

## Russian Radical Ethnonationalism in Its Influence on the Transforming Political Culture of Contemporary Russia

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The key problem of contemporary Russian politics is the formation of the civic political culture. The evaluation of emerging Russian civil society could significantly help to realize the essence, the alternatives, and the perspectives of the changing political regime in the country. The most general question in this aspect is: what is actually more characteristic for the interpretation of the current Russian political culture-transformation or continuity, adaptation or consistency, Russian imperial and Soviet legacy or the impact of Western liberalism?

Implementing the classical behavioral-psychological approach to political culture with all the disputes around it (see Almond and Verba 1980; Etkins and Simeon 1979; Eatwell 1997). I could suppose that existing Russian political culture, being highly fragmentary in its structure, represents a very peculiar combination of parochial, subject, and participant models with a lack of a dominant one. The proportion of these three types depends basically on the societal environment~ for instance, the proportion could be very much influenced by the governmental policy. Civic culture is at the very beginning of its emergence. The role of old and new ideological paradigms and concerts in the formation of Russian mass and individual consciousness is particularly important. This is why public responses to various ideological appeals need a special study.

It is commonly assumed that political culture is the basis for political activity on both personal and institutional levels. The study of political participation in Russia, embracing electoral behavior and preferences, party identifications and ideological cleavages, affiliations with protest and dissent activities, have been solidly reflected in emerging publications. Nowadays there exists a rich and rapidly growing literature on current Russian political culture (see Fleron, 1997; Gibson, 1996; Hahn, 1997; Petro, 1995; Rukavishnikov, 1998; White, 1997c; Wyman, 1997).

Some authors emphasize a recent partial reversion in Russian politics to old cultural patterns (Brovkin 1996~ Brym 1996; Fukuyama 1995; Gudimenko 1994; Rose 1999; Urban 1998). But all of these works omit or only slightly touch upon backgrounds, manifestations, and perspectives of Russian ethnonationalism as an influential factor in shaping political culture's

patterns. In summary, to understand current and future development of ~ussian political culture, it is important and promising to correlate RUSSian and

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Western studies on the issue. It is also important to conduct a retrospective analysis of this pheno~enon, .and to generalize and exp~ain ~ece~t .empirical data in various aspects, mcludmg assessment of ethnonattonahsm s llmpact on the ideological profile and political behavior of Russians. The latter problem is quite actual for political transformation, innovative in research, and needs a particular in-depth consideration.

The recent development of Russian political discourse indicates that classical communism or Western-style liberalism have significantly exhausted its potential and are gradually being replaced by the ideology of nationalism in its peculiar Russian implementation (see Anderson 1998; Fish 1997; Kutkovets and Klyamkin 1997; Pastukhov 1998). This tendency contains a dilemma: is this exclusive hegemonic ethnonationalism or comparatively tolerant civic patriotism?

For a decade, popular moods and affiliations have considerably shifted toward traditional Russian and imperial values. This shift could be explained by different factors. The split of the Soviet Union and the troubles of 25 million Russians in the Former Soviet Union (FSU) countries led to the intense search for national self-identification. The loss of the great power status revived the "national idea" disputes with the predominance of variable "nostalgia aspects," such as

"restoration of the mighty USSR" or "revival of the powerful Russian empire." Frustration caused by inefficient market reforms and uncivilized political power fights, as well as growing distrust of the government, made Russians vulnerable to scapegoating and ethnic prejudices. The Chechen war played as an impetus to create an "enemy image" and anti-Caucasian sentiments. The unprecedented growth of influence on the part of ethnic Jews in business and governmental structures inspired a new level of anti-Semitism.

Socio-cultural analysis enables one to distinguish a specific type of public consciousness of the supporters of radical ethnonationalism as extremely paternalistic and egalitarian. As calculated in the SSPSS survey [see Appendix, Table 10], such a mindset in general is widely spread in contemporary Russian society and comprises up to one-third of all citizens.

Characteristic of these people is

the expectation that their problems will be solved by the state or at least by local authorities and enterprise management, the greater significance of material factors in their value systems, belief in the necessity of creating an equal-income society in Russia, a pathological reaction to social differentiation in general, and a negative attitude toward the "new Russians" in particular. This segment of the population is openly waiting for a "firm hand" that would impose order even to the point of reorganizing property. (Tikhonova 1998: 11)

Their political cultural pattern concentrates the traits of a predominantly subject model of societal behavior.

Ideologically they are at

"the cross-roads of national capitalism and national socialism attempting to appropriate high consumer standards of Western societies but preserving supreme spiritual values of the Russian civilization" (Kutkovets and Klymnkin 1997: 137). The political solution of this combination lies in totalitarian statism, based on legally guaranteed privileges for the Russian majority, ethnic proportional representation in all governmental and public institutions, and other means.

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Table 1: Comparative Programmatic Information on Leading Radical Nationalist Political Parties •

Sources. Danilov and Zassonn (1993:258-62); Politicheskie Partii...

Party	Model of State	Form of Government	Rights for Ethnic Russians	Foreign Policy
	transition through	strong revival of Russian	Reestablish-	
	administrative-	presidential	traditional values,	
	territorial	republic with	Russian as the only	Russian state
	LDP	federation to unitary state:	one-chamber parliament	official state language
	guberniya system,	the former	abandonment of	Soviet Union,
	national territories	restoration of its	great power	status
	federative	republic of	Russian ethnicity	peaceful
	(geographical-	Russian	as the major source	repatriation of
	territorial) state	statehood-	of supreme power,	ethnic
	with cultural and	Russian	restoration of	Russians from
	NRPR	economic autonomies for	Empire with proportional	ethnic Russian statehood: the FSU republics,
	non-Russian	electoral	governmental	guarantees of
	ethnic groups	system	offices, public	equal rights
	institutions, mass	and cultural/	media, education	economic
	autonomies for	Russian	population	..
	remammg	there, change	of borders	ethnic proportional
	"pure" Russian	republic of	representation in all	restoration of
	unitary state with	Russian and	governmental and	the historic
	RNE	traditional admini	strati ve	for Russian nation: ethnic
	Russian	units: guberniya,	Russians,	Russian ethnicity: ethnicity and
	uezd,	Ukrainians,	barriers of mixed	civilization in
	volost'	Byelorussians	marrlages,	the world
	prosecution of	russofobia as a grave	cnme	ethnic proportional
	expanslOn into			

representation, north

RP unitary state with guberniya administrative division to be determined by popular referendum ethnic Russian as the head of state, expropriation of Zionist property and return it to the robbed working Kazakhstan, north Kirgistan, the Crimea, Left Bank Ukraine; changing Russian boundaries in

Russian people, accordance with

promotion of Jews' ethnic Russians'

repatriation from compact

. . Russia settlement

(1996: 41-54, 69-76).

### Classification of Radical Ethnonationalist Parties and Movements

. In terms of their ideological programs and political configuration, Russian ultra-nationalists could be grouped into three major segments:

1. Pro-fascist movements with developed paramilitary structures and means of propaganda: previously Pamyat' (Memory)<sup>1</sup> and currently RNE\* (here and further with the names of Russian movements and parties see Appendix) which is leading in this ideological sector. The phenomenon of RNE has been described by such Western and Russian experts as Braun (1997), Korey (1994), Krasnov Valery (1996), Laquer (1996), Tikhov (1997), Tolz (1998), and some others. RNE uses the Nazi racial doctrine as its theoretical basis, making the slight adjustment that ethnic Russians are the supreme embodiment of the Aryan race. The global Zionist-Masonic conspiracy and the principle of ethnic segregation are the key postulates of its affiliations, which is why overcoming all the consequences of mass physical and spiritual genocide against the Russian ethnicity is proclaimed as a prime objective.

Having been in the political arena for almost a decade, RNE failed thus far to gain a mass societal support, spreading its influence within marginal strata of the population. From the very beginning, this was an organization with strict discipline, rigid hierarchy, and a paramilitary avant-garde. In 1994 RNE nominated its candidate Alexander Fedorov for an additional election to the State Duma from a Moscow suburban electoral district, but received the insufficient support of only 6%. In the 1995 parliamentary elections, RNE could not manage to present 200,000 supporting signatures to be officially registered. But by some estimates, RNE has at least doubled its public sphere of influence from 200,000 in 1995.

The second major chauvinistic grouping is NRPR\* (about this party see Laquer 1996; McFaul and Petrov 1995; Tolz 1998). The NRPR has the highest political establishment among this set of organizations, as its leader Nikolai Lisenko was elected in 1993 as a single-mandate deputy to the State Duma, where he made a name for himself by tearing up a Ukrainian flag at the discussion of the problem of belonging of the Crimea. "In the 1995 election campaign NRPR spoke of genocide against Russians in the ethnic republics of the federation. Lisenko denounced mafia hordes from the Caucasus and Central Asia and read out lists of non-Russian names associated with his political enemies. His innovation was that they were not Jewish surnames but the surnames of Muslims or Caucasians who worked in the Ministry for Nationalities. A short clip for NRPR appealing to Russian pride used footage of battle scenes from classic films such as 'Alexandr Nevskii about the Rus' driving the foreigners from its land" (Belin and Orttung, 1997:82-3). Despite all the

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<sup>1</sup> Pamyat' has played its role as a school for raising such future leaders of Russian ultra-nationalists as Barkashov, Lisenko and others, and gradually faded away from Russian political scene. About Pamyat's program and activity. see Braun(1994), Drobizheva (1996), Flenley (1996), Korey (1994), Krasnov Vladimir (1993), Laquer (1996), Spehler (1990), Tishkov (1997), Zisserman (1998).

nationalist rhetoric, in 1995 the NRPR failed to get over the 5% threshold necessary for party representation in State Duma.

A similar ideological sector has been filled by RP\* (see Tishkov 1997 ~ Tolz 1998 and Table 2).

Table 2· Activity Data About Major Russian Radical Nationalist Parties

Parliamentary Newspaper Parliamentary Federal Found-Election 1995 Party Election 1993

Registration no participation

no data 1998 +

DPA participation 59 seats from 50 seats from PR\* party list PR party list (22,92 % -first (11,18%-highest result),

second highest Liberal-1989 LDPR +

result), 1 SM Democrat -totally 14,2 % 5 SM\* deputies deputy --

totally 1,35 second largest % -third faction in SD\* largest faction in SD in PR party list NRPR -0,48% no data failed to be

registered, 1 SM 1990+ (behind 5% deputy threshold) being Russkii RNE failed to be refused in no participation

Poryadok registration 1990 registered (Russian Order)-recently banned Russkaya RP 1991 no participation

no Gazeta participation +(Russian NewsQaper) Source: Krasnov Valery (1996:336-413). \*PR -proportional

representation, SM-single-mandate, SD-State Duma

2. Socialism restorationists within the communist-nationalist NPS\*. The ethnic extremism and vulgar anti-Semitism are increasingly as typical for such its constituent structures as DPA\* and partly TR\*. The State Duma, which is dominated by left and nationalist parties, has refused to condemn such open violations of the constitutional norms~ this could be explained by the pre-election logic of KPRF\* (about KPRF's increasing shift to nationalism, see Evans and Whitefield 1998; Flikke 1999; Hanson 1997; Ishiyama 1998; Scanlap 1996; Slater 1998; Urban and Solovei 1997). Their new tactic is to consider radical "communo-patriots" as one of "three columns" collecting potential votes. This might have a double effect on the public attitude toward KPRF: expanding their base of support in nationalist circles but averting from

the party communists who back the Marxist principle of "proletarian internationalism.,.

3. Populist authoritarian nationalist: LDPR\* is a major example, which is gradually losing its radicalism due to members' involvement in governmental offices. For LDPR, this trend is noticeable in the factions in the State Duma, some positions in federal government, and in particular, increasing solidarity with the El'tsin administration on different basic tactical issues. These tactics include the blocking of the KPRF-Yabloko' impeachment attempt, the backing of all of the president's candidates for prime-minister, combating Moscow Mayor Luzhkov's ascendance, and others. This alliance gave the ground for some politicians and expert to denounce LDPR's leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy as "part of the party of power" (Hough et al. 1996:72). The political logic for LDPR now is that it needs to be more conformist, cutting a deal with the existing government about its representation there, as the party has proved to be unable to compete with either communists or liberals. The culmination of the party's public influence has already passed in the 1993 parliamentary elections (see below).

There is an attempt by some scholars to include Alexander Lebed' with his previous KRO\* and newly established RNRP\* parties in this sector. This politician utilized a considerable volume of his nationalist appeal during the 1995 parliamentary, 1996 presidential, and 1998 Krasnoyarsk krai gubernatorial elections. This contributed to Lebed's relative success in 1996 and his absolute victory in 1998, but did not help his party in 1995. Lebed' proved to be a hegemonic leader of any political party with which he has been identified. For Lebed', nationalism, as any other ideological framework, is little more than a tactical means in his striving for unlimited authoritarian political power.

These parties are now second-rank competitors for representation in the new State Duma, but they have experienced some temporary rise in their former popularity with the help of extremely isolationist slogans at the height of the public protest campaign of the NATO trike against Yugoslavia. It is interesting to trace how Zhirinovskiy is using various public effects to restore his image as a charismatic leader. According to Russian media reports, he has sponsored a TV profile "This is Zhirinovskiy," edited the "Sex ABC" booklet, recorded 13 popular songs entitled "Genuine Colonel," and played Mozart in a TV version of Pushkin's "Mozart and Salieri."<sup>2</sup> Low current potentials of LDPR have been proved recently by Zhirinovskiy's failure when he ran for governor of the Belgorod oblast and managed to win the third position with

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proportionally only 17% of the vote.<sup>3</sup> One of the most relevant explanations for the case lies in the well-proved "Zhirinovskiy's ability to discredit himself" (Sakwa 1995:217).

On the eve of approaching national elections, radical nationalist intensified their attempts to combine forces and vote. RNE translated an umbrella coalition-National Bloc-which includes less publicly known

<sup>2</sup> Segodnya March 6, April 30, 1999; Nezavisimaya gazeta June 9, 1999.

<sup>3</sup> Nezavisimaya gazeta June 1, 1999.

nationalists, and claims 20% of the electorate.<sup>4</sup> In the situation of the anticipated hard electoral competition, the ambitions of this alliance are not justified. The decision itself, however, demonstrates that Russian Chuvstvennoye groups resolutely intend to achieve political success within the existing parliamentary system after they neglected the 1993 election and failed at the 1995 election. RP is now constructing a bridge between Russian exclusivists and orthodox communists. The most provocative and populist restoration groups are unifying around Victor Anpilov's TR [see Table 3].

#### Radical Nationalists' Electoral Results, Their Appeal and Public Voting Behavior

The LDPR's sensational success in the December 1993 State Duma elections has been analyzed profoundly by different authors. Ordeshook pessimistically argued that "the marvel of that election was not that democratic reformers did so badly while Zhirinovskiy did so well, but that the fascists, ultranationalists, and hard-core anti-reformists somehow failed to secure outright control of the new legislature" (1995:47).

Some scholars explained this by the exceptional circumstances of the 1993 election campaign, which cleared the nationalist field for LDPR and turned it into its monopolist (Sakwa 1995; White et al. 1997b). Another explanation is connected with the legitimacy of the previous election, which is favorable for LDPR (Wyman et al. 1995). The hybrid campaign tactics, combining skillful use of television with street rallies, proved to be effective (Hough, 1994). The absence of support in single-member districts and Zhirinovskiy's personal characteristics motivated the importance of the party leader's image-making in attracting votes (Mendras 1996; Wyman et al. 1998). Populism might have played a decisive role in the rise of LDPR (Mikhailovskaia and Kuzminskii 1994; Sakwa 1995).

In general, the relative success of LDPR took place not only at the expense of market democrats, but primarily by drawing on potential supporters of KPRF and AP\* as the "popularity of Zhirinovskiy in 1993 and Lebed" in 1996 indicated public discontent in the government with simultaneous unwillingness to vote for communists, rejecting both reform and Red conservatism" (Malyutin 1998:47).

Comparing the 1993 to the 1995 parliamentary elections, LDPR suffered a considerable decline. The party's earlier appeal had been

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<sup>4</sup> Segodnya April 21, 1999; Kommersant April 27, 1999.



undermined by the emergence of other nationalist groupings, including KRO\* and ROS\*-. which joined forces with the electoral left-wing coalition Narodovlastie (Power to the People) (Marchenko 1996; White et al. 1997a).<sup>5</sup> And as the major problem for LDPR's campaign, KPRF had deprived Zhirinovskiy's party of its monopoly on the expression of a protest vote. Nevertheless, LDPR was the only nationalist organization out of nine to clear the 5% threshold. Fish supposed that "if KRO and Derzhava (Great Power) parties had combined forces-and there was little real programmatic difference between the two-they together would have captured 6,9% of the vote" (1997: 197).

As for LDPR's appeal, Rose et al. (1997) and Whitefield and Evans (1994) came to the conclusion that in 1993 LDPR was able to present itself as both a critic of the market transition and the main anti-minority nationalist movement. For this reason, although actual levels of support for an exclusive ethnic position were not as high as those against economic reform, Zhirinovskiy may have won a disproportional electoral benefit.

In terms of Russian state formation, Sakwa argued that "the strong support for LDPR, which advocated the abolition of ethno-federalism and its replacement by the unitary guberniya system of administrative provinces, suggests that approval of decentralized federalism might be lower than it advocates had suggested" (1995:214). But the most emphatic aspect of LDPR's appeal was a brand of militant Russian nationalist restorationism. Espousing a policy of national capitalist development and the restoration of empire together with the revival of Russia's dignity and greatness, LDPR attracted a considerable portion of the Russian vote, those alienated by economic decline, the end of superpower status, and the alarming tensions with the FSU republics.

Protest and ethnocentrism were interacting organically in the LDPR appeal. "Ideological position of LDPR was complex and subject to change. It did not advocate a return to state regulation of the economy; rather they suggested that the difficulties faced in the market transition were explicable by the actions of foreigners and, particularly, by the disruptive effect of the inner and outer 'empires'" (Whitefield and Evans 1994:44).

In the election, LDPR was the nearest equivalent to a nationalist party, as Zhirinovskiy intensively used Russian nationalist rhetoric. "Nor did any competing in 1993 party make an explicit religious or anti-religious appeal, and only Zhirinovskiy made anti-Semitic remarks in public, blaming Jews for the country's economic problems" (White et al. 1997b: 142). LDPR

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<sup>5</sup> There was some contradiction in White et al.'s (1997a) assessment of KRO as being radical, and the opposite, evolving into a moderate national-patriotic grouping. Actually KRO was rather tolerant in ethnonationalist issues with the exception of its militant protection of Russian *diapora* rights. As for ROS, since its foundation it has used a communist-nationalist platform with certain modernity in both ideological sectors. That is why the problem for LDPR in the 1995 election was not in the competition with other nationalist extremists but rather in the start of public reorientation from radical to relatively civic nationalism.

avored a strongly pro-Slavic and anti-Western foreign policy, particularly in the former Yugoslavia. Foreigners and Jews were offered as scapegoats for Russia's problems. No wonder that "LDPR and later KRO were the parties with the largest minority of anti-Selnitic voters" (Rose et al. 1997:805). LDPR was the only party in the campaign that unreservedly sought to make political capital out of the alleged persecution of Russian speakers in, FSU republ~cs. Zhirinovskiy complained most about the fact that many Russlans were being forced to leave those countries because of their ethnic origin.

LDPR managed to accumulate a double-target protest message. "While there was nothing distinctive in Russian voters casting votes against the party of government, the Zhirinovskiy function was distinctive in spotlighting voters who were also negative about the communist regime. Because their protests were negative, the Zhirinovskiy voters were more "anarchist" than "bureaucratic authoritarian" (Rose et al. :815). It proved to be effective in 1993, but complicated LDPR's campaign tasks in 1995. "By being against the past as well as the present regime, LDPR distinguished itself from KPRF~ it also reduced the size of the electorate to which it could appeal. Yet LDPR endorsement of authoritarian alternatives and rejection of a European identity created some overlap with the Communist appeal. The resulting tensions caused its vote to be volatile" (Rose et al.: 817).

In 1995, LDPR, as in 1993, was nationalist and anti-Western in foreign policy, strongly in favor of the restoration of federal control in Chechnya, and pro-market but also protectionist in its domestic economic strategy. Zhirinovskiy courted ethnic Russian voters, contending again that a plot existed to destroy the Russian people and leave them a minority in their own country by the year 2030. He said the new Duma's top priority should be defending Russia and all things Russian. LDPR pitched its appeal almost exclusively in terms of the leader himself. The most frequently used slogan was "I'll get Russia up off its knees!" The party's printed leaflets attacked the "corrupt 'democratic' nomenklatura," promised to defend ordinary people against the mafia and rich "new Russians," and assured Muscovites that public transport would run on time, that the streets would be clean, and that housing would be allocated to city residents rather than "southern Mafiosi." LDPR perceived a new concern by people for their personal security far more readily than did the others. Many of Zhirinovskiy's proposed solutions to restore public order were ridiculous. But to a population extremely weary of crime and corruption, they may sometimes appear preferable to the current situation (see Belin and Orttung 1997~ Fish 1997; White et al. 1997a).

LDPR's nationalist appeal was modernized by Zhirinovskiy in 1996 presidential elections. "His new strategy in that election was to try to position himself as the centrist between El'tsin' s radical democrats and Zyuganov's radical communists, offering Russia a third way. This centrist rhetoric did not tame Zhirinovskiy's radical anti-Western racist messages. To appeal to communist voters, Zhirinovskiy openly promoted Russian imperialism and praised Stalin as a great Soviet leader" (McFaul, 1997:56-7).

### Social Profile of Nationalist Parties' Voters and Their Attitudes

According to Zhirinovskiy's appeal LDPR electorate should be defined as protestive-nationalistic, with the emphasis on the first attribute

~ meaning a ver~ pec~liar .combination of "the ideology of aggressivel; powerless RUSSian nationallsm and the politics of radical condemnation of both t.he old or~er and t~e n~w regime" (Malyutin 1998:48). It is really essential to test If the nationalist voters' profile actually coincides with this definition. Most of the experts shared conventional understanding that LDPR supporters belonged to the excluded marginal groups, aggressively insurging against the embryonic post-communist "new class" (Sakwa 1995 ~ Marchenko 1996; Wyman et al. 1995).

Using NRB V data [see Appendix, Table 10] Rose, Tikhomirov, and Mishler elaborated the socio-economic portrait of LDPR voters. "Rather, they were badly off, middle-aged, belonging to the lumpenproletariat, tending to see themselves lowest in status, with lowest income and highest deprivation level, the least educated, with only 24% having a good education" (J 997:806-7,] 5).

On the contrary, Pastukhov argued that "lumpen stratas and socially unprotected groups have not been base of support for nationalists" (1996:80). He defined the profile of LDPR as a "city petty bourgeoisie, and of KRO-as city intelligentsia with nationalist concern" (Ibid.). It is worth mentioning that Zhirinovskiy has recently started to make public claims for LDPR's identification with the Russian rising entrepreneurial middle class.<sup>6</sup>

White, Wyman, and Kryshantovskaya denied the both uppositions. Implementing the data of PPR survey [See Appendix, Table 10] and orne studies that took place at the moment of 1993 elections, they came to the assumption that "those who had positive feelings about nationalist parties were not identifiable by any of demographic characteristics. They were drawn from all social groups in roughly equal proportions" (1995: 195). The authors concluded that "more probably it indicated the potentially universal appeal of Russian nationalism and the concern of a very wide constituency with the lack

of public order and economic decline" (Ibid:] 96). In my opinion, it appears more relevant for the case to separate the core of the nationalist vote from it occasional recruitment with the development of the electoral campaign.

Prior to December 1993, support for LDPR was heavily concentrated among particular social groups, especially the manual working class, especially in the defense industries, as the obvious losers from the marketization transition process. During the campaign, the party, preserving its core, appeared to have extended its coalition to appeal to a much broader section: the unemployed; the young, including students, attracted by Zhirinovskiy's nihilism; some part of the intelligentsia, who had 10 t status as a result of the reforms and now found themselves marginalized; and the military and KGB personnel (Sakwa 1995; Wyman et al. 1995). LD~R support was particularly strong in small provincial town and rural areas ,";lth a predominantly ethnic Russian population~ for instance, in the 1995 election

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<sup>6</sup> Nezavisimaya gazeta, June 9, 1999.

it received 2,9% of the vote in Moscow and St. Petersburg, 9,6%-in large cities, but 12,7%-in towns and villages (in total 11,4%) (Krasnov Valery 1996: 178).

Various surveys could be helpful in understanding how the LDPR appeal influenced its voters' attitudes. In a PPR survey (see Appendix, Table 10) "views of those who identified themselves with nationalist politicians showed many similarities with those of communist identifiers in their hostility to democracy and to the marketization. Nationalist identifiers also tended to be sympathetic to the communist cause in greater numbers. The closeness of views that existed at leadership level was accordingly reflected at the level of their supporters, and formed the basis for communist-nationalist alliance of opponents to the post-communist Russian government. There were also some differences: in particular, respondents who felt that all leading positions in the country should be occupied by ethnic Russians were more likely to identify themselves with the nationalists than the organized left" (White et al. 1995:197-8).<sup>7</sup>

According to the NRB survey [see Appendix, Table 10] LDPR voters were "authoritarian-] 7% above national average, trusted traditional institutions-6% above national average, blamed the government for economic problems-18% above national average, blamed communists for economic problems-8% below national average" (White et al. 1997b: 144). "Two-thirds of the voters for LDPR said their situation had been better before the change. More than half of them preferred the old shortage economy. They were most positive about the old system, most negative about the present and least optimistic about the future" (Rose et al. 1997:809-10). In all those aspects they looked highly similar to KPRF electorate. On the basis of the NRB III survey, White, Rose, and McAllister suggested that the LDPR vote was a non-ideological protest one. Judging from the poll, Zhirinovsky's aggressive and nationalist attitudes, such as "spending more on the armed forces, retaining nuclear weapons, believing that Russia was threatened from abroad and that Russian nationals in the other FSU republics should be protected, readiness to use force in the near abroad, and commitment to Slav traditions turned out to be non-significant for the surveyed LDPR voters" (1997b: 145).

A similar observation was done by Hough of the RES survey (see Appendix, Table 10) concerning ethno-federal attitudes. "Asked their reactions to proclamation of sovereignty by the former autonomous republics of Russia, the supporters of Zhirinovsky, who was extremely outspoken on this subject, were strikingly similar to those of the rest of the population (in percent of total)" (1994: 18).

White, Rose, and McAllister came to the uncommon conclusion that "the variety of motives leading people to vote LDPR, the limited identification with the party and its lack of ideological cohesion gives no ground for describing those who supported LDPR as committed to its leader's

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<sup>7</sup> It is significant to note that this issue is one of the most sharply disputed currently within the KPRF, between radical communist-nationalists and moderate leftist patriots.

neo-nationalist creed. Those with nationalist views were not a bloc, nor did they support anyone party at the election" (1997b: 145,48). This Statement disagrees with their own assumption that Zhirinovskiy's success in ) 993 "indicated substantial support for a nationalist appeal" (Ibid: 199). Assessment of the profile of Russian ethnonationalist supporters is very significant within the perspective of the coming ) 999-2000 elections. Interpreting the results of two previous polls: the seven nationalist parties in 1995 won 13,6 million votes, whereas in 1993 LDPR won 12,3 million- Belin and Orttung came to conclusion that "there exists a stable nationalist- protestive electorate in Russia" (1997: ] 19).

#### Governmental Policy Toward Radical Ethnonationalists and Public Responses

Since the very start of the ultra-nationalist movement, governmental offices have demonstrated in most cases their unwillingness or disability to combat unconstitutional dissemination of ethnic hatred by pro-fascist groups. This could be explained by two major reasons. First is connected with the fact that the post-communist government itself adopted and utilized various nationalist values, appeals, and slogans (see Drobizheva, 1998; Tolz, 1998). The second results from the lack of a special federal law on combatin~ political extremism currently under consideration by the State Duma.<sup>8</sup> President El 'tsin's special decree on this issue, including the demand for criminal prosecution, failed to have a serious effect. The occasional court considerations and decisions of such actions covered the great minority of the cases. In Fall 1998, the State Duma failed several times to pass a resolution to censure Makashov and Iluykhin's (DPA leaders and KPRF deputies) anti-Semitic remarks when communist and nationalist deputies voted olidl y against it. The Krasnodar krai governor Nikolai Kondratenko announced his strong support for Makashov and encouraged the distribution of anti-Semitic literature in the province. In his response in December 1998, President El't in promised a jowerful offensive against anti-Semitism and extreme Russian nationalism.<sup>9</sup> The first resolute measure was undertaken in 1998 by then Minister of Justice Sergei Stepashin (now Prime-Minister) when he refused to register RNE on federal level accusing it of ethnic segregation. Legally thi was some kind of confusion since such an accusation, if proved, could provide a legal ground not for a prohibition of registration but for a crimina1 prosecution. In his tum, RNE leader Alexander Barkashov declared that Stepashin' decision was illegal, that it couldn't undermine the political might of RNE having its affiliations in more than a hundred Russian regions (being registered by local governments), and that real Russian patriots would remember about Stepashin when they came to power.

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<sup>8</sup> Nezavisimaya gazeta May 21, 1999.

<sup>9</sup> East-European Constitutional Review 1999. 8, 112:34.

A tum at the regional level has been made recently by the proclaimed start of the irreconcilable fight of Moscow Mayor Yurii Luzhkov against RNE's activity in the city. It started with blocking Barkashov's intention to hold RNE's congress there. Then Moscow authorities, reacting to 200 RNE

activists' march in the city, prohibited their regional organization and the party newspaper's publication. And finally, on April 28, 1999, the Moscow City Duma approved additional measures banning production, spread, and demonstration of the nazi symbols or the symbols resembling them. The next day, the measure was echoed in S1. Petersburg where City Legislative Assembly adopted a similar decision. Some restriction of nazi symbols was reported from Kemerovo oblast.<sup>10</sup>

Such governmental activity has caused a double polarizing public effect. On one hand, this could contribute to the rehabilitation of the confidence to the local government from democratically minded moderate nationalists (the bulk of potential Luzhkov's electorate). But on the other hand it might inspire new public sympathy for ethnic extremists as innocent victims of authoritarian pressure and prosecution.

#### Analysis of Public Opinion Surveys on Russian Ethnonationalism Manifestations

The new socio-political environment, as well as ideological programs and political activity of radical nationalist organizations, have evidently affected the patterns of Russian political culture both on elite and especially on mass levels. A growing sense of victimization by the majority, as well as a tremendous feeling of deprivation were reflected in society. Various sociological surveys indicated increased interethnic hostility among Russians by 1993. Time coincidences with LDPR's electoral success appears absolutely logical, taking into consideration public moods and attitudes. The moment of such a shift could be explained by the initial and most painful reaction to the split of the Soviet Union, the first wave of people's frustration about market reforms, and the rise of aggressive and nihilist sentiments in the society as a response to the bloody president-versus-parliament power struggle.

Then there was overwhelming support for Moscow to protect Russians in the "Near Abroad." According to the poll conducted in October 1993 by FOM (Public Opinion Foundation, Moscow), "out of all the most important and immediate aims of the Russian government, 630/0 of the surveyed marked restoration of the international prestige of Russia, and 52% named protecting Russians in the FSU republics" (Mikhailovskaia and Kuzminskii 1994:62), But when those issues were offered to the surveyed in the complex with some other issues that were more appealing to them, they proved not to be the first priority. Thus 89% of the NRB III survey [see Appendix, Table 10] respondents proposed that the Russian government should put domestic problems first, against 11% in favor of first making Russia a world superpower. From a variety of all possible concerns, only 4%

<sup>10</sup> Segodnya-Interfax April 29, 30, 1999; Nezavisimaya gazeta May 21, 1999; Izvestiya May 19, 21, 1999.

of the interviewed chose that of treatment of Russians in the FSU republics, which was very much behind rises in price, low wages, increasing crime, and government's ineffectiveness.<sup>11</sup>

An even higher level of Russian diaspora protectionism was revealed by Hough from the RES survey [see Appendix, Table 10]. "When asked whether the Russian state should defend the rights of Russians who live in the FSU republics, fully 92% answered "yes," only 30/0 said "no," and 50/0 declined to answer" (1994: 13).<sup>12</sup> NRB survey, however, demonstrated that the public image of such a protection was not really interventionist, being basically concentrated on negotiations, and to a less extent on economic pressures and repatriation of ethnic Russians from those countries, and it almost excluded military action, so much advocated by radical nationalists (see Table 5), Hough argued that "such views were associated with a level of tolerance towards the autonomous republics consistent with democratic federalism" (Ibid). But that statement contradicted the data of the survey that he co-conducted, Only 21 % of the surveyed approved the proclamation of sovereignty in the former autonomous republics of the Russian Federation, while 40% disapproved it, 19% were indifferent to it, and 18% felt that it was difficult to answer. When asked, "Do you think that all people who live in the Republics of Russia, independent of their nationality, should freely know the language of the nation that gave its name to the republic?," fully 53% replied "yes" and 330/0 replied "no" (14% declined to answer) (Ibid: 13-4). The similar cultural exclusiveness was reflected in POTE survey in 1993 [see Appendix, Table 10]. Forty-seven percent assumed that all national minorities in Russia must be educated in the Russian language, 27% were against that supposition, and 21 % were in-between (Whitefield and Evans 1994:53). The survey indicated "a solid basis of support for anti-Western and anti-minority positions, though these attitudes, the latter in particular, are less widely shared among the population than the more basic antipathies to the course of market and democratic reform so far" (Ibid:51). There was a relatively even distribution of attitudes towards the existence or extent of minority group rights, with large numbers of respondents being between the two extremes. Thus, 29% of those surveyed agreed that national minorities should have more rights than they had at the moment, 37% disagreed, and 24% were in between. The response to the question "Have Jews in Russia today too much power and influence?" brought a similar distribution of opinions: "yes" -30%, "no" - 32%, in between-20% (Ibid:52-3). The GP survey (see Appendix, Table 10) reflected the record level of expansionism in attitudes during 1993 election campaign. About half of the surveyed assumed that there were parts of other countries that should belong to Russia: 51 % indicated holding this opinion in pre-election and 49% in post-

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<sup>11</sup> University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No.228, 1994.

<sup>12</sup> Public attitudes on this issue changed a great deal by 1999, when according a VTsIOM survey, only 5% believed that policy of Russia regarding nationalities should be aimed at protection of interests of ethnic Russians living in the FSU republics (see Segodnya-Interfax March 16, 1999).

election polls. Naturally, those moods were higher among LDPR supporters: 67% and 600/0, but KPRF voters were not much different from ethnocentrists: 64% and 54%, and what was really surprising that level of nationalism among VR\* supporters, which were considered to be liberals: 47% and 43%. One quarter of the respondents supported the threat of military actions to defend the rights of Russians living outside Russia: 25% before and 25% after the election. With the LDPR electorate, the results were 41 % and 31 %, with KPRF-17% and 31 %, with VR-17% and 25%.<sup>13</sup>Wyman, White, Miller, and Heywood discovered that "as support for LDPR grew, Zhirinovskiy's voters actually became less nationalistic, although they still remained the most likely to adopt hostile attitudes to minorities and to foreign countries. It was, in fact, voters for other parties who became more likely to adopt a nationalistic stance" (Wyman et al. 1995:602). Surveys, however, indicated a stabilization in the volume of Russian hegemonic exclusiveness, and even a dynamically slight decrease of it from 1993 until the present (see Table 4).

Table 4: Dynamics of Russian Exclusiveness in Correlated Surveys by VTsIOM (1993, 1999), FOM (1995), and NRB III (1994) 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1999

"Should Russia be recognized as a major ethnic group?"

53%-yes 43%-yes, 38%-no 43%-yes, 48%-no

"Who is to blame for current miseries of Russia?"

"Non-Russians residing on the territory of Russian Federation" (one of the optional responses)

33%-yes 20%-yes, 71/0-

no

"Ethnic Russians themselves who didn't manage to preserve their best traditions,

Sources: Drobiszheva (1996:143); University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, 1994, No.228:20; Segodnya-Interfax, March 16, 1999; Tolz, 1998:1015.

The empirical evidence from NRB surveys [see Appendix, Table 10] appears to contradict the concept of Russian national superiority. Constantly growing anti-isolationism was reflected in the opinion on European self-identification. This could be a reliable indicator of the distance between the views of the ideologies of the radical right and those of most Russians. At the same time, according to these polls, xenophobic feelings about the threat of foreign governments increased between 1994 and 1996 from 22% up to 31 %. Forty-nine percent of the surveyed constantly denied this threat, but the proportion of the undecided decreased from 29% down to 20%, demonstrating

<sup>13</sup> Rearranged data from Wyman et al., 1995:603.



that the nationalist appeal found its response from those who had previously been indifferent to it. The same surveys vividly revealed Russian traditionalist floods and expectations. For 580/0 of the respondents, European self-identification paradoxically co-existed with the conviction on the part of the ~ greater majority (78%) that Russians should keep to their own values. Simultaneously, the idea of monarchist restoration was overwhelmingly rejected.

Table 5: Comparative Data of New Russian Barometer on Nationalist Attitudes Among Russians

NRB III 1994  
NRB IV 1995  
NRBV 1996  
Jan

NRBVI 1996  
NRB VII 1998  
Aug

"Who is to blame for our economic problems-and how much?"-Jews (one of the options)

Definitely -%

5 5 2 | Somewhat -%

4 5 | Not much -% | 6

| 5 | 5 | Not at all -% | 10 | 62 | 46 | 57 | |

Difficult to answer -%

| 25 | 39 | 25

Foreign governments (one of the options)

Definitely -%

10 7 | 9

Somewhat -%

12 | 18 | 22

Not much -%

| 12 | 11 | 18

Not at all -%

| 37 | 27 | 31

Difficult to answer -%

29 | 36 | 20

"A return to the Tsar would be better"

Completely agree -%

4 2 | 1 | 2 2

Somewhat agree -%

5 | 8 | 5 | 7 9

Somewhat disagree -%

27 29

18 | 32 | 28 |

Total ~ disagree -%

64 59

52 58 | 65 |

"Do you think other nationalities living in Russia could be a substantial threat?" Big threat -% | 10 | 7 | 9 | Some threat -  
0/0 | 23 | 23 | 22 |

Little threat -%  
29 | 33 | 29

Not threat at all -% | 1 | 34 | 36 | 40

"What should government do if Russians in the "Near Abroad" are threatened?"

Negotiations -%  
96 | 95 | 92

Economic pressures -%  
67 | 61 | 67

Repatriation of Russians -%  
66 | 68 | 67

Military action -%  
17 | 20 | 16 |

Nothinmuch could be done -%  
16 | 9 | 8 |

"Our country should develop like West European countries" {a} or  
"Russian people have much the same values and interests as people in the  
West {b}

{a} 22% | {b} 21% | |

"Our country should develop according to our own traditions" {a} or "Russian people have different values and interests  
from people in the West" b {a} 78% {b} 78%

"Do you think of yourself as a European?"

Often -%  
7 | 1 | 9 | 12 | 24

Sometimes -0/0  
25 | 13 | 14 | 16 | 34

Rarely -%  
18 | 17 | 19 | 23

Never -% | 54\* | 58 | 59 | 53 | 19

Sources: Rearranged from University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No:  
228 (1994), 250 (1995), 260 (1996), 272 (1996), 303 (1998).

\*150/0 didn't know how to answer

NRB polls showed that despite Zhirinovskiy's and Lisenko's rhetoric, anti-minority hostility occupied a stable and comparatively modest position in the respondents' sentiments. Polls also demonstrated that anti-Semitism on the mass level should not be either neglected or exaggerated, since in public opinion, Jews rank next to the bottom among sixteen groups that were sometimes blamed for the country's economic problems (White et al. 1997b: 142).

The issue of national identity is central for understanding contemporary Russia. Civic-tolerant, historical-cultural, and racial-exclusive approaches are competing for public recognition in the disputes surrounding national identity (see Flenley 1996; Tishkov 1997; Tolz (1998), Some surveys suggest that in the broad public opinion, Russian identity is largely subjective, linguistic, and cultural. The question of citizenship is far less significant, whereas the "nationality entry" in internal passports or racial characteristics are peripheral. This demonstrates that among all of the existing alternatives, a major bulk of the population rather prefer modernity and traditionalism than an extremist nationalist appeal (see Table 6).

Table 6: Popular Attitudes to National Identity  
Characteristics Which are necessary for a Russian

Source: Tolz (1998:1015) based on FOM 1995 survey.

With the retreat from a policy of communist state atheism, Russia experienced a rising wave of adherence to the Orthodox faith (see Table 7). Traditional religious beliefs were turned into meaningful criteria of Russian national identity by some strata of the society, replaced vanishing communist spiritual values for the other, and became just fashionable for the greater majority. But "having de jure status as 'first among equals,' the Russian Orthodox church had to face the reality that its actual influence on society was not nearly as great as its official status suggested" (Krasikov 1998:76).

Table 7: Combined Comparative Data of Surveys by VTsIOM (1989, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997), FOM (1991,1999), and NRB IV (1995)

on Distribution of Religious Beliefs among Russians

1989 1991 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1999 Orthodox Christians-% 30 34 50 | 56 | 43 | 44 48 | 55  
Non-Orthodox Believers -0/0

10 | 10 | 19

Atheists-% 65 | 40 | 40 39 | 26 | 43 37 31 Hard to say-%  
1 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 20 | 1..1

Sources: Dubin (1998:37); Segodnya-Interfax May 11, 1999; University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy (1995), No.250:66.

There exists an assumption in Western academic literature that in Russia a party of Orthodox believers could also claim to be a nationalist party (see Evans and Whitefield 1993; White et al. 1998). But in later works, the first two authors rejected their earlier assumption, stating that "Orthodoxy in Russia has always lacked the prescriptive component of Catholicism, has avoided a direct political intervention and has tended to associate itself politically with support for the state rather than with views on particular categories of issues" (in Wyman et al. 1998:74). And in practice, all of the attempts of newly founded Christian parties to compete in the elections have failed up to now. The leadership of the Russian Orthodox church prohibited its priests from joining any political party or participating in elections. Certain ideological solidarity and collaboration, however, have been established between nationalist or communist leaders and Russian Orthodox hierarchs (see Slater 1998).

Considering Russian Orthodox believers apart from the church's officially proclaimed neutrality, one can see a higher level of conservatism and traditionalism (see Table 8).

Table 8: Difference in Ethnopolitical Attitudes Between Orthodox Believers and Nonbelievers

Approval of the following point of view-

Nonbelievers

%

"Orthodox" is equivalent to "Russian"

10

34

really exists"

"Russia is returning to its spiritual roots"

" Threat of a military attack on Russia

37 "Non-Russians have too much influence in

37 RF' "Spiritual revival of the lies in a powerful

46 Russian state"

Source: VTsIOM 1996 survey data rearranged from Dubin (1998:43-4).

Judging from polls, extreme nationalist slogans always found limited response from the Russian public. From VTsIOM's data only 3 to 50/0 of the population supported the nationalists parties and their blocs. Even when support for the nationalists communists was factored in, the level of support remained at about 8 to 12% (Drobizheva 1998: 144). When asked if they were ready to vote for paramilitary pro-fascist groups 1,5-2% of surveyed traditionally confirmed it (Tishkov 1997: 238).

A PPR survey [See Appendix, Table 10] reflected an obvious predominance of negative and indefinite attitudes over positive and neutral attitudes in public association with the then-leading radical nationalist parties and their leaders (see Table 9).

Table 9: Public Attitudes to Radical Nationalist Parties (December 1992)

Party and its Leader	Positive Attitude	Neutral	Negative	Indefinite
Pamyat'	51	31	15	54
Dmitrij	28	15	75	
Vasilyev				
LDPR	210	19	68*	
Vladimir	61	150	33	
Zhirinovskiy				

Source: PPR survey data rearranged from White et al. (1995:190).

\*Evidently those ~8.% who were at that time non-determined in their attitude to LDPR composed an additional base for its phenomenal support a year later, in the 1993 election.

An SPS study [see Appendix, Table 101] profoundly analyzed the system of attitudes among Russian nationalists who constituted 160/0 of the population according to its data. Their image of the state model is significantly complex and vague: 90/0 back the restoration of the Soviet state (though 220/0 of nationalists voted for KPRF at 1995 election), 26% support the idea of establishing a democratic state, and for the rest the issue is unclear. They are much more consolidated in their ethnocentric attitude to human

f. rights. Only 250/0 approve the principle of ethnic equality advocating the legally guaranteed priority in rights and freedoms for the Russian ethnic majority. The motivation of their demand is rather egoistical than hegemonic, as they feel themselves deprived in the situation when non-Russians are adopting the new reality better than Russians. The beliefs and values of Russian nationalists are highly amorphous and controversial: they are much more expressed in their rejection than in construction. Russian nationalists are vulnerable to political and ideological irritants, rather than to positive ideas. No more than 160/0 of them would wish that Russia return to the historical pattern of the USSR, but while comparing present and past, they demonstrate one of the highest levels of nostalgia. Fifty-four percent would like to have the same living standards as in the West, but at the same time they are leading in defensive isolationism with 26% seeing the West as the major threat and enemy. In general, their mentality is considerably materialistic and consumptionist despite their enthusiastic support of traditional Russian spiritual values (Kutkovets and Klyamkin 1997: 134-5). Conclusions

1. There is an essential contradiction in Russian nationalist mass consciousness between proclaimed primordial spiritual values and actual priority of material demands, which makes it uncertain for the greater majority of the society.

2. Nationalist mindset and behavior would considerably affect Russian

political culture in the nearest future. Nationalism has its potential in public attitudes since it could be widely interpreted as a specific form of democracy, representing the interests of the Russian majority. If integrated with leftist affiliations, it might effectively compete with liberal democratic values.

3. The dramatically changing geopolitical position of the Russian Federation could greatly influence the search of the "national idea" by different political forces, and through them ideological cleavages of the citizens.

4. With the absence of a stable and influential Russian middle class, the level of nationalist radicalization would depend on marginalization of the population as the decisive factor.

5. Extreme Russian ethnonationalism still preserves its solid socio-economical, cultural, and psychological base in the Russian society though its political success seems unlikely, given both the legacy of socialist internationalism for one strata of the population and the influence of liberal values on another, as well as the immunity to fascism inherited from the historical memory of World War II-for the greater majority of the citizens.

6. It is hardly imaginable that ultra-nationalist groups that are ideologically different and in some cases antagonistic could be consolidated within some truly widespread coalition, compatible with major players in forthcoming Russian elections.

7. The 1999 parliamentary and 2000 presidential elections would obviously witness a new level of nationalist appeal from most of the participating parties. Their ethno-political messages would vary on the liberal-authoritarian scale and would be adjusted to the parties' criticism toward either the El'tsin's administration or the previous parliament.

8. From the current developments, the most predictable and situationally desirable alternative to Russian chauvinism or communist restorationism could be "enlightened patriotism" or moderate nationalism, which appears to be able to affect the protest vote and might be politically represented in power by the centrist Otechestvo (Fatherland) or Yabloko, as well as their alliance, having the potential of considerable mass support.

#### Appendix

##### List of Abbreviations and Translations of the Names of the Parties

AP-Agramaya partiya (Agrarian Party)

DPA-Dvizhenie v podderzhku armii (Movement for Army Support)

KRO-Kongress russkikh obshin (Congress of Russian Communities)

KPRF-Kommunisticheskaya partiya RF (Communist Party of Russian Federation)

LDPR-Liberal'no-demokraticeskaya partiya Rossii (Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia)

NBP-Natsional-bol'shevitskaya partiya (National Bolshevik Party)

NPS-Narodno-patrioticheskii soyuz (People's Patriotic Union)

NRPR-Natsional'no-respublikanskaya partiya Rossii (National-Republican

Party of Russia)

SO-Soyuz ofitserov (Union of Officers)

RNE-Russkoe natsional'noe edinstvo (Russian National Unity)

RNRP-Rossiiskaya narodno-respublikanskaya partiya (Russian People'

Republican Party)

ROS-Rossiiskii obshenarodnii soyuz (Russian All -People's Union)

- RP-Russkaya partiya (Russian Party)
- TR-Trudovaya Rossiya (Working Russia Movement)
- VR-Vibor Rossii (Choice of Russia)

Table 10: Surveys on Public Attitudes and Voting Behavior Referenced

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- In IS aper

- Moscow' PLS-Paul Lazarsfeld Society, Vienna; FOM-Public Opinion Foundation Moscow' VTsIOM· All-Russian Center for Public Opinion Research" CSPP-Center for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde; ISA-Institute for Sociological Analysis, Moscow; RNISiNP-Russian Independent Institute of Social and National Problems, Moscow
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