Post-Soviet Affairs
Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rpsa20

Regional patrons and hegemonic party electoral performance in Russia

Ora John Reuter [a] [b]

[a] Department of Political Science , Skalny Center, University of Rochester , Rochester , NY , USA

[b] International Center for the Study of Institutions and Development, Higher School of Economics , Moscow , Russia

Published online: 14 May 2013.

To cite this article: Ora John Reuter (2013): Regional patrons and hegemonic party electoral performance in Russia, Post-Soviet Affairs, 29:2, 101-135

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1060586X.2013.780410

Post-Soviet Affairs, 2013
Vol. 29, No. 2, 101–135, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1060586X.2013.780410

Regional patrons and hegemonic party electoral performance in Russia

Ora John Reuter[a,b]*

[a]*Department of Political Science, Skalny Center, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY, USA;* [b]*International Center for the Study of Institutions and Development, Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia*

A political scientist examines how regional elites shape the electoral fortunes of Russia's hegemonic party, United Russia (UR). Using original data on regional legislative elections from 2003 to 2011, we show that UR performs better in those regions where regional governors control strong political machines. Russia's leadership undercut its own electoral strategy by replacing popular elected governors with colorless bureaucrats who struggled to mobilize votes on behalf of United Russia. This is one of the reasons for United Russia's poor performance in recent elections.

Keywords: United Russia; elections; regional politics; political machines; political parties; governors

Most modern authoritarian regimes govern via nominally democratic institutions, such as parties, elections, and legislatures. One of the most important authoritarian institutions is the hegemonic party. Hegemonic parties are ruling parties in authoritarian regimes that dominate multi-party elections (Magaloni 2006; Reuter and Gandhi 2011). Some prominent examples of hegemonic parties include the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in Mexico, ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe, United Malays National Organization (UMNO) in Malaysia, National Democratic Party (NDP) in Egypt, and United Russia (UR) in Russia. Recent scholarship suggests that the survival of these parties depends upon much more than just repression and fraud. Instead, these parties are seen to thrive when the opposition is fragmented, when the regime controls a large public economy that can be used to distribute patronage, when they can successfully buy voters with social spending before elections, and when the leader is popular (Magaloni 2006; Greene 2007; Blaydes 2011; see also Gill 2012).

Existing accounts of hegemonic party strength feature rulers, society, opposition parties, or the hegemonic party itself as the central actors. These accounts usually ignore regional elites as actors in their own right. Incorporating regional patrons into the study of hegemonic parties helps us gain a better understanding not only of why established hegemonic parties lose, but also of why incipient ruling parties transform into successful hegemonic parties. With respect to Russia, focusing on

*Email: ojreuter@gmail.com

regional elites helps explain both UR's electoral successes and the party's poor performance in parliamentary elections in 2011.

My argument relies on the premise that regional patrons – governors, landlords, bosses, chiefs, caciques, clan leaders, strongmen, influential businessmen, or other local politicians – are key actors, whose political machines and clientelist networks are powerful vote-mobilizing tools. As a minimum condition, nascent hegemonic parties must attract a critical mass of these actors if they hope to win elections by large margins. Thus, hegemonic parties bind together these local political machines and put them to work for the hegemonic party. Repressing or destroying these elites can be prohibitively costly because doing so undermines the vote-getting capacity of the hegemonic party.

In turn, hegemonic parties win more votes when the regional patrons who mobilize votes on behalf of the regime are authoritative and influential. In other words, ruling parties become hegemonic and remain hegemonic when the regional elites who support the party have the resources, machines, and/or authority to dependably generate popular support for the regime.

I examine this explanation and competing explanations of hegemonic party survival using original data on the electoral performance of Russia's hegemonic party, UR, in regional legislative elections between 2003 and 2011. I find that UR performs better in elections when the regional governors who support it are influential and authoritative. Such governors translated their electoral machines into votes for UR. I measure the electoral influence of Russia's regional governors using: (1) popularity ratings from mass surveys, (2) the size of the governor's own electoral mandate, (3) the governor's tenure in office, and (4) the depth of the governor's ties to the region prior to attaining office. The effect of governor popularity on UR's electoral performance remains strong even while controlling for President/Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's popularity in the region. As I show, the most popular governors in the appointment era were those who first attained office through elections prior to the cancellation of gubernatorial elections in 2004. As popular elected governors with deep ties to the region and robust clientelist networks were slowly replaced with unpopular, appointed bureaucrats, the regime undermined its own ability to mobilize votes.

Competing explanations of hegemonic party electoral performance perform less well. There is little evidence that political budget cycles (PBCs) (Magaloni 2006) or large public economies (Greene 2007) determine UR's vote totals. Nor does the cohesion of the opposition seem to undermine UR's vote totals (Howard and Roessler 2006). And perhaps surprisingly, once we control for exogenous region-level factors, Putin's own popularity in the region appears to have little effect on UR's electoral performance. However, repression does seem to increase the UR vote share. Finally, there is mixed evidence that high unemployment undermines UR's vote totals, but economic growth has no effect.

The findings point to one of the reasons that UR has recently stumbled in elections. In December 2011, UR won only a slim majority in the State Duma and turned in its worst performance since 2006 in regional legislative elections. Lay accounts of this electoral failure focus on the rise of a middle class and increased popular demand for

open politics. But according to the perspective offered here, UR's decline has a great deal to do with elite politics. In an effort to control strong regional patrons, the Kremlin replaced direct gubernatorial elections with a system of appointments. As powerful elected governors were replaced with colorless bureaucrats, who exercised little authority among local elites, UR's vote totals suffered.

UR's performance in the October 2012 regional legislative elections confirms this trend. In those six elections, UR won, on average, 59.2% of the vote, compared with only 44% in regional elections held in December 2011. However, by chance, half the governors in these six regions were strong, elected governors who had been reappointed precisely because they were effective vote-mobilizers (Tkachev in Krasnodar, Bozhkaryev in Penzenskaya *Oblast*', and Volkov in Udmurtskaya *Oblast*'). By contrast, in December 2011, governors were elected in only 8 of 26 races. What is more, all the governors in the regions holding legislative elections in October 2012 had built their political careers in the region. In the December 2011 regional elections, half of the governors had no ties to the region prior to coming to office. Thus, the October 2012 elections demonstrate the importance of regional political machines to UR.

Poor performance in the December 2011 elections spurred UR's leaders to try new tactics in the October 2012 regional elections. These included nominating new candidates and relying more on local opinion leaders to help win elections. A continued shift toward relying on popular politicians could improve the regime's electoral fortunes. At the same time, low voter turnout during these elections – particularly in urban areas – demonstrates that the regime is increasingly relying on administrative resources, not popular enthusiasm for regional authorities, to win elections.

Undermining existing systems of social control can be costly to authoritarian rulers. Replacing popular governors with strong electoral machines would have – and in many cases did – cost Russia's rulers dearly at the ballot box. This story illustrates an irony identified by Migdal (1988), in which rulers undermine the very institutions that could help them govern for fear that those institutions could be used to challenge their authority. Indeed, the findings suggest that sub-national elections can be beneficial to authoritarian leaders because the competition they engender allows regional patrons to cultivate the electoral machines that help the regime win elections.

Theories of hegemonic party electoral performance

Hegemonic party regimes are those authoritarian regimes in which a single party, affiliated with the regime, dominates multi-party elections. The hegemonic party typically controls access to many, but not necessarily all, important political offices, shares powers of policy making and patronage distribution, and uses privileged access to state resources to maintain its position in power. Hegemonic party regimes bind together elite coalitions by providing institutional guarantees about how spoils will be distributed in the future. Because hegemonic parties reduce elite uncertainty and decrease the likelihood of defections, hegemonic party regimes are more stable than authoritarian regimes without strong ruling parties (Magaloni 2008).

One of the most common explanations of hegemonic party survival is economic performance. Although they are more robust to economic crises than other types of regimes, hegemonic party regimes still appear to be stabilized by economic prosperity (Magaloni 2006; Colton and Hale 2009). Economic performance in these regimes is also affected by government spending, however, as incumbents use budgetary resources to buy votes and support. Several studies have attributed hegemonic party survival to vote-buying organized around increased social spending at election time (Magaloni 2006; Blaydes 2011).

It has also been argued that hegemonic parties are most vulnerable when they lack access to public resources that can be used for partisan gain (Greene 2007). Indeed, it is difficult to gainsay the notion that control over a large public sector and a subservient bureaucracy gives hegemonic parties both the means and the opportunity to buy support in society. Public funds can be used to fund election campaigns and pork-barrel spending, while government jobs can be used as patronage. A large government sector makes economic elites dependent on the state for access to markets, government contracts, and, for those in state-owned enterprises (SOEs), career success. Finally, the nature of the opposition also matters. Scholars have argued persuasively that hegemonic party regimes survive longer when the opposition is divided (Howard and Roessler 2006; Magaloni 2006).

Finally, turning more specifically to Russia, popular wisdom suggests that UR's electoral success depends on Putin's own charisma and popularity. Although survey evidence indicates that the picture is much more complex (Hale 2008), this explanation for UR's electoral performance remains one of the most prevalent among observers.

Argument

What many existing accounts of hegemonic party electoral performance miss is the incentives and ability of other elites, outside the central leadership of a country, to mobilize votes for the ruling party. By elites I mean individual actors who exercise influence in society and demand loyalty from other political actors. They may be landowners, caciques, bosses, chiefs, local warlords, clan leaders, strongmen, enterprise managers, regional governors, influential politicians, or opinion leaders in society. Such elites, and especially regional elites, consistently have been key players in the center-periphery struggles that have defined politics in so much of the nondemocratic world (Migdal 1988).

The account of hegemonic electoral performance offered here shares this emphasis on elites.[1] Specifically, it demonstrates *how* the vote totals of hegemonic parties depend crucially on the strength of regional patrons who mobilize votes on the regime's behalf. The argument starts from the premise that hegemonic parties mobilize votes through a series of principal-agent networks, where the dictator or ruling group occupies the role of the principal and regional patrons occupy the role of agents. In electoral regimes around the world, such local patrons use their influence, authority, and control over clientelist networks to mobilize voters.

Indeed, the study of how electoral machines work has a long pedigree in political science and post-Soviet studies.[2] Such political machines are based upon asymmetric yet mutually dependent ties between a patron and multiple clients. Clients provide patrons with political support that patrons can use as leverage in their relationships with other actors, who may include other patrons, central state leaders, or organized groups. In return, patrons distribute benefits to clients, including careers, spoils, rents, transfers of material benefits, and/or protection. The relationship is asymmetric because clients are *individually* subordinate to the patron. In many countries, electoral outcomes depend crucially upon how these patrons instruct their clientelist networks to vote. Patrons may mobilize their individual clients directly, or using their levers of control, may encourage their elite clients to mobilize their own subordinates.

Local patrons may use their political machines in order to advance their own narrow interests, often at the expense of central authority. In Russia in the 1990s, powerful Russian governors often mobilized their regional electoral machines to support opposition presidential candidates and secure the election of deputies in the State Duma who would support decentralization (Hale 2006). In hegemonic party regimes, however, regional elites put their political machines to work *for* the regime.[3] Because these local notables are such important vote mobilizers, hegemonic parties need their support in order to secure high-vote totals. As a minimum condition, then, hegemonic parties must draw support from a critical mass of these local patrons.[4]

Given this minimum condition, what explains variation in the performance of hegemonic parties that have attracted the support of the most important regional elites? Why do some *new* ruling parties blossom into stable electoral hegemons, while others falter? And, why do some established hegemonic parties continue to win large majorities, while others lose ground to the opposition?

Hegemonic parties put their electoral fortunes, I argue, in the hands of local patrons, whether these are regional governors, tribal leaders, bosses, landowners, or other local strongmen. These local patrons mobilize regime support because their opportunities for career advancement and spoils depend on it; local cadres who demonstrate political loyalty and competence by using their resources to mobilize regime support are more likely to be promoted or reappointed (Blaydes 2011; Reuter and Robertson 2012). Thus, it stands to reason that hegemonic parties win more votes when the local patrons who support them are authoritative, overseeing robust clientelist networks and/or exercising significant popularity in their locality. At the sub-national level, which is the level of analysis that I examine here, hegemonic parties will win more votes in those regions where the party's local vote brokers are authoritative patrons. Conversely, hegemonic parties will win fewer votes as the authority of local patrons wanes.

Analyzing hegemonic party performance in Russia: the dependent variable

I examine the above propositions using data on the performance of Russia's hegemonic party, UR, in regional legislative elections. There are several reasons

why Russia is a good laboratory for testing theories of hegemonic party performance. First, the recent nature of UR's emergence as a hegemonic party facilitates examination of both hegemonic party emergence and survival. Many well-known dominant parties, such as the PRI in Mexico, the Kuomintang in Taiwan, or UMNO in Malaysia, have their origins in the early or mid-twentieth century. This makes collecting data on their early development difficult. Second, Russia's 89 regions, each of which elects a regional legislature every four to six years, provide a treasure trove of variation on many political, social, and economic dimensions.[5] Many existing explanations of dominant party performance have not been subjected to comparative analysis, because data are not available for a large-cross section of countries. This study takes advantage of rich, original data on the Russian regions. Third, using sub-national variation to test hypotheses of dominant party performance allows one to hold constant some important national-level explanations of dominant party strength, such as origins of the party. Russia's dominant party did not emerge out of a need to co-opt a strong opposition (Smith 2005), nor did it emerge from the throes of a revolutionary struggle (Huntington 1968), nor as a bulwark against endemic contentious politics (Slater 2011).[6] Fourth, Russia is an important and influential electoral authoritarian regime that serves as a model for other authoritarian rulers, especially in the post-Soviet region.

In spite of all this, Russia's hegemonic party remains understudied. Scholars have described its domination of elections and legislatures, but empirical studies of its performance in elections are few (Gel'man 2006; Smyth et al. 2007; Reuter and Remington 2009).[7] More importantly, few scholars use the theoretical frameworks developed in the neo-institutional study of authoritarian regimes to study UR. Analyses of UR can be improved by viewing it in light of this literature, and, in turn, the study of Russia's authoritarian institutions can contribute to the appraisal and refinement of theory on the operation of institutions in modern authoritarian regimes.

This analysis focuses on the party's electoral performance in *regional* legislatures for several reasons. First, as noted, regional elections offer a plethora of variations on key independent variables across time. Second, these are important electoral events that provide crucial information to the regime, both about the distribution of voter support and about the political performance of sub-national elites, who are charged with mobilizing votes (Reuter and Robertson 2012). In Putin-era Russia, national elections thus far have been held every four years. In the interim period, the regime uses the thousands of regional and local elections that take place to gauge voter support and cadre performance.

Russian regional legislatures have the power to pass regional laws, approve budgets, amend the regional charter, override gubernatorial vetoes, and, in some cases, confirm/reject appointments to the governor's cabinet. Thus, it has been very important for the Kremlin to control regional legislatures, and it has done so via its hegemonic party, UR. As authoritarian institutions, regional legislative elections determine which prominent ruling party members in a region – usually members of the regional business elite – are afforded access to the spoils associated with a parliamentary seat, including immunity from criminal

prosecution, an elevated public profile, and a platform for lobbying one's personal business interests.

I analyze regional legislative elections that have taken place between December 2003 and December 2011. This period corresponds to the entire era during which UR participated on the party-list ballot in regional elections. Prior to 2003, the vast majority of Russia's regional legislatures were elected on the basis of single-member districts (SMD) and first-past-the-post electoral systems. Most deputies – 86% from 1999 to 2003 – were elected as independents (Golosov 2003; Moraski 2006).

The pervasiveness of independents in official electoral results makes it difficult to assess the distribution of vote shares in elections held prior to 2003. Beginning in December 2003, however, changes in Russia's electoral law required all regional legislatures to elect at least half of their members on party lists. Since then the vast majority of regional elections have taken place under mixed electoral systems, with an essentially even balance between SMD and party list seats.[8] UR has fielded a party list in every regional legislative election since the electoral reform.

Thus, the dependent variable in this study is the share of the party-list vote won by UR in the 166 regional elections that have taken place since December 2003. Party-list vote share is more appropriate as a dependent variable than the overall share of seats won by UR because the latter is influenced heavily by the individual characteristics of the SMD candidates in a given race and, consequently, is more idiosyncratic.[9]

Figure 1 displays the average share of seats and the average party-list vote won by UR on each unified election day from 2003 to 2011.[10] UR's vote share improved from 2003 until late 2010 and then began to fall. All regions do not hold

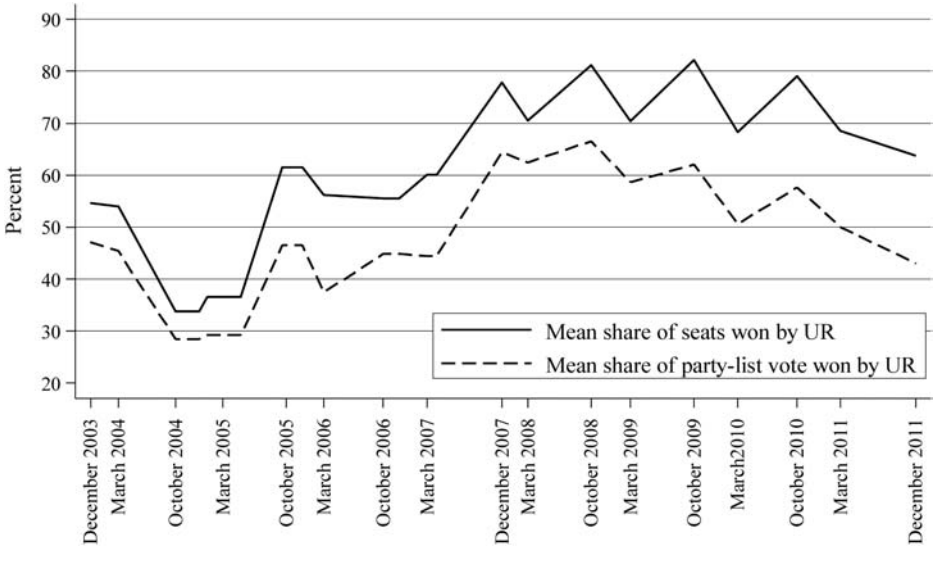

Figure 1. UR performance in regional legislative elections.
Source: Author's database and calculations.

their elections simultaneously. From 2003 to 2005, elections were held in various regions at irregular intervals throughout the year. Since March 2006, all Russian elections, except by-elections, have been held once in the spring and once in the fall on 'unified election days.' The average number of regions holding legislative elections on unified election days is 11.4.

Regional elites and UR's electoral performance

My argument is that the electoral performance of hegemonic parties depends upon the power and influence of the regional patrons who support it. The most important regional patrons in post-Soviet Russia are the regional heads of administration – governors, as they are commonly known. In the 1990s, regional governors used their formal and informal control over state property, budget resources, law enforcement organs, regional bureaucracies, and ethnic patronage networks to construct powerful political machines. Governors then used their machines to secure the election of preferred candidates in regional and national elections (Hale 2003).

In the early 2000s, President Putin initiated a series of recentralizing reforms that sought to reduce the influence of regional governors in federal politics. These reforms culminated in a law that replaced direct election of regional executives with a system of appointments, so that, since 2005, all governors serve at the pleasure of the president. But even as appointed officials, regional governors remained by far the most powerful players in Russian regional politics. Their power rested upon a combination of carrots, sticks, patron–client ties, and popular support. With respect to the first, governors use control over government contracts, tax incentives, and enterprise subsidies to influence regional business. In turn, firm directors encourage their employees to turn out and vote appropriately (e.g., Fish 2005). With respect to sticks, governors use their power over regulatory agencies, law enforcement bodies, and judiciaries to harass and intimidate actual or would-be opponents.[11] It is not unusual for an opposition businessman to discover that his factory is in violation of safety codes or that he owes back taxes.

Simultaneously, governors retained and sometimes strengthened their control over extensive patron–client networks in the 2000s. In the regional executive bureaucracy, governors exercised total control over appointments, and used these appointments to reward allies. In return, regional bureaucrats could then be counted on to mobilize the vote, inducing their employees to vote on behalf of UR and making government resources, such as public spaces, available to UR candidates. These patron–client networks also reach outside the executive bureaucracy to include organs of local self-government, electoral commissions, judiciaries, enterprises, and regional legislatures.

These are asymmetric, mutually dependent relationships between the governor and the regional elite. Governors' clients depend on *personal* links with their patron for access to rents and career advancement, so these clients have a *vested* interest in supporting the governor's political career. Such machines, built not only

on carrots and sticks, but also on self-interested, reciprocal relationships, are powerful tools for mobilizing popular support.

In the appointment era, the Kremlin sometimes replaced sitting governors with outsiders who had few ties to the region.[12] These outsiders often found it difficult to find accommodation with local elites and, consequently, struggled to quickly construct extensive patron–client networks (see, e.g., Kynev 2007; Petrov 2010). For this reason, UR should perform worse in regions with outsider governors.

Another element of governor power in the 2000s was popular support. Popular support is a function of the carrots, sticks, and patron–client networks at the governor's disposal. Governors who successfully control the media and motivate local elites to mobilize support on their behalf are likely to have a higher popularity rating. Undoubtedly, of course, the direction of causality also runs the other way, as popular governors find it easier to attract loyal clients. Indeed, many regional governors were intrinsically popular as elected politicians. The gubernatorial corpus in place in 2005 had cut its teeth on direct elections that were, at times, quite competitive. And those who survived these contests owed much of their success to political skill or charisma.

To be sure, the strength of gubernatorial machines varied as did the intrinsic popularity of governors. I hypothesize that UR will perform better in those regions where governors were stronger in these resources. Given the centrality of popularity, both as a cause and consequence of governor power, I take it as one of the three primary measures of governor influence. UR should perform better in elections when governors are popular.

I measure the popularity of Russian governors using data from a series of massive surveys, called GeoRatings, conducted by the Public Opinion Foundation (Fond Obshchestvennoye Mneniye or FOM). These surveys draw representative samples of the population in 68 Russian regions four times a year.[13] In these surveys, respondents were asked: 'Do you think the leader of your region is doing a good job or a bad job?' I use the percentage of respondents who think their governor is doing a good job in the most recent survey before regional elections as an indicator of the governor's influence and call this variable *Governor's Popularity*. Data on this variable are only available until November 2010. For regional elections occurring in December 2011, I use the November 2010 measures of governor popularity.[14]

If *Governor's Popularity* is merely a function of popular support for the regime in a region, then this measure is of limited value as an exogenous indicator of regional patron strength. To say that regime support leads to higher UR's vote totals tells us little. Yet there are compelling reasons to think that *Governor's Popularity* is not simply determined by levels of support for Putin or UR. First, as noted above, a large literature suggests that the power of Russia's most influential governors was exogenously determined by local factors in the 1990s (see Hale 2003). Second, while region-level polling data on UR's popularity rating are not available, regional data on *Putin's Popularity* are available from the same FOM GeoRating surveys. Popular wisdom suggests that UR owes much of its electoral success to its association with Putin. Perhaps surprisingly, the correlation between

the popularity of Russian governors and Putin's regional popularity rating between 2003 and 2010 is not exceedingly tight ($r = 0.31$). In any case, treating this issue as an omitted variable problem, I control for *Putin's Popularity* in all models that use *Governor's Popularity* as a predictor.

In addition, I employ three other measures of governor authority which are significantly more exogenous. The first is the *Governor's Margin of Victory* in his most recent gubernatorial election. This variable is coded as 0 if the governor is appointed. As noted, the cancellation of direct gubernatorial elections did not mean that all sitting elected governors were fired. To the contrary, as late as 2010, 42 of Russia's 83 governors had been elected prior to 2005.

Governor's Margin of Victory has been used in previous work to measure the strength of Russian governors (Robertson 2007; Golosov 2011), and it is available for all observations in the sample. It also has the advantage of tapping several dimensions of governor influence, aside from popularity. Elected governors, by virtue of their longer tenure in office, were more likely to develop strong clientelist networks in the 1990s or early 2000s, when opportunities for machine-building were abundant. Moreover, electoral competition gave these governors extra incentive to do so. Those who won by large margins frequently owed their victories to well-developed electoral machines. It is highly unlikely that these governors' electoral victories were determined by latent support for Putin or UR, since all the electoral victories used to calculate the measure would have occurred between 1999 and 2004, a time when federal influence in the regions was still limited, and the ruling party was having great difficulty getting its gubernatorial candidates elected (Hale 2005).

Two other measures of governor's authority tap exogenous sources of governors' machines more directly: *Governor's Tenure* in office and the *Governor's Regional Ties*. The first is simply a continuous variable measuring the number of years that a governor has held office. Longer-serving governors have more time to develop the clientelist networks needed to mobilize votes and, therefore, UR should perform better in regions with long-serving governors. *Regional Ties* is an additive scale comprising three components: (1) a dummy variable for whether the governor is born in the region, (2) a dummy variable for whether the governor went to university in the region, and (3) a dummy variable for whether the governor worked in the region for more than five years. The three dummy variables are added together to make the scale, so that a governor with a score of 3 was born in the region, went to university there, and worked there for more than five years. As noted above, governors with strong ties to the region are more likely to be embedded in local patron–client networks that can help them mobilize votes at election time.

A governor's influence will only bring electoral benefits to the dominant party if that influence is channeled into support for the party. In 72% of regional elections since 2003, governors were members of UR. Oftentimes, however, non-party members still deployed regional administrative resources on behalf of the party, because generating high vote totals for the ruling party was one of the primary criteria that the Kremlin established for reappointing governors. At the

same time, many governors, especially before 2006, refrained from binding themselves too closely to the party by becoming formal members, lest the party leadership in Moscow restrict their freedom of maneuver.

I expect that governor resources will have a stronger effect on UR's vote total when the governor is a UR member. When the governor is not a UR member, the effect of a governor's popularity and influence is unclear because some nonmembers campaigned for the party, while in 2003 and 2004, a handful of nonmembers worked against the party. To test this, I interact the measures of governor influence with a variable called *URMember*, which is equal to 1 if the governor is a UR member in the month of the election and 0 otherwise.

Alternative explanations

There are several theories of hegemonic party survival in the literature but few attempts to test them comparatively.[15] The most straightforward explanation of hegemonic party survival is economic performance legitimacy. Hegemonic parties should perform better in elections when the economy is doing well (Magaloni 2006; Colton and Hale 2009). I use two measures of economic performance here: *Unemployment* in the year prior to the election and *GRP Growth* in the year prior to the election. The latter is a measure of total output, analogous to GDP, for the regional level.

Greene (2010) argues that dominant parties remain dominant when they control a large public economy that can be exploited for partisan gain. I use two measures of the size of the public economy here. First, I use the percentage of the workforce employed in the public sector, *Size of Public Sector Workforce*. Both government employees and employees of SOEs are counted as public sector employees. His measure directly taps the key mechanism linking the size of the public economy and dominant party survival, namely, government levers over economic activity. Second, in the Appendix, I use government share of investment in fixed capital, *Government Investment*, as another proxy for the role of the government in the economy.[16]

The measures mentioned above do not tap the size of the budget, so they do a less than perfect job of capturing the ability of the government to engage in pork-barrel spending. But rather than examine the *capacity* of the state to trade social services for votes, I examine the *mechanism* directly by looking at whether increases in government spending before elections translate into higher vote totals for the ruling party. Dominant parties, it is said, capitalize on their control of the public coffers by spending lavishly prior to elections (Magaloni 2006; Blaydes 2011). To examine whether large PBCs translate into higher vote totals for UR, I use original, monthly data on regional government expenditures in Russia and follow a modified version of a method used by Akhmedov and Zhuravskaya (2004) to examine how pre-electoral deviations in government spending patterns affect vote totals for a candidate or party.[17] This variable is called *PBC Amplitude*. If pre-election spending boosts UR's vote totals, then this variable should be positive.[18]

Repression is another explanation for UR's electoral success. Targeted coercion is used to silence opposition figures and intimidate opposition party donors. The authorities use formal control over state media outlets and, sometimes, informal control of private outlets to provide positive coverage for UR. Measures of repression are notoriously difficult to construct. As a proxy, I use a measure of media freedom in the Russian regions constructed by the Glasnost Defense Foundation (*Fond Zashchity Glasnosti*). This measure is an expert ranking ranging from 1 to 3, where 1 is 'Not Free' and 3 is 'Fairly Free.' The coefficient on this variable should be negative if UR performs worse in regions with more *Press Freedom*.

Institutional factors may also play a role. As noted above, most regional legislatures are elected through a mixed electoral system, but 13 regions have moved to elect all their deputies on party lists, as the State Duma does. Given that UR cannot rely on disproportionality in SMD races to boost its vote total in these contests, party leaders may have extra incentive to focus energy and resources on winning votes in the party-list component such that UR party-list shares are higher in these races. I include a variable called *Only PR* to test this.

The electoral calendar may also matter. Specifically, UR's regional campaigns may benefit from a national coattails effect when regional elections are held concurrently with national elections. In December 2003, March 2004, December 2007, March 2008, and December 2011, regional legislative elections were held on the same day as either presidential or national legislative elections. During these campaigns, UR's regional legislative campaigns benefited from the organizational effort and positive media coverage exerted on behalf the Kremlin's presidential campaign or UR's State Duma campaign. This control variable is called *Concurrent Election*. All models also include yearly fixed effects to account for heterogeneity in UR's performance by year.

Another potentially important institutional feature of regional elections is ballot order. In the USA, studies have found that being listed first on the ballot increases vote share (Ho and Imai 2008). According to Russian election law, ballot order is randomly assigned, but the data show that this is not the practice. UR was 'fortunate' enough to receive the top spot on the party-list ballot in 70 of the 166 regional elections. The average number of lists in each election was 5.8, with a maximum of 13 and a minimum of 2. Given these figures, the probability that UR would have randomly received the top spot on the ballot in 70 or more elections is 1 in 1.5 trillion. Thus, while I expect ballot order to have a positive effect on UR vote share as a result of the actual ballot position, ballot order also reflects fraudulent electoral practices. I include a variable, *UR Heads Ballot*, equal to 1 if UR was listed first on the party-list ballot and 0 if it was not.

In addition to its hypothesized dependence on gubernatorial machines, UR's vote total may also depend on voters' orientations toward its leader, Vladimir Putin. Therefore, I include *Putin's Popularity Rating* in the month of the election as a regressor. Higher popularity ratings for Putin should translate into higher vote totals for the ruling party.

Other regional elites may also matter. Golosov has found that UR performs worse in elections when prominent figures from the local elite spurn UR affiliation

to run on the party list of an opposition party (Golosov 2011). To test whether such elite conflict undermines UR's electoral performance, I used Golosov's method of measuring elite conflict and construct a variable coded 1 if a vice-governor, Federation Council senator, chair of the regional legislature, or mayor of a city in the region with more than 100,000 residents runs in the top three spots on an opposition-party list.[19] This variable, *Elite Conflict*, is very proximate to the outcome of interest, and I expect that it is in large part determined by the authority of the governor in a region. But if *Elite Conflict* has an independent effect, its coefficient should be negative.

The nature of the opposition is also thought to have an effect on hegemonic party performance. Regime change is more likely in authoritarian regimes when the opposition presents a united front (Howard and Roessler 2006). When the opposition is fragmented, dominant parties need not win by large margins. Thus, I include a variable, *Opposition Fragmentation*, which is the effective number of opposition parties in the legislative election. If opposition fragmentation improves dominant party vote shares, then the coefficient on this variable should be positive.[20]

The ethnic makeup of the region may also have an independent impact on dominant party emergence and survival.[21] In Russia, those regions with large nonRussian populations tend to be the least democratic and feature the most autocratic political machines (Matsuzato 2001; Hale 2003; Remington 2011). Fraud and the use of administrative resources are extensive here, and UR routinely wins over 90% of the vote in some ethnic republics. Therefore, I expect that UR will perform better in ethnic regions. I include a variable called *Percent Russian*, which is the percentage of the population in a region that is Russian, to test this. The coefficient should be negative.

Finally, I control for the wealth of the region with *Log GRP per Capita*, and the level of urbanization, *Urbanization*. Magaloni (2006) shows that the PRI performed better in poor regions where it could buy votes. Similarly, it has been suggested that dominant party machines depend on the mobilization of populations who are dependent on the state, which indicates that UR should perform better in rural areas. Because of well-known issues with ecological inference, I do not draw strong conclusions from these variables. Survey research is better positioned to uncover the individual-level determinants of the dominant party vote.

Lastly, in two robustness checks in the Appendix, I control for the share of the vote received by UR in the 2003 Duma elections, *UR 2003 Vote Share*. Surveys suggest that the ideological composition of UR's support base has remained relatively stable since 2003, so this variable can be seen to capture unmodeled heterogeneity in UR's baseline level of support. With the inclusion of this control and *Putin's Popularity*, we can be more confident that *Governor's Popularity* reflects the governor's authority and not ideological support for the regime.

Model estimation and results

The dependent variable is continuous, so I estimate all models using simple ordinary least squares regression. The data are panel data with election years (T)

nested within regions (*N*). There are a large number of regions (*N*), each of which held a small number of elections (*T*) from 2003 to 2011. *N* varies between 70 and 83, while *T* is 2 for 70 of 83 regions.[22] Given the extremely short panels, most econometric methods for time-series cross-sectional data are not appropriate. Nonetheless, variance in the error structure may be attributable to nonobservable, region-specific factors that make UR perform better in some regions. This would artificially depress standard errors. Therefore, I cluster robust standard errors on region. Clustered standard errors take into account unit heterogeneity in the error structure and, along with it, the most likely source of serial correlation in the data.[23] All models include year-fixed effects. The results are shown in Table 1.

Model 1 shows the results, with *Governor's Popularity* as the key independent variable. Model 2 uses *Governor's Margin of Victory* as the key independent variable. Models 3 and 4 introduce the interactions between *URMember* and *Governor's Popularity* and *Governor's Margin of Victory*, respectively. Models 5 and 6 include the indicators of governor embeddedness in the region, *Governor's Tenure* and *Regional Ties*. The first six models omit *GRP Growth* and *PBC amplitude* because these variables are only available for the period between 2003 and 2010. Model 7 includes these variables. Model 8 omits all measures of governor resources, but includes *Putin's Popularity* to show that collinearity is not driving the findings on the measures of governor resources.

The results indicate strong support for the hypothesis that UR's regional party-list vote share depends upon the influence of the regional governor. As Model 1 shows, controlling for potential confounders, increasing the popularity of the governor by 50 points would add 10 percentage points to UR's regional vote total. Similar results are found for *Governor's Margin of Victory*. A 50-point increase in the governor's margin of victory would add 5.3 percentage points to UR's vote total.

The effects are even starker when we take into account the interaction with *URMember*. Consider the conditional coefficients shown in Table 2, taken from Models 3 and 4. As Column 1 shows, the effect of *Governor's Popularity* on UR's vote share is 20 times larger when the governor is a member of UR. The popularity of the governor has little to no effect when the governor is not a member of UR. When the governor is a UR member, a 50-point increase in the governor's popularity increases UR's vote share by 15%. The effect of *Governor's Margin of Victory* also varies substantially, depending on whether the governor is a member of UR.[24]

In Models 1 and 2, *URMember* is included on its own as a regressor, without any interaction. The coefficient is positive, but insignificant. This is not surprising, given the fact, as noted above, that many governors who wished to retain their autonomy, but still win favor with the Kremlin, mobilized the vote for UR, but eschewed formal party membership. At the same time, many weak and unpopular governors joined UR early in an attempt to demonstrate fealty to the Kremlin and avoid replacement (Reuter 2010).

The coefficients on the alternative measures of governor strength bear out theoretical expectation as well. UR performs better in regions where governors

Table 1. Determinants of UR's party-list vote share in regional elections.

Variable	Model (1)	Model (2)	Model (3)	Model (4)	Model (5)	Model (6)	Model (7)	Model (8)	Model (9)
Governor's Popularity	0.21**		0.02				0.24**		
	(0.05)		(0.07)				(0.07)		
Putin's Popularity	−0.15		−0.17			−0.14	−0.02	−0.14	−0.17
	(0.12)		(0.11)			(0.12)	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.13)
Governor's Margin of Victory		0.10**		−0.01					
		(0.04)		(0.05)					
Unemployment	−1.21*	0.20	−1.15**	0.22	0.11	−1.48**		−1.54**	−1.53*
	(0.62)	(0.25)	(0.55)	(0.24)	(0.29)	(0.57)		(0.62)	(0.77)
Size of Public Sector Workforce	−0.00	−0.15	0.08	−0.13	−0.11	−0.03	−0.06	0.00	0.02
	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.17)	(0.15)	(0.18)	(0.17)	(0.21)
Press Freedom	−3.95**	−3.52**	−3.67**	−3.83**	−3.82**	−3.39**	−5.49**	−3.19**	
	(1.25)	(1.38)	(1.13)	(1.38)	(1.47)	(1.31)	(1.42)	(1.35)	
Only PR	−5.16**	−0.13	−2.30	0.09	0.63	−1.74	−5.38**	−2.36	−2.95
	(1.95)	(2.42)	(1.84)	(2.42)	(2.59)	(2.86)	(2.32)	(2.69)	(2.65)
Concurrent Election	2.84	2.77	3.35	3.00	2.20	1.87	11.81**	2.03	3.44
	(2.71)	(2.33)	(2.65)	(2.19)	(2.44)	(2.51)	(3.48)	(2.49)	(2.76)
UR Heads Ballot	0.68	2.86	0.69	3.49**	2.68	0.55	1.49	0.57	0.88
	(1.90)	(1.78)	(1.81)	(1.69)	(1.87)	(1.93)	(1.68)	(1.85)	(1.88)
Elite Conflict	−4.09*	−7.94**	−4.34**	−7.49**	−7.15**	−4.97*	−3.28	−5.97**	
	(2.41)	(2.68)	(2.16)	(2.66)	(2.85)	(2.71)	(2.38)	(2.57)	
Opposition Fragmentation	−2.85*	−3.68**	−3.56**	−3.85**	−3.94**	−4.34**	−1.24	−4.06**	
	(1.45)	(1.29)	(1.36)	(1.28)	(1.47)	(1.38)	(1.16)	(1.51)	
Percent Russian	−0.26**	−0.21**	−0.27**	−0.19**	−0.21**	−0.32**	−0.13**	−0.36**	0.38**
	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.10)	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.11)
Log GRP per Capita	0.83	−1.42	1.22	−1.37	−1.44	1.75	1.53	2.36	3.78
	(2.37)	(2.23)	(2.31)	(2.34)	(2.26)	(2.21)	(2.67)	(2.46)	(2.48)

Table 1. (*Continued*)

Variable	Model (1)	Model (2)	Model (3)	Model (4)	Model (5)	Model (6)	Model (7)	Model (8)	Model (9)
Urbanization	−0.14	0.09	−0.19	0.10	0.08	−0.12	0.05	−0.21	−0.33**
	(0.12)	(0.09)	(0.12)	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.15)
UR Member	2.34	1.92	−9.12**	−1.57	3.04	1.30	2.88	1.18	2.99
	(1.93)	(2.08)	(4.18)	(2.65)	(2.18)	(2.22)	(2.16)	(2.05)	2.38
Governor's Popularity × URMem.			0.29**						
			(0.09)						
Margin of Gov. Victory × URMem.				0.14*					
				(0.07)					
UR 2003 Vote Share									
Governor's Tenure					0.39**				
					(0.16)				
Governor's Regional Ties						2.44**			
						(0.81)			
PBC Amplitude							−0.08		
							(2.11)		
GRP Growth							0.23		
							(0.25)		
Constant	93.53**	86.41**	101.08**	85.73**	89.95**	103.68**	6.55	104.86**	70.77*
	(37.45)	(27.11)	(34.07)	(27.21)	(29.23)	(34.88)	(35.04)	(38.49)	(39.82)
Year fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	133	159	132	159	158	137	100	141	141
R^2	0.72	0.65	0.75	0.66	0.64	0.70	0.79	0.67	0.58

Notes: Cell entries are unstandardized OLS coefficients. Robust standard errors clustered on region in parentheses. $^{**}p < 0.05$; $^{*}p < 0.10$
Source: Author's database and calculations.

Table 2. Conditional coefficients of governor influence for UR members and nonmembers.

	Coefficient on Governor's Popularity[a]	Coefficient on Governor's Margin of Victory[a]
Governor is an UR member	0.301 [0.182–0.421]	0.128 [0.037–0.214]
Governor is not an UR member	0.015 [−0.122–0.154]	0.011 [0.011–0.087]

[a] 95% confidence interval indicated in brackets.
Source: Author's database and calculations.

have been in office for a long time, as the positive and significant coefficient on *Governor's Tenure* in Model 5 indicates. Likewise, the positive and significant coefficient on *Governor's Regional Ties* indicates that UR does better in regions where governors are more embedded in regional networks. UR's vote total is 7.5 percentage points higher in regions where the governor was born in the region, went to university in the region, and worked in the region, when compared with regions where the governor had no such ties to the region.[25]

Results on the control variables are of considerable interest as well. Perhaps surprisingly, as the insignificant coefficients on *GRP Growth* show, I find little support for the idea that UR's vote share depends on variation in regional economic growth. However, there is some mixed evidence that UR's vote totals suffer when *Unemployment* is high. The coefficient on this variable is negative and significant in several of the models.

I find little evidence that UR performs better in regions with larger public sectors, as the coefficient on *Size of Public Sector Workforce* is consistently negative and insignificant. I also find little evidence that UR performs better in regions with larger PBCs, as the coefficient on *PBC Amplitude* in Model 7 is insignificant.

Repression does seem to play a substantial role. UR performs significantly better in regions with low levels of press freedom. Indeed, increasing the level of press freedom from the lowest ranking (1) to the highest ranking (3), decreases UR's vote share by 12 percentage points.

Institutional factors play an inconsistent role. *Only PR* is significant and negative in Models 1 and 7, indicating that UR performs worse in elections with only a PR component. But this result is clearly not robust, as the sign of the coefficient is reversed in Models 4 and 5. Models 2, 4, and 5 include the North Caucasus. Thus, it seems that all PR elections reduce UR's vote total in elections outside the North Caucasus, but once we include all PR elections that occurred in Kabardino-Balkaria, Chechnya, Ingushetia, and Dagestan in the sample, the effect of *Only PR* diminishes.

At first glance, the concurrency of regional and national elections does not seem to have an impact on UR's regional vote share: the coefficient on *Concurrent Election* is insignificant in Models 1–6. However, the large, positive, and statistically significant coefficient on *Concurrent Election* in Model 7 illustrates that the absence of an effect in Models 1–6 is due only to the fact that UR performed relatively poorly in the December 2011 regional elections. Model 7

excludes these elections due to missing data on *PBC Amplitude* and *GRP Growth*, and we see that for elections between December 2003 and October 2010 *Concurrent Elections* increased the vote share of UR by over 11 percentage points. Finally, the impact of a favorable ballot position is consistently positive, but *UR Heads Ballot* only reaches conventional levels of statistical significance in Model 4.

The relations of other elites to the party also may matter. The coefficient on *Elite Conflict* is consistently negative, indicating that elite conflict may reduce UR's vote totals. *Opposition Fragmentation* has a negative effect on UR's vote share. This is surprising in light of existing literature which finds that authoritarian regimes benefit from opposition fragmentation. I interpret this unexpected finding in two ways. First, the primary empirical implication from theories of how opposition fragmentation affects hegemonic party survival do not relate to the hegemonic party's vote share. Rather, the argument is that when the opposition vote is divided, the dominant party needs fewer votes in order to maintain its leading position. This is because disproportionality in the translation of votes into seats favors large parties. In the party-list component of Russian regional elections, the minimum vote threshold for attaining seats is high, ranging from 5% to 7%, so the dominant party gains significant seat bonuses when one or more opposition parties fails to clear the threshold. Moreover, when the opposition is divided on the party-list side of the ticket, then it is likely also divided in the SMD component, and dominant party seat gains from disproportionality accrue even faster in first-past-the-post elections. Given this, it may be that hegemonic party leaders actually invest less effort in winning a majority of votes when the opposition is fragmented.

Second, the effective number of opposition parties may just be a proxy for the use of coercion by regional authorities. Regional authorities often deny registration to specific opposition parties. A lower effective number of opposition parties may simply indicate that regional authorities were willing to employ and capable of using especially undemocratic methods to win a given election.

Perhaps surprisingly, *Putin's Popularity* has little impact on UR's vote totals once we control for more exogenous determinants of UR's electoral performance. The fact that *Putin's Popularity* is not significant when the measures of governor popularity are excluded (Model 8) indicates that the insignificant coefficient on this variable is not simply due to its correlation with the measures of governor popularity. In Model 9, I estimate a model that includes *Putin's Popularity* and the most exogenous covariates in the model. The coefficient on *Putin's Popularity* remains insignificant here as well. These results suggest that electoral support for the regime is generated from the bottom up, not from the top down.

The ethnic makeup of the region also seems to matter. The negative coefficient on *Percent Russian* indicates that UR performs better in regions with ethnic majorities or large minorities. In most models, this variable is significant even while controlling for *Press Freedom*, *GRP per capita*, and *Urbanization*.

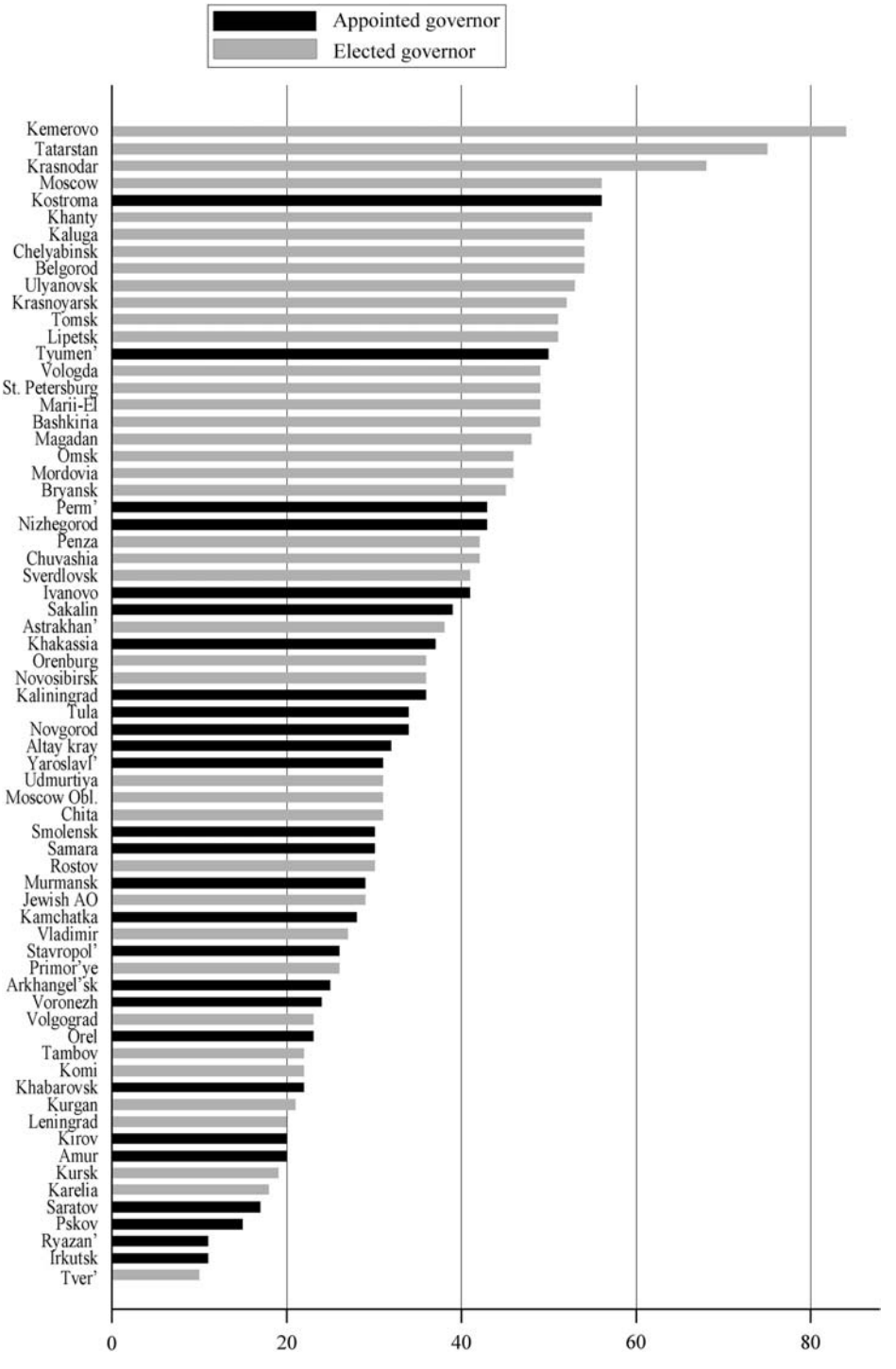

Figure 2. Popularity of elected and appointed governors in 2009.
Source: Author's database and calculations.

UR's electoral performance and the sources of governor popularity

These results provide support for the hypothesis that UR's vote share depends, to a significant degree, on the authority of regional patrons who mobilize votes on its behalf. Both the popularity of the governor and the size of his personal electoral mandate are positively and consistently associated with higher vote totals for UR. Similar findings are obtained using more exogenous measures of governor strength, the governor's tenure in office, and strong ties to the region. All this indicates that hegemonic parties perform better when the regional patrons supporting them are influential and authoritative.

Clearly, though, these findings beg another important question: What determines the power and authority of regional patrons in an electoral authoritarian regime like Russia? In the Appendix, I conduct a secondary statistical analysis of governors' popularity in Russia. The main finding from that analysis is that governors who were elected prior to 2005 are more popular. Over the period from 2005 to 2010, elected governors are 12 percentage points more popular than appointed governors. Figure 2 illustrates the difference in popularity between elected and appointed governors as of 2009.

While controlling for other relevant factors, having an electoral mandate increases the popularity of the governor by 9.2 percentage points. Moreover, this difference in popularity has increased over time such that by 2010 popularly elected governors were 15 percentage points more popular than unelected governors. Thus, UR performs best in those regions with popular governors, and popular governors are those with elected mandates.

In the first years of the appointment era, Putin reappointed many of Russia's most powerful elected governors, since it was known that their machines could win votes for the Kremlin (Goode 2007; Reuter and Robertson 2012). By the late 2000s, however, two processes began to unfold. First, the Kremlin became emboldened to remove popularly elected governors whom it deemed potentially unruly. The unceremonious ouster of Yuriy Luzhkov in September 2010 is a notable instance. Second, the advancing age of many of the most authoritative governors from the 1990s forced them from the political stage. Mintimer Shaymiyev in Tatarstan and Pyotr Sumin in Chelyabinsk are good examples of this trend. New governors dislocate personal ties and create new uncertainties for local elites. Outsider governors, in particular, find it difficult to mobilize votes without easy access to preexisting clientelist networks. Thus, newly appointed governors cannot count on the same level of vote-mobilizing effort. Consequently, the Kremlin undermined its own ability to mobilize votes by canceling gubernatorial elections and subsequently replacing popular elected governors with appointed bureaucrats.

Conclusion

The electoral success of hegemonic parties like UR depends not just on the behavior of regime leaders, voters, and the opposition, but also on the disposition and resources of sub-national patrons. The findings in this article suggest that hegemonic parties win elections by larger margins when the regional elites who support the party have the

resources, machines, and/or authority to dependably generate popular support for the party. Throughout the 2000s, UR's electoral success rested, in large part, on the shoulders of gubernatorial political machines forged during the era when governors were directly elected. As the decade wore on, however, popular governors from the 1990s retired or were replaced if the Kremlin felt it could do without their clientelist networks. Newly appointed governors, however, were often technocrats or politicians with few ties to the region (Buckley et al. 2012). Such governors proved unable to build effective political machines or generate popular enthusiasm for their rule. Largely as a result of this, UR's vote totals began to decrease in 2011.

Thus, the Kremlin undermined its own vote-mobilizing strategy by canceling direct gubernatorial elections. In the wake of anti-regime protests that erupted after the December 2011 parliamentary elections, Russia's leadership introduced a bill in parliament that would reintroduce direct gubernatorial elections, subject to some important constraints on candidate registration. Many saw this as a concession to the opposition, but the findings in this study indicate that it could also be viewed as a gambit to reinvigorate the decentralized model of vote mobilization that had worked so well in the 2000s. Indeed, the findings in this study suggest that semi-competitive sub-national elections can be beneficial to authoritarian leaders because they provide regional patrons with an opportunity to cultivate strong political machines that help the regime win elections. Of course, the success of such a strategy will depend on whether the regime can ensure the election of its candidates and whether the regime would be able to control any such reconstructed electoral machines.

The conclusions of this study leave much room for future research. In particular, much remains to be done to understand why the authority of patrons varies both within Russia and across countries. I find that directly elected governors were more popular than appointed governors in Russia. This suggests that federal countries or those with meaningful histories of political decentralization may be more prone to the type of patron-based regionalism that I have described here. Weak central states are also likely to abet the proliferation of strong regional patrons. Such was the case in Russia in the 1990s. I also find that governors of ethnic regions are more popular and are better at mobilizing the vote for UR. This suggests that countries with ethnic enclaves may be more likely to breed patterns of local clientelism.

Acknowledgements

This article is an output of a research project implemented as part of the Basic Research Program at the National Research University Higher School of Economics (HSE).

Notes

1. To be sure, not all accounts of ruling parties omit elites from the equation. Brownlee (2007) argues that successful dominant parties are those in which rival elite factions put their differences to bed and cooperate within the framework of the ruling party. Slater (2011) also highlights the importance of elite collective action in the construction of a dominant party and further posits that elites will engage in this collective action when they feel threatened by endemic contentious politics.

2. On the USA, see Banfield and Wilson (1963). On Latin America, see Kern (1973), and on Africa, see Clapham (1982). On southern Europe, see Chubb (1982), and on the former Soviet Union, see Hale (2003). And on South Asia, see Weiner (1967) and on South-east Asia, see Scott (1972).
3. As nondemocracies, hegemonic party regimes tend to be characterized by (1) low levels of programmatic linkages between parties and voters, (2) the socio-economic dependence of citizens on the state, and (3) a dearth of nationwide collective action. This makes hegemonic party regimes comparatively fertile breeding grounds for both clientelism and regionalism.
4. My analysis takes the existence of a nascent ruling party as a given (Reuter 2011, 2010). Other work directly tackles the question of why ruling parties emerge in the first place and why individual elites choose to affiliate with the new ruling party.
5. At the time of writing, the number of regions had been reduced to 83.
6. As Reuter and Remington (2009) point out, the communist opposition was on the decline when UR was formed.
7. For an important exception to the lack of empirical work, see Golosov (2011).
8. Of 166 elections in the sample, 23 were elected fully on the basis of party lists, and 23 were mixed with a higher proportion of party list seats. The remainder were held with an even balance between party-list and SMD seats.
9. In the Appendix, I test the robustness of key results to an alternative specification that uses the total share of seats won by UR as the dependent variable.
10. For elections held between 2003 and 2005, election results are averaged for the first and second halves of the year, respectively.
11. Many accounts exist. See Fish (2005) for some examples.
12. Thirty-four percent of appointed governors worked in a different region immediately prior to appointment (Buckley et al. 2012).
13. Polling is not conducted in Altay Republic, Republic of Tuva, Chukotskiy *Avtonomnyy Okrug*, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), the North Caucasus republics, or any of the autonomous okrugs except Khanty-Mansiysk. The private survey data were purchased from FOM.
14. Results are robust only to analyzing elections from 2003 to 2010.
15. For an important exception, see Greene (2010).
16. Greene also analyzes the effect of bureaucratic quality on dominant party performance using expert rankings of meritocracy in the civil service. Such data are unavailable for the Russian regions.
17. The method works by first estimating the following equation on regional monthly panel data stretching from December 2003 through December 2010: $y_{it} = \beta y_{it-1} + \beta y_{it-2} + f_{iz} + \gamma t + u_i + \varepsilon_{it}$, where i identifies regions, t is real time in months, and y is the logarithm of total government spending. Seasonality is controlled for by including a set of fixed effects f_{iz} for each of the 12 calendar months in each region. And γt is a linear term that accounts for increased spending over time. Region-specific deviations in spending are accounted for with a series of region-fixed effects, u_i. βy_{it-1} and βy_{it-2} are the first and second lag of the dependent variable. In other words, this equation estimates current spending in a region as a function of seasonality, time trends, previous spending, and region-specific patterns. The amplitude of the electoral budget cycle is defined as the residual of this equation for the month prior to the regional election.
18. In the Appendix, I also test whether levels of, as opposed to changes in, regional government spending affect UR's vote shares and find no evidence for this proposition.
19. This measure differs from Golosov's slightly. See the Appendix for an explanation and for robustness checks using Golosov's original measure.
20. *Opposition Fragmentation* is calculated as one over the sum of squared vote shares received by the opposition ($1/\sum v_i^2$), where v_i is the share of the *opposition votes*

received by the *i*th party. The quantity v_i is not the share of the *total* vote received by party *i*, but the share of the vote won by the opposition. Thus, this measure is similar to the Laakso–Taagepera index of the effective number of parties, with the sole exception that it restricts the calculation to the opposition's vote total.

21. In democracies, it is well known that the number of ethnic groups is positively associated with the number of parties (Cox 1997).
22. Nine regions held only one election in this period, three held three elections, and one, Sverdlovskaya *Oblast*, held five.
23. Recent studies in political science with high *N* to *T* ratios such as ours have used this clustered Standard Error approach. See, for example, Golder (2006).
24. The conditional coefficients in Column 2 are a good example of why Brambor et al. (2006, 76) warn that it is 'extremely difficult and often impossible to evaluate conditional hypotheses using only the information provided in traditional results tables.' As they note, 'it is perfectly possible for the marginal effect of *X* on *Y* to be significant for substantively relevant values of the modifying variable *Z* even if the coefficient on the interaction term is insignificant' (2006, 72). These results illustrate this point because the sign on *Margin of Gov. Victory X URMember* in the main results table is insignificant, and yet, from the conditional coefficients we see that this is due to the large standard error on *Governor's Margin of Victory* when *URMember* = 0. When *URMember* = 1, *Governor's Margin of Victory* has a substantively and statistically significant effect. This information could not be gleaned from the coefficient and standard error on *Margin of Gov. Victory X URMember* alone. Results are similar when interacting the other two measures of governor authority with *URMember.*
25. In Table A3, I show results where *Regional Ties* and *Governor Popularity* are included in the same model. Both remaining significant.
26. FOM conducted four surveys in 2003, two in 2004, two in 2005, four in 2006, four in 2007, four in 2008, four in 2009, and four in 2010. Surveys were conducted in 71 regions, although this number varies slightly by year.
27. Results are robust to three commonly used alternative estimation methods for this type of data: (1) robust standard errors clustered on region, (2) a generalized estimating equation with exchangeable panel-specific error structure, and (3) Newey-West HAC standard errors (with errors correlated up to four lags).

References

Akhmedov, Akhmed, and Ekaterina Zhuravskaya. 2004. "Opportunistic Political Cycles: Test in a Young Democracy Setting." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 119 (4): 1301–1338.

Banfield, Edward C., and James Q. Wilson. 1963. *City Politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Blaydes, Lisa. 2011. *Elections and Distributive Politics in Mubarak's Egypt*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Brambor, Thomas, William Roberts Clark, and Matt Golder. 2006. "Understanding Interaction Models: Improving Empirical Analyses." *Political Analysis* 14 (1): 63–82.

Brownlee, Jason. 2007. *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Buckley, Noah, Timothy Frye, Guzel Garifullina, and Ora John Reuter. 2012. "The Political Economy of Russian Gubernatorial Election and Appointment." Unpublished paper, Higher School of Economics, Moscow.

Chubb, Judith. 1982. *Patronage, Power, and Poverty in Southern Italy: A Tale of Two Cities*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Clapham, Christopher, ed. 1982. *Private Patronage and Public Power: Political Clientelism in the Modern State*. London: Frances Pinter.
Colton, Timothy J., and Henry E. Hale. 2009. "The Putin Vote: Presidential Electorates in a Hybrid Regime." *Slavic Review* 68 (3): 473–503.
Cox, Gary W. 1997. *Making Votes Count: Strategic Coordination in the World's Electoral Systems*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Fish, M. Steven. 2005. *Democracy Derailed in Russia: The Failure of Open Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Gel'man, Vladimir. 2006. "From 'Feckless Pluralism' to 'Dominant Power Politics'? The Transformation of Russia's Party System." *Democratization* 13 (4): 545–561.
Gill, Graeme. 2012. "The Decline of a Dominant Party and the Destabilization of Electoral Authoritarianism?" *Post-Soviet Affairs* 28 (4): 449–471.
Golder, Matt. 2006. "Presidential Coattails and Legislative Fragmentation." *American Journal of Political Science* 50 (1): 34–48.
Golosov, Grigorii V. 2003. *Political Parties in the Regions of Russia: Democracy Unclaimed*. London: Eurospan.
Golosov, Grigorii V. 2011. "Russia's Regional Legislative Elections, 2003–2007: Authoritarianism Incorporated." *Europe-Asia Studies* 63 (3): 397–414.
Goode, J. Paul. 2007. "The Puzzle of Putin's Gubernatorial Appointments." *Europe-Asia Studies* 59 (3): 365–399.
Greene, Kenneth F. 2007. *Why Dominant Parties Lose: Mexico's Democratization in Comparative Perspective*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Greene, Kenneth F. 2010. "The Political Economy of Authoritarian Single-Party Dominance." *Comparative Political Studies* 43 (7): 807–834.
Hale, Henry E. 2003. "Explaining Machine Politics in Russia's Regions: Economy, Ethnicity, and Legacy." *Post-Soviet Affairs* 19 (3): 228–263.
Hale, Henry E. 2005. "Party Development in a Federal System: The Impact of Putin's Reforms." In *The Dynamics of Russian Politics: Putin's Reform of Federal-Regional Relations*, edited by Peter Reddaway, and Robert W. Orttung. Vol. 2, 179–214. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
Hale, Henry E. 2006. *Why Not Parties in Russia? Democracy, Federalism, and the State*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Hale, Henry E. 2008. "What Makes Dominant Parties Dominant: The Unlikely Importance of Ideas in the Case of United Russia." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, MA, August 28–31.
Ho, Daniel E., and Kosuke Imai. 2008. "Estimating Causal Effects of Ballot Order from a Randomized Natural Experiment: California Alphabet Lottery, 1978–2002." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 72 (2): 216–240.
Howard, Marc Morjé, and Philip G. Roessler. 2006. "Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes." *American Journal of Political Science* 50 (2): 365–381.
Huntington, Samuel P. 1968. *Political Order in Changing Societies*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
Kern, Robert, ed. 1973. *The Caciques: Oligarchical Politics and the System of Caciquismo in the Luso-Hispanic World*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
Kynev, Aleksandr. 2007. "Gubernatorskaya inzheneriya [Governor engineering]." *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, February 10. http://www.ng.ru/ng_politics/2007-10-02/11_ingenering.html
Kynev, Aleksandr. 2009. *Vybory parlamentov rossiyskikh regionov: 2003–2009 [Elections to Russia's regional parliaments: 2003–2009]*. Moscow: Panorama.
Magaloni, Beatriz. 2006. *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and its Demise in Mexico*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Magaloni, Beatriz. 2008. "Credible Power-Sharing and the Longevity of Authoritarian Rule." *Comparative Political Studies* 41 (4–5): 715–741.
Matsuzato, Kimitaka. 2001. "From Ethno-Bonapartism to Centralized Caciquismo: Characteristics and Origins of the Tatarstan Political Regime, 1900–2000." *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 17 (4): 43–77.
Migdal, Joel S. 1988. *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Moraski, Bryon. 2006. *Elections by Design: Parties and Patronage in Russia's Regions*. Dekalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press.
Petrov, Nikolay. 2010. "Regional Governors under the Dual Power of Putin and Medvedev." *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 26 (2): 276–305.
Remington, Thomas. 2011. "Accounting for Regime Differences in the Russian Regions: Historical and Structural Influences." Unpublished paper, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia.
Reuter, Ora John. 2010. "The Politics of Dominant Party Formation: United Russia and Russia's Governors." *Europe-Asia Studies* 62 (2): 293–327.
Reuter, Ora John. 2011. "The Origins of Dominant Parties: A Cross-National Investigation." Unpublished paper, Columbia University, New York.
Reuter, Ora John, and Jennifer Gandhi. 2011. "Economic Performance and Elite Defection from Hegemonic Parties." *British Journal of Political Science* 41 (1): 83–110.
Reuter, Ora John, and Thomas F. Remington. 2009. "Dominant Party Regimes and the Commitment Problem: The Case of United Russia." *Comparative Political Studies* 42 (4): 501–526.
Reuter, Ora John, and Graeme B. Robertson. 2012. "Subnational Appointments in Authoritarian Regimes: Evidence from Russian Gubernatorial Appointments." *Journal of Politics* 74 (4): 1023–1037.
Robertson, Graeme B. 2007. "Strikes and Labor Organizations in Hybrid Regimes." *American Political Science Review* 101 (4): 781–798.
Scott, James C. 1972. "Patron-Client Politics and Political Change in Southeast Asia." *American Political Science Review* 66 (1): 91–113.
Slater, Dan. 2011. *Ordering Power: Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in Southeast Asia*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Smith, Benjamin. 2005. "Life of the Party: The Origins of Regime Breakdown and Persistence under Single Party Rule." *World Politics* 57 (3): 421–451.
Smyth, Regina, Anna Lowry, and Brandon Wilkening. 2007. "Engineering Victory: Institutional Reform, Informal Institutions, and the Formation of a Hegemonic Party Regime in the Russian Federation." *Post-Soviet Affairs* 23 (2): 118–137.
Weiner, Myron. 1967. *Party Building in a New Nation: The Indian National Congress*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Appendix

This statistical appendix includes information on variable sources, robustness checks not shown in the main text, and figures referenced in the main text.

Descriptive statistics and additional robustness checks

Table A1 contains sources and descriptive statistics for the main variables in the analyses. Table A2 contains the results of several robustness checks. For each robustness check in Table A2, I replicate Models 1 and 2 from Table 1, substituting one or more variables for the relevant robustness check.

Table A1. Descriptive statistics on variables in Table 1.

Variable	*N*	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Source
UR Vote Share	166	47.6	15.7	15.7	91	Electoral results from www.cikrf.ru
Governor's Popularity	134	41.2	17.7	6	87	FOM GeoRating (see footnote 14)
Governor's Margin of Victory	166	27.8	30.17	0	90.3	Author's database collected from various sources
Putin's Popularity	142	67.57	11.37	40	91	FOM GeoRating
Unemployment	162	9.24	7.3	0.9	53	Rosstat *Regiony Rossii* (various years)
Size of Public Sector Workforce	165	45.9	7.8	31	83.4	Rosstat *Regiony Rossii* (various years)
Press Freedom	161	2	0.71	1	3	Glasnost Defence Foundation http://www.gdf.ru/
Only PR	166	0.12	0.32	0	1	IRENA Electoral Database http://www. helix-center.org
Concurrent Election	166	0.36	0.48	0	1	IRENA Electoral Database http://www. helix-center.org
UR Heads Ballot	166	0.42	0.5	0	1	IRENA Electoral Database http://www. helix-center.org and Kynev (2009)
Putin's Popularity Rating	163	75.3	6.7	65	87	Levada Center Omnibus http://www.levada.ru
Elite Conflict	166	0.17	0.38	0	1	Author's calculations compiled from IRENA Electoral Database http://www. helix-center.org
Opposition Fragmentation	166	3.6	1.2	1	8.1	Author's calculations compiled from IRENA Electoral Database http://www. helix-center.org
Percent Russian	166	79.1	20.5	9.2	90	Rosstat *Regiony Rossii* (various years)
Log GRP per Capita	165	11.7	0.81	9.2	14.9	Rosstat *Regiony Rossii* (various years)
Urbanization	163	69.1	13.6	26.1	100	Rosstat *Regiony Rossii* (Various years)
URMember	164	0.71	0.45	0	1	Reuter (2010)
Regional Scale	165	1.58	1.07	0	3	Author's database
Governor's Tenure	164	6.792683	5.185	0	20	Author's database
PBC Amplitude	122	0.012	0.56	−1.4	1.95	Russian Federal Treasury (Roskazna)
GRP Growth	123	5.1	7.18	−20.2	27.5	Rosstat *Regiony Rossii* (various years)

Table A2. Robustness checks.

Variable	Model (1)	Model (2)	Model (3)	Model (4)	Model (5)	Model (6)	Model (7)	Model (8)	Model (9)	Model (10)
Governor's Popularity	0.211**		0.225**		0.283**			0.200**	0.190**	
	(0.056)		(0.053)		(0.066)			(0.063)	(0.047)	
Putin's Popularity	−0.133		−0.146		0.085			−0.093	−0.146	
	(0.119)		(0.119)		(0.116)			(0.120)	(0.093)	
Gov. Margin of Victory		0.094**		0.091**		0.125**	0.121**			0.079**
		(0.040)		(0.041)		(0.038)	(0.048)			(0.029)
Unemployment	−1.262**	0.099	−1.145*	0.142	−0.318	0.223	−0.339	−1.063*	−0.650	0.075
	(0.542)	(0.231)	(0.624)	(0.253)	(0.535)	(0.266)	(0.313)	(0.558)	(0.406)	(0.154)
Government Investment	0.119**	0.008								
	(0.053)	(0.075)								
Press Freedom	−3.775**	−3.644**	−4.164**	−3.813**	−4.489**	−3.572**	−4.590**	−5.147**	−2.403**	−2.067*
	(1.273)	(1.373)	(1.211)	(1.377)	(1.362)	(1.615)	(1.493)	(1.360)	(1.112)	(1.069)
Only PR	−5.144**	0.249	−4.205**	1.165	−17.885**	−11.058**	−5.894*	−6.198**	−2.506	−1.705
	(1.985)	(2.411)	(1.971)	(2.536)	(3.117)	(3.528)	(3.114)	(2.351)	(2.330)	(2.486)
Concurrent election	2.453	2.267	3.143	3.283	2.143	2.181	7.687**	10.501**	1.743	3.044
	(2.649)	(2.309)	(2.923)	(2.489)	(3.269)	(2.666)	(3.851)	(3.535)	(2.672)	(2.008)
UR Heads Ballot	0.728	3.206*	0.513	2.606	1.779	4.589**	3.683	0.903	0.292	1.798
	(1.981)	(1.752)	(1.911)	(1.822)	(2.169)	(2.116)	(2.637)	(1.576)	(1.656)	(1.540)
Elite Conflict	−4.009	−7.834**			−5.792**	−11.590**	−6.552**	−3.739	−3.380	−7.211**
	(2.440)	(2.660)			(2.726)	(3.470)	(2.790)	(2.263)	(2.121)	(2.269)
Opp. Fragmentation	−2.643*	−3.920**	−2.729*	−3.722**	0.103	−1.075	−4.083**	−2.053*	−2.152**	−2.599**
	(1.365)	(1.224)	(1.414)	(1.247)	(1.557)	(1.466)	(1.278)	(1.217)	(0.945)	(0.989)
Percent Russian	−0.258**	−0.211**	−0.254**	−0.216**	−0.204**	−0.160**	−0.248**	−0.194**	−0.155**	−0.103**
	(0.091)	(0.075)	(0.086)	(0.072)	(0.065)	(0.070)	(0.085)	(0.066)	(0.064)	(0.043)
Log GRP per Capita	1.750	−2.033	1.186	−0.451	2.925	−1.287	−4.429**	2.929	1.417	−0.964
	(2.549)	(2.241)	(2.382)	(2.346)	(1.837)	(2.116)	(2.018)	(3.554)	(1.574)	(1.943)
Urbanization	−0.171	0.055	−0.142	0.057	−0.102	0.179	0.321**	−0.060	−0.135	0.089

Table A2. (*Continued*)

Variable	Model (1)	Model (2)	Model (3)	Model (4)	Model (5)	Model (6)	Model (7)	Model (8)	Model (9)	Model (10)
	(0.115)	(0.095)	(0.127)	(0.103)	(0.122)	(0.109)	(0.116)	(0.133)	(0.104)	(0.087)
URMember	2.822	1.548	2.451	2.659	4.031	5.362*	4.097	2.501	0.866	0.522
	(1.890)	(2.131)	(1.991)	(2.277)	(2.427)	(3.143)	(2.543)	(2.121)	(1.854)	(1.871)
Size of Public Workforce			−0.015	−0.177	−0.111	−0.283	−0.107	0.067	−0.225*	−0.323**
			(0.156)	(0.161)	(0.187)	(0.194)	(0.174)	(0.183)	(0.135)	(0.116)
Alternative Elite Conflict			−2.101	−1.363						
			(2.791)	(2.488)						
Log Total Spending								−0.157		
								(0.391)		
UR 2003 Vote Share									0.511**	0.532**
									(0.150)	(0.107)
Constant	80.444**	90.808**	88.729**	80.405**	44.249	79.958**	109.530**	62.362*	58.485**	53.818**
	(40.208)	(27.772)	(37.260)	(28.526)	(30.918)	(26.897)	(29.439)	(34.964)	(23.074)	(22.303)
Year fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	131	157	133	159	133	159	100	100	133	159
R^2	0.725	0.655	0.715	0.624	0.685	0.586	0.737	0.805	0.776	0.734

Notes: Cell entries are unstandardized OLS coefficients. Robust standard errors in parentheses. $^{**}p < 0.05$, $^{*}p < 0.10$.
Source: Author's database and calculations.

All models are contextualized in the main text in more detail. Models 1 and 2 introduce an alternative measure of the size of the public economy, *Government Investment*, as a control. Models 3 and 4 show results using Golosov's (2011) original measure of elite conflict. The measure of elite conflict that I use in the text differs from Golosov's measure slightly. First, I do not count instances where only the vice-chairman of a regional legislature serves on an opposition party list as an instance of elite conflict. In the early 2000s, vice-chairmen were prominent figures in their own right, but by the mid- to late 2000s, many vice-chairman positions were handed out as spoils to opposition party leaders as part of a calculated co-optation strategy. Including vice-chairmen would thus diminish the extent to which this measure taps meaningful contestation between local elites. Second, I count instances in which the mayor of one of Russia's 186 largest cities ran for an opposition party as an instance of elite conflict, whereas Golosov restricts this component to regional capitals. Models 5 and 6 show that results are robust by using the share of seats won by UR as the dependent variable. This measure thus takes into account UR's performance in SMD races as well as the PR component.

Model 7 shows that the result on *Governor's Margin of Victory* is robust to a sample that only includes elected governors. The 99 elections in Model 7 all occurred under governors with elected mandates. Model 8 investigates the effect of levels of regional government spending per capita on UR's electoral performance. The results provide no evidence that UR performs better in regions where government spending is higher.

Models 8 and 9 show results from models that include *UR Vote Share 2003* as a regressor.

Table A3 shows the results of several robustness checks that relate to the *Regional Ties* variable used in this study. Model 1 shows that both *Governor's Popularity* and *Regional Ties* remain significant when included in a regression together, indicating that both have an independent effect. Models 2–4 show results using only the component parts of the *Regional Ties* scale. Results are mixed, and it appears that the governor's work experience in the region has a larger effect on UR vote shares than either being born in the region or attending university in the region.

UR's electoral performance across time

Figure 1 displays the average share of seats and the average of the party-list vote won by UR on each unified election day from 2003 to 2011. For elections held between 2003 and 2005, election results are averaged for the first and second halves of the year, respectively. After a strong performance in the first elections held under the new election law, the vote share for UR dipped in 2004. Subsequently, it improved gradually until 2010, when UR's vote share began to drop slightly. In the December 2011 regional elections, the party won, on average, 43% of the party-list vote, its worst performance since March 2006. At the same time, however, the percentage of SMD seats won by UR remained high throughout 2010 and 2011. The disproportionality of SMD races mitigated seat losses for the ruling party so that UR still won, on average, 64% of seats in the December 2011 regional elections.

Figure A1 depicts the difference between the share of SMD seats won by UR in regional elections and the share of party-list seats won by UR. The disparity between party-list and SMD performance illustrates an important fact about UR's electoral history that bears directly on the main argument in this study. Initially, from 2003 to 2006, UR won almost as many seats in the PR component as it did in the SMD component. Because of disproportionality in both components, its seat share always exceeded its vote share, but the gap in the share of seats won by the party and the share of the party-list vote has grown larger in recent years.

In late 2004 and early 2005, UR won more seats on the party-list ballot than it did in SMD races. By the December 2011 regional elections, however, UR won, on average, 84% of seats

Table A3. Regional ties robustness checks.

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Governor's Popularity	0.208**				
	(0.048)				
Putin's Popularity	−0.136				
	(0.108)				
Unemployment	−1.173**	0.164	0.178	0.156	0.159
	(0.581)	(0.270)	(0.250)	(0.266)	(0.272)
Size of Public Workforce	−0.022	−0.206	−0.189	−0.192	−0.217
	(0.150)	(0.161)	(0.165)	(0.163)	(0.164)
Press Freedom	−4.066**	−4.712**	−5.033**	−4.771**	−4.574**
	(1.261)	(1.414)	(1.501)	(1.441)	(1.412)
Only PR	−4.716**	1.150	0.281	0.787	0.821
	(2.164)	(2.523)	(2.516)	(2.488)	(2.571)
Concurrent Election	2.868	0.174	0.038	0.301	−0.087
	(2.765)	(2.274)	(2.305)	(2.394)	(2.348)
UR Heads Ballot	0.851	1.434	1.411	1.673	1.358
	(1.924)	(1.784)	(1.779)	(1.794)	(1.841)
Putin's Popularity Rating	−3.249	1.414**	1.473**	1.513**	1.418**
	(2.509)	(0.346)	(0.345)	(0.333)	(0.362)
Elite Conflict	−3.053**	−5.511*	−4.419	−4.982*	−5.349*
	(1.354)	(2.822)	(2.959)	(2.834)	(2.764)
Opposition Fragmentation	−0.220**	−3.598**	−3.846**	−3.651**	−3.827**
	(0.081)	(1.487)	(1.483)	(1.461)	(1.513)
Percent Russian	0.430	−0.162**	−0.161**	−0.156**	−0.189**
	(2.166)	(0.072)	(0.067)	(0.070)	(0.074)
Log GRP per Capita	−0.069	−0.024	0.517	0.774	−0.257
	(0.111)	(2.177)	(2.234)	(2.232)	(2.371)
Urbanization	1.945	0.073	0.038	0.052	0.077
	(2.052)	(0.093)	(0.094)	(0.093)	(0.096)
URMember	2.197**	2.644	2.368	2.155	2.443
	(0.760)	(2.025)	(1.969)	(1.914)	(1.976)
Regional Ties	−1.173**				
	(0.581)				
Gov. Worked in Region		4.317**			
		(1.457)			
Gov. University in Region			3.221		
			(2.105)		
Gov. Born in Region				3.086*	
				(1.783)	
Constant	−43.316	−40.134	−45.829	−54.801	−34.124
	(49.447)	(45.785)	(45.031)	(44.243)	(47.845)
Year fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	132	158	158	158	158
R^2	0.767	0.669	0.665	0.664	0.663

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses. $^{**}p < 0.05$, $^{*}p < 0.10$.
Source: Author's database and calculations.

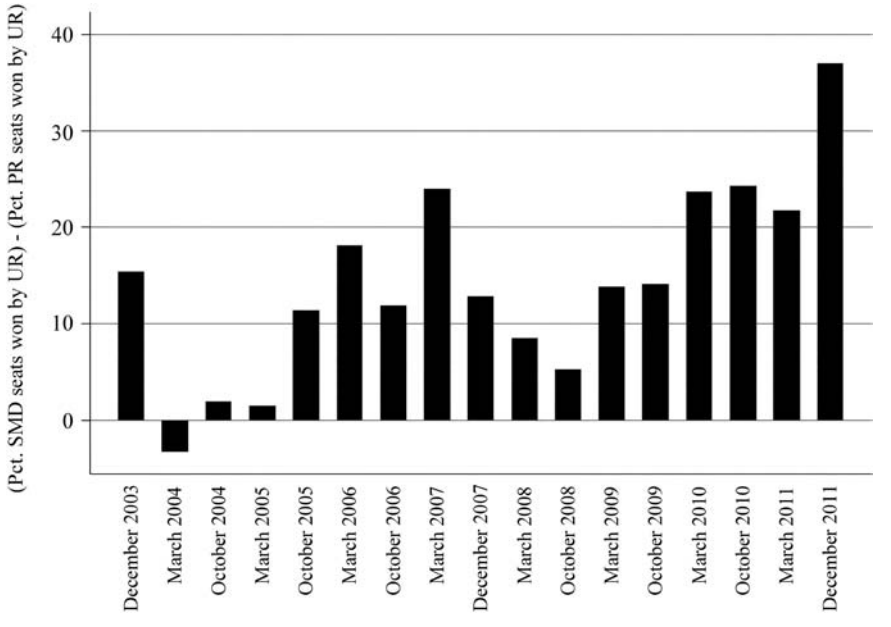

Figure A1. The difference between the share of SMD seats won by UR and the share of PR seats won by UR.
Source: Author's database and calculations.

in the SMD races compared with only 47% of the seats in the PR component. In the early and mid-2000s, UR had difficulty convincing strong local candidates to accept the party's nomination in elections. Local enterprise directors and opinion leaders often chose to run as independents, leveraging their autonomous resources against inducements to join the dominant party. As time went on, however, and the Kremlin invested more time and energy into making the dominant party a mechanism for distributing spoils, more elites sought to demonstrate their commitment to the party by affiliating with it.

Analysis of governor's popularity

In the main text, I make the point that elected governors are more popular than appointed governors. In this section, I test this proposition in a multivariate setting. The dependent variable in this analysis is the same *Governor's Popularity* variable used in the text. Since I am not limited here to analyzing the popularity of the governor on the date of regional elections, there are many more observations – 1887 – over the period from 2003 to 2010.[26] Descriptive statistics on this and all other variables are presented in Table A2.

The key independent variable is whether the governor has ever been elected, *Elected Governor*. As noted above, Russia's governors built powerful political machines in their days as elected officials. I expect elected governors to be more popular for two reasons. First, quite simply, they won elections to become governor, so a certain modicum of popularity at some point in their career is a necessary condition for holding office. Second, the legacies of the 1990s and early 2000s supported elected governors' efforts to maintain high popularity levels. Elected governors came to power at a time in Russian history more conducive to the construction of regional political machines than was the case in the mid-2000s. Regional authorities exercised more *de facto* and *de jure* control over policy and appointments at that

time, and central state capacity was more limited. Many elected governors continued to cultivate their political machines after the cancellation of direct elections, and to the extent that strong patron–client networks generate popular support, they should be more popular. Newly appointed governors in the mid- to late 2000s had neither the time nor autonomy to construct strong political machines of their own.

The descriptive data bear out this hypothesis. Elected governors over the period of analysis were 11 percentage points more popular than appointed governors, a statistically significant difference. I also test a set of competing explanations. First, I examine whether economic factors influence a governor's popularity, including variables that measure *Unemployment*, *Lagged GRP Growth*, and *Log GRP per Capita*. Governors may be able to shape their own popularity rating by exerting control over the media, so I include *Press Freedom* as a variable. In addition, governors may be more popular when Putin is popular so *Putin's Popularity Rating* is included. And although this sample excludes most ethnic regions, because it was not conducted in the North Caucasus or several other republics, I include *Percent Russian* as a control.

Finally, I also include a dummy variable indicating whether the governor held elected office *prior* to becoming governor. Governors who have experience with competing in and winning election campaigns are more likely to have the skill and resources to generate mass support, whether those resources are a cause or consequence of their prior electoral success. This variable is called *Elected Experience* (Table A4). Finally, I include the full set of year-fixed effects.

The data are time series cross-sectional in nature with an average of 26 surveys conducted over time in 71 regions. Each observation is a survey conducted by FOM, usually at three-month intervals, but sometimes at longer intervals. The data are heteroskedastic and exhibit panel-specific autocorrelation. Indeed, some regions have governors whose popularity exhibits much more dramatic swings than others, and, obviously, a governor's popularity in one month is correlated with his popularity in previous months. Thus, I model the dependent variable using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) with panel-corrected standard errors that assume both panel-specific heteroskedasticity and a panel-specific AR(1) error structure.[27]

The results from these models are given in Table A5. The results bear out theoretical expectations about the effect of being elected on a governor's popularity. While controlling for theoretically appropriate confounders, having an electoral mandate increases the popularity of the governor by 9.5%. In Model 2, I interact *Elected Governor* with *Time* to see whether the effect of being elected varies over time. Figure A2 shows that it does, and that this effect has increased over time. The effect of being elected is larger in recent years. At the end of 2010, being elected increased a governor's popularity by 15 percentage points, while being elected only increased a governor's popularity by 5 percentage points in 2006. This is because many strong, elected governors were initially reappointed in 2005, 2006, and 2007, because it was known that their machines could win votes for the Kremlin (Goode 2007; Reuter and Robertson 2012).

However, by the late 2000s, two processes began to unfold. First, the Kremlin became emboldened to remove popular elected governors whom it deemed potentially unruly. The ouster of Yuriy Luzhkov in September 2010 is a case in point. Second, the advancing age of many authoritative governors from the 1990s forced them from the political stage. Mintimer Shaymiyev in Tatarstan and Pyotr Sumin in Chelyabinsk are good examples of this trend.

Popular governors were often replaced with colorless bureaucrats lacking political and electoral experience. Indeed, Buckley et al. (2012) show that Russia's appointed governors were significantly less likely to have elected political experience than their directly elected predecessors. On this point, the results also show that elected experience translates into higher popularity levels. Holding elected office prior to becoming governor translates into a 4 percentage point increase in a governor's popularity.

Table A4. Descriptive statistics of variables in Table A5.

Variable	*N*	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Source
Governor's Popularity	1887	40.9	17.2	1	90	FOM GeoRating
Press freedom	1887	2.06	0.67	1	3	Glasnost Defence Foundation http://www.gdf.ru/
Putin's Popularity Rating	1887	77.7	5.13	66	88	Levada Center Omnibus http://www.levada.ru
Percent Russian	1887	84.4	14.3	26.7	90	Rosstat *Regiony Rossii* (various years)
Log GRP per Capita	1887	11.7	0.66	10	14.06	Rosstat *Regiony Rossii* (various years)
GRP Growth	1887	4.4	6.13	−18	28.5	Rosstat *Regiony Rossii* (various years)
Unemployment	1887	7.4	2.44	0.8	18.5	Rosstat *Regiony Rossii* (various years)
Elected Experience	1887	0.68	0.46	0	1	Buckley et al. (2012)

Table A5. Determinants of governor popularity.

Variable	Model 1	Model 2
Elected Governor	9.170**	−0.250
	(1.274)	(3.467)
Elected Experience	3.847**	4.110**
	(1.012)	(1.000)
Percent Russian	−0.242**	−0.238**
	(0.036)	(0.034)
Putin's Popularity	0.080**	0.087**
	(0.029)	(0.027)
Press Freedom	−1.529**	−1.530**
	(0.745)	(0.712)
Log GRP per Capita	9.237**	9.050**
	(1.922)	(1.760)
GRP Growth	−0.059	−0.058
	(0.069)	(0.068)
Unemployment	−0.624**	−0.525**
	(0.214)	(0.210)
Elected × Time		0.542**
		(0.167)
Time		0.403
		(0.247)
Constant	−38.612*	−33.224
	(21.597)	(20.321)
Year fixed effects	Yes	Yes
Observations	1823	1823
R^2	0.625	0.648
Number of regions	71	71

Notes: Cell entries are unstandardized OLS coefficients. Panel corrected standard errors in parentheses. $^{**}p < 0.05$, $^{*}p < 0.10$.
Source: Author's database and calculations.

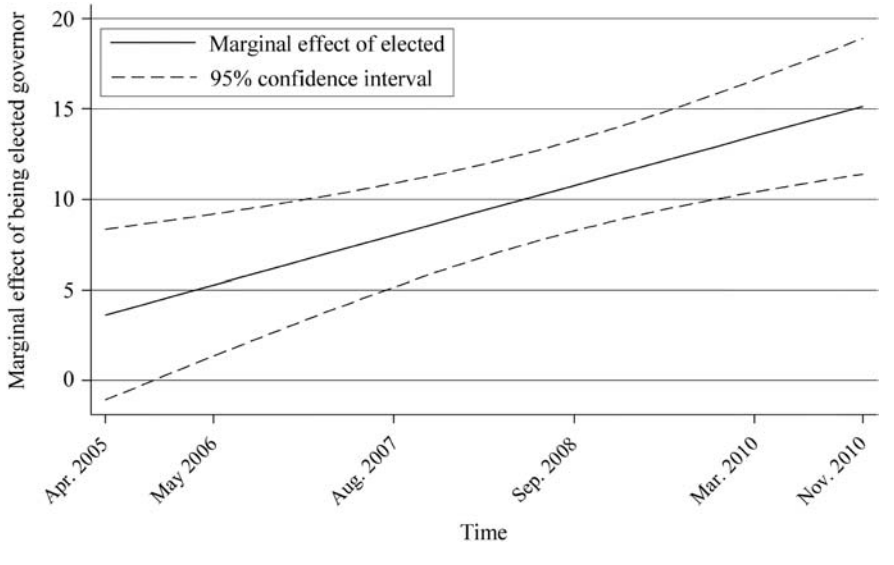

Figure A2. The marginal effect of Elected on governor popularity across time.
Source: Author's database and calculations.

Other control variables are also noteworthy. First, the results confirm that restricting press freedom is an effective way of manipulating public opinion, as governors are less popular in regions with a relatively free press. The coefficient on this variable is negative and statistically significant. Second, economic performance seems to matter. The positive and statistically significant coefficient on *Log GRP per Capita* indicates that governors of wealthy regions are more popular. Meanwhile, high levels of unemployment depress a governor's popularity, as indicated by the negative coefficient on *Unemployment*. Interestingly, *Lagged GRP Growth* exerts no statistically significant effect, a finding that holds even when *Unemployment* is removed from the regression.

Governors of ethnic regions are more popular, as indicated by the negative and statistically significant coefficient on *Percent Russian*. But, again, this variable should be interpreted with caution, given that most ethnic regions are excluded from the FOM surveys. Finally, *Putin's Popularity Rating* exerts a positive and statistically significant effect on a governor's popularity in both models.