65%)	0.2 (11.6%)	**0.18 (19.2%)**	**0.18 (13.3%)**
Left Radicals[6]		0.22 (4.5%)	0.2 (2.2%)				0.22 (2.3%)
Other Left[7]	*0.36 (8%)*	*0.47 (3.8%)*		*0.37 (3.65%),* 0.23 (3.1%)	*0.31 (2.3%)*		
LDPR[8]	**0.17 (22.9%)**	0.23 (11.2%)	0.2 (6%)	**0.19 (11.5%)**	0.23 (8.1%)	0.26 (11.7%)	0.23 (13.1%)
Other Nationalist[9]		0.3 (4.3%), *0.4 (2.6%)*		0.24 (9%)			
"Just Russia"					0.25 (7.8%)	0.26 (13.2%)	0.28 (6.2%)
"Yabloko"	0.25 (7.9%)	*0.33 (6.9%)*	0.27 (5.9%)	0.25 (4.3%)	*0.34 (1.6%)*	*0.33 (3.4%)*	*0.4 (2%)*
Other Liberals[10]	0.22 (15.5%), 0.24 (4.1%)	*0.33 (3.9%)*	0.25 (8.5%)	0.28 (4%)	*0.35 (1%)*	0.24 (0.6%)	0.29 (0.7%)
Others[11]	**0.18 (8.1%),** 0.21 (5.5%)	0.23 (4.6%), 0.28 (4%)	0.2 (2%)				

Source: Central Election Commission, author's own archives (for earlier elections). Calculated by author. Data presented for all the parties gaining more than 2% of the vote, with addition of less successful "other liberals" in the 2007, 2011, and 2016 elections in order to continue the comparison for them.

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[5]   In bold are low scores while high scores are italicized. Electoral results of the parties and candidates are in brackets.

[6]   "Communists – Russia of Labor – For the Soviet Union" in 1995 and bloc with a similar name "Communists, Workers of Russia – For the Soviet Union" in 1999. "The Communists of Russia" in 2016.

[7]   Mainly Agrarian Party of Russia, plus "Russian Party of Pensioners – Party of Social Justice" (with lower electoral result) in 2003.

[8]   Note that in 1999 Zhirinovsky Bloc appeared on the ballot instead of LDPR.

[9]   "Congress of Russian Communities" (with higher electoral result) and "Derzhava" in 1995, "Rodina" (Motherland) in 2003.

[10]   "The Choice of Russia" (with higher electoral result) and "Russian Movement for Democratic Reforms" in 1993, "The Democratic Choice of Russia" in 1995, "Union of Right Forces" in 1999, 2003, and 2007, "The Right Cause" in 2011, PARNAS in 2016.

[11]   "The Women of Russia" (higher electoral result) and Democratic Party of Russia in 1993, "The Women of Russia" (higher electoral result) and Party of Workers' Self-Government in 1995, "The Women of Russia" in 1999.
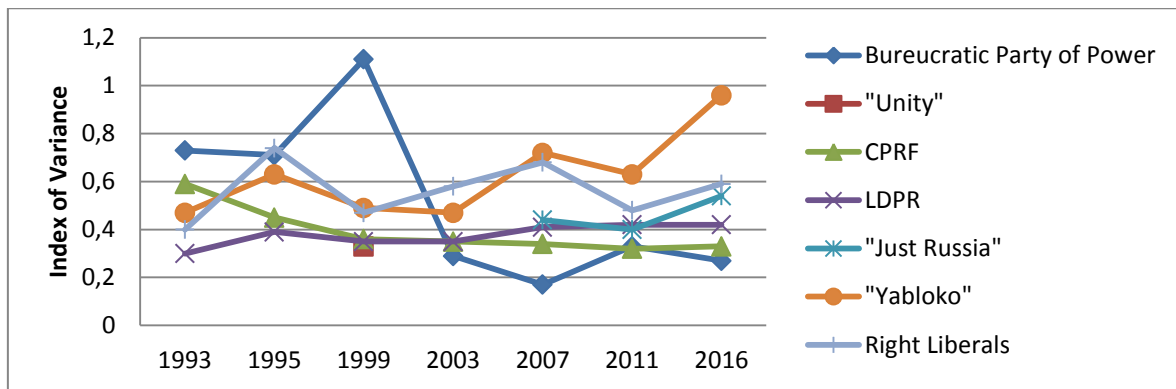
Fig. 3. Variance Coefficients of Russian Parties in Parliamentary Elections.
Source: Central Election Commission, author's own archives (for earlier elections). Calculated by author.

Tab. 2. Variance Coefficients of Russian Parties in Parliamentary Elections.

	1993	1995	1999	2003	2007	2011	2016
Bureaucratic Party of Power	*0.73 (6.7%)*	*0.71 (10.1%)*	*1.11 (13.3%)*	0.29 (37.4%)	**0.17 (64.2%)**	0.33 (49.3%)	**0.27 (54.2%)**
"Unity"			0.33 (23.3%)				
CPRF	*0.59 (12.4%)*	0.45 (22.3%)	0.36 (24.3%)	0.35 (12.65%)	0.34 (11.6%)	0.32 (19.2%)	0.33 (13.3%)
Left Radicals		0.39 (4.5%)	0.44 (2.2%)				0.41 (2.3%)
Other Left	*0.66 (8%)*	*1.05 (3.8%)*		*0.92 (3.65%),* 0.47 (3.1%)	*0.6 (2.3%)*		
LDPR	0.3 (22.9%)	0.39 (11.2%)	0.35 (6%)	0.35 (11.5%)	0.41 (8.1%)	0.42 (11.7%)	0.42 (13.1%)
Other Nationalist		*0.54 (4.3%),* *1.31 (2.6%)*		0.44 (9%)			
"Just Russia"					0.44 (7.8%)	0.4 (13.2%)	*0.54 (6.2%)*
"Yabloko"	0.47 (7.9%)	*0.63 (6.9%)*	0.49 (5.9%)	0.47 (4.3%)	*0.72 (1.6%)*	*0.63 (3.4%)*	*0.96 (2%)*
Other Liberals	0.4 (15.5%), 0.44 (4.1%)	*0.74 (3.9%)*	0.47 (8.5%)	*0.58 (4%)*	*0.68 (1%)*	0.48 (0.6%)	*0.59 (0.7%)*
Others	0.32 (8.1%), *1.06 (5.5%)*	0.4 (4.6%), *0.53 (4%)*	0.4 (2%)				

Source: Central Election Commission, author's own archives (for earlier elections). Calculated by author.

The most important change in Russia's nationalization came from the elite-based centrist or centre-right parties commonly known as "parties of power". While being aimed at representing most of Russia's ruling elites these parties initially were no more than a coalition of an important high-ranking federal politician and a bunch of regional governors. In the time of deep elite cleavages in the 1990s such parties in fact became main agents of regionalization however without any such intentions. But at the same time it is very symptomatic that the centrist / "catch-all" electoral actors started to create their zones of support with the help of local mobilization introduced more and more firmly by ruling regional elites. This process led to more regionalization in its beginning since the elites' coalitions covered only parts of Russia. This is why "Our Home is Russia" produced much localized support in 1995. "Fatherland – All Russia" did even worse in these terms despite a bit better national result. Moreover, its result was so localized that "Fatherland – All Russia" appeared to be the only significant party in Russia making its VC exceed 1. In fact this party (and elites' split of course) was "to blame" for the fact that in 1999 nationalization of Russia's party system did not grow strongly and remained less than in 1993. On the contrary, "Unity" was much more nationalized but we do not count it as a "party of power" in its full sense because it did not intend to mobilize and unite elites in the course of 1999 elections rather appealing directly to electorate. And this centre-based appeal radiating to the regions through the federal media appeared to be more efficient in terms of nationalization.

Creation of "United Russia" has become a turning point both in the imposed unification of Russian elites and in the role of "party of power' in nationalization of party system. Moving away from the groups of local elites with spatially fragmented electoral support the new "party of power" has become true and strongest agent of nationalization. In this sense, "United Russia" reached its peak in 2007 with PNS more than 0.9 and VC less than 0.2. With the protests of 2011, spatial support of "United Russia" became more fragmented and the scores we track went down again. It is interesting in terms of methodology that PNS was not sensitive to this change (remaining higher than 0.8) but United Russia's VC went seriously high in 2011. The 2016 elections improved the role of "United Russia" as an agent of nationalization. Its level did not reach 2007 but was similar to the 2003 elections when "United Russia" entered the Duma elections for the first time. VC as more sensitive indicator shows that United Russia's nationalization was a bit higher in 2016 than in 2003 and this is what one could expect regarding long history of its mobilization efforts. Clearly, "United Russia" has become the most nationalized party in Russia being the dominant actor just anywhere in the regions.
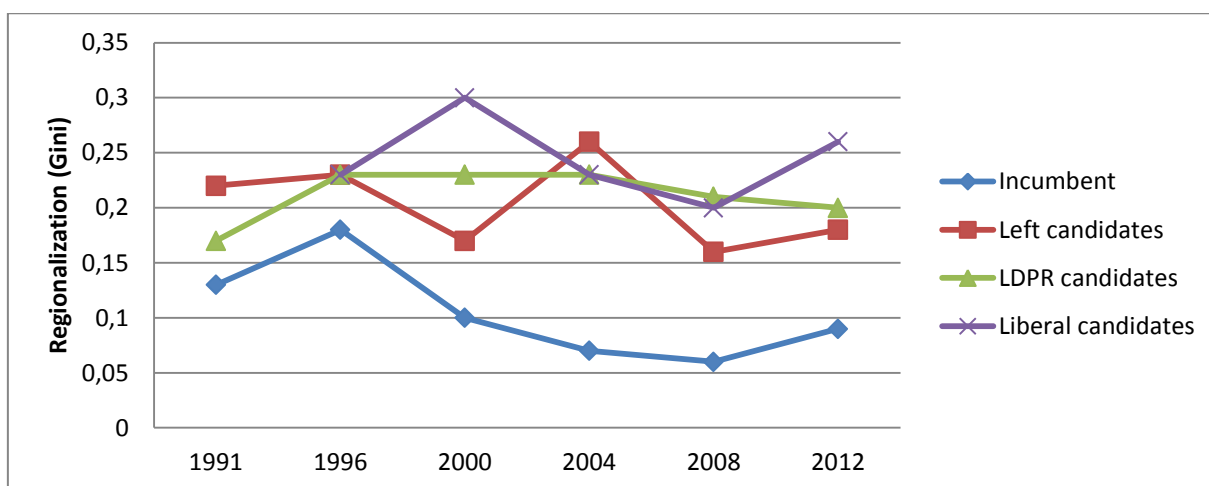
Fig. 4. Regionalization Scores of Presidential Candidates[12].
Source: Central Election Commission, author's own archives (for earlier elections). Calculated by author.

Tab. 3. Regionalization Scores of Presidential Candidates.

	1991	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012
Incumbent	**0.13 (57.3%)**	**0.18 (35.3%)**	**0.1 (52.5%)**	**0.07 (71.3%)**	**0.06 (70.3%)**	**0.09 (63.6%)**
Left-wing candidates	0.22 (16.85%)	0.23 (32%)	**0.17 (29.8%)**	0.26 (13.7%)	**0.16 (17.7%)**	**0.18 (17.2%)**
Other left-wing[13]	0.3 (6.8%), 0.22 (3.7%)		*0.4 (3%)*	0.24 (4.1%)		
LDPR candidates	**0.17 (7.8%)**	0.23 (5.7%)	0.23 (2.7%)	0.23 (2%)	0.21 (9.35%)	0.2 (6.2%)
Other nationalist[14]		0.21 (14.5%)				
Liberal candidates		0.23 (7.3%)	0.3 (5.6%)	0.23 (3.8%)	0.2 (1.3%)	0.26 (8%)
Others[15]	0.23 (3.4%)					

Source: Central Election Commission, author's own archives (for earlier elections). Calculated by author.

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[12]   Incumbents are Yeltsin in 1991 and 1996, Putin in 2000, 2004, and 2012, Medvedev in 2008. Left-wing candidates are Ryzhkov in 1991, Zyuganov in 1996, 2000, 2008, and 2012, Kharitonov in 2004. LDPR candidate is Zhirinovsky except for 2004 (Malyshkin). Liberal candidates are Yavlinskiy in 1996 and 2000, Khakamada in 2004, Bogdanov in 2008, and Prokhorov in 2012.

[13]   Other left-wing are Tuleyev (the one with higher electoral result) and Makashov in 1993, Tuleyev in 2000, Glazyev in 2004.

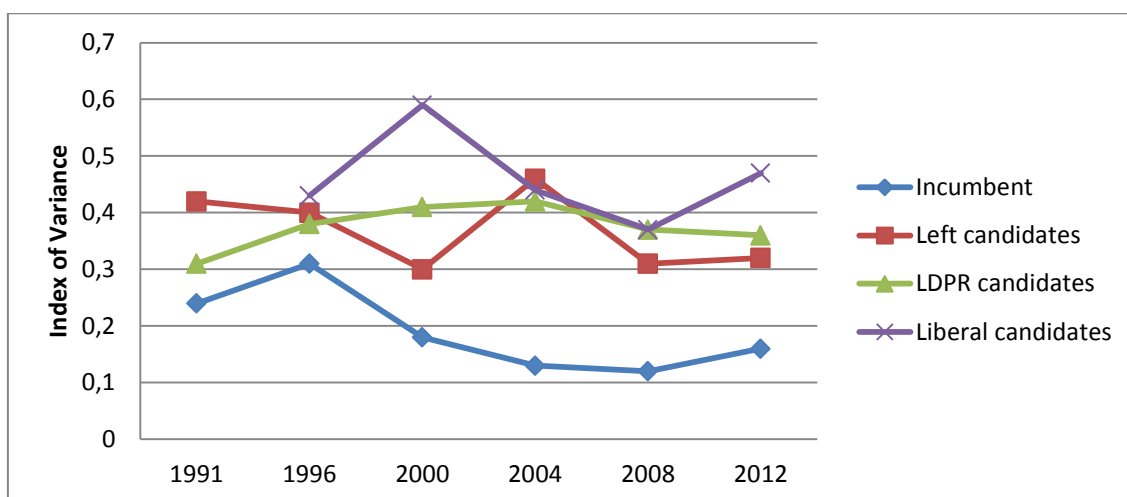[14]   Lebed in 1996.

[15]   Bakatin in 1993.

Fig. 5. Variance Coefficients of Presidential Candidates.
Source: Central Election Commission, author's own archives (for earlier elections). Calculated by author.

Tab. 4. Variance Coefficients of Presidential Candidates.

	1991	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012
Incumbent	**0.24 (57.3%)**	0.31 (35.3%)	**0.18 (52.5%)**	**0.13 (71.3%)**	**0.12 (70.3%)**	**0.16 (63.6%)**
Left–wing candidates	0.42 (16.85%)	0.4 (32%)	0.3 (29.8%)	0.46 (13.7%)	0.31 (17.7%)	0.32 (17.2%)
Other left-wing	*0.7 (6.8%),* 0.4 (3.7%)		*1.85 (3%)*	*0.54 (4.1%)*		
LDPR candidates	0.31 (7.8%)	0.38 (5.7%)	0.41 (2.7%)	0.42 (2%)	0.37 (9.35%)	0.36 (6.2%)
Other nationalist		0.38 (14.5%)				
Liberal candidates		0.43 (7.3%)	*0.59 (5.6%)*	0.44 (3.8%)	0.37 (1.3%)	0.47 (8%)
Others	0.5 (3.4%)					

Source: Central Election Commission, author's own archives (for earlier elections). Calculated by author.

Speaking about presidential incumbents, we have to underscore their crucial role in the consolidation of Russia's electoral space (fig. 4 and 5, tab. 3 and 4). While "parties of power" were failing in these efforts in the 1990s, Yeltsin was much more successful. High level of Yeltsin's nationalization score was the starting point of Russian democratic elections themselves. It fell a bit in 1996 (especially if measured by VC) but was returned to its highs by Putin and Medvedev (both delivering more nationalization than Yeltsin ever did). It is very important to mention that the popular leading presidential candidates in the plebiscitarian-style elections always played the principal role in Russia's nationalization. The main and only drawback was in

1996 (as in 1995 for the Duma elections). It is clear that Putin and Medvedev were more successful than Yeltsin thus confirming the overall trend towards nationalization. And it is also clear that the level of nationalization for the presidential incumbents was higher than for the "parties of power" even after the birth of "United Russia". In other words, a strong presidential incumbent have become the leading agent of nationalization in Russia. Of course, this relates to the higher percentage they get in the elections but these high percent just prove this point. The "small" drawback in the 2011-2012 electoral cycle (similar to the one in 1995-1996 but with higher nationalization scores) was partly overcome in the 2016 Duma elections and is still waiting to be overcome in forthcoming presidential campaign.

But unification of electorates around strong national leaders and later around the dominant pro-presidential party which united most of regional elites is not the only factor of nationalization in Russia's party system. Left ideology with its strong Soviet background has been another substantial factor of nationalization. Of course, CPRF after the collapse of the Soviet Union could not consolidate the Russia's electoral space in a manner and scope as CPSU did it under totalitarian regime. One should also remember that CPRF built up its regional network in the middle of the 1990s gradually and from the scratch. But its ideology (and all what remained from the Soviet ideology) had its own appeal for most of Russia's territory.

At the same time, the story of CPRF as an agent of nationalization reveals a problem in methodology of such studies. The essence of this problem derives from the fact that a strong actor is not exactly the one which is well nationalized. On the contrary, it can rely on the regions with very high electoral support but such regions tear apart the electoral space of the state. Therefore, the nationalization scores of CPRF were almost constantly increasing for all Duma elections but the support of the party was changing in both directions at the same time. In 1993 and 1995 the formation of "red belts" made CPRF look strong enough but the scores of nationalization were average and definitely not high. More or less similar level of regional support had been achieved by CPRF by the 1999 elections when it got its highest electoral result. After Putin came to power, CPRF has lost many votes but remained an important agent of nationalization (with PNS at 0.8 or exceeding, but with VC more than 0.3, which means medium-level nationalization rather than high). Elections in 2016 did not bring any change to this situation as PNS stayed exactly the same (0.82) and VC went up just by 0.01 (from 0.32 to 0.33).

As for the presidential incumbents, the influence and popularity of the leader was an important factor of nationalization in the case of CPRF too. Zyuganov's presidential campaign helped the left to improve their support but the scores of nationalization for CPRF and Zyuganov were very similar. All in all scores of CPRF and its presidential candidates follow the same path.

One striking feature is a rather low score of the 2004's candidate Kharitonov whose electoral support was more diverse in the regions as compared with the party leader Zyuganov – a clear proof of the latter's role in the party. When Zyuganov returned to the role of presidential candidate in 2008 and 2012 the scores returned to the higher level of CPRF standards (his scores were very similar in 2000, 2008 and 2012 elections and close to the scores of his party).

Analysis of other left, of left-nationalist parties and candidates shows that they could not deliver the same steady results of nationalization as CPRF did. Sometimes some of them were successful in this but some of important actors had very fragmented regional support. For example, alternative (and more radical) communists could also find the response from the electorates in most of the regions (albeit less enthusiastic than CPRF). Surprisingly the leftist challenger of CPRF in 1995 ("The Communists – Russia of Labor – For the Soviet Union") delivered even better scores of nationalization than CPRF did. Further on such parties started to lag behind CPRF but still with the average (not low) scores. This was proved by "The Communists of Russia" in the 2016 elections. Contrarily, the parties with clearly corporate support (Agrarian Party of Russia) and created by the leaders with high local popularity (like "Derzhava" of former Russian vice-president Rutskoy) acted more as agents of regionalization.

Among the left-nationalist movements "Rodina" in 2003 could only be considered an average-level agent of nationalization. However, in 2016 "Rodina" failed to prove both its strength and its role in nationalization. By the way, the same path was trodden by its predecessor, "The Congress of Russian Communities" with poor results in 1999 following a relative success in 1995.

In the presidential elections, the first left-wing challenger (and hardly an incumbent despite his formal status in Soviet hierarchy) Ryzhkov in 1991 did quite well in terms of nationalization but still much worse than Yeltsin did. Approximately the same level of nationalization in the same elections characterized left-nationalist Makashov. The main example of left-of-centre candidate with highly regionalized support was Tuleyev coming from Kemerovo region where he still keeps overwhelming support. In the 1991 elections, Tuleyev showed low nationalization scores but in 2000 it was even lower (with VC at 1.85).

Despite all the changes, left ideology in Russia remains one the main factors of nationalization. However, its popularity not only changes in time but also differs from region to region. An example of CPRF shows that this party can be considered an agent of nationalization but its scores are not very high. The radical left and left-nationalist forces have average scores meaning that some areas can be quite favorable for them but these parties are unable to create significant support in most of the regions.

As different from the left, the liberal ideology failed to become an agent of nationalization. Rather it produced very uneven regional support highly localized in bigger cities. As years gone by this situation has not improved but become even worse. In Yabloko case, the electoral support of this party was in continuous decline since 1993 and only the 2011 elections gave a sudden but very short rise. In our scale of nationalization scores Yabloko got better results (average but closer to high regionalization) in the 1993, 1999, and 2003 Duma campaigns (in two of this cases, in 1993 and 1999, Yabloko managed to get to the parliament). All other campaigns including the successful 1995 Duma elections clearly mark Yabloko as an agent of regionalization. In 2016, Yabloko delivered the worst result of its nationalization in the whole history of this party. This can be interpreted as the biggest ever concentration of Yabloko supporters in the smallest number of Russia's regions (in fact, in Moscow and Saint Petersburg).

Development of right liberal forces shows a bit different results. These parties were closer to high scores of nationalization when they delivered their best results. It was the 1993 campaign for "The Choice of Russia" and the 1999 elections for "The Union of Right Forces". In these two cases, the results of nationalization were similar to Yabloko's. In most other cases poor electoral results coincided with high regionalization. A bit surprisingly, in the 2016 elections, PARNAS had a bit more even regional breakdown than Yabloko.

Liberal presidential candidates have always showed average-to-high level of regionalization. It was seemingly better with the least oppositional candidate Bogdanov in 2008. However, Bogdanov was a case of "false nationalization" delivering the poorest electoral results for all this group of candidates. "False nationalization", in our opinion, means that a candidate or party receives spatially even but very low electoral support. Yavlinskiy performed better in these terms in his first elections in 1996 but seriously worsened his nationalization score in 2000 along with the level of his support. Prokhorov in 2012 performed on the level considered the best possible for a liberal candidate or party in Russia but a bit worse than Yavlinskiy in 1996 when the liberal idea was more popular among the Russians.

Thus, all liberal parties and candidates failed to achieve high levels of nationalization, as their support was mainly concentrated in big cities. When these actors managed to organize a strong campaign, this led to more spatial integrity but still it was no more than leaving the zone of high regionalization.

LDPR as a specific Russian phenomenon of a populist party with nationalist standings looks more nationalized and we consider it the third-ranking nationalization agent after United Russia and CPRF. A problem, which leads to more regionalization in the case of LDPR, is its low support in the ethnic peripheries. For this reason, LDPR with its support sometimes close to zero in the non-Russian areas cannot perform the function of nationalization across the state.

However, this case is very interesting since the support of this party is based mainly on the personal popularity of its leader Zhirinovsky translated through the federal media. This fact reminds us again about the integrity of Russia's federal media and their omnipresent influence which can substitute (as in LDPR case) poor network of local activism.

Unsurprisingly LDPR appeared to be a leading agent of nationalization in 1993 when it got its best electoral results. When the support of LDPR declined it also became geographically less even. In 2016 its PNS was exactly the same as in the 1995 and 2007 elections (at 0.77) while VC remained the same as in 2011 (0.42). It seems that LDPR does not move anywhere since 1995 showing average scores a bit closer to high nationalization. But for the ethnic Russian area these scores should be higher. The same level of nationalization characterizes presidential elections too. A bit ironically, the scores of Zhirinovsky in the 2012 elections were close (and slightly worse) to his first ever results in 1991.

Finally, "Just Russia" which started its federal campaigning in 2007 failed to achieve high nationalization scores. Its support was clearly tied to local elites and strong and popular regional activists and it could not be enough. The 2016 Duma elections marked decline of this party, which became an agent of regionalization similar to liberal parties.

Our analysis of nationalization in Russia' party system reveals the changing role of centrist "parties of power". Before the formation of "United Russia", such parties were rather agents of regionalization due to very uneven support from local elites (with an important exception of "Unity" the success of which was not grounded in local elites' support). But when the regional elites were unified and started to support "United Russia" literally everywhere, "party of power" has turned into the leading agent of nationalization. This process was enforced with the advent of Putin and his (and Medvedev's) presidential campaigns. Its precursor, however, can be found in the first Yeltsin's campaign in 1991 followed by the wave of protest-biased regionalization in the middle of the 1990s. Importantly, the regionalization was not a starting point of post-Soviet party system but rather its temporary response to the loss of Yeltsin's popularity and disappointment with the liberal reforms. In the 2016 Duma elections, the role of "United Russia" in nationalization was reconfirmed after the small-scale protest-driven regionalization in 2011.

The level of Russia's regionalization is not very high. It is better to say that it is higher than could be expected in such a vast and multiethnic space. Long before "United Russia" appeared, CPRF and LDPR played an important role both in creation of Russia's party system and its nationalization. On the contrary, liberal forces and then "Just Russia" did not manage to "nationalize" Russia's electoral space. Their support remained too fragmented for this and it did

not improve with years. Last Duma elections showed that Yabloko and "Just Russia" moved towards even more regionalization leaving three main parties unchallenged in this sense.

Regional outliers: how many and where?

The analysis of nationalization scores gives only the general picture of electoral space and party system. To understand it on the regional level we use the calculation of "Euclid distance" (ED) which shows the virtual distance between a specific region and the national result (Turovsky 2016). This method is especially interesting in defining most deviant and typical regions, the former characterized by the "longest" ED while the latter deliver results most close to the state totals. One of the problems in ED measurement in electoral studies is the lack of the scale, which would translate plain figures into substantial assumptions. Empirically and being based on Russia's experience we decided to call the regions with ED more than 20 deviant while regions with ED less than 5 are counted as typical.

Certainly, it is not sufficient just to name deviant and typical regions. The topic of deviant regions is most interesting because such regions can be potential threats for not only party system but also political integrity of the state. One can expect that the deviant regions are most peculiar in terms of their political culture, ethnic composition, economy and so on. In Russia, ethnic and religious cleavages can be the main reason for deviations. Another reason is centre-periphery cleavage, which differentiates administrative capitals and centers of social and political innovations from rural areas. One can also consider the factor of geographic distance from the centre as a possible precursor of electoral deviations. Besides, the deviant regions may be able to create their own party systems based on regional and ethnic parties. Apart from the political geography of deviant regions, important is their number (or share in a number of state's administrative units). If this share is large, this is dangerous for the integrity of the state. On the contrary, the fair share of typical regions means political stability.

In party systems with dominant party such as Russia's, deviant regions split into two distinctively different groups. One group is loyal deviation, which marks the regions with extremely high support for the authorities. On the other hand, the oppositional deviation characterizes the regions with the highest support for the opposition. Before the system with dominant party was created, deviant regions in Russia could appear as both most pro-liberal and pro-communist, or because of extremely high support of any of the specific parties.

Overall analysis of ED in Russia proves once again that ethnic cleavage is the most important one in its electoral space. Ethnic regions make up the most persistent part on the list of deviant regions. It is very important to mention that ethnic regions have always been deviant despite all the changes in party system. From recently they tend to loyal deviation. But before

"United Russia" appeared, such regions could cling in vast majorities of their voters to other parties, usually communists but not only them.

It is hardly surprising that the electoral deviation is usual in ethnic regions with the lowest shares of Russian-speaking population and the most distinctive own religion and culture. These are republics of North Caucasus plus Tuva in Siberia. Three republics of North Caucasus, Dagestan, Ingushetia, and Kabardino-Balkaria, have been present among the deviant regions in all parliamentary elections in Russia. Chechen Republic joined them all the times when it voted (in 1993 and 1999 this region did not participate in the elections)[16]. Two other republics in North Caucasus frequented the list but not all the time: Karachaevo-Cherkesia missed the 2003 elections and North Ossetia both 2003 and 2007. Beyond North Caucasus, the most culturally distinctive regions in Siberia such as Tuva and Aginsky Buryatsky *okrug* (now part of Zabaykalsky *kray*) have always been deviant. All these regions show extremely high support for United Russia. In the 1990s some of them supported "parties of power" of that time; some were among the biggest supporters of CPRF or Agrarian Party. Ingushetia in 1993 was the only region in Russia with extremely high support of Democratic Party of Russia. Usually all these regions were giving tiny results for LDPR and this was their another distinctive feature.

Other republics having more Russian-speakers do not fill the list of deviant regions so frequently. Tatarstan missed 1993 (when its turnout was extremely low) and 2007, Bashkortostan appeared only three times, in 1993, 1999, and 2011. The strangest phenomenon is the Republic of Mordovia with its Russian-speaking majority, which also has become one of the examples of loyal deviation (since 1999 with the exception of 2011). Crimea has made a new appearance in 2016 (but not the City of Sevastopol). All other republics were deviant only once (Kalmykia in 2016, Altay and Adygea in 1993) or never.

Nor other cleavages, except for the ethnic, influence so steadily on the electoral deviations in Russia. The centre-periphery cleavage seems less important. It worked for Moscow only three times, in 1993, 1995, and 1999. It was caused by support of both liberal parties and "parties of power" supported by the popular mayor Luzhkov. Saint Petersburg and Moscow *oblast* appeared to be deviant only once.

Among other deviant regions, we can mention only a few specific spatial patterns and cases. One of them is the biggest case of oppositional deviation found in 2011. That time ten Russian-speaking regions filled up the group of deviant regions voting for "Just Russia" and/or CPRF. Most of them were situated in the North-West of Russia and northern part of Central Russia (Karelia, Murmansk, Arkhangelsk, Vologda, Novgorod, Leningrad, Yaroslavl, Kostroma

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[16]   Ingushetia and Chechen Republic usually were the leaders in ED. The record was established by Ingushetia (85 points in 1999 because of voting for "Fatherland – All Russia" and 70.3 in 1993 caused by voting for DPR). Chechen Republic has been keeping the first place since 2003 due to extreme United Russia's results.

regions) joined by Sverdlovsk region in the Urals and Sakhalin in the Far East. Another case is the extreme loyalty of some Far Northern regions such as Chukotka (1999 and 2011), and Yamal (2011). Interesting is the case of Kemerovo region where high popularity of local leader Tuleyev leads to the mass voting for the parties supported by him (CPRF in 1995 and "United Russia" in 2016). Finally, we remind of some isolated deviant cases of Russian-speaking regions caused by the voting for CPRF (Oryol in 1995 when it was even the most deviant region in Russia), LDPR (Pskov in 1993 and Amur region in 2016), of even "Derzhava" (Kursk in 1995).

The number (or share) of deviant regions can be a useful addition to the study of nationalization scores. This indicator shows how many administrative units of the state fall out of more or less "normal" results. In Russia, this number was at its highest not in the 1990s as it may seem but in 2011 and due to the surge of "oppositional deviation" in some of the regions in the North. In 2016, it returned to the numbers usual for the 1990s and even exactly coincided with the 1993 elections (13 deviant regions). In 1995 and 1999 this number was a bit higher (16 and 15 correspondingly). The lowest was the number of deviant regions in the time of United Russia's rise (8 regions in 2003 and 2007).

The 2016 elections appeared to be average in terms of EDs and the number of deviant regions. They replicated the most typical "loyal eight" of United Russia's campaigns (five Muslim republics of North Caucasus, plus Tatarstan, Mordovia, and Tuva) joined by North Ossetia, Kalmykia and Crimea. Extreme level of loyalty was also produced by Kemerovo region. The only case of oppositional deviation was Amur region in the Far East where LDPR performed better than in all other regions while "United Russia" looked quite humble. A group of distinctively ethnic regions together with some Russian-speaking regions (Mordovia, Crimea, Kemerovo) forms and almost exhausts all the deviant regions in Russia under the system with United Russia's dominance. Support of opposition is too small to produce any significant group of oppositional deviation, which would seem as a challenge for this system coming from some of the territories. For example, Moscow, which is seen as a base for potential opposition, does not behave so differently from the other regions.

The topic of typical regions does not give much insight into the structure of Russia's electoral space. No region is typical all the time and it is easily understood. The pattern of party system has changed many times; new parties were coming and going with all the elections. Hardly there exists a region, which would sensitively respond to all these changes always replicating the national breakdown of votes. With the consolidation of Russia's party system the very number of typical regions rose up. No regions fell into this category in 1993, and the number was gradually rising up to 2007 (reaching 14). Afterwards it fell to empirically "normal" level at 8 in 2011 and 9 in 2016 (almost the same as 7 in 1999 and 9 in 2003).

However, searching for the Russia's "New Hampshire" is hardly fruitful. Probably Russia's party system is too new and not so stable to produce any long-term typical regions. Usually typical regions are purely Russian speaking and come from the European part of the state (Central and Volga macroregions). Under United Russia's dominated party system, two neighboring regions have appeared to be most typical recently. These are Kursk and Belgorod regions falling into this category in three subsequent campaigns (2007, 2011, and 2016). Besides, Stavropol region has been typical two times in a row, in 2011 and 2016. In terms of geography, all the regions, which were typical in the 2016 elections, could be found either in Central Russia (Kursk, Belgorod, Tula, and Ryazan) or in Volga and Southern regions (Stavropol, Volgograd, Samara, Udmurtia). The only exception was a newcomer Sevastopol but it also can be considered a southern region.

Change and Continuity in Territorial Patterns

The structural volatility of Russia's electoral space can be measured with the help of correlations between territorial patterns of voting in different elections (Turovsky 2016). For each party or a group of electoral actors the territorial pattern may change from election to election and its stability marks both the degree of party's institutionalization (the topic beyond this paper) and the character of its nationalization. Changing territorial patterns of voting for each party is an indicator of what we call the dynamic nationalization. In our opinion, the genuine nationalization presupposes not only high nationalization scores but also stable territorial pattern of voting. Using this approach, we can be sure that the relatively low territorial heterogeneity of voting coincides with the voting of the same core electorates living in the same areas.

To measure dynamic nationalization we can use two different techniques. One of them is based on the correlations between following elections (we call it a "chain" of regional volatility, tab. 5). Another method measures correlations between a certain electoral campaign (for example, the last one) and all the previous campaigns (we call it a "path" of regional volatility, tab. 6).

Tab. 5. Chains of Volatility in Parliamentary Elections[17].

	2016 vs. 2011	2011 vs. 2007	2007 vs. 2003	2003 vs. 1999	1999 vs. 1995	1995 vs. 1993
"United Russia"	0.88*** (0.75***)	0.9*** (0.78***)	0.84*** (0.58***)	FAR 0.45*** (0.22*) Unity 0.095 (0.07)	FAR vs. OHR 0.61*** (0.305*)	
CPRF	0.775*** (0.71***)	0.78*** (0.7***)	0.72*** (0.635***)	0.8*** (0.79***)	0.84*** (0.88***)	0.78*** (0.87***)
LDPR	0.9*** (0.85***)	0.92*** (0.88***)	0.86*** (0.8***)	0.78*** (0.7***)	0.68*** (0.58***)	0.52*** (0.41**)
"Just Russia"	0.585*** (0.65***)	0.71*** (0.71***)	-	-	-	-
Yabloko	0.89*** (0.9***)	0.92*** (0.9***)	0.84*** (0.77***)	0.77*** (0.77***)	0.65*** (0.78***)	0.78*** (0.8***)
Right liberals	0.46*** (0.65***) PARNAS vs. Right Cause	0.5*** (0.58***) Right Cause vs. Union of Right Forces (URF)	0.61*** (0.49***) URF	0.49*** (0.63***) URF	0.37** (0.65***) URF vs. Democratic Choice of Russia (DCR)	0.45*** (0.64***) DCR vs. Choice of Russia

Source: Central Election Commission, author's own archives (for earlier elections). Calculated by author.

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[17] Correlation coefficients (Pearson, then Spearman in brackets) for territorial (federation subject-wise) patterns between elections for certain parties or their successors.

Tab. 6. Paths of Volatility in Parliamentary Elections.

	2016 vs. 2011	2016 vs. 2007	2016 vs. 2003	2016 vs. 1999	2016 vs. 1995	2016 vs. 1993
"United Russia"	0.88*** (0.75***)	0.83*** (0.65***)	0.8*** (0.5***)	FAR 0.41** (0.27*) Unity -0.04 (-0.17)	OHR 0.59*** (0.21)	-
CPRF	0.775*** (0.71***)	0.505*** (0.39**)	0.48*** (0.42**)	0.27* (0.25*)	0.14 (0.23*)	0 (0.195)
LDPR	0.9*** (0.85***)	0.86*** (0.82***)	0.85*** (0.79***)	0.775*** (0.73***)	0.52*** (0.455***)	0.35** (0.26*)
"Just Russia"	0.585*** (0.65***)	0.5*** (0.46***)				
Yabloko	0.89*** (0.9***)	0.93*** (0.84***)	0.77*** (0.72***)	0.57*** (0.6***)	0.59*** (0.65***)	0.51*** (0.46***)

Source: Central Election Commission, author's own archives (for earlier elections). Calculated by author.

Our analysis of United Russia's territorial pattern showed that it appeared right in 2003 when this party started in the national elections. The measurement of "chain" confirms that each territorial pattern in each United Russia's campaign was very similar to the previous one. If course this does not mean no changes at all and Spearman's coefficients being lower than the Pearson's prove that the order of the regions could change significantly.

Considering United Russia's predecessors, we see that the pattern was changing much more significantly from one election to another when no strong "party of power" existed in the 1990s. "United Russia" inherited part of the pattern of "Fatherland – All Russia" because the latter was a typical bureaucratic "party of power" which support was based on the mobilization conducted by the part of regional elites. On the contrary, there is no correlation between the voting patterns of "United Russia" and "Unity". As for "Fatherland – All Russia" it inherited in turn a part of the voting pattern of "Our Home is Russia". But looking at the "path" we see that United Russia's territorial pattern in 2016 is even a bit closer to the one of "Our Home is Russia" rather than that of "Fatherland – All Russia". The reason is that both previous "parties of power" of the 1990s were supported in the ethnic peripheries but "Fatherland – All Russia" also enjoyed high support in the City of Moscow and neighboring Moscow region (due to popularity of Moscow mayor Luzhkov) while "United Russia" did not manage to become popular in the capitals.

Territorial pattern of CPRF is especially interesting because we can track it from the very first State Duma elections in 1993. Earlier we mentioned that CPRF looks like a party ranking second in the process of nationalization of Russia's party system (after "United Russia") but with a longer history of involvement in this process. However, CPRF's territorial pattern is rather unstable if we conceive the whole story of Russia's elections. This pattern combined change and continuity all the time. The most significant continuity could be mentioned in the second half of the 1990s (between the 1995 and 1999 elections). More spatial change happened between 2003 and 2007 (while the result itself did not change much that time). Looking at the "path", we conclude that the existing territorial pattern of CPRF is a product of the 2000s, when "United Russia" appeared and changed the structure of party system while drawing more and more support from the conservative regions (especially in the Central and Southern Russia) formerly known as "red belts". But even the correlation with the 2003 and 2007 elections looks not very strong if significant. Relations of contemporary pattern and those in the 1990s are very weak and not significant at all for the 1993 elections.

Therefore, the analysis of dynamic nationalization raises the question of the role of regional change and continuity, which can unmask serious volatility hidden behind seemingly "good" nationalization scores. CPRF is an example, which makes the vision of Russia's nationalization more complicated. At least we cannot say for sure that the influence of CPRF in this process is very high.

All this makes us think again about the role of LDPR. Support of LDPR has very serious gap in Russia's republics, which makes LDPR less nationalized. However, in the ethnic Russian regions LDPR looks quite stable. Our analysis of dynamic nationalization shows that LDPR's territorial pattern had formed by 1999 and it has been stable since 2003. LDPR even keeps relatively good correlation with the 1993 elections. It looks like LDPR quickly found its niche in Russia's electoral space being party of premier choice for the dissatisfied voters in the Northern and Eastern regions of Russia. While the party system changes, this niche remains intact and no other party could successfully push LDPR out of it. In other words, LDPR has contributed to the nationalization of Russia's party system nor less significantly than CPRF.

In difference with LDPR, a case of Yabloko gives results that are more controversial. On one hand, this party is much localized and cannot be considered an agent of nationalization. On the other hand, its fragmented territorial pattern is very stable by itself and replicated all the time. Yabloko is the only one of the "old" parties with high correlation scores even with the 1993 elections. However, its contemporary territorial pattern was formed in 2007 and 2011 when the electoral results became tiny as compared with the 1990s. The most significant change of spatial pattern happened in 1995.

Despite the similar localization of voting for the right liberals, frequent change of parties and their electoral outcomes cannot produces the same stable pattern that Yabloko keeps. As one may expect the best was the continuity for "The Union of Right Forces", which three times participated in the federal elections. PARNAS in 2016 produced territorial pattern close to the one of "The Right Cause" in the 2011 elections.

Finally, we conclude that "Just Russia" failed to form the territorial pattern similar in its stability to those of other parties presented in the State Duma now. In 2016, this pattern has become even less stable. In conclusion, "Rodina" ("Motherland") which used to be one of constituent parts of "Just Russia" poorly replicated in 2016 its pattern of successful 2003 (Pearson at 0.235* and Spearman at 0.5***).

Thus, the contemporary territorial pattern of the Russia's voting appeared with the formation of the current party system dominated by "United Russia". After the consolidation of regional elites under its banner, "United Russia" became the main factor of electoral space's stability. Among the new parties, "Just Russia" has failed to create similarly stable pattern. At the same time, "United Russia" influenced upon the territorial pattern of CPRF, which is continuously changing producing contradiction between its rather even geography in every election and changes of this geography from one election to another. From this point LDPR is formally less "nationalized" than CPRF but manages to keep much more stable territorial pattern. Finally, although the territorial pattern of voting has mostly been formed after the 2003 elections, some significant traces of pro-liberal and pro-LDPR patterns appeared in the 1990s remain.

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