

**EVOLUTION OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND
ELECTORAL POLITICS IN RUSSIA, 1991-2007**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

SHASHI KANT PANDEY



CENTRE FOR RUSSIAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN STUDIES

SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY

NEW DELHI-110067

2012

Date: 27-07-2012

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled “**Evolution of Political Parties and Electoral Politics in Russia, 1991-2007**” submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this university or any other university.

SHASHI KANT PANDEY

CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Prof. Ajay Kumar Patnaik
Chairperson, CRCAS

Dr. Sanjay Kumar Pandey
Supervisor

Dedicated to
My late Baba

CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgement</i>	<i>i-ii</i>
<i>Abbreviations</i>	<i>iii-iv</i>
<i>List of Tables</i>	<i>v-vi</i>
1. Introduction and Conceptual Framework	1-24
<i>Introduction</i>	
<i>Conceptual Framework</i>	
<i>Development of Political Parties</i>	
<i>Elements of Political Parties</i>	
<i>Conceptual Basis of Party System</i>	
<i>Electoral System: A Battle for Political Power</i>	
2. Evolution of Political Parties during the Tsarist and Soviet Time	25-43
<i>Political Formation in the Tsarist Period</i>	
<i>Soviet Russia: Towards a Monolithic Party</i>	
<i>Communist Party of Soviet Union: Organization and Structure</i>	
<i>Membership</i>	
<i>Lenin to Brezhnev</i>	
<i>Gorbachev Reform: Withering away of CPSU</i>	

3. Political Party and Party System in Post-Soviet Russia 44-69

Legal Framework Concerning Political Parties

Parties and Public Exchequer

Political Parties in Russia

Conceptual Framework of Party Classification

Political Parties in State Duma

The Politics of Switch Over

Lack of Nationwide Organizational Presence of Political Parties

Party System in Post Soviet Russia

Party System in Russia 20th Century

Party System in the Early 21st Century

4. Role of Political Party in the Electoral Politics in Russia 70-98

Central Electoral Commission (CEC)

The Experience of Duma and Presidential Elections

State Duma Election 1993

State Duma Election 1995

Presidential Election, June–July 1996

State Duma Election 1999

Presidential Election, March 2000

State Duma Election 2003

Presidential Election, March 2004

State Duma Election 2007

Presidential Election March 2008

Party in Policy Making Process

Public Perception of Electoral Fairness

Role of Media

5. Conclusion **99-102**

Bibliography **103-114**

Acknowledgement

At the juncture where I am standing, I reflect back on the academic journey from Banaras Hindu University to Jawaharlal Nehru University. This phase was not only filled with emotions but also hopes for my future, as the events were unfolding before my eyes. I would like to acknowledge that, this work is an outcome of all academic and emotional support that I received which provided me the strength to complete this research work. This work would not have been successful without the blessings of Baba Vishwanath and Sankat Mochan.

First and foremost, I offer my deepest and sincerest gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Sanjay Kumar Pandey. Throughout this journey, he has provided me with necessary guidance and helped me through his encouraging remarks. His expertise, ideas and intellect have not only made me familiar with the topic but also explore and broaden my knowledge during the course of this work. His kind, generous, honest and friendly nature has been a great and continuous source of inspiration for me, since the very first meeting. My limited words are unable to acknowledge his countless contributions in the accomplishment of this work.

I am very thankful to my Chairperson Prof. Ajay Kr. Patnaik whose lectures and writings helped me a lot. I would also convey my sincere thanks to Dr. Phool Badan and all other faculty members for their co-operative attitude and moral support towards me.

I am indebted to Dr. T. P. Singh (Associate Professor, B.H.U) for his constant, painstaking, and timely assistance at each level of my academic and personal life. His advices and knowledge have given me a latent support all the time in my work. Further I would like to offer my earnest regards to Prof. K.K. Mishra and other faculty members of B.H.U. who nurtured my interest in Political Science and International Relations. I shall always be grateful to them.

My special thank goes to Arundhati madam, Mukesh bhaiya, Alok and Ashish, for their valuable and indelible advices, discussions, and moral support during the writing and furthermore for giving their precious time to patiently read my dissertation and their very crucial and critical comments.

All my days from BHU would have been tedious without the moral support of my senior Harish bhaiya and my friends Ameesh, Swatantra, Jaidev Ji, Gautam, Gyan, Rajani, Shahikant, Kunal, Deepmala, Anupma for standing beside me all the time. I also extend my special Thanks to Arvind, Gaurav, Rajaram, Surendra, Abhimanyu, Manu Bhai, Binay, Shailesh and Sheru for their memorable company and emotional support.

Last, but not the least, my very heartfelt thanks and deepest love and gratitude to my parents, Didi and Jijaji who have always been the source of inspiration and encouragement for me through all ups and downs of my life. Their constant motivation and support helped me a lot to reach this place. I also extend special thanks to Gurudev (Sujeet Tiwari), Rakesh, Pinki, Atul, Piyush and Anshu for their love, optimistic outlook and encouragement.

Lastly, the mistakes in this work belong to me only.

Shashi Kant Pandey

ABBREVIATIONS

AP	Agrarian Party
CDP	Constitutional Democratic Party
CFC	Central Election Commission
CPRF	Communist party of Russian federation
CPSU	Communist Party of Soviet Union
FA	Federal Assembly
FAR	Fatherland-All Russia
FC	Federal Council
IRGD	Inter Region Group of Deputies
JR	Just Russia
KANU	Kenya African national Union
LDPR	Liberal Democratic Party of Russia
NEP	New Economic Policy
NRB	New Russian Barometer
OHR	Our Home is Russia
OP	Octobrist Party
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PR	Proportional Representation
RCP	Russian Communist Party
RF	Russian Federation
RPRF	Republication Party of Russian Federation

RSDLP	Russian Social Democratic Labour Party
RSFSR	Russian Socialist Federation of Soviet Republics
RUH	Russian Unity and Harmony
SMD	Single Member District
STV	Single Transferable Vote
UP	Unity Party
UR	United Russia
URDP	United Russian Democratic Party
URF	Union of Right Forces
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

List of Tables

Table3.1 1993 to 2007 Duma election (Number of seats)	54-55
Table 3.2 Party in December 1995 Duma	57-58
Table3.3 December 2003, Duma	59
Table3.4 Age Education and Party Choice	64-65
Table3.5 Political Values and Party Choice	66
Table 4.1 Russia Duma Election 1993	72-73
Table 4.2 Russia Duma Election1995	76-77
Table 4.3(1) Presidential Election 1996, first round result	79
Table 4.3(2) Second Round 1996 Election	79
Table4.4 (1) Does Russia need an opposition now?	90
Table4.4 (2) Does Russia currently need political opposition?	90
Table4.5 Survey on Opinion about Political Parties	92-94
Table4.6 State Duma Election 1999	94-95
Table 4.7 Result, Presidential Election 26 march 2000	95-96
Table 4.8 Results, Presidential Election, 14March 2004	96
Table 4.9 Result, Presidential Election 2March 2008	96

Table 4.10 Results, State Duma Election 7December 2003 **96-97**

Table 4.11 State Duma Election Result 2Dec 2007 **97-98**

CHAPTER I

Introduction and Conceptual Framework

Introduction

Political parties are central and essential component of democracy. One could even argue that the true spirit of democracy is alive due to political parties and the political process would be incomplete without their role. Elections constitute the process which provides citizens an opportunity to choose their representatives, both the ones who would sit in government and who would be in opposition. Duverger defined parties as having "their primary goal the conquest of power or a share in its exercise," and drawing "their support from a broad base" in contrast to pressure groups, which "represent a limited number with a particular or private interest".

During the 1890s, Russia's industrial development led to a large increase in the size of the urban bourgeoisie and the working class, which gave rise to a more dynamic political atmosphere and the development of parties. The working class and peasants were the first to establish political parties because the nobility and the wealthy bourgeoisie were politically timid. Abysmal living and working conditions, high taxes, and land hunger gave rise to more frequent strikes and agrarian disorders. The first Russian Marxist group was founded in 1883 by George Plekhanov, who is often regarded as the "Father of Russian Marxism". The discontent against the Tsar continued to mount and revolutionary activities gained momentum. The Russian Social Democratic Labour Party was formed in 1898 with the aim of uniting the diverse revolutionary groups and organizations into one unified party. The same year the party held its first congress at Minsk.

The Second Congress of the Social Democratic Labour Party took place in 1903 and marked the split of the party into two groups: the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. Two of the party's main leaders, Vladimir Lenin and Julius Martov, disputed over different issue and ended up leading the Bolshevik and Menshevik factions, respectively. Lenin believed in democratic centralism and wanted to have an immediate proletariat revolution. Martov believed that it was way too early for a revolution as capitalism was still absent in Russia, and that there must be a bourgeois revolution before the proletariat revolts. Another significant party the Socialist Revolutionary party was also founded in 1898. Its major goal was to gather and unite the different local socialist revolutionary groups. The party ultimately wanted to unite all of the groups that were against the Tsarist regime.

In the wake of Russia's debacle in the 1905 war with the Japanese, a revolution broke out spontaneously. After The Revolution of 1905, many new political parties emerged. The Constitutional Democratic Party was a liberal party, the members of the party commonly known as the Kadets, were mainly supported by professors and lawyers. In 1906 during the First State Duma elections, the Kadets received 30% of the seats and they allied with the Trudoviks, forming a majority. The Octoberist Party founded October in 1905, was a non-revolutionary centrist party. They emphasized the need for a parliament (Duma) and its control over government. In the 1906 elections the Octoberist party and other groups associated with it did not do well as the Kadets. The Union of the Russian People was the only party to support the Tsarist regime. This counter-revolutionary party was founded in St. Petersburg as a part of the Black Hundred movement, the anti-Semitic conservative movement that supported the autocracy and thus went against all revolutionary causes. All political parties except the Union of the Russian People had one common goal to overthrow the Tsar. In Feb and Oct 1917 two changes took place: first; the autocracy collapsed and the provisional government was formed and second the Bolsheviks came to power. Bolsheviks were in favour of a new state in Russia based on the Marxist philosophy. In 1918, Bolsheviks came into being as Russian Communist Party and in 1920 the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine joined the RCP. Later the party was renamed as the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1952.

The organizational structure of the Communist Party of Soviet Union was based on the principle of 'Democratic Centralism' that was discussed by Lenin in his book 'What is to be Done?' (1902). In the subsequent decades things were not smooth for Soviet Union. It faced many challenges in the emerging national and international arena. The new General Secretary of central committee Mikhail Gorbachev's tenure started with new challenges which forced him to go for reform programme in the party and the state. Soviet Union had become economically fragile, Mikhail Gorbachev's reform programme became famous as 'perestroika' (restructuring) an economic reform, and 'glasnost' (openness) denotes transparency in government. Gorbachev's politics, intended merely as internal reform of the centralized government of the union, triggered a process whereby many of the constituent republics asserted political independence and eventually general elections in these

republics produced elected regional leaders who could challenge Moscow's authority. Boris Yeltsin was elected president of the largest of the constituent republic - Russia.

After the dissolution of Soviet Union Russia emerged as the successor to the Soviet Union. After seventy three years of one party rule, it is really difficult to establish a smoothly functioning multi-party system. In 1990 an amendment to article six of the Soviet constitution ended the dominant position of communist party of Soviet Union in all walks of Soviet life. In 1993 with the adoption of new constitution multiparty system was accepted and elections were declared a method through which people can express their wishes. This study tries to highlight evolution of Political Parties and Electoral politics in Russia and how electoral politics is functioning. Elections are also considered the best way to assess the functioning of democracy in any country. In the post period we have witnessed five Duma and five presidential elections in Russia, with more than ten parties participating in them.

When we discuss about evolution of Political Parties in Russia from 1993 to 1999, the Communist Party of Russian Federation (CPRF) is the only party which has a nationwide existence, ideological affiliation and clear programme for future Russia. The ideological evolution of the CPRF after 1994 marked a shift from orthodox Marxism towards socialist democracy and partial nationalism. CPRF received 11.6, 22.3 and 24.3% of votes in respectively 1993, 1995 and 1999 in Duma election. Another significant party Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) is known as the leading nationalist party. It was formed in 1991 with the avowed goal of popular mobilization through the articulation of ultra-nationalist ideology. LDPR received 21.4, 11.2 and 6% of votes in 1993, 1995 and 1999 Duma elections respectively. The strength of LDPR declined considerably. Yabloko party is led by economist Grigori Yavlinsky shared a commitment to economic reform. In Duma elections party received 7.3, 6.9 and 5.9% of votes in 1993, 1995 and 1999 respectively. Woman of Russia, party is based on the soviet era committee of soviet woman. Its programme points out 'without women there is no democracy'. In duma elections party received 7.6, 4.6 and 2.0% votes in 1993, 1995 and 1999 respectively. Unity party can be placed under the category of political right. Party shows its belief in a free society. It participated in 1999 Duma election and got 23.3% vote. Fatherland-All Russian party also came to the scene just before the 1999 Duma election, hence has been described

as 'ad-hoc' party. It favoured a 'society oriented market economy', and received 13.3% vote in 1999 Duma election.

When we discuss about evolution of Political Parties in Russia since 1999 the United Russia is seen as a conservative Political Party and also the largest Party in the country. The Party was founded in December 2001, through a merger of the Unity and Fatherland-All Russia Parties. Ideologically, it self-identifies as a "Russian conservative" Party, the Party is associated with former President and current Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, who is currently it's the leader. Since the formation of United Russia in December 2001, it has been the dominant Political Party in Russia. In the 2003 Duma elections four parties passed the 5% threshold: United Russia with 37.5% of the vote, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation with 12.6%, the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia with 11.45% and Rodin with 9%. In December 2007 Duma elections United Russia dominated the poll, winning 64.3% of the vote, which equalled 315 seats in the State Duma. Other parties to pass the 5% threshold and win seats in the State Duma were: The Communist Party of the Russian Federation, which won 11.57% of the vote and 57 seats; The Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, which won 8.14% of the vote and 40 seats; and Fair Russia, which won 7.74% of the vote and 38 seats. Parties which failed to win seats in the election included the Agrarian party of Russia (2.3%), The Russian Democratic Party Yabolko (1.59%), Civilian Power (1.05%), The Union of Right Forces 0.96%, Patriots of Russia 0.89%, the Party of Social Justice 0.22% and the Democratic Party of Russia 0.13%. In 2004 and 2008 presidential elections, winners Vladimir Putin and Dmitry Medvedev respectively were backed by United Russia.

Definition, Rational and Scope of the Study

Political Party can be defined as a group of likely minded people who come together to achieve certain common objectives through acquisition of power. For effective and well-functioning democracy free and fair competition between various political parties is prerequisite.

Disintegration of the then Soviet Union in the 1991 resulted in the fall of communist regime in Russia and this led to introduction of multiparty democracy. The proposed research would help in understanding the prospects and evolution of electoral politics

in Russia and the role played by Political party in this process. It will also analyse the limitations that Political parties and electoral democracies faces in Russia.

Multiparty democracy is yet a distant dream in Russia as electoral politics is being dominated by single political party namely United Russia. As democracy is still in nascent phase in Russia, It would not be wrong to hope that multiparty system may develop provided the constraints are properly tackled. This study would the period from 1991 to 2007.

The present study will focus on some points:

- To discuss how the Political Parties evolved in Russia.
- To make a comparison of the Political Parties and Party system of Soviet Union and Russia.
- To study the development of Political Parties and Party system in post-Soviet Russia.
- To explain the trends and patterns of electoral politics in Russia.
- To analyse the role of Political Parties in the electoral Politics and democracy in Russia.

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer several research questions. How Political Party evolved in Russia? What is the difference in the pattern of development of Political Parties and electoral politics in Soviet Union and Russia? What is the role of Political Parties in the electoral process in Russia? What are the pattern and trends of election and electoral outcome in Russia? How the Political Parties influence the functioning of democracy in Russia?

Hypotheses

The study will test two hypotheses. First, political Parties are not a prominent feature in Russian politics as their role in government formation and policy making is limited. Second, the Concentration of power in Russian Political System has led to control of the ruling Party over all apparatus of government and media facilitating its victory in elections.

Research Methodology

The design for the study is Historical, analytical and descriptive. The study would explore the evolution of Political Parties and electoral politics in Russia. Quantitative analysis of election results and voting pattern would be helping understanding the nature of electoral politics in Russia. This Study would be based on primary sources like government documents, archives, reports, election results, Party manifesto and pamphlets secondary sources would include books, articles, research journals, magazines, newspaper clippings, etc.

Overview of Chapters

CHAPTER 1- Introduction and Conceptual Framework: This chapter will introduce the concept of Political Parties, Party system and electoral politics after providing a brief introduction of study.

CHAPTER 2- Evolution of Political Parties during the Tsarist and Soviet Time: This chapter will deal with the development of Political Parties and what is their role during tsarist and soviet period.

CHAPTER 3- Political Party and Party System in Post-Soviet Russia: The third chapter would discuss about the Political Parties and Party system during the post-Soviet Period.

CHAPTER 4- Role of Political Party in the Electoral Politics in Russia: The Fourth chapter deals with the role of Political Parties and its limited contribution in functioning of Democracy in Russia. It also seeks to understand the electoral behaviour in the Russian politics which has resulted in One Party dominant system in the country.

CHAPTER 5- Conclusion: This chapter will summarise the analysis and outcomes of the preceding chapters. It will answer all research questions and justify the hypotheses.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Political Parties are central and essential component of Democracy. One could even argue that the true spirit of democracy is alive due to political parties and the political process would be incomplete without their role. Elections constitute the process which provides citizens an opportunity to choose their representatives, both the ones who would sit in government and who would be in opposition. Duverger defined parties as having "their primary goal the conquest of power or a share in its exercise," and drawing "their support from a broad base" in contrast to pressure groups, which "represent a limited number with a particular or private interest"(Duverger 1972: 1-2). The evolution of political parties coincided with the growth of parliamentary system and electoral processes.

Political Parties are essential for the effective working of modern democratic states. Harold J. Laski underlined the importance of parties when he wrote, "There is no alternative to party government, save dictatorship, in any state of modern times. Government requires leaders, leaders require not an incoherent mob behind them, but an organised following able to canalise the issues for an electorate with a free choice." This statement correctly separates dictatorship, which is one person's arbitrary rule, from democracy where people make free choice of their representatives to govern, on their behalf. A dictator like Hitler or Mussolini may also lead a party, but then it is a group of sycophants, not a competitive organisation. In simple terms, we can define a political party as an organised partnership based on ideological unity, which considers itself separate from other parties by a specific programme and which actively and constitutionally participates in politics. Its final aim is to secure political power and use this power for making and implementing authoritative values for the entire society.

Sigmund Neumann analysed Political Parties on the basis of their ideologies. He drew some valuable conclusions. He pointed that in view of sharp differences between the democratic and authoritarian parties, it is impossible to give a single acceptable definition. Nevertheless, he said that the purpose of setting up a party is uniformity within, and distinction from other groups. Essentially, each party has partnership

within a specific organisation, and separation from others on the basis of its particular programme. This definition is obviously true in case of two or multiparty democratic societies. On the other hand, in a one-party system there is total absence of competition and distinct policies and programmes. In fact, many scholars refuse to designate the party, in a single party system, as formal political parties. For them a party must have a second part, or a competitor, which is missing in one-party states. Thus, in one-party system, the party becomes totalitarian. Once it manages to acquire power, it retains it by any means. However, Neumann expressed the view that even in one party states opposition does exist in one form or the other. Even if there is no opposition, the authoritarian party always feels insecure due to fear of possible revolt or opposition. According to Neumann, political party is representative of social interests who and as a bridge, a link, between the individual and the society. The success of democracy depends on the efficient working of parties. Whether the government is parliamentary or presidential democracy, it cannot succeed in the absence of parties.

A Political Party which is democratically elected should have three other important characteristics. First, within the broad spectrum of ideological unity it tolerates permits and accepts the existence of groups as parts of the whole. Secondly, all political parties accept each other as competing parties in the struggle for power. Together they constitute the party system. Thirdly, each political party stands committed to uphold the interests of the whole community i.e. the national interests, and it is because of this feature that the party system works as a shared field of activity. But political parties are also sectional i.e. they have different mass bases and ideologies. Some may represent particular region, ethnic groups or social groups. Their perceptions of national interest also differ. As such partnership, separation, participation in decision making, unity in diversity and national interests are common characteristics of all the parties (Sartori 1976: 66).

Weiner and La Palombara refer to other essentials of a Political Party: “1-Continuity in organisation whose life span is not dependent upon the life span of current leaders; 2-manifesto and presumably permanent organisation at the local level with regularised communications and other relationships between local and national units; 3- self –

conscious determination of leaders at both national and local levels to capture and to hold decision making power alone or in coalition with others not simply to influence the exercise of power; and 4- the concern on the part of the organisation for seeking followers at polls or in some manner striving for popular support”(Weiner and Palombara 1969: 6).

Marxist View: The Marxist view of a Political Party and its role is quite different from one we have seen above. According to the Marxist view parties represent classes. This situation can be remedied only with the successful completion of class-struggle resulting in the victory of proletariat. The party that represents the working people alone has the right to exist. The bourgeois parties do not represent true democratic process. Therefore, they must be eliminated. According to Lenin the “proletariat has no weapon in the struggle for power except organization” (Sabine 1932: 724). Lenin made his own contribution to the development of Marxism in the twentieth century. If Marx said that the fact of exploitation at the hands of bourgeoisie would force the working class to develop the necessary consciousness that would act as the force to take them to the path of a revolution, Lenin modified the idea by adding that an organization of the proletariat would play a crucial part in arousing class consciousness and thereby creating a revolution.

The Communist Party is organised on the principle of ‘democratic centralism’. It means two things. First, the party is a hierarchy in which members of the higher rank are elected by those of the lower ranks. Moreover all units have intra-party democracy whereby the members may discuss and debate matters at their organizational level and also elect and remove their office bearers. Second, the lower units are bound to follow the decrees given by higher unit with the result that power is centred at the top. A very small band of the arch-leader and his most trusted followers constitute a clique that holds unlimited and absolute power. A critic may, therefore point out that “the communist type organization is in fact a structure of vertical centralism. Its secret is to sever horizontal communication lines, and especially descending ones. No democratic party has been able or shown as yet the desire, to go that far” (Sartori 1976: 96).

Lenin described the Communist Party as the ‘vanguard of the revolution’ for the working class. It is evident from the text of a resolution adopted at the Congress of

Communist International in 1920 that among other things, the Communist party is a part of working class; it's most progressive, most revolutionary and most class-conscious part. "The Communist party is created by means of the selection of the best, most class-conscious, most self-sacrificing and far-sighted workers. The Communist party is the lever of political organization, with the help of which the more progressive part of the working class directs on the right path the whole mass of the proletariat and the semi-proletariat along the right road"(Degras 1956: 28). The Communist Party alone knows what is in the interest of working people. Lenin was of the opinion that the party's position is similar to a military organisation in the proletariat's struggle to secure power and in its maintenance. The party is vanguard of the working people which has a pivotal role in class-consciousness, and is ever ready to make sacrifices in the interest of the proletariat. The Marxist ideology unites the working people and the party, and its organisation makes it all-powerful.

Development of Political Parties

The emergence of Political Parties in the modern world is closely linked to the emergence of constitutionalism and representative government. Parties today are found under almost all form of government, and in socialist and third world state as well as advanced liberal democracies, but their origins are essentially western. It is quite customary in the west to associate the development of parties with the rise of parliament and with the gradual extension of the suffrage. Duverger's theory postulates three stages in party development: First, the creation of parliamentary groups, Secondly, the organisation of electoral committees, and finally, the establishment of permanent connections two elements (Weiner and Palombara 1969: 29-33).

Duverger held the view that in the second half of the twentieth century parties' were usually associated with ideologies. Marx and Lenin had seen parties as representatives of conflicting classes, but several contemporary scholars like M.I.Ostrogoski, Roberto Michel and Maurice Duverger emphasise structure of Political Parties. These and other writers lay emphasis on what the parties do, not on what they are. It has become essential for comprehensive study of the parties to analyse their ideologies, social foundations, structures, organisations, and strategies. Political parties can be classified

essentially on two bases. These are: structure of parties, and the Party system. One cannot ignore other aspects and mutual relations of parties while analysing the structure of parties. From the point of view of structure, Duverger classified study of parties into two categories, which are internal organisation and external organisation. Whether parties were initially created internally, an internally created political party is one that emerges gradually from the activities of the legislators themselves. Some striking cases of internally created parties would be conservative and Liberal parties of Great Britain. Externally created parties are those that emerge outside the legislature and invariably challenge the ruling group and demand representation. Such parties are more recent phenomena. Such parties receive their original organisational impetus from such varied sources as trade unions, students, intellectuals, religious organisations, and so on. In the West, the notable examples are the socialist parties that emerged in the late nineteenth century and Christian Democratic Party in the early twentieth century party by response to the threat of proletarian political movements. Most of the political parties that existed at time of independence and later also in many Asian and African countries are example of the type.

The origin of the parties may be traced in the practice of collection of election funds for candidates and in the committees constituted to secure supporters and workers for the victory of candidates. Gradually, members of the legislature holding similar views and belief in similar ideologies came together leading to the birth and growth of political parties. While common ideology became the basis of parties in Britain and other European democracies that was not the case in the United States. The American political parties do not have clearly distinct ideologies. These parties came into existence as an outcome of the process of selection of presidential candidates, managing their campaign, raising campaign funds and selecting candidates for numerous other electoral offices in the United States. These parties are even now more concerned with electoral processes, rather than ideologies.

Weiner and La Palombara have suggested that parties emerge in political system when those who seek to win or maintain political power are required to seek support from the large public. This can happen in two circumstances. First, a change may already have taken place in the attitudes of subjects or citizens towards the authority.

Individuals in the society may believe that they have the right to influence the exercise of power. Secondly, a section of dominant political elite or aspiring elite may seek to win or maintain power even though the public does not actively participate in political life. Thus a non- participant population may be aroused into politics. This suggests that there must be fundamental conditions which precede political participation. In other words, while the presence of one of the historical crises maybe catalyst for the organisation of parties, it is clear that parties will not in fact materialise unless a measure of modernisation has already occurred (La Palombara and Weiner 1969: 8-21).

Elements of Political Parties

The functioning of Political Parties involves the role of several ‘inner circles’ that may be termed caucuses, cells, branches, militia, etc. Moreover, it is their meaningful role that enables us to distinguish between democratic, fascist and communist variants of political parties. The contribution of Maurice Duverger has an importance of its own in this regard. He is of the view that a political party “is not a community but a collection of communities, a union of small groups, dispersed throughout the country (branches, caucuses, local associations etc.) and linked by co-ordinate institutions (Duverger 1972: 17).

Duverger talks about the following element of a party’s organisation (ibid 1972)

Caucus: Identifiable with a small unit like clique, core committee, coterie and the like, it is a very small entity having a ‘limited nature’. Its size is deliberately kept as small as possible. Its strength does not depend upon the number of its key members but upon the quality they possess. It is, indeed, a group of notabilities chosen because of their influence. It plays a very important part in the decision- making process, though it reaches its peak on the eve of elections. Thus, it may be likened with institutional elite. Caucuses may be of ‘direct’ and ‘indirect types’. The first category are composed of ‘notabilities’ chosen for their individual qualities and personal influence; the second one (as in the case of Republican and Democratic parties of the united state) are composed of ‘experts’ in the art of fighting elections.

Branch: It designates a basic element which is less centralised than a caucus. While the latter deliberately seeks to live away from the masses, the former appeals to them

and also appreciates its growing proximity with them. It is by and large an invention of the socialist parties which desire to maintain their intimate touch with the people at large. It is found that the leaders of the socialist parties come to the branch members and talk about their problems and then a free exchange of ideas takes place. An attempt is also made to recruit more and more members with the help of branch organisations. The result is that the branches of a political party become very important in the day to day functioning of the party. Besides, its impact upon the people in general is so abiding that they see in politics a means of bettering their position. In this way, branch system corresponds to the working class mentality.

Cell: It is an invention of the fascist and communist parties where the ‘occupational’ units of the ruling party are scattered in every nook and corner of the country and every cell has a much greater hold on its members than the caucus or a branch. The members of a cell carry more importance than the members of a party. The secretary of a cell can exert the strong influence. The party solidarity is also strong, because cell is a unit of about a dozen members or so who know each other intimately. Above all, the cells have an ideological orientation and they are a source of every clandestine action. The entire network of the cells is controlled by the highest unit of the party composed of the ‘real decision-makers at the top’.

Militia: The Fascist party of Mussolini in Italy and the Nazi party of Hitler in Germany and communist party of China under Mao made another experiment by taking militia as the basis of their party organisation. Mention may be made of Hitler’s storm troopers Mussolini’s shock troops and Mao’s Red Guards. The members of these organisations remain civilians, though they are given military training, wear prescribed uniforms, hold party flags and act at the behest of the party leaders working under the supreme command of the chief of the organisation. It is a kind of private army of the party in power sufficient to combat and finish the enemies inside the country.

Duverger mentions two types of Parties:

Cadre Parties

Cadre Party means a ‘Party of Notables’, dominated by an informal group of leaders who saw little point in building up a mass organization. Such Parties invariably

developed out of parliamentary faction or cliques at a time when the franchise was limited. However, the term cadres is now more commonly used (as in communist parties) to denote trained and professional party members who are expected to exhibit a high level of political commitment and doctrinal discipline. In this sense, the communist party of the Soviet Union, the Nazi party in Germany, and the Fascist party in Italy were cadre parties, as are the Chinese communist party etc.

Mass Party

A mass party is one that believes in the principle of 'election' to get popular legitimacy. It tries to enrol more and more members and act with their support and consultation. The membership is an open affair that is available to everyone who subscribes to its basic policy. Regular subscription is the source of its finances and the vast size of its membership is the stuff of its activity. In this way, mass party technique replaces the capitalist financing of electioneering by democratic financing (Duverger 1972: 33).

Conceptual Basis of Party System

Modern representative democracy has brought about party system as an indispensable factor in every political society. It may be laid down that political party in one form or another "is omnipresent" (La Palombara and Weiner 1969: 3). Undeniable is the fact that party politics has become a universal phenomenon. Every state of the world has a party system of its own whether it pertains to a one party model or to a bi-party model or to a multi party model. Manifold are the determinants of the party structure. They vary from religious and social to economic and political. Certain political parties are associated with a religious faith like Christian Democrats in Italy and Germany, Komei-to in Japan. There are some parties depending on ethnic or racial connection such as Tamil Federal party in Sri Lanka. Though the determinants of party structure may be different, they may be reduced to three main factors- historical, socio-economic and ideological.

In the first place, historical factors are of great importance in the determination of party structures. Parties are the conditions of modern political processes and their emergence presupposes a necessary degree of urbanisation and development of mass communications. It is the extension of franchise that leads to the creation of political

parties. As the process of suffrage grows, the organisation of political parties has a wider and still wider base. Political parties “arise when historical change occurs and these are not subject to scientific laws. Therefore, the development of parties is more haphazard and uneven than general classification make apparent. Certainly particular changes are necessary such as the need for dominant political elites to seek wider political support, and for a significant change in the political attitudes” (Ball 1978: 102).

Second, the socio-economic factor has a significance of its own. The level of economic development influences the nature of party competition. We may find that there is a different response to urban and rural societies and to those in which class conflict is a significant aspect of political process. In a liberal democratic state party with a totalitarian structure may hardly find a congenial place to live in and operate, since there is open electoral competition that allays possibilities of all such development. Nationalism and religious divisions may be more important than those of class in forming the basis of political parties. Of course, the attitude and values prevalent in society and political culture may be of vital significance in determining the type of political parties that emerge in any society.

Third, Socialist and communist parties are organised on the basis of particular ideology. These parties are called ‘leftist’ because they struggle to change the status quo what they call ‘the era of injustice’ perpetrated by the class of ‘bourgeois’ exploiters and oppressors over the ‘proletarian’ class of the workers and toilers. There may be the parties based on the ‘rightist’ ideology as fascist in Italy, Nazis in Germany and Bharatiya Janta Party in India. Such parties stand for the maintenance of the status quo that goes to the advantage of the existing rulers hailing from the affluent class of the society.

Political parties emerged to perform some common functions in a wide variety of political systems at various stage of social, political and economic development. Whether in a free society or under a totalitarian regime, the organization called the party is expected to organize public opinion and to communicate demands to the center of governmental power and decision- makers. The party must articulate to its followers the concept and meaning of the broader community even if the aim of the party leadership is to modify profoundly or even to destroy the broader community

and replace it with some other order such as role of the Russian communist Party in the Tsarist Russia. Party is also likely to be involved in political recruitment – the selection of the political leadership in whose hands power and decision will in large measure reside (La Palombara and Weiner 1969: 12). Political parties perform several important functions in modern political system:

Representation is refers to the capacity of parties to respond to and articulate the views of both members and the voters. They are major ‘inputting devices’ through which the needs and wishes of the society reaches the government. This is a sort of function that could be carried out in a better manner, in an open and competitive system that forces parties to respond to popular preferences.

Elite formation and the recruitment function are more exclusive prerogatives of the parties. The future elites are exposed to be a long and wearisome process of testing in party offices and on the backbenches before they are admitted to the highest executive offices. Parties provide a training ground for politicians, equipping them with skills, knowledge and experience, and offering them some form of career structure.

Political Parties have traditionally been one of the means through which societies set collective goals and ensure that they are carried out. Parties play this role because in the process of seeking power, they formulate programmes of government (through conferences, conventions, election manifesto etc.) with a view to attracting popular support. In defining goals perception of interest may vary from one party to the other.

In the process of developing their respective goal, parties also help the people in articulation and aggregation of their various interests. Parties, indeed, often develop as vehicles through which business; labour, religious, ethnic or other group advance or defend their various interests. The UK Labour Party for example, was created by the trade union movement with the aim of achieving working class political representation.

The Most important indicator of the legitimacy of a party system is the share of vote polled by it the parties under considering while party espouse a radical change in the socio-economic or political system (Known as anti-system parties) or does it support a moderate change in the existing system (called system parties). Parties are important agent of political education and socialization, internal debate and discussions as well

as campaigning and electoral competition or the means of the political education. This issues that parties choose to focus on help to set the political agenda, and the value and attitudes, that they articulate become part of the larger political culture.

An important element of the competitive interaction between parties is the shape of party systems, it is important to distinguish types of party systems. The other three types are one party system, two party system and Multi party system that may be explained in the following manner:

One Party System: One-party system implies the existence of only one party in a country. The countries committed to certain ideologies such as Marxism or Fascism normally do not allow the existence of any opposition party. In one-party states, there is, therefore, no opposition. Parties other than the ruling party are either constitutionally debarred, or they are crushed by the rulers. This system originated with the establishment of the rule of the Communist Party of the USSR after the Bolshevik Revolution. While the critics deplored the system as authoritarian rule of the Communist Party, the USSR claimed it to be the rule of the working classes. This category “is characterised all other groups, trying to absorb the political opposition, or in the extreme case suppressing all opposition groups which are regarded as counter revolutionary or subversive of the regime as forces dividing the national will (Johari 2011: 273). This principle category has two sub categories- Dictatorial and democratic, the case of a one party system of the dictatorial model obtains if the party in power allows no other party or group to live or act in opposition to its authority, Fascist Party in Italy (1922-43) and Hitler’s Nazi rule in Germany (1933-45) were typical examples of the dictatorship of one man who led the only party permitted by him. All other parties were banned and crushed. Their leaders were thrown in the jails or even executed. It’s democratic in case the ruling party tolerates the existence of other parties in opposition, Mustafa Kamal Pasha’s one-party rule in Turkey was claimed to be democratic.

The democratic category of an one party system has three subcategories, namely one plus party system where the dominant party seldom takes the help of some other party as we could see in the case of liberal democratic party of Japan until 2009, one dominant party system where one party enjoy s a position of far more influence than all other parties put together as in case of Indian National Congress before 1967,

finally, one absorbing Party system where one party absorbs all other major and minor political organisations within its fold as in the cases of Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) of Mexico, Kenya African National Union (KANU) of Kenya and National Renovating Alliance of Brazil (ibid: 2011).

According to Maurice Duverger, there can be different forms of one-party regimes. Prior to the Second World War, there was strong discipline in the Fascist and Communist parties, whereas the only Turkish party, the Republican Party was closer to the traditional parties. Salazar's Fascists in Portugal followed the pattern of nineteenth century liberals; it was different from Mussolini's Fascist Party as it lacked militarily trained youth groups. Secondly, they are dictated by certain ideologies which generally support revolutionary methods, and even encourage violence. Nevertheless, there are major differences between Communist and Fascist Parties. While the former are based in the workers' movements and seek to abolish private property, the latter have their main support base among the rich, wealthy and industrialists. Thirdly, there are differences in one-party systems on the basis of economic policies and level of development. It may emerge in backward societies as the former Russian empire was, or as Tanzania was. It may even develop in developed and democratic societies also, as in Eastern Europe in post-Second world war period. Besides, the role of a one party may vary. The communist parties become integral part of the state machinery as was the case in the former Soviet Union, or is the case in China today. The Fascist Party, on the other hand was used only as an instrument of governance; it did not become part of the state apparatus. The fascists promote police state, whereas the communists aimed at the withering away of the state. This, however, may never happen.

Two Party Systems: In modern democracies, there are two or more competitive parties. There are, obviously, at least two parties. None of these is more stable or powerful than the other on a permanent basis. If, however, one party remains in power for a very long period of time and the other continues to occupy opposition benches then it becomes a dominant party system; it ceases to be a competitive two-party system. The leaders and scholars of the United Kingdom and the United States consider 'dualism' as the best system. But, it has not become very popular. In the two-party system, there is constant competition between the two parties for securing

majority of popular votes and seats in the legislature. Both the parties keep on occupying either the treasury benches or sit in the opposition, though this may not always be alternate. Besides, there may be one or smaller parties also in the two-party system. But, the smaller parties neither come to power nor do they normally influence the outcome of elections, though at times smaller parties may associate with one or the other major party.

In order to carry our point of typological illustration further, we may say that the two party systems have its two sub categories distinct and indistinct. The distinct two-party system, on the other hand, includes two parties with well-defined policies and programmes and clear organisations. Members of both the parties function within the party discipline, and obey the leadership. Great Britain is the best example of such a two-party system, both have definite organisation, they remain within party discipline, and members of Parliament ordinarily do not defy their leadership, on the other hand when we talked about the indistinct two-party system. The most prominent example of this type is the United States. There are hardly any major differences in the policies of Major American parties namely, the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. As Dahl says, they have 'ideological similarity and issue conflict' (Dahl 1967: 222) both the parties have very loose discipline in the Congress. At the local level, it is even worse; there is practically no discipline. Normally, in the two Houses of Congress, members vote of their own choice; they hardly receive, or obey, the party line on bills and other issues. Consequently, the differences, if any, in the two parties is often blurred. Many members of both the parties may vote in favour of a motion, and many other members of the same two parties may vote against. As Duverger wrote, "Actually, there is a different majority and a different opposition for each issue. It does not follow party lines." Duverger is of the opinion that the loose two-party system of the United States is close to the multi-party system rather than the two-party system of Great Britain. Their national organisation is flexible and central control is minimal. In the United States, the two parties take strong pro-leadership line only on the issue of presidential election.

Finally, we can say two-party system is said to be a guarantee of success of democracy. Power shifts from one party to the other, and yet stability is maintained. One party rules in a responsible manner and the other offers constructive opposition.

There is neither instability of multi-party system, nor authoritarian rule of one party system.

Multi-Party System: It is a system in which no party is able to obtain clear majority in the legislature entitling it to form government. There are several countries that have developed a system of having many parties.

Technically, the existence of three or more big parties may be described as multi-party system. In Europe, France, Italy and Switzerland are some of the examples of this system. India has over 40 political parties, big or small, represented in the Lok Sabha. In a multi-party system, three, four or more parties may get together at any point of time to form coalition governments. Such governments generally adopt a common minimum.

Programme for governance, as they do not have commitment to any one ideology. The coalition governments generally do not last long, but there can always be exceptions. In a general election, voters have a wide choice of candidates. Many of them may belong to smaller parties committed to regional or sectarian interests. The winning candidates may not necessarily secure even half of the total votes cast. In a multi candidate election, the candidate getting largest number of votes is declared elected, whatever percentage of total votes this may be.

The multi-party system of India has the distinction of having such a large number of parties that, for some time now, it is impossible for any single party to win majority on its own. For almost 40 years after independence (with the exception of 1977-79 period), Congress Party dominated the Indian political scene. There were indeed several parties in post-independent India, but the Congress was mostly in power both at the Centre and in most of the States.

A more neat taxonomic illustration of party system has been given by Sartori in his study on this subject. The notable feature of his classificatory illustration is that he discovered several sub-varieties within the one party system and then differentiated the two-party and multi-party system on the basis of '**pluralism**' and '**atomism**'. The basis touchstone of his classification is the fact of real participation in power what the term 'competition' (Sartori 1976: 12).

Here the analysis of Sartori, the single party system is one where political competition between different political parties is either non-existent, or is not very effective. The single party model may be said to have three main varieties. First it is **monopolistic** when political power is wielded by one party alone and no other party is permitted to exist at all. Such a party system has three types: **totalitarian, authoritarian and pragmatic**. The totalitarian and authoritarian parties are assumed to reflect different ideological intensities, the one party pragmatic represent that end of continuum at which an ideological mentality gives way to a pragmatic mentality. One can equally say that totalitarianism and authoritarianism appear as different points of an ideological scale whose lowest point is called pragmatism (ibid 1976: 223).

One more multiplicity of the single party system is its **hegemonic position**. Here we find that while the survival of other parties is allowed, only one party counts more than all. The other parties survive like its 'satellites' or assistant entities without posing any challenge to its hold. The hegemonic party neither allows for a formal nor a de facto competition for power. The case of a hegemonic party has two sub varieties first ideological and pragmatic. It pertains to the former category if the ruling party is committed to a particular ideology like the communist party of Russia, or it is pragmatic when the ruling party has no such obligation. Third, **predominant party system** is another variety of the single party system. Here we find a power arrangement in which one party governs alone without being subjected to rotation as long as it continues to win absolute majority in the election. In this model, one party outdistances all others, for it is significantly stronger than all of them even put together. The case of India, Japan, and Turkey fall in this category.

In the scheme of Sartori two and multi party systems embody the common characteristic of '**polarised pluralism**', a line of distinction between the two may be drawn. A bi- party system is one where the existence of third parties does not prevent the two major parties from governing alone and, and therefore coalitions are unnecessary. It involve these important conditions: (1) two parties are in a position to compete for the absolute majority of seats, (2) one of the two parties actually succeeds in wining a sufficient parliamentary majority, (3) this party is willing to govern alone and (4) alternation or rotation in power remains a reliable expectation(Sartori 1976:

188). We come to the point of **extreme polarism** that is the hall- mark of an ‘**atomised**’ party system .A multi party system having a highly fragmented character leads to the existence of highly fluid party politics. Here we find that no party is in a position to cast a noticeable effect on the other. All those parties must be excluded which have almost no place in the bargaining process and thereby represent their structured consolidation. An atomised party is fragmented leader by leader, with very small group revolving around each leader. As such, it “has no significant fractional articulation beyond the face value of all that characterises a political party (ibid 1976: 75).

Electoral System: A Battle for Political Power

By electoral system we mean set of rules that structure how votes are cast at elections for a representative assembly and how these votes are then converted into the seats in that assembly. Electoral systems are the primary institutional mechanism to regulate political competition. While there are numerous types of electoral systems, they can best be understood as falling into three main types: single-member majoritarian, proportional representation, and mixed systems.

Majoritarian Electoral Systems

This is the oldest electoral system, this system can be divided into two category one plurality and second an absolute majority (50+ percent) of votes to be elected. The plurality rule is most familiar in the legislative elections in the India, United States and the United Kingdom, where the national constituency is divided into territorial single-member districts, and the voter casts a single vote for his or her preferred candidate. The winner is the candidate who obtains more votes than any rivals for that reason the system is also known as a first-past-the post election, so that a candidate with only a handful more votes than the second- or third-place finishers takes office. The party that succeeds in the most districts emerges as the legislative majority and, in parliamentary system form the government.

A second type of majoritarian formula introduces an absolute majority requirement, so that the winner must obtain at least 50 percent plus one vote to be successful. For that reason, absolute majority rules are applied in two-round or run-off electoral systems. For example, in the 1996 Russian Presidential election, 78 candidates registered to run for election, of which 17 qualified for nomination. Boris Yeltsin won 35.3 percent of the vote in the first round, with Gennadii Zyuganov, the Communist candidate; close behind with 32 percent, and Alexander Lebed third with 14.5 percent of the vote. After the other candidates dropped out, and Lebed swung his supporters behind Yeltsin, the final result was a decisive 53.8 percent for Yeltsin against 40.3 percent for Zyuganov (White, Rose and McAllister 1996).

Proportional Representation (PR)

Proportional representation is a concept in voting systems used to elect an assembly or council. PR means that the number of seats won by a party or group of candidates is proportionate to the number of votes received. For example, under a PR voting system if 25% of voters support a particular party then roughly 25% of seats will be won by that party. There are many different forms of proportional representation. Some are focused solely on achieving the proportional representation of different political parties such as party list PR while others permit the voter to choose between individual candidates such as PR single transferable vote (STV). Proportional electoral systems based on Party Lists in multimember constituencies are widespread throughout Europe, and worldwide almost 60 countries use PR.

The principle of PR that the seats in a constituency are divided according to the number of votes cast for party lists, but there are considerable variations in how this is implemented in different systems. Party lists may be open as in Norway, Finland, the Netherlands and Italy, in which case voters can express preferences for particular candidates within the list. Or they may be closed as in Israel, Portugal, Spain and Germany, in which case voters can only select the party, and the political party determines the ranking of candidates. The rank order on the party list determines which candidates are elected (Norris 1997: 5).

The single transferable vote (STV) is a voting system designed to achieve PR through preferential voting. Under STV, an elector's vote is initially allocated to his or her most preferred candidate, and then, after candidates have been either elected or eliminated, any surplus or unused votes are transferred according to the voter's stated preferences. The system minimizes “wasted votes”, provides approximately proportional representation, and enables votes to be explicitly cast for individual candidates rather than for closed party lists. It achieves this by using multi-seat constituencies (voting districts) and by transferring votes to other eligible candidates that would otherwise be wasted on sure losers or sure winners. This system is used in the Upper House in India and Australia.

Mixed Systems

In this system electors have two votes. For example in Germany combines single member and party list constituencies. Half the Members of the Bundestag (328) are elected in single-member constituencies based on a simple plurality of votes. The remaining MPs are elected from closed party lists in each region (Land). Parties, which receive, less than a specified minimum threshold of list votes (5 per cent) are not be entitled to any seats. The total number of seats, which a party receives in Germany, is based on the Niemeyer method, which ensures that seats are proportional to second votes cast for party lists. Smaller parties which received, say, 10 per cent of the list vote, but which did not win any single member seats outright, are topped up until they have 10 per cent of all the seats in Parliament. It is possible for a party to be allocated 'surplus' seats when it wins more district seats in the single-member district vote than it is entitled to under the result of the list vote (ibid 1997). This system is also used in Italy and New Zealand.

CHAPTER II

**Evolution of Political Parties during the
Tsarist and Soviet Time**

The political system of Tsarist Russia can be characterized as unrestrained despotism bordering on repression and martial law. No representative institution of any kind existed until 1864. In fact until 1905 Political parties and trade unions were illegal. Hence political parties existed only as underground associations. Before 1905, the Tsar was the supreme political authority. The Decembrists were the first in the history of the revolutionary movement in Russia. They wanted to overthrow the monarchy and set up a strong centralized republican government as a necessary means for achieving social reform. At the end of nineteenth century, Marxism began to make impact in Russia. The Russian Social Democratic Labour Party was formed in 1898 with the aim of uniting the diverse revolutionary groups and organizations into one unified party. In 1903 the party split into two groups: the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. Vladimir Lenin and Julius Martov were two main leaders of the party. The collapse of all authority in March 1917 contained within it the seeds of future development.

At the very beginning the party gave a classical performance of its role of 'guiding Nucleus' (Schapiro: 1960: 246). It carried out the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. It was the upholder of ideology based on Marxism- Leninism. It was the CPSU which organized and constituted the Soviet state. During the course of its struggle for power, it appropriated the role of working class. The entire functioning of state and society was taken over by CPSU. The CPSU was always considered as a van-guard organization with the duty of leading the masses toward a communist society. It was deliberately kept as a minority organization, as an association of 'the best element of soviet society'. And admission to it was difficult, protracted and selective during the early decades. Lenin always maintained that the party was the essential instrument of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The programme of party adopted in 1961 replaced the earlier programme of 1919 which stated that party was now the vanguard of entire nation.

The Party structure closely resembled that of the State at all levels from the district upward. The party assumed superior position because it was the directing forces of social revolution. State organs were regarded as one of the 'Transmission belt' between the party and masses. In theory, the communist party was not considered as an alternative to the state organization. This was made amply clear way back in march 1919 at the 8th congress of the party. The party was only to play the leading and guiding role. In practice, the party apparatus controlled all key institutions. In the process the party structured was jelled with the state structured. Unity of thought and tight controlled made the system inflexible. Hence when the party was criticized and got delegitimized and collapsed, the other institutions fell like bunch of cards or automatically collapsed.

Political Formation in the Tsarist Period

Communist Party did not emerge by accident. Rather it evolved historically. The history of the revolutionary movement in Russia, of which Social Democracy was an integral part, began with Decembrist (Fainsod 1969: 6). Although this uprising was crushed easily, its political ideas continued to inspire the future revolutionaries. Majority of the Decembrists were 'Jacobin' in politics with more concern for social reform than with liberty. Their goal automatically meant the over throw of autocracy as a necessary means for achieving social reform. The aspirations of the reformers were conditioned by the existence of a large peasant population. On the eve of emancipation of the serfs in 1861, out of the total population of seventy four million, the peasants farmed the overwhelming majority. The regime of Aleksandra II (1855-81) witnessed the rise of the 'populist movement'. It's main inspiration coming from Aleksandra Herzen (1812-70). The doctrine of Herzen that Russia could, by virtue of its traditional peasant commune, travel a separate path to socialism, and thus avoid the evils of capitalism, received a more detailed exposition from N.G. Chernyshevsky (1828-89) Chernyshevsky, also known as the father of modern Russian radicalism had influenced a generation of revolutionaries including Lenin. "A free and prosperous commune" he believed, 'would provide the basis for the society of the future' (Keep 1976: 245).

The Emancipation Act of 1861 had further strengthened this traditional form of land-tenure, which also included a primitive form of self government by peasant households. The commune system tended to preserve the peasants as a separate social group. Three features distinguished: first, that within it the peasant had no right to property, but merely a right of user, within the commune and as determined by the commune; secondly he was restricted in his right to withdraw from the commune; and thirdly, he was subjected to a form of state paternalism, due partly to sentiment and partly to a desire to maintain an efficient system of tax collection (Schapiro 1975: 1). It was in the 1870's that the populists took the first steps towards creating an organization. They began by taking steps to set up circles for discussion and propaganda among the workers and peasants. These efforts led to the emergence of first Russian revolutionary party, Zemlia I volia (Land and Liberty) which was founded by M.A. Natanson, A.D. Mikhailov and G.V. Plekhahov. The first programme adopted by Zemlia I volia contained social rather than political demands all land to the peasants, self determination for all parts of the Russian empire, transfer of self government functions to the peasant communes. The programme accordingly called for agitation in order to arouse and stimulate revolutionary section of civil liberty (Schapiro 1975: 2).

Although there was strong populist tradition against any kind of political objectives, Pressure are inside Zemlia I volia for more concrete and immediate political action. This became evident at a congress of the party held at Voronezh on 24 June 1879. The programme adopted at this congress declared that the immediate objective was the overthrow of the regime in order to liberate the people. There after a freely selected constituent assembly would decide the future course of action. The party would have to take the lead in overthrowing the autocracy, and preparing the people for the election that would follow. The task of organization was left to the conspiratorial party centre, the executive committee. But towards the end the only activity of *Narodnaia Volia* or 'People's will' proved to be the assassination of Aleksandra II (Fainsod 1969: 15). The Voronezh Congress of Zemlia I volia was significant for another reason too. It led to

Plekhanov's break with Zemlia I volia and the founding of a separate organization, Chernyi Peredel (Repartition of the land) by him along with a few supporters prominent among whom were P.B. Akhel'rod, Vera Zasulich and Leo Deich. In the first issue of Chernyi Peredel (The organ of the movement), Plekhanov and his supporters argued that it was only through economic struggle that the people could gradually learn the meaning of and the need for political struggle. The future founders of Marxism were thus preaching for over a year the very heresy, which under the name of 'economism' this would soon condemn. On 25 Sep. 1883, Plekhanov announced the publication in veronica of a series of popular political pamphlets for workers to be called 'The Library of contemporary socialism'.

Thus, came into existence the first Russian theoretical Marxist group which came to be known as the group for the Liberation of labour and Plekhanov came to be rightly regarded as the father of Russian Marxism (ibid 1969: 38). The primary aim of Plekhanov and his companions was the formation of a social democratic party in Russia. The first to put this idea into practice, were not the Russians, but the Polish and Jewish inhabitants of the Russian Empire. The success of the Jewish organization (The Bund) in defending the interests of the workers gave considerable impetus to the development of the Russian movement. The successful experience among the Jewish workers was set down in a Pamphlet entitled 'Agitation' by A. Kremer. The main theme of this influential pamphlet was firstly that, the Proletariat must on no account wait for the bourgeois to win freedom for it. Second, the masses could not be induced to take up the cudgels for abstract ideas. Third the development of proletarian consciousness was a gradual process evolved in a succession of battles for small, concerted demands. Late in 1895, Lenin who was already active in one of these circles joined forces with Martov to form the Petersburg union of struggle for the liberation of working class. The joint Political activity of Lenin and Martov did not last long and in December 1895, they were arrested and sent to Siberia (Fainsod 1969: 41-42).

In the midst of all these developments, all Russian Social Democratic Labour Party was founded. Its first congress met in Minsk on 1 March 1898. The congress elected a central committee of three-A. Kremer, B.L. Eidelman of Kiev and S.I. Radchenko. The congress adopted a broadly democratic party structure with the central committee being made responsible to periodic congresses. The congress also issued a manifesto which was largely the work of Peter Struve a Marxist intellectual. The first congress did not exercise much practical influence as most of its delegates were arrested immediately after it. Conflict among the ideological leaders caused much damage to the party. These conflicts centered around two questions: organization, and what was called 'economism' in party polemics. The older party intellectuals were more concerned with the professional side of the revolution; the newer social democratic leaders were more intent on practical action such as strikes.

Meanwhile in course of his exile Lenin evolved the idea of creating a newspaper. It was hoped that this newspaper, besides safeguarding the Russian social democratic movement from ideological contamination would also form an organizational center for unifying the Russian underground committee. This idea was first formulated by Lenin in an article written in 1899, which remained unpublished (Schapiro: 1979: 22). By the end of 1900 an agreement had been reached on policy, and on the composition of editorial board with Plekhanov, Aksel'rod, Vera Zasulich, Dotresov, Martov and Lenin. This scheme was put into effect when the first issue of the newspaper ISKRA (Spark) appeared in Leipzig on 24th Dec. 1900 (Carr, 1950: 22-27).

It was about this time that Lenin first began to emerge head and shoulders above the others by his energy and by the clarity of his ideas. About the same time, Lenin published his first major original work on revolutionary doctrine and revolutionary organization, 'What is to be done'? "Bolshevism as a stream of political thought and as a political party, Lenin was to write twenty year later has existed since 1903" (ibid 1950). Its

character was determined by the controversies of the period in which it was conceived. The winning of political freedom by the overthrow of the autocracy, it put forward in the name of the proletariat political as well as economic demand, since the foundation of ISKRA. Lenin became more and more the pacemaker of advanced ideas and it is in his writings that the evolution of party doctrine can be most clearly traced. Two propositions to which Lenin returned over and over again, the first was that "without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement". The second was that 'social democratic consciousness' or 'class political consciousness' was not a spontaneous growth and could come to the worker only from within (Carr 1950: 25).

Lenin was clearly influenced by the autocratic nature of the Russian state which precluded the formation of any kind of socialist or even Democratic Party on a western model and drove every democratic or socialist movement into secret conspiratorial channels. Thus the whole emphasis came to rest on the need for a small closely knit party under a strong central leadership to act in the name of the proletariat as the spearhead of the revolution. The methods of the revolutionary struggle varied and had to be determined empirically from time to time. Lenin advocated these views with considerable success at the party's Second Congress held in Brussels and London during Aug. 1903. The Congress was marked by controversy over the definition of a party member, over how much autonomy local party organizations would have and on the issues of national self-determination and cultural development of non-Russian nationalists. When seven delegates walked out of the Congress, Lenin and his followers were able to claim a "majority" and as a result of this fateful act, Lenin's faction became known as the 'Bolsheviks' (members of majority). The opponents who remained at the congress were called 'Mensheviks' (members of minority), and Lenin was to claim subsequently that this Bolsheviks were the majority even when they were in the minority in a badly divided party (Christopher 2005: 60).

Another party Socialist Revolutionary was also founded in 1898, and its main objective was to collect and unite the diverse local socialist revolutionary groups. The party eventually wanted to unite all of the groups that were against the Tsarist regime. The ideology behind the party is different from Marxist ideas in that rather than the industrial proletariats spark the revolution, it would be the peasantry. As the party was highly supportive of the rural peasantry also rather than believing in land nationalization, which the Socialist Revolutionary Party believed.

The defeat of the autocracy in the Russia Japanese war raised a revolutionary storm, in Russia the revolutionary movement had started. The revolution of 1905 encouraged the formation of several progressive parties, like the Constitutional Democratic Party was a liberal party founded during the peak of the Russian Revolution of 1905, when Nicholas II was strained to grant basic rights to the people in signing the October Manifesto. The members of the party, normally known as the Kadets, were mostly supported by professors and lawyers. The opposing parties at the time, the Constitutional Democratic Party, as a left-wing party, wanted universal suffrage and a constituent assembly that would write down the constitution, deciding the country's government. In 1906, for the period of the First State Duma elections, the Kadets received 30% of the seat. This initial success would go to waste as the government dissolved the Duma, calling it dysfunctional. The Kadets' leaders were soon banned from participation in the Duma due to a manifesto they wrote in response to the government's breaking up of the party. Finally the Kadets, who were not initially committed to the idea of a constitutional monarchy, declared their support for it and abandoned their revolutionary ambitions.

Like to the Constitutional Democratic Party to their Left, the Octobrist Party was founded during the latter part of October in 1905, when the October Manifesto was being issued. The Octobrist Party was a non-revolutionary centrist party, it was neither left-wing nor right-wing but in the middle. Distinct from their opposing left-wing party, the Octobrists strongly believed in a constitutional monarchy from the start. The Octobrists still

emphasized the need for a parliament (Duma) and government control over it. In the elections for the First and Second State Dumas, the Octobrist party and other groups associated with it did not do well as the Kadets made up the majority of the parliament. After that, before the Third State Duma, the laws on parliament election changed in favour of the Octobrists, and they eventually made up the largest group of the Duma. The party could not grab the opportunity and take benefit of the majority; because they had no influence on the politics the Octobrist party split. The Union of the Russian People is the only one to hold up the Tsarist regime. This counter-revolutionary party was founded in St. Petersburg as a part of the Black Hundred movement, the anti-Semitic conservative movement that supported the autocracy and hence went against all revolutionary causes.

The first reaction among all the Social Democrats was to boycott the Duma elections as there was no guarantee that electoral canvassing and agitation would be free from police interference. For the Bolsheviks, the Duma was a reactionary body which would merely encourage false illusions among the workers. The best course for the social democrat was to boycott the elections and after the Duma had assembled to exploit the conflicts which would arise between the Duma and the people. The Mensheviks, though divided in their views believed that the Duma could serve as a valuable source of experience for the worker by teaching them that only a democratic constituent assembly could satisfy their demands. Like the Bolsheviks, The Socialist Revolutionaries too decided to boycott the elections. This policy resulted in the complete disorganization of the workers. Left to themselves, the workers in some cases returned to candidates with social democratic sympathies. The peasants in the absence of socialist candidates voted for the *Kadet* resulting in its emerging as the strongest party in the Duma, with 179 out of 478 seats. Eighteen social democrats were also elected (Carr 1950: 45-70).

The Social Democrats had not played a very active role in the first Duma. With no Bolsheviks in the Duma, the tactics of the social democrats was more like that of the

Mensheviks. As the time for the elections to the second Duma approached, Lenin who had earlier called for a boycott of the elections decided to reconsider his views. He declared that history had demonstrated that the Duma was a valuable forum for agitation (Lenin 1976: 28-32). An electoral compromise with the Mensheviks worked well with the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks co-operating fairly harmoniously in the electoral campaign. On 3 June 1907, the Tsar issued a manifesto dissolving the second Duma. A new electoral law considerably restricting suffrage was promulgated. The immediate cause of the dissolution was the refusal of the Duma to surrender for trial the members of the Social Democratic 'faction' on the charge of fomenting an uprising among the armed forces. The effect of the revised electoral law was clearly evident in the composition of the new Duma which met on 1 Nov. 1907. The majority of the deputies were right wing or liberal conservative Octobrists of the radicals the *Kadet* now numbered only fifty four and the social democrats eighteen of which the great majority were the Mensheviks with only five Bolsheviks (Carr 1950: 47).

In January 1912 Lenin gathered his followers in Prague for a conference, as result of which his organization came to be called the Russian Social Democratic Labour party (of Bolsheviks) and the division of the Russian Marxist into two parties was final. With the beginning of 1st world war the first reaction of the Russian proletariat was a patriotic upsurge. The situation soon changed when rising costs, shortage of commodities, economic depression, defeat and disorganization started having its effect and major workers unrest were witnessed in Moscow and Petrograd. Among the radical parties, the *Kadet* supported the war effort. The Socialist Revolutionaries were far from united in this matter: some supported it, while the others opposed it. Inside the Duma, the Russian Social Democrats refused to vote for the war budget and issued a declaration in August 1914 repudiating the war, and calling on the international proletariat to work for its termination. In spite of the split both the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks agreed on the declaration (Fainsod 1969),

In March 1917, the Russian monarchy and the old regime collapsed in the largely spontaneous and virtually bloodless revolution. The old order collapsed not because new claimants for power were pushing it aside but through its own inherent weakness. Out of this void two potential governments emerged, the provisional government of the liberal intelligentsia pledged to some form of constitutional government, and Petrograd soviet, a revival of 1905, claiming to speak in the mystic name of revolution. To the provisional government the revolution stood for democratic freedoms, for liberation from oppression and for a chance to prosecute effectively a war which the inefficient monarchy had hampered. The soviet in which the Mensheviks and socialist revolutionary's predominated until 1917, viewed the imperialist war with disgust and bourgeois provisional government with suspicion, they demanded conclusion of peace on just, democratic terms (Schapiro 1979: 25). From February to October 1917, Russia lived under the so called 'dual-power'. By September the Bolsheviks who were at the outset a tiny minority in the soviets obtained a majority in the Petrograd and Moscow soviet. Lenin returned from exile to Petrograd in April 1917 and came round independently to the same view as that of Trotsky that the socialist and bourgeois revolution should be telescoped into one. The record of events between the February and October revolution of 1917 reveals that the Bolsheviks seized power.

The Bolsheviks won because once the Tsar was overthrown they were the only group who consistently evoked confidence in their ability to seize and maintain power (Carr 1950: 45-70). There were other reasons too which contributed towards the victory of Bolsheviks besides singleness of purpose they possessed a superior organized and disciplined armed force the Red Guard. Their slogan of bread, peace and land brought them considerable support among the workers and sections of the army nearest to the capital, also they had ample funds which they skillfully used to suit their purpose (ibid 1950). The decree of Nov. 1917 of the Second All-Russian Congress, of Soviet established the Council of People's commissars. It was described as the 'provisional workers and peasants government' exercising authority until the convocation of constituent assembly.

Elections to the constituent assembly were held in Nov. 1917. The Bolsheviks secured only quarter of the total votes polled. Half of the country voted for socialism but rejected Bolshevism. The signing of Brest-Litovsk treaty in February-March 1918 marked the beginning of the end of the coalition government. In July 1918 the Socialist Revolutionaries pulled out of the coalition government to raise the country to revolutionary war. Within the party it produced an open opposition movement, led by Bukharin which came to be known as 'left communism' (Schapiro 1960: 187). During the first three to four years of the revolution almost every policy decision of the party was preceded by a policy conflict both within and without the party. This resulted from a number of factors. Firstly, the Bolshevik party had not clearly chalked out a plan for building socialism. Secondly the circumstances in which the Bolshevik party operated had been exacted before the seizure of power. Thirdly many members of the Bolshevik party were not fully in accord with, Lenin's policy and sometimes non-Leninist views prevailed. The Bolsheviks did not possess a monopoly of political power until July 1918.

Soviet Russia: Towards a Monolithic Party

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union was the only legal ruling Political Party in the Soviet Union and one of the largest Communist organizations in the world. The CPSU emerged from the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party under the leadership of Vladimir Lenin. The Bolsheviks were in favour of establishing the world's first socialist state. In 1918 the Bolsheviks became the Russian Communist Party and in 1920 the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine joined the RCP. Later the party was renamed as the CPSU in 1952.

Communist Party of Soviet Union: Organization and Structure

The CPSU in the pre-revolution phase adopted a number of specific principles to regulate its internal functioning in order to attain its goal. In the initial years after the Bolshevik revolution, there were relatively free debates concerning the appropriate way forward for

a society setting about the task of building socialism as a prelude to communism. Democratic Centralism was the basic organizational principle of the CPSU. It means, election of all leading bodies from the lowest to the highest, periodical reports of party bodies to their party organization and to the higher bodies, the decision of higher bodies are obligatory on the lower bodies, strict party discipline and subordination of minority to the majority.¹ The preamble recited the fundamental law of the party. It called for 'monolithic' unity in ideas and organization, and prohibition of all 'faction' and groups. This proposal was adopted at the 10th congress in March 1921. The duty of party member was to use his entire endeavor to strengthen the ideological and organizational unity of the party (Article 2). But, as a party member, one had the 'inalienable' right to engage in free and business like discussion of the policy of individual party organization and the party as a whole. There was even provision for discussion on a nationwide scale in certain instances, with safeguards against the formation of groups (Article 27).

The territorial organization was roughly parallel to administrative sub-division of the country. At the All-union level organization comprised the All-union congress and the permanent organs of party administration e.g. the Central Committee, the Politburo a Secretariat, a committee of party control etc. the next tier was formed by the party organizations of the fourteen union republics (except RSFSR), of the six areas and of the regions, which for party purposes and included the autonomous republics and autonomous regions. They were 142 in total in April 1971. The last tier was composed of ten circuit organizations, 1964 city organizations 448 urban and 2810 rural district organization. The functional organization of party was composed of 370,000 primary party organizations at industrial enterprises, state and collective farms and government, educational, cultural, scientific and trading institutions.

¹ Rule of the CPSU, adopted by 22nd congress of the CPSU, 31st oct1961, Soviet Booklet no.82, London,1961,p.11

The largest and most important union republic, the RSFSR had no party organization separate from the All-union organization. Also the party organizations of the union republics were in no sense national parties, but branches of the All-union party, subject to discipline and directions like any other subordinate party organization. This principle of centralization, cutting across the national division of the country was always the cardinal in party policy. The supreme policy-making organ of the party was the Politburo. The Politburo was in theory elected by and responsible to the central committee. In practice it was the real centre of power. In March 1919, Orgburo was set up as a second sub-committee of the Central Committee, overlapping in membership with and lower in status than the Politburo. According to Lenin the general principle of assigning matters was that while the Orgburo allocated forces, the politburo decided policy. At the same time third sub-committee Secretariat had emerged.

These four bodies Central committee, the politburo, the Orgburo and the Secretariat virtually controlled all aspects of country's life (Schapiro 1960: 235-45). After 1922, the main centre of party administration was the Secretariat headed by Stalin as General Secretary. The improvements effected to consolidate it as the real centre of power between 1924 and 1927 were as follows. First, after the setting up of organized the system of control over subordinate party organization was perfected by improving the inspection, guidance and verification of the work of the local committees. Second, the system of maintaining personal records was rationalized the centre how kept the all records in case of key man and delegated the responsibility of other records to local organizations. A third change also involved more delegation. The practice of making appointments by the centre was restricted to limited list of key posts.

Membership

In 1918 CPSU had a membership of approximately 200,000. In the late 1920s under Stalin, the party engaged in a heavy recruitment campaign of new members from both the

working class and rural areas. This was both an attempt of the party and an attempt by Stalin to strengthen his base by outnumbering the old Bolsheviks and reducing their influence in the party. In 1925 there were 1,025,000 communist party members in a population of 147 million. In 1927, after an intensive recruitment campaign, membership rose to 1,200,000. By 1933, the party had approximately 3.5 million members but as a result of the great purge party membership was cut down to 1.9 million by 1939. In 1986, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had over 19 million members or approximately 10% of the USSR's adult population. Over 44% of party members were classified as industrial workers, 12% were collective farmers. The CPSU had party organizations in fourteen of the USSR's 15 republics. In the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic itself there was no separate Communist Party until 1990 as affairs were controlled directly by the CPSU. Children would join the young pioneers and then, at the age of 14, might graduate to the Komsomol (Young Communist League) and ultimately, as an adult, if one had shown the proper adherence to party discipline or had the right connections one would become a member of the Communist Party itself. However, membership also had its obligations. Komsomol and CPSU members were expected not only to pay dues but also to carry out appropriate assignments and "social tasks".

Lenin to Brezhnev

The major developments which marked the period after October revolution were the increase of authority of a small Central Party leadership. The transformation of the Party from a revolutionary organization directed to the overthrow of existing institutions into the direction nucleus of a governmental and administrative machine; and finally, the creation for it of a monopoly through the elimination of other parties (Schapiro 1979: 38).

The adoption of the new economic policy created deep division in the ranks of Communist Party. NEP was introduced to placate the peasantry and rebuilt the economy; the initial policy change agreed to at the 10th Party Congress in March 1921 was to replace the method of surplus appropriation of grain by tax in kind. Any grain produced

above the tax could be freely marketed by the peasant. But the left wing of party led by Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamanev were against NEP and were in favor of industrial programme by squeezing the peasantry. For Lenin the economic reforms were only a subsidiary to the political reform if the supremacy of the Communist Party and its monopoly of power was to be preserved. He argued that the attempt at direct transition to communism had been a grave misstate. The proper road was from small scale production to state capitalism and then to socialism and only thereafter to communism.

An insight of the ruling of the party during formative years reveals several striking features. At the policy making level at the summit a high proportion of newcomers including stalwarts like Trotsky and Bukharin had emerged. Much of the friction of the early years of communist rule owes its explanation to this factor. In sharp contrast to this, in actual party apparatus, Lenin's Pre-revolutionary collaborators culminated. Thus the organizational structure after the revolution was therefore in this respect very close to the pre-revolutionary structure. It is significant that closer one came to the centre of power, one became representation of the older Bolsheviks in the party apparatus. Secondly, the tendency to use old Bolsheviks in the party apparatus in the local organizations was showing a natural increase by 1922. So far as party state relations are concerned, the eight Congresses in March 1919 decided that there has to be an end to the integration of party and soviet led party committees were to maintain themselves in a position to 'guide' and 'control' government bodies through directives given to the party 'faction' inside them. The new central machine took steps to consolidate its position. As a first step, it liquidated the autonomy of various party institutions and organizations operating outside the control of regular machine Secondly, it brought the local party committee under the control of Central Committee.

Stalin was appointed General Secretary in 1922. He started making own appointments, especially people from centre rather than from the soviets. In a conscious manner, Stalin neglected and isolated the earlier Bolshevik leadership. It was victory in the factional

disputes over policy epically after the death of Lenin which helped Stalin to gain supremacy over the party. Their policy of opposition to NEP was described as 'un-Leninist'. Once the NEP was abandoned in 1929, the right wing faction of Bukharin was also sidelined. A combination of apparatus power, factional victories and more importantly his sheer persuasive and political skill put Stalin in undisputed control of soviet politics by the end of 1920's. The period of 1936-37 was period of great purges which saw tremendous increase in police and widespread use of arbitrary arrest and punishment of suspect citizens and party workers. Not only the old Bolsheviks but a large percentage of Stalin's loyal supporters in the party were destroyed by purges. The party as Lenin said was, in theory, monolithic. The Tenth Congress had put an end to factionalism. It was also 'monopolistic' in the sense that it was the only party tolerated, and in the sense that it enjoyed a monopoly of the right to interfere in every aspect of public and private life. Even in 1921 severe measures were taken to subdue the party but none the less it survived as an institution. Congress met regularly, control organs of party retained a modicum of independence and some ideological vigor survived for years. Lenin dominated the party but did not destroy it as an institution. The purges broke up both inside the ranks of party and outside then effectively and for a long time to come, all possibility of cohesion or solidarity. Stalin destroyed the party as an institution, and undermined its monopolistic position. He used both the personnel of the security police and of the state bureaucracy as instruments of his personal rule in rivalry with those in the party. The 'atomization' of society was completed in the year of terror (Schapiro 1960: 422-35).

The overall effect of the purges became clear when Malenkov gave the eighteenth Party Congress in 1939 an analysis of party members over the years. Only 8.3% who joined the party earlier at the end of 1920 survived of the total membership at the beginning of 1921, less than a fifty remained in party in 1939. Less than half of total members who joined between 1929 and 1933 survived the purges. The social composition of the party had undergone a profound change which was mainly the result of deliberate policy of recruitment. In the initial years after the launching of first five year plan, there was a

traditional preference for working class recruits to the party. The avowed aim was to increase the proportion in the party of workers actually engaged in production and this aim was achieved. Production rose from 40.8% in Jan. 1928 to 48.6% in 1930. In the Eighteenth Congress new party rules abolished preferential categories for admission to the party and threw open membership to all 'conscious and active workers, peasants, and intellectuals, loyal to the cause of communism (ibid: 1960: 443). The effect of purges and new recruitment policy on party were chiefly three. First, 70% of recruits came from the new intelligentsia secondly, it was now a young party more than half of delegates to the Eighteenth Congress were under thirty five thirdly, the party was still predominantly male. In 1941 women formed only 14.9% of the total membership, infact a decline from 15.9% in 1932. The transformation of party ensured Stalin's supremacy. By 1939 this was virtually unchallengeable (Fainsod 1953: 245-82).

There were major significant shifts in CPSU policies under Khrushchev. First, it became a mass party, yet at the same time selective. It freed itself from its doctrinal preference for proletarian membership and admitted experts and specialists from various fields. Secondly there was predominance within the party of the apparatus of officials and secretaries. Thirdly, there was centralization of the apparatus itself. At the top of the hierarchy of secretaries and officials were the secretaries of the Central Committee, controlling through their subordinate officials the several departments of Secretariat. Despite all, administrative devolution the three of control laid firmly in the hand of the control secretariat. Fourth, personal ascendancy of Stalin led to the brutal imposition of the idea of monolithic unity upon the party and nation. He governed through the party and also without it. Khrushchev restored the intuitional framework of the party, its organs and regularities, which Stalin had destroyed. Party elections under Khrushchev were rigidly control from the centre as before. The most momentous change effected by Khrushchev was his repudiation of Stalin. At the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, in Feb. 1956 Khrushchev delivered his famous attack on the period of the 'cult of personality'. But he himself as first secretary retained to the full the personal authority which he could exercise over party officials and indeed over all party members. Indeed it

was in large measure because of his insistence on asserting his personal will in the matter of appointments and policy that Khrushchev laid the basis of his quarrel with the men of the party apparatus.

Brezhnev succeeded Khrushchev as General Secretary and Kosygin was chosen as chairman of council of ministers. Both the offices were merged in 1977 when Brezhnev became the chairman of the Presidium of the USSR. By the early seventies Brezhnev's domination was clearly established. It was the 1977 constitution under Brezhnev in which for the first time constitution mentioned the CPSU as the 'leading and guiding force' of soviet society and 'The nucleus' of its political systems and all state and public organization (Article 6). Regarding the composition of CPSU since the 24th congress, the report at the 15th Congress, stated the present strength of party to be at 15,694,000 members, of them 41.6% were worker, 13.9% collective farmers, nearly 20% in the technical fields and 24% were working in the fields of science, literature, arts, education public health management and military.² In the post-Brezhnev era Andropov became the CPSU general secretary he survived only for 15 months. Andropov initiates limited reform in agriculture, industry and in the party. After his death Cherenkov succeeded him. His leadership was balanced coalition, two regular central committee plenums were held during Cherenkov's period of office. Neither plenum made any change in the membership of Politburo or Secretariat and Central Committee. Andropov and Cherenkov's tenure was a transitional phase prior to the Gorbachev era.

Gorbachev Reform: Withering away of CPSU

In the preceding decade's thing were not smooth for Soviet Union. It faced many challenges in the emerging national and international arena. The new General Secretary of Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachev's tenure started with new challenges which forced him to go for reform programme in the party and the state. Soviet Union had

² XXV CPSU Congress: Documents and Resolutions (New Delhi,1976), p.63

become economically fragile, Mikhail Gorbachev's reform programme became famous as 'perestroika' (restructuring) an economic reform, and 'glasnost' (openness) denoted transparency in government. Gorbachev's politics, intended merely as internal reform of the centralized government of the union, triggered a process whereby many of the constituent republics asserted political independence and eventually general elections in these republics produced elected regional leaders who could challenge Moscow's authority. Boris Yeltsin was elected president of the largest of the constituent republic – Russia.

CHAPTER III

Political Party and Party System in Post-Soviet Russia

Democratic system is characterised by the space that it provides for the functioning of a multi-party system, an essential part of democratic set up, and the role that political parties play in political change and governance.

For almost seventy years Soviet Union had been dominated by the one Party structure of Communist Party of Soviet Union (CPSU). This worked as a stumbling block in establishing a smooth and functioning multi-party system. Elections during this period were a farce as electorates were provided options to choose. It was Mikhail Gorbachev who initiated the process of democratisation and introduced multi-candidate election and also amended the Article six of the constitution that ensured the dominant position of CPSU in all walks of soviet life. Gorbachev replaced this very Article with a new provision that provided space for other political parties and political groups in the soviet political system. Besides this, in October 1990, he introduced a law and established a mechanism through which political parties and other organisation could register themselves in the system. This specified that there should be at least 5,000 members in an organisation to be registered at the all-union level.

Despite such changes, by August 1991 CPSU and the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) were the only two organisations that gained the status of a political party. A good number of organisations though applied for the registration but their membership was very low. It is believed that Gorbachev's attempt to reshape and reform the system, during the Perestroika years, contributed to the dismemberment of Soviet Union. Expectedly, the alternate political formations could not emerge or even challenge the earlier system dominated by the one party the CPSU.

Later Russian Federation provided enough space for the development of a multi-party system. The introduction of a new constitution (1993) recognised political diversity, multi-party (Article 13.3) and explicitly mentioned that no ideology may be established as state or obligatory (Article 13.2).

The policies of glasnost advocated that political movement and informal groups be allowed to exist even if they pose a challenge to the CPSU. The Gorbachev regime expected that it would broaden the social base of the CPSU which would most certainly facilitate the emergence of new political parties. As a consequence of the

policies of Glasnost and Perestroika, a number of movements and political groups emerged, during the period, in the Soviet Union. Democratic Union was one such independent political formation.

Democratic Union came into existence in May 1988 and advocated liberal democracy and market economy as was the case in the western states. With the passage of time the group transformed itself into a political party and emphasised the need to have a Russian flag instead of the Soviet one. It is worth mentioning here that the activities of the party were limited to the slogans only and it neither outlined a clear strategy nor the party programme. It failed to mobilise the public opinion and faced a split within a very short period of time.

During the 28th CPSU Congress in July 1990, the Democratic platform left the CPSU to set up a new political organisation. But the leadership was not clear about their political strategy. For instance, leader of the democratic movement V. Shostakovsky insisted that this was a “division not a split” (Shostakovsky 1990: 5). The group later transformed itself and became the Republican party of the Russian Federation (RPRF). The leader of the Democratic movement did not work out the basis for an alternate political movement or planned a reorganisation for a party. All the leaders of the movement were well known leaders of CPSU and were not clear on its relationship with the CPSU. The position taken by leaders on almost all major issues were not only contradictory but blurred also. They were even confused whether the movement was to be inside the party or outside the party. Because of these self-destructing and contradictory policies, the movement lost its relevance and could not transform itself into a significant movement or a political party.

A pro-reform group called the Inter Region Group of Deputies (IRGD) was initiated from within the parliament and was chaired by Gavril Popov. However, because of the various factions it also failed to set up any effective structure and continued to remain in an amorphous shape. Thus, it could not become an alternative to the CPSU (Popov 1990: 6). These parties thus had informal structures and remained as factions in the parliaments or movements outside the parliament. Their leadership retained communist party membership and links with the CPSU. Later, these movements

became formal Political Parties, especially when the CPSU weakened and the soviet centre appeared to lose control.

To encourage the development of Political Parties, Article 6 of the Soviet constitution that enshrined the leading role for the Communist Party in the Soviet System was abolished in 1990. Gorbachev and the Soviet policy makers felt that this would encourage a multiparty system. This period also saw the assertion of Russian nationalist Political Parties like RUKH, the PAMYAT etc. These parties advocated ethnic nationalism and attempted to mobilise the masses on the basis of ethnicity. Though, these parties were poorly organised yet in the end succeeded to create the space to be a nationalist party. It was in this context that the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, under the able leadership of Vladimir Zhirinovsky was set up. Zhirinovsky contested the June 1991 Russian Republic's presidential elections, in which he received 7% of total votes that counted around 6.2 million.

A right wing nationalist party emerged, but effort at developing democratic Parties remained unsuccessful. Yeltsin as the leader of a movement for democracy retained his Communist Party membership till 1991. After leaving the party, he preferred to have an unstructured alliance with the new democratic political formation. He worked with the deputies in the Russian Supreme Soviet who supported his political moves and his opposition to the soviet structures. Yeltsin fought and won the 1991 presidential elections without any party platform. The movement for Democratic reform supported him without establishing any clear party linkage.

Long years of a monolithic political culture and a lack of civil society had curbed the space for an organised opposition. Opposition Political Parties of this period were based on personalities (Chenoy 200: 164). Yelstin did not promote the growth of the democratic parties. When the Congress of People's Deputies gave him extraordinary powers, he did not invite any of the democratic parties to participate in the drafting of the economic reform programmes and the constitution. He promoted individuals who were loyal to him. The Russian political elite did not pay sufficient attention to party formation or political mobilisation.

Legal Framework Concerning Political Parties

The need for a special law to regulate Political Parties date back to the First Congress of People's Deputies of the RSFSR (Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic) in 1990. A bill for such a law was completed under the auspices of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation in 1993, but as the parliament was disbanded in September of that year, it was never considered. In 1995, the Duma passed a "law" on parties but it was rejected by the Federation Council and never entered the law book (Wilson 2006: 315).

Under Article 13 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, political diversity and multi party system was to be recognised. Other than that there was no further reference to Political Parties. The Federal Law on Political Parties, enacted in 2001, has 48 articles divided into ten Chapters. The main requirements, which were introduced by the 2001 law, concern territorial representation and minimum membership (Venice commission 2012: 4). According to Article 3.2.a, a political party must have regional branches in more than half of the subjects of the Russian Federation, requiring at least 400 members or more (it was 500 earlier). The other regional branches must have at least 150 members (Venice commission 2012: 5). In 2005 on the proposal of president Putin, under the new election law all seats in Duma were awarded exclusively from party lists and the threshold for eligibility to win seats was raised to 7 %. The required minimum membership applied in Russia has been amended at least three times since the enactment of the law on Political Parties in 2001. The required number of members was increased in 2004 from 10 000 to 50 000, but has since been gradually dropping, first, to 45 000 and then a reform of the Law on Political parties was launched by President Medvedev on 23 December 2011. This reform proposed to liberalise and simplify the registration of political parties, lowering the minimum membership (which is proposed to drop from 40,000 to 500members, but still required representation in more than a half of the subjects of the Federation) and established the submission of financial reports to the Central Electoral Commission every three years, instead of annually, starting from 1 January 2012, to 40 000 (Article 3.2.b) of the Law.

The change in the law had an impact on the registration of political parties, which drastically decreased from 48 political parties to 15 in 2007. It saw “little doubt that all those measures had an evident impact on the opportunities for various political forces to participate effectively in the political process and thus affected pluralism” and alluded, in particular, to “the fact that only fifteen political parties out of forty-eight were able to meet the increased minimum membership requirement”.

Parties and Public Exchequer

One of the most controversial issues in the debate on the law on Parties was state funding. Previously, electoral associations were entitled to modest compensation of their campaign expenses, as set forth in various electoral laws, which were usually rewritten for each specific election. The 2001 law 'On Political Parties' brought about several substantive changes to Party finance in Russia. The Party law envisaged permanent state funding for Parties that (1) obtained at least three percent of the list vote in Duma elections; or (2) received at least 12 SMD candidate selected to the Duma (in which case the ‘three per cent threshold’ was not applicable); or (3) secured a minimum of three per cent of the votes for their Presidential nominee. The first two results those achieved in Parliamentary elections give right to a yearly subvention; the latter – the presidential vote – was translated into a non-recurrent subsidy. In all the above cases, the number of votes received was to be multiplied by 0.005 times the minimum wage. Other sources of income beside’s state funding were membership dues, donations by sympathetic ‘outsiders’ (both individuals and firms) and entrepreneurial activity. There appeared to be no maximum set for membership fees; the authors of the law most likely expected these to remain within reasonable limits. But restrictions and ceilings were established for donations (pozhertvovaniya) from without the party ranks. Donors could be Russian citizens and legal persons; funds from abroad were expressly outlawed. The total sum of yearly contributions was not to exceed 10 million MROT (Oversloot &Verhuel 2006: 389).

Some parties generated a considerable income from membership dues and, especially, donations. They had always been dependent on external contributions mainly from

industrial and financial groups. Before all media was subjected to state control, some parties were also able to have specific media access. Moreover they had easier access to public media and business contacts. Co-sponsorship of Political Parties by businessmen was the rule rather than the exception in Russia. Corporate funding was usually clouded in secrecy, but it can be safely assumed that all major parties in Russia enjoy such support and that the bulk of it went to the ‘Parties of Power’ (Gel’man 2005: 20-23). The Parties of Power, additionally, were able to use the public apparatus as an organisational resource. Although the law requires transparency as to financial income, accurate and up-to-date figures for political parties were often difficult to obtain. The Union of Right Forces and United Russia were particularly successful fund-raisers.

The Russian daily Vedomosti recently reported that United Russia receives large contributions from different sources. According to official information, during the period 2005-2009 United Russia collected about US \$16.7 million in party dues, about US \$54 million from the state budget, and more than US \$200 million from private donors. The list of the main donors of the United Russia for the five past years included the metallurgical giant NLMK, owned by Vladimir Lisin; a poultry farm owned by the son of former Minister of Fuel and Energy Victor Kalyuzhny; the Moscow developer MTZ Rubin, the Eurocement Group, the mining and metals company Mechel, plus Gazprom, Svyazinvest, Severstal Group and the oilfield service company Geotech.¹

Political Parties in Russia

United Russia

The development of United Russia began with the unification in 2001 of the previously competing Duma factions of Unity (otherwise known as ‘Medved’– ‘The Bear’), a centre-right party headed by Sergey Shoigu, and Fatherland-All Russia, a

¹ ‘Businesses to Donate Funds to Russian Political Party in Power’ [Online: web] Accessed on 11 February 2012 URL: <http://russia-briefing.com/news/businesses-to-donate-funds-to-russian-political-party-in-power.html/>

centre-left bloc led by Evgeny Primakov and Yuri Luzhkov. The party obtained its current name in 2003. For the 2003 Duma elections United Russia campaigned under the slogan ‘Together with the President!’, thus signifying its close links with the Putin administration. Party received 37.57% vote in 2003 Duma election. Vladimir Putin himself headed the United Russia list for the 2007 Duma elections. The election programme was entitled ‘Putin’s Plan: a worthy future for a great country’. In election the party received 64.30% vote. In the wake of the parliamentary elections, United Russia put forward Dmitri Medvedev as a candidate for Presidency, and in 2008 elected Vladimir Putin its chairman. It is worth pointing out that, regardless of their prominent positions within the party hierarchy, neither Putin nor Medvedev are formally members of United Russia (Kynev 2011: 1).

In the past four years, the Party has also had to be integrated some of the political statements of President Dmitri Medvedev which were considerably more liberal and reform oriented. Vague discourses and developments are also reflected in the procedure of internal differentiation that United Russia has been going through during the second half of the past decade. This demarcation is expressed, *inter alia*, in the creation of several thematic ‘clubs’ such as the Centre for Socio-Conservative Policy, the Liberal-Conservative Club, or the Government-Patriotic Club. However these clubs do little to clarify what the party really stands for. At the pre-election party convention in September 2011 President Medvedev and Prime Minister Putin announced that they were to swap jobs. In 2011 Duma election Party got 49.32% of vote.²

The Communist party of the Russian Federation (CPRF)

The CPRF is the successor of the Communist Party of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR). Though the CPRF is one of the strongest political parties in Russia, but its share of votes has been continuously decreasing over the past 20 years. Zyuganov was elected party leader in February 1993. Zyuganov was the central figure of the left. He was a Marxist reformer in internal party politics. His thinking

² European forum for Democracy and Solidarity’ [online: web] Accessed on 15 April 2012, URL: <http://www.europeanforum.net/country/russia#top>.

reflected a mix of statism, slavophilism and populism (Sakwa 1998: 139). CPRF is the most well-structured and organized political force. The ideological evolution of CPRF after 1994 marked a shift from orthodox Marxism towards social democracy and elements of nationalism (Chenoy 2001: 170)

A poll published in November 1995 found that CPRF was the most popular party for those aged over 55 but did not come into the top five for those aged between 18 to 24. This trend still continues. Similarly with Russia moving forward on the path of globalization and privatization on economic issue CPRF lacks sufficient support because of its image of supporter of a state driven economy. Although new leaderships had tried to come out of it and as Zyuganov insisted that the CPRF has overcome its sectarian approach, determined by the attempt to reflect “narrow class interest” and now hopes to express the aspirations of the overwhelming majority of the Russian people (Sakwa 1998: 133).

The Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR)

LDPR is the oldest party in today's Russia. It was founded in 1990 as the Liberal-Democratic Party of Soviet Union and was the first party other than the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) ever to be officially registered. The LDPR had gained support from the work force in the military industrial complex from sections of the army, pensioners and the impoverished and organisational structure throughout Russia also back for LDPR. In April 1994, Zhirinovskiy was elected sole leader of the party. Electoral strength of LDPR is personality based. Unlike communists LDPR also enjoys the support of age group from 30 to 54, as well as average educated people.

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy remains the key political and ideological figure in the party and was also a major player in the 2011 election campaign. The LDPR tends to take ambivalent and oscillating positions, although traditionally it is considered nationalist. For its 2011 campaign the LDPR has adopted the slogan ‘For the Russians!’ and focused on nationalist ideas and regional trouble spots such as the North Caucasus and the Far East. In 2011 Duma election Party received 11.67% of total vote share.³

³ ‘European forum for Democracy and Solidarity’ [online: web] Accessed on 15 April 2012, URL: <http://www.europeanforum.net/country/russia#top>.

Our Home is Russia

It was founded in 1995 as a Political movement to sustain the Chernomyrdin government in the Duma elections. This Party was recognized as pro-government. Our Home stood for a 'broad centre', including a stronger state and support for domestic producers and investors. Its pre election programme, adopted in August 1995, had three priorities: the 'spiritual renewal of Russia', including the right and freedoms of the individual: the 'integrity' of the country', including public order, and the development of market economy together with a greater degree of social protection. In 1995 election it got 10.1% of votes but in 1999 the part witnessed major decline in the voting percentage.⁴

Just Russia

The emergence of Just Russia in 2006 was closely linked to the Kremlin's decision, around the same time, to liquidate the socialist-patriotic Motherland (Rodina) Party. Headed by Dmitry Rogozin and Sergey Glaziev, this Party was created by the Kremlin as an (initially) attempt to rein in opposition forces, but soon escaped from the control of the Kremlin technocrats. In order to be able to remove Rodina from the political stage the Kremlin needed a Party that would fill its place. The small 'Russian Party for Life', headed by Federation Council speaker Sergey Mironov, lent itself to this purpose. In the course of 2006 the Party of Life, the Motherland party and the Party of Pensioners merged into Just Russia with Sergey Mironov as its new chairman. Between 2006 and 2008 Just Russia merged several smaller parties such as the Green Party 'Zelyenye', the United Socialist Party of Russia, and the People's Party. The processes of merger and reorganisation resulted in the departure of prominent former leaders of Rodina Just Russia bases its programme on 'contemporary, democratic and effective socialism'. It calls for a more vigorous social policy that would guarantee social stability and fight poverty, corruption and United Russia's monopoly on power. In 2011 Duma election party received 13.24% of vote (Kynev 2011: 2).

⁴ Centre for the study of public policy, University of Strathclyde, 'Party Alignments in the Duma, 1995-July 2003'. [online: web] URL http://www.russiavotes.org/duma/duma_align_1995_2003.php (Accessed on 20 April 2012)

United Russian Democratic Party (Yabloko – ‘Apple’)

The United Russian Democratic Party, ‘Yabloko’, was established in 1995 by its three leaders Gregoriy Yavlinsky, Yuri Boldyrev and Vladimir Lukin. Yabloko is ideologically rooted in social liberalism: ‘Our aim is a society of equal opportunities, based on the principles of social justice and solidarity between the powerful and the weak. This means that the most important condition for establishing a free society in Russia is not only the unleashing of private initiative, but also a well-developed social support system’. Following its defeat in the 2007 elections, the party has been trying to pursue a careful policy by taking small steps focusing predominantly on ecological and local residential issues (Kynev 2011: 2).

Yabloko’s internal organisation is hierarchical and marked by personalised rule. Formally, Sergey Mitrokhin has been the party leader since 2008. Though, the party remains very much dominated by Grigory Yavlinsky who is also the frontrunner of the 2011 party list (together with Mitrokhin and 78 year old ecologist Alexey Yablokov). Because of this, during the past few years many prominent party members have left Yabloko and joined Just Russia or United Russia. Negotiations aimed at persuading Boris Titov, the leader of the organisation Business Russia, to join the 2011 party list did not succeed. Moreover, Yabloko’s campaign suffers from insufficient publicity and the fact that its candidates are not well-known in Russia’s regions.

Conceptual Framework of Party Classification

There are at least three ways to examine Russian Political Parties: 1) the persistence of parties 2) party coherence and 3) regional representation. Further there parties can be classified into three categories; first, established Political Parties; second, transitory Political Parties and; the third ephemeral Political Parties. The first criterion is the persistence of Parties, which concerns the time dimension. Established Parties have participated in all elections, while transitory and ephemeral parties appear in one election and disappear in another election. The second criterion is party coherence. In Parliament, many parties are undisciplined and Duma members easily change their

parties. The patterns of faction building in Duma explain to some extent the party discipline. The third criterion is regional representation. From geographical viewpoint, this is the means to assess how broadly parties are supported by the public (Sangtu 2011: 89).

Political Parties in State Duma

The Russian electoral system has significantly changed in 2005 on the proposal of President Putin, who claimed that limiting the number of Parties in Duma would build up the Russian party system. Until 2003 election there was a functional but a mix. It means that half the 450 seats were circulated in single-member districts and the rest of half seats were elected on the basis of a party list. Under the new election law all seats in Duma are awarded exclusively from party lists and the threshold for eligibility to win seats is raised to 7 % (Moraski 2007).

Table 3.1, 1993 to 2007 Duma election (Number of seats)

Party		1993	1995	1999	2003	2007
Contesting elections Communist party	5	42	157	114	52	57
Liberal Democratic party		64	51	17	36	40
Contesting elections Yabloko	4	27	45	21	4	–
Contesting elections Agrarian party	3	38	20	-	2	-
Contesting elections	2	-	-	-	225	315

United Russia					
Union of right forces	-	-	29	3	-
Woman's party	23	3	-	-	-
Our Home is Russia	-	55	8	-	-
Russia choice	62	9	-	-	-
Russian unity and Harmony	22	1	-	-	-
Contesting 1elections Just Russia	-	-	-	-	38
Democratic party	15	-	-	-	-
Homeland party(Rodina)	-	-	-	37	-
Unity party(Medved)	-	-	73	-	-
Fatherland All Russia	-	-	66	-	-
Independents	13	77	113	68	-
Others	16	32	9	23	-

Source: Sangtu 2011, p.90

As the table 3.1 indicates the Communist Party and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR) have effectively contested all the five elections held in the Post Soviet Russia. In this sense the two parties can be called the established party. Though, every party accounts for around 10% of the Duma seats today. The Communist party reached the maximum record of 157 seats in 1995 when Russians suffered from the drastic market reform. But its seats have considerably decreased from 114 in 1999 and

52 in 2003 and ultimately come down to 57 in 2007. Compared to the Communist Party the LDPR shows a relative stability of its seats won during five elections except the 1999 election.

The Yabloko contested 4 elections and can also be categorized as the established party. It considerably lost its visibility in the 2003 election by winning only 4 seats and finally could not enter the 2007 Duma. The Agrarian party contested 3 elections and it contested one more election in 1999 by changing its name into Fatherland party. It also failed to come into the Duma like the Yabloko in 2007. Thus, the Yabloko and the Agrarian party are the established party, which disappeared from the Russian party system (Sangtu 2011: 92).

The Parties that contested one or two elections contain the transitory Party and the ephemeral party. The parties that follow the party of power can be classified into the transitory Party. *Russia's Choice* and *Our Home Is Russia* and *United Russia* survived in two elections and Unity party contested only one election. They are the Party of power in their nature and are transitory in this sense. *Russia's Choice* was led by Gaidar, who worked for Yeltsin with the essential market improvement. It showed a poor performance in the 1993 election and gave its position of power party to *Our Home Is Russia* under Chernomirdin that failed to win over in the 1995 election. In 1999 election, two parties that supported Yeltsin emerged. Those who wanted to promote the reformist programme of the Yeltsin era prepared the Union of Right Forces which was led by Anatoly Chubais, Yegor Gaidar, Boris Nemtsov, and Vladimir Putin.

That two Parties were formed in favour of Yeltsin in 1999 was the result of the coalition of local politicians. Moscow mayor, Yuri Luzhkov created the Fatherland party and allied with a number of governors with a mutual the desire to decentralize power. The continuing unpopularity of Yeltsin encouraged Primakov to join the party. After the surprising defeat in 1999 election, Fatherland merged with the Unity into United Russia. The United Russia party is the first 'party of power' that has successively gained a majority in the Duma. It secured an absolute majority in 2007 election. Thus it has evolved from a transitory party to the established party. The other

parties departed only after one election and they are regarded as ephemeral. Women's party showed its visibility just by winning 23 seats in 1993 election. Russian Unity and Harmony won 22 seats and Democratic Party won 15 seats in the same election. There were a number of ephemeral parties in the founding election. Just Russia emerged as a new party in the 2007 election. It advocates social democracy.

The Politics of Switch Over

There is a gap between electoral Parties and Duma Parties. Winning candidates often change their party in whose name they stood during election immediately after entering Duma. Particularly, many of independents from single-member districts either join parties' or make new parties, which are called "convenience parties" (Sangtu 2011: 92). This experience was encouraged by the Duma rule that allowed faction members to enjoy greater compensation in office facilities and committee assignments. This is contrary to the established party system where the association of members of parliament is the same as at the general election, and changes in affiliation during the life of a parliament are few (White, Munro & Rose 2001: 425)

Table 3.2 Party in December 1995 Duma

Party	Election	Duma Opening	Change
Communists	157	149	-8
Our Home Is Russia	55	66	+11
Liberal Democrats	51	51	0
Yabloko	45	46	+1
Agrarians	20	35	+15
Russia's Regions	0	40	+40
People's Power	0	38	+38
Power to the People	9	0	-9

Russia's Choice	9	0	-9
Russian Communities: Lebed	5	0	-5
Women of Russia	3	0	-3
Forward, Russia	3	0	-3
Ivan Rybkin Bloc	3	0	-3
Minor Parties	13	0	-13
Independents	77	25	-52

Source: Sangtu 2011, p.93

Table 3.2 shows that 105 deputies switched parties between the election of December 1995 and the opening Duma in the next month. To qualify as a Duma faction, the Agrarian Party recruited some independents and hired additional members from the Communist Party. Independents formed two factions, namely Russia's Regions and People's Power. Some Communist deputies also joined these new convenience parties in order to help them qualify as a Duma party. This confirmation shows that "established parties" (Sangtu 2011: 93) do not suffer from party indiscipline of their members. But many Duma members of minor parties depart their organisation shortly after the election and weaken the position of the "ephemeral party" (ibid 2011: 93).

In 2003 United Russia enlarged its seats in Duma from 222 won by election to 300 at the opening of the parliament. It increased 78 seats in three weeks. It cornered 13 members from the People's Party, 3 from Union of Right Forces, 2 Agrarian Party deputies, 1 from Yabloko and 1 from the Pensioners Party. 66 independents joined United Russia (See Table 3.3). United Russia greatly succeeded in taking benefit of the position of 'Party of Power' and gained from the faction building after election than other established parties. In 2007 election, the change of Duma seats did not take place, because Duma seats were not allocated exclusively by proportional

representation. Under the new election law any members who change their party should automatically lose their seats (ibid 2011: 94).

Table 3.3, December 2003, Duma

Seats	Election, 03.12.2003	Duma opening 29.12.2003	Change
United Russia	222	300	78
Communists	52	52	0
Liberal democrats	36	36	0
Motherland	37	36	-1
Minor Parties	32	-	-32
Independents	68	23	-45

Source: Sangtu 2011, p.93

Lack of Nationwide Organizational Presence of Political Parties

In earlier system (before 2005) when half the Duma seats were elected from single member districts many nation wide parties could not nominate candidates in all the districts as they did not have local level leaders in all districts. In fact local network of grassroots workers and leaders were absent. For instance, the single-member system applied until 2003 election that encouraged parties to nominate candidates to contest districts nationwide, no party contested as many as half the 225 single-member districts. Even big parties had weak organisational bases outside Moscow with the Communists as an exception. In 1993, the Communist Party listed its candidates in 98 districts, and Russia's Choice listed only 88 candidates. In 1995 the Communist Party listed 130 candidates, and Our Home Is Russia listed 103 candidates (ibid 2001). In 1999 Vladimir Putin's favoured party, Unity, ignored the election in more than five-sixths of the single-member districts, nominating fewer candidates than five parties that failed to succeed list seats. The other party receiving praise from Putin, the Union of Right Forces (SPS), failed to nominate candidates in more than two-thirds of the

SMD constituencies. There were an average of five independent candidates per district; in total they outnumbered all the candidates nominated by formally recognised parties (White, Munro & Rose 2001: 421).

Party System in Post Soviet Russia

After the downfall of the CPSU in 1991, the Russian state remained party-less, and after the failed coup of August 1991 Russia turned into dictatorship. Since the state was legitimised by the people's deputies and the President no single party was instrumental in reasserting state power for the people and instrumental in re-creating order in the Russian Federation (RF). The very concept of 'party' was strongly, negatively, associated with the party, namely the CPSU, led Yeltsin and the 'new democrats' (sometimes working together in the Democratic Russia movement) had managed to curtail the powers of other parties. It was only after the dissolution of the Soviet-era parliament and the adoption of a new Constitution that culminated into the first genuine multiparty elections of December 1993. The political parties for the first time got a meaningful, albeit limited, role in the political process (Oversloot & Verhuel 2006: 384).

Distinctive features of the Russian party system became increasingly apparent against the background of the strengthening President's power. A pattern of the so called "party of power" started to emerge in Boris Yeltsin's term. But its development was somewhat suppressed by the disagreement between Boris Yeltsin and the parliament, which left its mark on further developments. As a result, Yeltsin deliberately ignored the parliament, thus leaving little space for the parliament and the parties to play a major role. For instance, the relative number of seats in the parliament did not reflect in the choice of the prime-minister and members of the government. Such lack of attention on the part of the President contributed to the preservation of a certain degree of pluralism in the Russian party system and some connection started to emerge between groups of voters and the parties supposed to represent them. With some reservations, this process was reflected in the ideological level too (using the most common terminology in Russia: left vs. right; orthodox groups getting support

from the Soviet-time nostalgia vs. democratic forces aiming at significant changes and reforms (Mikkil, 2006).

Stability has not been characteristic of the Russian party system: political parties have appeared and disappeared between the federal elections, both politicians and the electorate have changed their affiliation, and legislation regarding political parties and elections has been amended. During the 2000s, the party system has also undergone significant changes. Both the changed political culture and the growing power of Putin have enabled a stronger control of the party system by the executive power to the extent that the party system became synonymous to the executive power and, in particular, the presidential administration. The parliamentary tool in the hands of the executive power is the United Russia Party received the majority of the seats in the State Duma in the last two elections in 2003 and 2007. This ensured a smooth process for adopting the bills prepared by the president, the presidential administration or the government. It again got majority of seats in the controversial 2011 election though by a reduced margin. Economic growth and the popularity of Mr Putin have secured the survival of the current party system as part of the power vertical but now, as a consequence of the economic crisis and with a president more liberal in his rhetoric than his predecessor, there are expectations, and even some signs, of the liberalisation of the party system (Mäkinen 2009: 3).

Party System in Russia 20th Century

The economic and political disturbances in Russia in 1992-1993 did not create a congenial atmosphere for the growth of political party in Russia. On the one hand, many deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation used their official capacity to enlist support in their respective constituencies. They set up parties, whose names included the words like “democracy” “socialism” and “people” in various combinations, and the ever-present word “Russia.” However, very soon it became obvious that the parties were not strong enough to deal with the critical issues that inflicted the state and collapsed under political struggle. In addition, these parties were run by aides of parliament deputies who were more interested to boost their own career and were hoping to build up their own position in the executive branch of power.

If we keep European model in our mind then it would be simple to conclude that the permanent conflicts between Boris Yeltsin and the legislature split the Supreme Soviet and slowed down and considerably weakened the formation of a normal system of political parties in Russia. Supreme Soviet deputies, in contrast to their original ideological and political positions, gradually adopted strong opposition strategy in the struggle against the established powers. The Russian president had conflictual relation with majority of the parties represented in the Supreme Soviet. This strengthened his dislike of parties as such and limited their participation in government bodies in the federal centre and the provinces.

After winning nationwide support in a referendum in April 1993, Yeltsin came to treat the parliament as a rubber stamp for decisions made by executive bodies. A major reason for this was the internal power struggle which destabilized the reputation of democrats in society. The economic instability of the early 1990s denigrated their reputation: a majority of Yeltsin's former electorate connected the chaos with the notion "democrat" which sounded amorphous to most Russian citizens.

The "hot autumn" of 1993 became a milestone in the establishment of a multi-party system in Russia. Within a span of several months, the authorities organised elections to a new kind of parliament, the State Duma; they also drew a new Constitution and adopted it through a plebiscite, which coincided in time with the parliamentary election. The new Fundamental Law clearly limited the powers of the legislative branch, and hugely strengthened the executive branch, in particular, the presidential powers. Feeling weakened, the State Duma already in the first term of office (1993-1995), passed a law on public associations in an attempt to control the political process, as participants in the political process were only vaguely outlined in the 1993 Constitution. The law, became effective in May 1995, introduced the legal notion "political public association;" it set parameters for registering these associations and provided conditions for their participation in politics in the event of threats to the state's integrity or in cases of inciting social, racial, ethnic or religious rivalry. In addition certain limitations were imposed on legitimate participants in the political process. They were not allowed to draw funds from abroad, though the option of

membership in international political associations was not denied to them. However, the above law did not regulate the problem of funding associations inside Russia. In fact later this created many problems for the activities of various political parties. In addition, the law did not clarify the difference between “political public associations” and “political parties.” This led to the substitution of the development of a multiparty system with the courting of the electorate, limited by election cycles. Personal blocs were set up to protect their leaders ‘winning coveted seats in parliament. The blocs, whose number exceeded that of parties, tended to highlight the personal appeal of leaders on the party lists who regularly were not career politicians rather than the ideological core of the movement they represented (Shveitser 2009: 6)

In a responsible Party system a proportion of voter would fluctuate between parties from one election to the next but the competing parties remains constant. In the 1993 Duma election 13 parties were on the list ballot; in 1995 there were 43 parties, and in 1999 it came down to 26. To be awarded any list seats a party must win at least 5 % of the vote share. In 1993 six parties succeeded to clear this threshold; in 1995, 39 parties were unsuccessful to meet this criterion and in 1999 there were 20 list parties not capable to secure one in 20 votes. The weak nature of Russian parties is evident from the fact that more than 60 parties failed to win any list ballot seats because their vote fell below (and usually well below) the 5% threshold. In the contest for list seats the vote for 'failed' parties can be extremely high. In the year 1995, 49.5% of the list vote went to parties that failed to clear the 5% barrier. In 1999 a total of 18.7% of the vote was cast for parties that failed to win any list seats or against all. Only 12 parties cleared the 5% barrier at least once (White, Munro & Rose 2001: 420).

In following Duma elections, parties have been floating on and off the ballot. Of the 13 parties that contested list seats in 1993, five departed in 1995 and three more by the 1999 election. Of the 43 parties contesting list seats in 1995, 35 had disappeared by the following election. The total vote cast for the four parties contesting all three Duma elections has always been less than half, and has fallen by a fifth from 1993 to 1999. Additionally, two of the four persisting parties, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and the Zhirinovskiy's party, cannot be described as advocates of democratic accountability. Egor Gaidar's 'party of power' at the 1993 Duma election,

Russia's Choice, has merged into the Union of Right Forces bloc. Our Home is Russia, formed to support Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin in 1995, almost left after the exit of Chernomyrdin from the Kremlin. In the 1999 Duma election more than half the vote was cast for new parties, mainly for parties formed to promote Presidential candidates.

In short if the Russian parties were stable, the great majority of parties fighting list seats, and particularly those winning by clearing the 5% threshold at least once, would be the same at all three elections. But this was not so of the eight parties that cleared the threshold in the 1993 election, only three, the Communists, the Liberal Democrats and Yabloko, fought and cleared the mark again in 1995 and in 1999. The one new party that cleared the obstacle in 1995, Our Home is Russia, failed to do so in 1999, when it was no longer a party of power, while three parties that did not exist at the earlier election did so. Two-thirds of the parties winning list seats at least once have not fought all three Duma elections. A floating party system forces many electors to become people's choice is also dependent on the fact that there exist stable parties in the election process.

Choice Variables in Political Participation

As far as the choice of variables in political participation is concerned, a survey conducted by New Russia Barometer, 79% of Russians said they favoured elections, a level of endorsement similar to that found in established democracies.

Table 3.4 Age Education and Party choice

Age, Education and Party Choice							
% of those voting for							
Total	Age	Yabloko	Unity	Zhirinovskiy	Fatherland	KPRF	Right Forces
26	18-29	9	23	33	11	6	31
43	30-54	54	46	43	45	36	45
31	55 plus	37	31	24	44	58	24
27	Elementary	12	25	38	24	42	19

	education, incomplete secondary						
28	Secondary, basic vocational	22	26	32	24	21	29
30	Secondary, specialised vocational	41	35	25	37	28	28
15	Higher	24	14	5	15	9	24

Sources: Richard Rose, Neil Munro and Stephen White (2001), *Voting in a Floating Party System: The 1999 Duma Election*.

When preferences for the six parties winning list seats at the 1999 Duma election are linked with social structure characteristics, including age, education, subjective social status age and education are interconnected. Theories of the influence of education on party choice suggest that, regardless of generation, educated people will think and vote differently from those who are not educated. However, in Russia generations differ radically in their political experience. The oldest generation has vivid first-hand memories of the Great Patriotic War and of Stalinism, while the youngest generation experienced political socialisation under Gorbachev. The relationship between age and party preference is the highest (0.12). Voters for the Union of Right Forces and the Zhirinovsky bloc are disproportionately young, and the Zhirinovsky bloc depended on the personality of a leader rather than a persisting organisation. Among Communist voters, 58% were aged 55 or older in 1999(See Table 3.4). Education also influenced the choice of voters similar to age. Both pro-market parties Yabloko and the Union of Right Forces draw a disproportionate amount of support from those with university education. While the appeal of the latter to the educated tends to reflect its recruitment of youthful supporters, Yabloko's is preferred choice of mature as well as educated voters; its supporters are also older than average. By contrast, the Communist appeal to older voters and also to the less educated stream of the electorate. The support of the Zhirinovsky bloc comes from a distinctive marginal group: relatively uneducated, youthful voters (Rose & Carnaghan 1995: 28-56).

Table 3.5 Political values and Party choice

Q. What broad political outlook are you most inclined to favour? (% of those voting for)							
-90	Total	Right Forces	Yabloko	Unity	Zhirinovsky	Fatherland	KPRF
35	None	9	22	28	26	30	5
18	Market	82	36	33	17	15	1
7	Social democratic	5	20	13	23	15	1
7	Great power patriot	1	6	8	6	13	1
5	Environment green	1	6	4	4	5	1
24	Communist	1	2	6	8	13	91
4	Other	1	8	8	16	9	0

Source: Richard Rose, Neil Munro and Stephen White (2001), Voting in a Floating Party System: The 1999 Duma Election.

An unconventional theory of party stabilisation is that, independently of their socio economic Position, individuals adopt political values and policy preferences that become a durable basis for voting. Glasnost' made it possible for Russian political elites to debate alternative ideologies and familiarised the electorate with new outlooks such as 'green' values, as well as bracing older outlooks, such appealing to the patriotic Russia's great power status. The New Russia Barometer based on the variable of outlook found that communism was the most commonly endorsed outlook, with 24% respondents; its antithesis, the market, was preferred by 18%. In addition, social democracy, great power patriotism, green values and other outlooks were each preferred by less than 10% (See Table 3.5).

Two types of Russian parties competed for votes in the 1999 Duma election. Just under a third of votes went to the Communist Party and the Union of Right Forces, parties whose supporters each shared a common political outlook. More than two-

thirds of voters allowed parties without a well defined appeal to a recognisable political ideology or values.

Party System in the Early 21st Century

President Vladimir Putin in sharp contrast to his predecessor Boris Yeltsin has constantly recognized the importance of political parties and expressed his desire to strengthen them. One of Putin's clear goals was to re-arrange Russia's party system. At a press conference in July 2001, shortly after he had signed the law on parties, Putin voiced his disgust at the state of Russia's party system and made clear his desire to streamline it (Wilson 2006, p.342). He said:

If there are de facto two, three, and four party systems in developed, civilised countries, why does there have to be 350 or 5,000 parties in Russia? This is a kind of Bacchanalia, not democracy. This leads to a situation in which the population cannot orient itself politically. It leads to a situation in which people choose not between ideologies and programmes but between individuals and personalities. And it will always be like this in Russia, if we don't construct a normal political base (Putin, 2001).

Putin's broadly publicised solidarity with United Russia, which not only presented itself as a party of well-organized managers but which was in fact such a party during the stabilisation period, and the full identification of United Russia and local powers enabled the party to ensure a relative and later an absolute majority of mandates in the State Duma. Thus, the State Duma acquired the quality of a driving belt of the executive branch and successfully removed the conflict between the two branches of power, which had been permanently on the agenda in Yeltsin's time.

The presidential government also fruitfully implemented a project for creating another pro-Kremlin party, Just Russia, led by the speaker of the Federation Council Sergei Mironov, who was very loyal to the president. Just Russia is a marvellous mix of former nationalists from the Rodina party, ex-Communists from the Party of Pensioners, and members of Mironov's former Party of Life, which had a rather unclear ideology. The cross posed as a Russian version of social democracy and gained support in the Socialist International and other European reformist organisations. Candidates and even whole parties that the Russian authorities viewed

as doubtful were banned from elections. During election campaigns, the mass media was controlled by the government during the time of the presentation of promotional materials of political parties that were critical of the present regime. Not all parties enjoyed equal conditions when organising pre-election rallies. Law enforcement bodies rooted out the actions of the opposition which, in their very partial view, violated Russian laws. Rulings by courts of any level were immensely against the political opposition (Shveitser 2009: 47).

Unaffordable or, at best, unconfirmed practices with regard to parties that had not vowed their allegiance to the authorities, were based on the law on Political Parties, passed by the State Duma in 2001 and later constantly amended. In defiance of the universally established democratic norms, the law put a minimum number of party members (it amounts to 40,000 at present) and obliged parties to have branches in more than a half of the administrative entities of the Russian Federation. Biased checks let the authorities influence the legitimacy of parties that could, at least theoretically, rival pro-Kremlin parties. In contrast with the Western European political practice, the Russian authorities did not allow parties to be set up along confessional or professional lines. Political activity was barred at enterprises and colleges. On the whole, the law on political parties inhibits opportunities for Russian citizens to set up political parties that would express public sentiments.

The decrease in the number of Political Parties in Russia in the first decade of the 21st century has necessitated limited mutual integration between party leaders and top state officials. The 2008 presidential election brought about two equally powerful figures in the Russian political hierarchy, namely Putin and Dmitry Medvedev. This factor has somewhat loosened the rigid structure of a “presidential republic” (Shveitser 2009: 47). While the president (Medvedev in this case) has kept his character of neutrality, despite formal invitations from United Russia, Putin has developed his own know how quasi-party membership. He has agreed to become United Russia chairman without becoming its formal member. This situation, unprecedented in European political practice, is explained by a desire to have political support for a possible comeback to the top state post and by a fear of being identified

with the party, whose functionaries, primarily at the regional and local levels, may become involved in high-profile corruption scandals.

Russian powers need these pseudo-parties to keep up a semblance of democratic ethos. The authorities do not wish to fully distance themselves from the party system in the hope that reliable parties would be a sort of “safety cushion” (ibid 2009) in the event of a dramatic decline of the social and economic situation. Thus the parties would channel the spontaneous discontent of the population into moderate parliamentary activity. The authorities believe that this strategy can work in the centre, where political activity developed at the turn of the 1990s. Of no less importance are political party “safeguards” in regions, where local leaders of the “party of power” are accountable to the population and hence restrain public protests. To create an appearance of parties’ participation in forming local government bodies, winners of local elections are now allowed proposing candidates for governors.

Reviewing the probable responses by the “party of power” to popular discontent during sensitive stages of the economic crisis, one cannot rule out a possible crack within United Russia and Just Russia into smaller parties, which the authorities may have failed to anticipate (CDPSP 2007: 5). The oligarchic triumvirate of state officials, business people (Both from the private and public sectors) and security agencies are doubtful to fully coordinate their positions in a critical condition. At various stages of the crisis, individual members of this triumvirate reflects the tendency to leave it and propose to the population their own vision of ways to overcome the crisis, posing as new leaders within the narrow scale of parties. But this development would lead the collapse of the entire power vertical, built by the authorities with so much effort. Consequently the political elite close to the Kremlin would try if there is enough time for that, of course to find conciliatory solution to reform this power vertical and prevent it’s dismantling (Shveitser 2009: 48).

CHAPTER IV

Role of Political Party in the Electoral Politics in Russia

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 witnessed major development of the political system. The RSFSR (Russian Socialist Federation of Soviet Republics) was the major constituent of the Soviet Union and as per provisions of international law it became the successor state to the Soviet Union. Following the disintegration of the USSR in 1991, the very idea of competing political parties and free and fair elections was unknown to the vast majority of citizens of the Russian Federation. In the first elections for a president of the RSFSR in 1991 while the USSR was still in existence, Boris Yeltsin emerged victorious. He set up a convention to draft a new constitution, including a new electoral system. However, a new constitution was not adopted until November 1993.

The new constitution adopted a model whereby the Russian Federation elects vote a head of state the president by popular, for a maximum of two four year terms. This continued from 1993-2008. The year 2008 saw change in terms of extension of the term of president for a maximum of two six year terms and a legislature one of the two chambers of the Federal Assembly (*Federalnoye Sobraniye*). The State Duma (*Gosudarstvennaya Duma*) also saw change. The elected term of the Duma constituting 450 members was extended from four year terms to five year terms in post-2008, all of them elected by proportional representation. The Federation Council (*Sovyet Federatsii*) has 166 members: two delegates for each region, who are appointed by the President. Since the fall of the USSR, there have been five elections for the presidency and parliament. In the five presidential elections, only once, in 1996, was a second round required. There have been three presidents, with Boris Yeltsin elected in 1991 and 1996, Vladimir Putin in 2000 and 2004 (Yeltsin relinquished power to Putin on the last day of 1999) and Dmitry Medvedev in 2008. The candidate of the Communist Party has always come in second, first Nikolay Ryzhkov in 1991, then Gennady Zyuganov in 1996, 2000 and 2008, and Nikolay Kharitonov in 2004. Only in 1996 there has been another candidate who gained more than 10% of the votes (in the first round), General Alexander Lebed (Independent candidate) with 14.5%. The Communist Party was the biggest party in the 1995 (35%) and 1999 (24%) parliamentary elections. The only other constant participants have been the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), whose support has hovered between 5 and 15% of the votes, and Yabloko, which won 10% of the votes in 1995 and around 5% in the other three elections. Parties that have won more than 10% of

the votes in the entire period were Russia's Choice with 16% in 1993; Our Home is Russia with 12% in 1995, the Unity Party of Russia with 23%, the Fatherland-All Russia party with 13% and the People's Deputies Faction party with 15% in 1999. United Russia, an alliance of the Unity Party of Russia and Fatherland - All Russia, became the biggest party with 38% in 2003.¹

Central Electoral Commission (CEC)

The Central Electoral Commission which was setup primarily to supervise the 1993 election later became a permanent agency.² The CEC consists of 15 members in which 5 are chosen by the president, 5 by the State Duma, and 5 by the Federation Council. Nikolai Ryabov, CEC head, supervised elections of 1993 and 1995. He was alleged for consistent electoral fraud during his tenure and replaced by Alexander Ivanchenko after the presidential elections of 1996. Alexander Ivanchenko was relatively more independent, however, he was also involved in over numerous regional electoral scandals. As a result, he was replaced by Alexander Veshnyakov in March 1999. The new head of CEC brought major changes to the electoral system until he was replaced as head of the CEC in March 2007 by Vladimir Churov, a former member of the LDPR.

The Experience of Duma and Presidential Elections

The best way to analyse the role played by political parties in a country is their participation and performances in the elections. In Russia, with the adoption of the new constitution, multiparty system was introduced in 1993 and elections were adopted as a method through which people can express their wishes.

State Duma Election 1993

Russia embarked on its first genuine multi-party electoral campaign after the State Duma election in 1993.³ However, the circumstances were hardly propitious for a free

¹ Eurussia Centre, (2011), *The electoral system of Russian federation*, The Eu-Russian centre Review, Issue.17, April.2011

² Russian Profile (2011), The Central Election Commission, [Online: Web] URL: http://russiaprofile.org/bg_politics/49377.html (Accessed on 20 March 2012)

³ Eurussia Centre, (2011), *The electoral system of Russian federation*, The Eu-Russian centre Review, Issue.17, April.2011.

and fair election. Later the results of the parliamentary election showed the reflective divisions in Russian society. The new parliament was deeply fragmented as no clear winner emerged in the end. To enter into the parliament, it was necessary for a party to have at least 5 per cent of the national vote, with the whole country considered one giant constituency. It was assumed that this would give reformist candidates an advantage since their natural strength in the big cities, above all in Moscow and St Petersburg, would counteract the conservatism of rural areas (Sakwa 1995: 195-227).

In contrast to earlier practice, this time the elections were to be held in one round, thus abolishing run-off contests and the old minimum turnout requirement of 50 per cent was reduced to 25 per cent. Candidates required a minimum of 1 per cent nominations to enter the contest in single-member districts unless they had been nominated officially by one of the party blocs, in which case the necessity of obtaining what on average was 4–5,000 signatures was waived. Total 1,586 candidates contested in electoral process in Russia's 225 single-member constituencies. The rest 225 seats in the State Duma were distributed to the parties on a proportional basis.

In the elections Russia's Democratic Choice and the Party of Russian Unity and Consensus (PRES), both pro government, jointly polled 22.2 per cent of the vote, less than the LDPR alone. The total opposition vote now reached 43.2 per cent (22.9 per cent LDPR, 12.4 per cent, CPRF, and 7.9 per cent APR); whereas the proportion of the 'democrats' (both in power and in opposition) had fallen to 33.2 per cent (15.5 per cent Russia's Choice, 7 per cent Yabloko, 6.7 per cent PRES and 4 per cent Sobchak); while the Women of Russia bloc (8 per cent) inclined towards the communists, and Travkin's DPR (5.5 per cent) and the Civic Union 1.9 per cent (See table 4.1) sought to occupy what appeared to be a disappearing centre. Another interpretation, of course, for the weak performance of the openly centrist parties is that all the others now moved to occupy 'centrist' positions with the exception of Zhirinovsky's LDPR.

Table 4.1 Russia Duma election 1993,

Party /Bloc	Party List (%)	Party List Seat	SMD	Total Seat	Total Seat (%)
Russia's Choice	15.51	40	30	70	15.6
LDPR	22.92	59	5	64	14.2

Communist Party	12.40	32	16	48	10.7
Agrarian Party	7.99	21	12	33	7.3
Yabloko	7.86	20	3	23	5.1
Women of Russia	8.13	21	2	23	5.1
PRES	6.76	18	1	18	-
DPR	5.52	14	1	15	-
Civic Union	1.93	0	1	1	-
RDDR	4.08	0	4	4	-
Dignity & Charity	0.70	0	2	2	-
New names	1.25	0	1	1	-
Cedar	0.76	0	-	-	-
Against All	4.36	0	-	-	-
Spoiled Ballot	3.10	0	-	-	-
Independent	-	-	-	141	31.3
Postponed	-	-	6	6	-
Total	-	225	225	450	100

Source: Sakwa, Richard (2008) *Russian Politics and Society*, London and New York: Routledge.

Any judgment on the political culture of Russia based on these elections must be tempered by the relative arbitrariness of the results. There is a need to carefully analyse the trend. It is important to note that if the elections had been held only on a proportional system, the LDPR would have been the single largest group; but if the old two-stage single-member system had been retained, the LDPR would hardly have figured. Although, there was strong support for the reformist candidates in Moscow, St Petersburg and some other places but as far as provinces were concerned the support fell sharply by 15 per cent in Vologda *oblast*, in Vladimir *oblast* by 10 per cent, and so on. Lyubarsky argues that the widespread fraud by the old Soviet apparatus was the main reason for such developments. He insists that support for reformist forces had not declined but had probably increased. The results of the referendum adopting the constitution held at the same time have also been questioned, and the charge of vote-rigging still hangs over the December 1993 elections (Sakwa 2008: 171).

State Duma Election 1995

The President's draft of electoral law, in November 1994, had exempted those groups already having representations in the Duma from collecting signatures to support their candidacy, a provision that was dropped later, as was the prohibition on candidates standing simultaneously in party-list and single-member elections. The presidential draft proposed the reduction in the proportion of those elected from party-lists from half to a third. It was similar to the original proposal of 1993. The new electoral law of June 1995 forced party leaders to cut the number of Moscow-based politicians on the party-list to 12, with the rest to be chosen from the regions. The new rules and regulations made it clear that only those parties or movements would enter into the campaign that have been registered before six months of parliamentary elections (CDPSP 1996:9). This very provision restricted the uncontrolled proliferation of parties and movements. Despite these measures there were some 300 parties engaged in bloc-making to collect signatures. The number of signatures required for the registration of electoral associations doubled to 200,000, with no more than 7 per cent from any one of Russia's 89 component units. To stand in a single-member district a candidate required to collect signatures from 1 per cent of the voters and the candidates who gained a simple plurality of votes won.

The retention of the 225: 225 split in the election and the unchanged minimum voter turnout threshold at 25 per cent signalled not only the strength of vested interests of the factions, already in parliament, but a continued commitment to the belief that a proportional system stimulates the development of parties. However, the retention of the 5 per cent threshold for party-list candidates to enter parliament was severely contested on the grounds that a significant proportion of the vote might end up unrepresented. Georgy Satarov, presidential aide, suggested a 'representation threshold' that would be gradually lowered until 75 per cent of votes cast were represented (Sakwa 2008: 172). Victor Sheinis provided the justification of the law on the grounds that smaller parties 'do not have the right to exist' and that it should encourage the creation of strong parties. He conceded that the lack of a second round in single-member districts was the electoral Law's greatest flaw.

Thus, the two-party system envisaged by Yeltsin in April 1995 did not materialise. He wanted to have a centre right dominated by Chernomyrdin's NDR, while the centre left slot was to be taken by Ivan Rybkin's Electoral Bloc. The latter went through several permutations and was challenged by a number of actors such as social democratic trade unions, and manufacturers' associations, as well as the Women of Russia bloc running with a federal list of 80 women. Despite these precautionary measures, the 'democratic' part of the political spectrum fragmented into small groups. Party leaders were of the view that by gaining access to free air time by heading a party-list group their chances in single-member districts would definitely increase. Thus, they placed their individual interests above those of the movement, something not restricted to the democratic camp (Sakwa 2008: 172).

The left was dominated by the CPRF, the Agrarian Party of Russia headed by Mikhail Lapshin, and a number of extremist parties, above all Victor Tyulkin's and Victor Anpilov's bloc Communists-Working Russia-For the Soviet Union. Zyuganov's CPRF came into the electoral fray and benefited a lot from the widespread discontent with the course of reforms and in the end emerged victorious in numerous regional elections. The CPRF's electoral manifesto was more a blend of patriotic populism than communism, avoiding a commitment to specific Soviet policies while stressing the reintegration of the USSR. Zyuganov assured Western business that the CPRF would not do anything to destroy the private sector if it happens to be at the helm of affairs (CDPSP 1996:9).

The nationalist wing was once again dominated by Zhirinovskiy's LDPR. In 1993, it had won around 25 per cent of votes but in 1996 it was forced to share the national-patriotic vote with numerous other groups. Patriotic centrists were represented by the Congress of Russian Communities whose leader was the former secretary of the Security Council, Yuri Skokov. Second on the list was General Lebed (retired), formerly commander of the Twelfth Army in Moldova, who made clear his presidential ambitions (Sakwa 2008: 172). The KRO had been established by Dmitry Rogozin in 1993 but he had ceded first place later to Skokov. Lebed announced his entrance into active politics in April 1995, when he joined forces with Skokov, and he resigned his commission in May. There were tensions within the KRO, and in

particular between Lebed and Skokov, who also nurtured presidential ambitions and allegedly noted that Lebed's 'education is inadequate.

On the patterns of 1993 elections, the electoral system amplified the representation of the parties making it over the threshold and voters supporting the other 39 blocs were in effect disenfranchised. Since, about 34 million votes were 'wasted' in 1995 the political preferences of a large segment of the electorate did not reflect in the parliament. All of this once again raised a number of questions such as the changing the electoral system, lowering the 5 per cent threshold, reducing the proportion of MPs elected from party-lists or abolishing the proportional part of the election entirely and, reintroducing a second round in single-member districts. In 1993, the votes received by LDPR represented the 'soft' backlash against the policies of the government (Ibid 2008: 173).

CPRF's gain in 1995 elections was termed as 'hard' backlash. This not only reflected anger at the painful economic reforms, but also a broader disenchantment with the post-August 1991 political order. However, the CPRF's 22 per cent vote share represented only 15.2 million votes: the total opposition vote of some 37 per cent was less than in 1993, while the vote for pro-reform parties fell to 22 per cent.⁴ The LDPR's vote halved from that in 1993, yet successfully crossed the party list threshold but won only one single-member seat. The greatest surprise here was the failure of patriotic organisations like KRO to enter into the parliament. In contrast to 1993, the 1995 electoral law set specific limits on campaign spending for parties and candidates, although these were clearly exceeded by some of the blocs.

Table, 4.2 Russia Duma Election 1995

Party /Bloc	Party List (%)	Party List Seat	SMD	Total Seat	1993 Seats
CPRF	22.30	99	58	157	45
LDPR	11.18	50	1	51	64
Russia our Home	10.13	45	10	55	N/A
Yabloko	6.89	31	14	45	25
Women of Russia	4.60	0	3	3	23

⁴ Eurussia Centre, (2011), *The electoral system of Russian federation*, The Eu-Russian centre Review, Issue.17, April.2011.

Working of Russia	4.53	0	0	0	0
KRO	4.31	0	5	5	N/A
PST	4.01	0	1	1	N/A
DVR	3.86	0	9	9	76
APR	3.78	0	20	20	55
Derzhava	2.59	0	0	0	N/A
Forward Russia	1.94	0	3	3	N/A
VN	1.61	0	2	2	N/A
Pamfilova et al	1.61	0	2	2	N/A
Rybkin bloc	1.12	0	3	3	N/A
Bloc with IMP	-	0	10	10	N/A
Independent	-	-	77	77	162
Total	100	225	225	450	450

Source: Sakwa, Richard (2008) *Russian politics and society*, London and New York: Routledge.

Presidential Election, June–July 1996

The first ever elections for the head of state of a sovereign and independent Russia was held in 1996. The two front-runners had to enter a run-off poll as none of the candidates obtained more than 50 per cent of the vote in the first ballot held on 16 June 1996. Yeltsin's own chances of re-election were reduced because of the Chechen war and his own ill-health. His popularity had fallen dramatically, from 37 per cent in December 1992 to 6 per cent in June 1995.

Duma elections in December 1995 were crucial for the presidential election as it successfully identified the strongest candidates for the presidency while eliminated the weakest. There were several contenders who explicitly announced their candidature including Zyuganov, Lebed, Yavlinsky, Gorbachev and, of course, Zhirinovskiy. Yeltsin's critics could not agree on a single convincing candidate, hence he remained in with a chance. Hardliners from within Yeltsin's entourage, popularly known as the 'party of war' for their advocacy of the first Chechen war in December 1994, urged Yeltsin to cancel the elections and declare a state of emergency to thwart what they insisted was the threat of a communist victory, and all that this entailed.

Alexander Korzhakov, head of Yeltsin's presidential security service, was leading the call for the postponement of the elections. His views could not prevail and were defeated by an alternative group led by Chubais. Reason behind this defeat was the fact that Chubais, with his typical decisiveness, was able to draw on the resources of the 'oligarchs' to organise Yeltsin's successful electoral resurrection. In a notorious letter, the 'Appeal of the 13', a number of the top oligarchs pledged their support for Yeltsin, and made unquantifiable sums available to his campaign (Sakwa 2008: 174).

The first round was largely a confirmation of Russia's traditional electoral geography, where Zyuganov gained strong support on the southern fringe and the 'red-belt' to the southwest of Moscow, while Yeltsin unexpectedly defeated the opposition in the Far East. Yeltsin fought a surprisingly effective campaign and focused on the threat posed by the communists. The media (notably Gusinsky's NTV), fearing the adverse consequences of a communist victory, fell in behind his candidacy as did a large proportion of the electorate.

Lebed's showed strong yet covert support of Yeltsin's team. In December 1995, he had been a populist, by June 1996 he seemed to have become a democrat. Between rounds Yeltsin sacked some of his more unpopular officials (including Defence Minister Pavel Grachev and Korzhakov) and appointed Lebed secretary of the Security Council and presidential national security adviser to root out corruption and crime. Yavlinsky fought a typically poor campaign, failing to become the candidate of a united 'third force', while Zhirinovskiy was pushed into fifth place.

In the second round Yeltsin secured a convincing victory from an electorate that was apprehensive of a change of president that would entail a change of regime. The 30 million vote cast in favour of Zyuganov represented a large constituency of dissatisfied citizens, but he could not broaden his support beyond the communist and national-patriotic opposition. Despite continuing fears over his health, Yeltsin successfully exploited the slogans of continuity, stability and reform. The executive's ability to impose a crude bipolarity on the electoral process reflected the weakness of

the emerging party system. The presidential powers remained unaffected after the 1996 elections.⁵

Table 4.3 (1) Presidential Election 1996, first round Result

Candidates	Vote (%)	Number of Votes
Boris Yeltsin	35.28	26,665,495
Gennadii Zyuganov	32.03	24,211,686
Alexander Lebed	14.52	10,974,736
Grigorii Yavlinsky	7.34	5,550,752
Valadimir Zhirinovskiy	5.70	4,311,479
Svyatoslav Fedorov	0.92	699,158
Mikhail Gorbachev	0.57	386,069
Martin Shakkum	0.37	277,068
Yuriiivlasov	0.20	151,282
Vladimir Bryntsalov	0.16	123,065

Table 4.3(2) Second round 1996 election

Candidates	Vote (%)	Number of Votes
Boris Yeltsin	53.82	40,208,384
Gennadii Zyuganov	40.31	30,113,306
Against both Candidates	4.83	3,604,550

Source: Sakwa, Richard (2008) *Russian politics and society*, London and New York: Routledge.

State Duma Election 1999

Parliamentary elections of 1999 were crucial for the presidential elections. The most fascinating aspects of the whole process is the inter-weaving of parliamentary and presidential considerations. It made a deep impact on the entire development of the party system and added a number of complications in the calculations of political leaders. By 1999 the attempt to impose the old bipolarity on the electoral process was no longer credible. The CPRF suffered from defections in the run-up to the December 1999 elections, above all with the majority of the Agrarian Party of Russia (APR) allying itself with the powerful new grouping headed by the former prime minister, Yevgeny Primakov. This electoral association was consisted of the *Otechestvo*

⁵ Eurussia Centre, (2011), *The electoral system of Russian federation*, The Eu-Russian centre Review, Issue.17, April.2011.

(Fatherland) organisation, led by the mayor of Moscow, Yuri Luzhkov, and *Vsya Rossiya* (All Russia), comprised of some of the leading regional leaders like Vladimir Yakovlev of St Petersburg and President Mintimir Shaimiev of Tatarstan. In Russian elections, a new force emerged in the form of regions and their increasingly independent leaders. The proliferation of regional party formations in the run-up to December 1999 elections demonstrated the fragile and fragmented political field. In the end no single ‘party of the regions’ emerged victorious but it once again testified to the political and economic fissures within the regional ‘lobby’ (Sakwa 2008: 176).

In earlier elections the trend was that the regime had always put forward a single quasi-presidential ‘party of power’ for example Gaider’s Russia’s Choice in 1993 and Chernomyrdin’s ‘Our Home is Russia’ in 1995. The emergence of a reconfigured but oppositional ‘party of power’, focused on Primakov, the national security establishment, regional elites, and industrial and financial groups, was rooted out by Primakov’s dismissal as prime minister in May 1999. In September 1999, to counter the destabilising threat to the succession that the Kremlin sponsored the creation of the Unity (*Edinstvo*) governors’ bloc to act as the official ‘party of power’. Sergei Shoigu, the long-time head of the Ministry of Emergency Situations, headed this very bloc. Undoubtedly, Unity was not a modern political party, however, there is no point to believe that it was a mass movement. It was, at best, a political association created by power elites with an aim to act like a competitive political organisation and to occupy the space where genuine political parties should belong. The prominent reason behind the marginalisation of genuine political parties, CPRF and Yabloko, was the fact that programmatic debate was subsumed into the struggle for the succession. The creation of a highly presidential system meant that the stakes had become extraordinarily high, since the presidency meant access to the vast financial resources of the state and its patronage. The stake was the very survival of the Yeltsin regime system where political power and economic advantage had become almost indistinguishable.

If we closely analyse the election results, it can be concluded that the results clearly indicated that Russian electors had learnt to cast their votes strategically. If in 1995, 49.5 per cent of the vote was cast for the 39 parties failing to cross the 5 per cent threshold, in 1999 this fell to 18.9 per cent of the vote being ‘wasted’ on the 20 blocs

failing to make the threshold. With the consolidation of the vote around 'mainstream' parties, there was less of a 'multiplier' effect and only 18 per cent of the party list seats were redistributed to the six successful parties. The CPRF won 22 per cent of the PL vote in 1995, and recorded a slight increase in 1999 (Petrov 2004: 22), although they did far worse in SMDs. The Zhirinovskiy bloc's base further eroded, however, contrary to most predictions it successfully overcame the 5 per cent representation barrier. The success of Unity reflected the continuing presence of a large floating centrist and power-oriented vote, given partially to Our Home is Russia (NDR) in 1995. Unity almost entirely lacked an ideology other than state consolidation around the presidency, and no new party, based on ideology, has been able to emerge since the founding election of the present system in December 1993. Yabloko continued the tradition of losing about a percentage point in each parliamentary election, but because of the success of the SPS the overall position of the liberals was consolidated (Sakwa 2008: 177). The 'democratic' vote, in earlier elections, was divided among rival groups but this time SPS successfully brought the majority together to register a significant improvement in representation. Given their support for Putin and the Chechen war, some might argue that this was at the price of giving up their liberalism.

Presidential Election March 2000

The 1999 Duma election weakened the presidential positions of all main opposition candidates – Luzhkov, Yavlinsky, Primakov and Zyuganov. Hybrid electoral system of Russia encouraged the development of hybrid political parties, parliamentary parties and presidential catch-all groupings. The system prevented parties from developing effectively in either direction. Interestingly, Vladimir Putin who won the overwhelming majority in parliamentary election was not even a candidate. The election did some remarkable things such as it provided the presidency with a strong base in the Duma, silenced the main opposition figures, and also boosted the prestige of Putin. On December 1999, seizing the opportunity, Yeltsin resigned and Putin became acting president which gave him the powerful advantage of incumbency in the rescheduled presidential elections of 2000. In Putin, Yeltsin saw the fulfillment of

his long term desire of ensuring a smooth transition to someone who would ensure his personal security and elite continuity (Sakwa 2008: 180).

The political regime associated with Yeltsin was powerful enough and successfully proved that it was able to reproduce itself; although the change of leader provoked modifications, the essentials of the political system established in the 1990s survived the succession. Beneath the cycle of political crises, sackings, resignations and dramatic demarches since 1995 there lay a more profound struggle for the succession. On 31 December 1999, Yeltsin, in his televised resignation speech, spoke about his desire to set the precedent of the 'civilised voluntary transfer of power' after the elections originally timetabled for June 2000 and also decided to resign. There was no danger of Russia returning to the past, and thus, Yeltsin argued, 'I have achieved the main task of my life' and thus he did not want to impede the smooth transition to a new generation of politicians. There was 'no reason to hang on to power when the country had a strong person worthy of becoming president'. Yeltsin's premature exit meant that Russia would not see one democratically elected leader transfer power to another in direct accordance with the expectations laid down in the constitution. Instead, there was an attempt to pre-empt the choice of the voters by transferring power to a designated successor for whom the most benign electoral environment had been established.

Putin presented himself as a symbol of confidence and stability and promised to maintain Russia's system of power and property, while radically renovating the state system and developing political and legal reform. He committed himself to the maintenance of the existing constitution, although he did not deny some institutional innovation without changing the broad framework. There was a remarkable difference between Putin and his opponents. As an acting President he set the terms of the debate and presented himself as a statesman while his opponents struggled for votes. Putin enjoyed the advantage of two powerful posts acting President and Prime Minister which made it clear that he was far from being an ordinary candidate. His programmes encompassed almost every conceivable shade of opinion which did not allow any space for a coherent alternative. An open letter to the electors in late February contained no more than generalities. Putin's first round victory (although by a relatively narrow margin) emulated Yeltsin's triumph in the 1991 presidential

election and endowed Putin's presidency with extra legitimacy (Sakwa 2008: 180). Like Yeltsin's 1996 election, the result was tainted by accusations of malpractice, above all in places like Dagestan where straightforward ballot-stuffing allegedly took place, and elsewhere the use of administrative pressure by officials has been documented.

State Duma Election 2003

The total of 18 Political Parties and 5 blocs fought the election. The turnout at 54.7 per cent represented a return to the level of December 1993 (54.8 per cent), compared to the 61.7 per cent of December 1999 and 64.4 per cent in December 1995. The 'against all' category just missed reaching its own independent representation with 4.7 per cent of the vote, indicating voter protest against the choices on offer. The average 'against all' vote in single-mandate districts was 12.9 per cent, for which 7.7 million votes were cast, forcing a re-run in three where this category gained the most votes. The greatest winner in the election undoubtedly was United Russia, taking 37.4 per cent of the PR vote and some 120 single-mandate seats, joined soon after by another 60 independents, giving them a two-thirds majority in the Duma (Sakwa 2005: 369-98).

Liberal parties were effectively squeezed out of the Duma. The social democratic Yabloko won only 4.3 per cent of the vote (See table 4.10), and thus failed to cross the 5 per cent representation threshold. The more neo-liberal SPS fared even worse, winning a mere 4 per cent. Together they won only 7 constituency seats, down from the 49 in the previous Duma. The (Communist Party of the Russian Federation) CPRF fought a confused and passionless campaign. Conservative traditionalists flocked away from the CPRF to UR and Rodina, a party established not long before the election to draw votes away from the Communists, leaving the CPRF with a rump marginalised electorate. The CPRF vote collapsed, gaining less than half as many seats in parliament, 52 instead of 125, with only 12.7 per cent of the vote compared to 24.3 per cent in 1999 (Petrov 2004: 22). The authorities sought to link the communists to the oligarchs, from which the CPRF had received considerable support. The

elections signalled that the CPRF, like its French counterpart a generation earlier, was gradually withering away.

Presidential Election March 2004

Putin was a highly respected and popular leader and hence won a second presidential term for himself. However, his victory was tarnished by a number of factors including the withdrawal of some of the leading candidates and attempts to boycott the election. In an interval between the Duma elections and the Presidential ballot, a group of radical critics of the President's administration formed a 'Committee 2008' headed by Gari Kasparov, the chess grandmaster. It was an attempt to create an alternative to Putin's regime. The Committee 2008 with other liberals worked on a strategy to call for a boycott of the election so that a turnout below 50 per cent could render them invalid. Yavlinsky made the claim that 'free, equal, and politically competitive elections are impossible' since the country lacked the three essential ingredients for a free election, first, independent courts; second free mass media and; third sources of finance free from Kremlin influence(Sakwa 2008: 180). Some others suggested that the party in any case lacked the resources to collect the required two million signatures. Putin was infuriated by the idea of a boycott and argued that those advocating abstention were 'cowards' and that the idea was 'stupid and harmful' and proposed by 'losers'. Divisions in the liberal camp, and within the SPS itself, were revealed in the inability to agree on a common candidate for the presidency.

Glaz'ev, former co-leader of Rodina with Rogozin, was the only other strong candidate. He sought to present himself as an independent political leader and a credible successor of Putin in 2008. His high ambitions turned the Kremlin from an ally into an enemy. The Kremlin secretly encouraged Rogozin to become the sole leader of Rodina and this resulted in the replacement of Glaz'ev as the head of its Duma fraction. This severely affected the position of Glaz'ev who emerged much weakened. Zyuganov, leader of the CPRF, refused to participate in the elections and instead the communists were represented by the second rank figure, Nikolai Kharitonov, who in the event did remarkably well, having been given significant media coverage in return for not pulling out of the race. Ivan Rybkin, the former

speaker of the Duma, was backed by Berezovsky from London, but did not succeed. His withdrawal in mysterious circumstances, following a five-day disappearance in Kiev, gave rise to the term 'rybkinisation' of the opposition: incoherent, incompetent and insubstantial (Titkov 2006: 18).

As in 2000, Putin fought a non-campaign, although his strategy was extremely effective. At this time because of the withdrawal of experienced candidates like Yavlinsky and Zyuganov, opposition became weak. In such an environment, Putin fought on his record, and also on a forward-looking programme of continued state and economic reform. The dismissal of Mikhail Kasyanov as prime minister before the election, and the appointment of the technocrat Mikhail Fradkov at the head of a reduced cabinet of an overwhelmingly liberal and modernising orientation, was a clear signal of Putin's intentions in his second term. This was a clear indication that he was at last conclusively distancing himself from the Yeltsin's 'family' ideology. In voting for Putin on 14 March, the electorate was supporting not only an individual but the consolidation of a system and the development of a programme.

Although Putin's victory was far from unexpected, yet marked a significant improvement over the 53 per cent won in 2000. In Tatartan and elsewhere there were reliable reports of ballot box stuffing, while the extraordinarily high turnout in some regions undoubtedly suggests the enthusiastic use of 'administrative resources'. However, the general conclusion is that Putin gained the overwhelming support of the Russian electorate, winning in every single region. He remained the symbol of national unity and of aspirations for a better life (Sakwa 2008: 183).

State Duma Election 2007

Duma elections were held on 2 December 2007. At stake were the 450 seats in the State Duma, the lower house of the Federal Assembly of Russia. Eleven parties were included in the ballot, including largest party, United Russia, which was supported by President of Russia Vladimir Putin. The United Russia won 64.3% of the votes, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation 11.6%, the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia 8.1%, and Fair Russia won 7.7% (See table 4.11) and none of the other parties won enough votes to gain any seats (CDPSP 2008:1-5).

Although 400 foreign election monitors were present at the polling stations, the elections have received mixed criticism internationally largely from Western countries and by some independent media and also some opposition parties domestically. The observers have stated that the elections were not rigged but that media coverage was heavily favoured towards United Russia. The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe have stated that the elections were "not fair", while foreign governments and the European Union have called on Russia to look for possible violations. The election commission responded saying that the allegations will be examined. The Kremlin insisted that the vote was fair and said it demonstrated Russia's political stability.

The 2007 election were assigned exclusively from party list proportional representation under a law adopted in 2005 on the initiative of President Vladimir Putin. He claimed it would strengthen the party system by reducing the number of parties in the Duma. In the previous elections half of the seats were filled using proportional representation and another half using the first-past-the-post system. It was also the first parliamentary election since 1993 that lacked the "against all" option on the ballot, and the first in which there was no provision for the minimum number of voters that must be achieved for the elections to be considered valid (CDPSP 2008:1-5).

As of 2007, the 225 single-member districts were abolished. In the election of 2003, 100 of these seats were won by independents or minor party candidates. All seats were awarded by proportional representation. The threshold for eligibility to win seats was raised from 5.0 to 7.0 percent. In 2003 four parties each exceeded 7.0 percent of the list vote and collectively won 70.7 percent of the total Duma vote.

Only officially registered parties were eligible to compete, and registered parties could not form a bloc in order to improve their chances of clearing the 7.0 percent threshold, with the provision that parties in the Duma had to represent at least 60% of the participating citizens, and that there must be at least two parties in the Duma. There were eleven parties eligible to take part in the Duma election. Duma seats were allocated to individuals on the lists of successful parties in accordance with their ranking there, and divided among each regional group of candidates for the party in proportion to the votes received by that party in each region (Article 83: Methodology

of Proportional Distribution of Deputy Seats). Any members who resign from their party automatically forfeit their seats.

Several weeks ahead of the election, party leaders took part in moderated debates. Debates were televised on several state channels. Each candidate was given a chance to present his party's agenda, and to challenge opponents with questions. (United Russia refused to participate in the debates to receive more time allowed for promotion clips than other parties.)

Presidential Election March 2008

The Russian Presidential election held on March 2, 2008 resulted in the election of Dmitry Medvedev as the President of Russia. Putin headed the United Russia list and got elected to the Duma thus facilitating his becoming prime Minister after completing two terms and transferring power to Medvedev. Five political parties (United Russia, Fair Russia, Agrarian Party, Civilian power, Russian Ecological Party "The Greens") received 71% of the vote, and the Communist Party of the Russian Federation the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia and the Democratic Party of Russia only got 29% votes (CDPSP 2008:1-5).

The fairness of the election was disputed, with official monitoring groups giving conflicting reports. Some reported that the election was free and fair, while others reported that not all candidates had equal media coverage and that Kremlin opposition was treated unfairly. Monitoring groups found a number of other irregularities. The head of the electoral commission Vladimir Churov and the European election monitoring group PACE said the results reflected the will of the people. The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) election monitoring group refused to monitor the election because of what it called "severe restrictions on its observers by the Russian government", a charge Russia vehemently rejected, calling the decision "unacceptable".

Party in Policy Making Process

Policy making is always a reflection of people's wishes and parties' attempts to include people's wishes in the system to the extent possible by articulating and

aggregating people's interest. In Russian case, President determines the basic guidelines for the state's domestic and foreign policy (Article 80, 2). He has also the supreme appointment powers. Although in any kind of appointment, Duma's consent is expected but not must, this absence of an effectual part makes Duma a weak institution. In the field of law making, the president, the state Duma Federation Council and government can propose draft of any law (Article 104). It has to be approved by the both houses of parliament and it requires president's approval in the end. President can veto any bill. This demonstrates president's dominating powers in the field of law making and policy formation. Similarly parties have less influence on the government formation as compared to the president, because government is responsible for the implementation of law to the president and not to the legislature. The last twenty years of Russian democracy reflects a mixed history of cooperation and confrontation between president and state Duma.

President Yeltsin emerged on the changing political scenario in Russia with his agenda of democratization and economic reform. But in the beginning of 1990s when he introduced his agenda the political arrangement was not so smooth for him (CDPSP 1996: 9). Late soviet period constitutional agreements made the president subordinate to the legislature. The president nominated the prime minister and other leading government members. These officials were all subject to confirmation by the parliament. Yeltsin successfully countered these institutional arrangements by convincing the parliament to grant him extra ordinary powers to promote his radical economic reform programme. His decrees were made equal to law. The confrontation became wider over the issue of making a new reformed constitution to make Russia a western type liberal democracy. Yeltsin was in favour of a constitution, which will ensure a strong president whereas parliament wanted a parliamentary friendly constitution. A new constitution was adopted without following any democratic process of debate and discussions. Neither political groups were not invited nor were any opposition leaders consulted. The draft was presented before the people but accepted by a minority of Russian population. This is now a democratic culture of consensus over the structure and functioning of the democratic system was subverted and a one man constitution was accepted.

In the economic field Yeltsin followed same policy of marginalizing opinion of other groups or political parties. While implementing economic reform Yeltsin used decrees and never consulted with the congress. Yeltsin favoured a shock therapy approach whereas most of the parliamentary groups were in favour of gradualism and against immediate transformation towards western type open marked oriented economy (Anders 1997). In the field of foreign policy, president Yeltsin and his foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev looked at west as the best supporters for their economic reform and their regime as well. Yeltsin and Kozyrev emphasized the desire for Russia to become a normal great power, not just a military power (CDPSP 1996:9). The first draft of Russian foreign policy was accepted without any consultation with the parliament. Parties were not taken into confidence. Yeltsin foreign policy enlarged part after 1991 was a response to the growing strength of conservative and nationalist forces in Russia. It gradually turned to its earlier traditional partner like India, China etc. The real cause of conflict between these two institutions is that the Russian Federation was born 'asymmetrical'. The cause of this asymmetry according to Solvinick, was that there were strong region for region variation after the collapse of Soviet Union, in the resources that local elites could acquire, and the power that they could generate (Robinson, Neil 2000: 1-23).

Finally, we can say that Russian political system and parties regardless of their position and programme exert practically no influence on decision-making processes. They are largely excluded from the sphere of executive power which is based on personal rule. Neither former President Dmitri Medvedev nor current President Vladimir Putin are members of United Russia, the 'party of power' which supports both of them. This phenomenon has become a political tradition in post-Soviet Russia.

Public Perception of Electoral Fairness

Opposition

In November 2010 the Levada Centre asked the question whether Russia needs an opposition now. Of its respondents 55% answered yes', 16% no', while 29% declared they had difficulty answering the question. Yearly polls over the past seven years

show that there is steady support for the role of a political opposition. While most Russians would welcome an opposition there is a significant minority opposed to any opposition parties.

Table 4.4(1) Does Russia need an opposition now?

Yes	55%
No	16%
Don't know	29%

Source: Levada Survey 22-25, Oct 2010-N 1600

<http://www.levada.ru/press/2010111705.html>

Table 4.4(2) Does Russia currently need political opposition?

	July,04	July,05	July,06	July,07	July,08	July,09	July,10
Definitely Yes	32	34	27	25	27	25	23
To some extent	29	30	29	34	34	32	44
Probably not	12	9	14	9	14	15	12
Definitely not	5	5	6	5	7	5	4
Don't know	22	23	24	27	17	29	16

Source: Levada Survey 22-25, Oct 2010-N 1600 –

<http://www.levada.ru/press/2010111705.html>

Role of Media

Russia has undergone radical changes in the last three decades. The Soviet regime was an authoritarian system with the rule of one party, having considerable control over the lives of the citizens. Censorship was thorough and permeated all of society. Art, culture, music, foreign and domestic news were subject to censorship before being put before the audience. The media was the prolonged arm of the Communist

Party, and information was seen as a privilege (de Smaele 2006: Simons and Strovsky 2006: 189).

The years under Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin (1931-2007; President of the Russian Federation, 1991-1999) have been labelled as the golden era for mass media in Russia (Belin 2002: 22, Simons and Strovsky 2006: 189). Although the press was given far more freedom than under the Soviet era, the Kremlin was still defining what kind of information was useful. But in contrast to the omnipresent censorship in the Soviet Union, the limitations for the media became reduced when Mikhail Gorbachev permitted the broadcasting of debates among Party officials and when Boris Yeltsin granted some measure of freedom of the press. Under Gorbachev and Yeltsin, Russia developed pluralistic and more independent media.

In the decade since Putin came to power, Russian society has undergone changes politically and economically, and the media are profoundly affected by these changes. Among scholars studying Russia and Russian politics, many have considered whether Russia, after a decade in the 1990's with media freedom, is moving towards a more authoritarian political system, controlling the media. The Russian media outlets today are under the control of the authorities, both regional and central. Some independent media radio stations, printed press and online media exist, but with few listeners and readers.

Political parallelism is the degree and nature of the links between the media and the political parties "*or the extent to which the media system reflects the major political divisions in society*" (Hallin and Mancini 2004: 21). This variable is in many ways going to the core of the Russian media system. The ownership structures in the media foster a strongly intertwined connection between the media and the government party. When major political parties or opposition parties are not granted access to the media, the media system as an institution supporting democracy is weakened. Information is constricted and the public cannot easily inform itself fully about issues on the agenda. All information available was controlled by the Party and no criticisms were allowed. During the so-called golden period, Russia saw the first independent media outlets. But soon it became evident that the owner of those independent newspapers and television channels had political agendas, and used their media as channels for the

realization of their goals. In the late 1990s, each television channel endorsed a party or president candidate, something that was easily comprehended by the audience. In the elections from 1999 till 2008, those television channels which have survived are those that give more coverage to the governmental presidential candidates and the governmental party than to the oppositional voices (Hopstad 2011: 50).

Sarah Oates in her book *Television, Democracy and Elections in Russia* argues that the “political parties and the media enjoy a close, symbiotic relationship in any political system. However, evidence suggests that by the Russian presidential elections in 2004 this connection had become closer to the Soviet propaganda model than to one resembling the interaction among parties, candidates, the media and the electorate in developed democracies” (Oates 2006: 66). Finally we can say that the media concentrate on promoting the actions and policies of the government. The opposition parties and activists are either ignored or denigrated in the media.

Table 4.5 Survey on opinion about political parties:

Oct 2009: How do you think about the Communist Party (CPRF)?

Very positive/ fairly positive	34%
Indifferent	38%
Rather negative/Very negative	21%
Not aware about their existence	<1%
Difficult to answer	7%

How do you think about United Russia?

Very positive/ fairly positive	59%
Neither one thing or the other indifferent	23%
Rather negative/Very negative	12%

Not aware about their existence	>1
Difficult to answer	6%

How do you think about the party LDPR?

Very positive/ fairly positive	26%
Neither one thing or the other indifferent	40%
Rather negative/ very negative	28%
Not aware about their existence	>1
Difficult to answer	6%

How do you think about the party —Fair Russia?

Very positive/ fairly positive	28
Neither one thing or the other indifferent	44
Rather negative/ very negative	15
Not aware about their existence	3
Difficult to answer	10

How do you think about the party —Right Cause?

Very positive/ fairly positive	7%
Neither one thing or the other indifferent	37%
Rather negative/ very negative	21%
Not aware about their existence	18%

Difficult to answer	17%
---------------------	-----

How do you think about the party Yabloko?

Very positive/ fairly positive	8%
Neither one thing or the other indifferent	41%
Rather negative/ very negative	31%
Not aware about their existence	4%
Difficult to answer	16%

Source: Levada Survey – 16 – 19 October 2009 - N 1 600

<http://www.levada.ru/press/2009102905.html>

Table 4.6 State Duma election 1999

Party/Bloc	Party List (%)	Party List Seats	SMD	Total Seats	Total Seats (%)
CPRF	24.29	67	47	114	25.9
Unity or Medved	23.32	64	9	73	16.6
Fatherland All Russia	13.33	37	29	66	15.0
Union of Right forces	8.52	24	5	29	6.6
Zhirinovsky bloc	5.98	17	0	17	3.9
Yabloko	5.93	16	4	22	4.5
Communist Toilers of Russian for the Soviet union	2.22	-	-	-	-
Women of Russia	2.04	-	-	-	-
Party of Pensioners	1.98	-	1	-	-
Our Home Is Russia	1.20	-	8	-	-
Party in Defence of women	0.81	-	-	-	-
KRO	0.62	-	1	-	-
Movement for	0.62	-	-	-	-

civil Dignity					
Stalinist bloc for the USSR	0.61	-	-	-	-
DPA	0.59	-	2	-	-
Peace, Labour May		0.57	-	-	-
Bloc of General Andrei	0.56	-	1	-	-
Russia All people Union	0.37	-	2	-	-
Party of Peace and Unity	0.37	-	-	-	-
Russian Socialist Party	0.24	-	1	-	-
Movement of Patriotic Forces	0.17	-	-	-	-
Conservative Movement of Russia	0.13	-	-	-	-
All Russia Political Party of the People	0.11	-	-	-	-
Spiritual Heritage	0.10	-	1	-	-
Socialist Party of Russia	0.09	-	-	-	-
Social Democate	0.08	-	-	-	-
Against All Independents	3.36	-	-	-	-
	-	-	105	-	23.8
Total	100	225	216	-	-

Source: Sakwa, Richard (2008) *Russian politics and society*, London and New York: Routledge.

Table 4.7 Result, Presidential election 26 march 2000

Candidates	Vote (%)	Number of Votes
Vladimir Putin	52.94	39,740,434
Gennadii Zyuganov	29.21	21,928,471
Grigorii Yavlinsky	5.80	4,351,452
Aman Tuleev	2.95	2,217,361
Vladimir Zhirinovskiy	2.70	2,026,513
Konstantin Titov	1.47	1,107,269
Ella Panfilova	1.01	758,966
Stanislav Govoruknin	0.44	328,723
Yurii Skuratov	0.42	319,263

Alesei Pokberezkina	0.13	98,175
Umar Dznabrailov	0.10	78,498
Against All Candidates	1.88	1,414,648

Source: Sakwa, Richard (2008) *Russian politics and society*, London and New York: Routledge.

Table 4.8 Result, Presidential election, 14 March 2004

Candidates	Vote (%)	Number of Votes
Vladimir Putin	71.31	49,565,238
Nikolai Kharitonov	13.69	9,513,313
Sergei Glazev	4.10	2,850,063
Irina Khakamada	3.84	2,671,313
Oleg Malyshkin	2.02	1,405,315
Sergei Mironav	0.75	524,324
Against All	3.45	2,396,219

Source: Sakwa, Richard (2008) *Russian politics and society*, London and New York: Routledge.

Table 4.9 Result, Presidential election 2 March 2008

Candidates	Votes	%
Dmitry Medvedev	52530712	71.25
Gennady Zyuganov	13243550	17.96
Vladimir Zhirinovskiy	6988510	9.48
Andrey Bogdanov	968344	1.31
Invalid ballot	1015533	0.9
Total turnout	74746699	69.7

Source: Eurussia Centre Report "The Electoral System of the Russian Federation", April 2011.

Table 4.10 Result, state Duma election, 7 December 2003

Party	Votes (PR)	% of Turnout	PR List Seat	SMD	Total Seats
United Russia	22,779,279	37.57	120	103	223
CPRF	7,647,820	12.61	40	12	52
LDPR	6,943,885	11.45	36	0	36
Motherland	5,469,556	9.02	29	8	37
Yabloko	2,609,823	4.30	0	4	4
Agrarian party	2,408,356	3.97	0	3	3
Russian party of pensioners and Party of social Justice	1,874,739	3.09	0	-	-

Party of Russian revival Russian Party of Life	1,140,333	1.88	0	3	3
People's Party	714,652	1.18	0	17	17
Yedenenie	710,538	1.17	0	-	-
New Course	509,241	0.84	0	-	-
Holy Russia	298,795	0.49	0	-	-
Russia Ecological Party	253,983	0.42	0	-	-
Development of Entrepreneurship	212,825	0.35	0	-	-
Great Russia-Eurasian union	170,786	0.28	0	-	-
True Patriots of Russia	149,144	0.25	0	-	-
United Russian Party 'Rus'	148,948	0.25	0	-	-
Party of peace and Unity	148,208	0.25	0	-	-
Democratic Party of Russia	135,294	0.22	0	-	-
Russian Constitutional Democratic Party	113,184	0.19	0	-	-
Party SLON	107,444	0.18	0	-	-
People's Republican party of Russia	80,416	0.13	0	-	-
Other Parties	-	-	0	0	0
Against All	2,851,600	4.70	-	-	-
Independents	-	-	-	67	67
Total	59,684,768	-	225	222*	450

Source: Sakwa, Richard (2008) *Russian politics and society*, London and New York: Routledge.

Table 4.11 State Duma election Result 2Dec 2007

Party	Votes	%	Seats
United Russia	44714241	64.30	315
Communist party of the Russian federation	8046886	11.57	57
Liberal Democratic party of Russia	5660823	8.14	40
Fair Russia	5383639	7.74	38

Agrarian party of Russia	1600234	2.30	-
Yabloko	1108985	1.59	-
Civilian power	733604	1.05	-
Union of Right forces	699444	0.96	-
Patriots of Russia	615417	0.89	-
Party of social justice	154083	0.22	-
Democratic party of Russia	89780	0.13	-
Invalid ballots	759929	0.70	-
Total turnout	69537065	63.78	450
Eligible voters	109145517	100.00	-

Source: Eurussia Centre Report “The Electoral System of the Russian Federation”, April 2011.

CHAPTER V

Conclusion

Political system of Tsarist Russia can be best described as unrestrained despotism. Until 1864 there were no representative institutions of any kind. Decembrists were the first to put strong resistance against the existing system in 1825. Later, industrial development substantially increased the size of urban bourgeoisie and the working class, giving rise to a more dynamic political atmosphere and development of workers parties. The credit for establishing political parties in Russia goes to the working class and peasants. In 1883 George Plekhanov, the father of Russian Marxism, founded the very first Russian Marxist group. The first political party came into being in 1898 when The Russian Social Democratic Labour Party was formed with the explicit agenda of uniting the diverse revolutionary groups and organisations into one unified political party. Although, this was a great beginning but the real turning point came in 1905 when Russia was defeated by Japan in a war. After this a strong anti-Tsarist wave swept the entire country and a number of political parties emerged on the political scene. Constitutional Democratic Party, The Octoberist Party and The Union of Russian People were the prominent ones in the series.

Two important developments occurred in 1917 that proved to be watershed in Russian history. Firstly, Tsarist autocracy collapsed in February and provincial government was established; secondly, October revolution took place and Bolsheviks, under the able leadership of Vladimir Lenin, came to the helm of affairs. Bolsheviks, by and large, were in favour of a new state based on the Marxist philosophy. They organised themselves as Russian Communist Party which was renamed as the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1952. The organisational structure of the party was based on the principle of 'Democratic Centralism'. The party, more or less, dominated the political scene till 1990 when article six of the Soviet constitution was amended which effectively ended the dominant position of the party in all walks of life.

With the dismemberment of USSR in 1991, a new era began in the politics and the party system of Russia. The structure of international system was changing at a fast pace and the democratic norms and values were on the rise. The newly independent countries were giving importance to these norms and values in framing their constitution. Russia could

not be an exception of this trend and provided substantial space for western liberal democratic values. However, it is debatable as to what extent the political parties and party system internalised these values and functioned accordingly. A stable party system, open debate and transparency are considered the prerequisites of a stable democratic system. In such a system, people enjoy the privilege of getting their interests and wishes fulfilled by the government.

The change was clearly visible in the 1993 constitution that set the stage for a multi-party system. It declared that elections are the legitimate method through which people could express their wishes. The development from the adoption of new constitution in 1993 to 2007, the time frame of this study, can be divided into two phases. The first phase (1993-1999) was dominated by the Communist Party of Russian Federation which had a nationwide presence, an ideological affiliation and a clear vision for the future of Russia. There were some other parties in the electoral fray also but their presence was neither felt nationally nor could they sustain themselves for a long period of time. Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, regarded as a nationalist party, took part in all the elections during the period but with each election it became weaker. Yabloko, led by Grigori Yavlinsky, was committed to economic reforms, however, it never came to a position from where it could influence major policy decisions. Parties like Unity Party and Fatherland-All Russia participated in the elections of 1999 only. Unity Party was in favour of a free society, while Fatherland-All Russia had deep faith in market economy. Performance of both the political parties was minimal in the election. During this very phase (1993-1999) there was a confrontation between the President and the Parliament. The new institutional structure had given a lot of rights and power to the President, especially in the area of law making, which sometimes created an uneasy situation when parliament tried to assert its position. Boris Yeltsin failed, to a considerable extent, in creating a democratic environment and the shortcomings of pre-1991 period of communist system continued even in the new institutional set up. It was necessary to get rid of all those shortcomings in order to create a healthy democratic environment.

In post 1999 period Fatherland-All Russia and Unity Party merged into one and formed a powerful political party named United Russia that has dominated the Russian politics till

today. Thus we have a one party dominant system in Russia similar to Rajni Kothari's description of Indian system as Congress System. The role of other political parties cannot be ignored because it was their participation that made the elections successful. There were six Duma and five presidential elections from 1993 to 2012. Vladimir Putin came to power in 2000 and contrary to his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin, constantly recognised the importance of political parties and also expressed a strong will power to strengthen them.

If we make an in-depth analysis of the above details we come to the conclusion that political parties in Russia have largely failed in articulating the wishes of the people. There are a number of reasons behind this: firstly, political parties have little role in the government formation or decision making process; secondly, political parties, other than the dominant ruling one, could not offer a better alternative to the people and the ruling party also considerably failed to live up to the expectations of the people and; thirdly, in post 1991 period, majority of voters not could not relate to the agendas and programmes of the parties and in many cases decided to support one or other candidate just before voting. The very first hypothesis of the study was that "Political parties are not a prominent feature in Russian politics as their role in government formation and policy making is very limited" has been tested in the study. During Yeltsin period a phenomenon of 'Party of Power' emerged. Party of power is the party that backs the President and in return enjoys some say in the policy making. The constitution of 1993 has given the President independent power of law making and veto over parliamentary acts, which means the marginalisation of legislature. Party of power, during Yeltsin period, used its proximity to the executive power in grossly undemocratic way. However, after Yeltsin, Putin successfully worked to reform this system. It is no secret that in the Russian system President is an overarching authority who appoints the Prime Minister of the country with the consent of Duma but he even has the power to bypass the suggestion of Duma. This makes it ample clear that in government formation political parties have limited role.

The second hypothesis of the study "The concentration of power in Russian political system has led to control of the ruling party over all apparatus of government in media

facilitating its victory in election” is also tested in the study. The study finds that media, which plays an important role in Russian system, facilitates the victory of the ruling party. It promotes the favoured candidates and despite all complains of misuse by the ‘party of power’ and plays an important role in the elections. The media outlets, at present, are under the effective control of regional and central authorities. Though there are some independent media radio stations, printed press and online media but they hardly find a substantial number of listeners and readers. From 1999 onwards, only those television channels have survived that gave a remarkable coverage to the candidates supported by the party of power.

Present Presidential system of Russia is authoritarian tendencies and could be effectively challenged only when a viable multi-party system with parties having a nationwide influence emerges. Having a nationwide presence would not be enough so parties should also have the ability to sustain in the electoral fray for a long time. Besides this, there is a dire need to strengthen other institutions of the state that can check and balance each other.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(*indicates primary source)

- * Eu-Russia Centre Review “The Electoral System of the Russian Federation”, April 2011.
- * “Federal Law no.95 –FZ of July 11, 2001 (Final Version) on Political Parties – Adopted by the state Duma on June 21, 2001 and by the Federation Council on June 29,2001”
- * “President Putin’s New Year message see more stable Russia, but work still to do”, Text Report by news agency ITAR-TASS, Summary of World Broadcasting (SWB),SU/403B/1,3 Jan 2001
- * Summary of World Broadcasts, BBC, London
- * Text of the Draft Constitution as adopted in December 1993”
- * CDPSP (1996), The Current Digest of Russian Press, (Formerly The Current Digest of Post-Soviet Press) Vol.48, No.18, (1996), p: 9, Russia’s Parliamentary Elections, 1993 and 1995 and The Russian Constitution of 1993.
- * CDPSP (2008), The Current Digest of Russian Press, (Formerly The Current Digest of Post-Soviet Press) Vol.59, No.49, (2008), p: 1-5, United Russia Predictably Sweeps Duma Elections.
- * CDPSP (2008), The Current Digest of Russian Press, (Formerly The Current Digest of Post-Soviet Press) Vol.60, No.8, (2008), p: 1-5, Russia Gears up for March 2 Presidential Election.
- * CDPSP (2007), The Current digest of the post-Soviet press, Vol. 59, no. 9, (2007) p: 5, Battle Heats up Between Two 'Parties of Power'
- * VENICE COMMISSION (2012), The Law on Political Parties of the Russian Federation, Adopted by the Council for Democratic Elections at its 40th meeting, (Venice, 15 March 2012), Opinion No. 658/2011, Strasbourg.

Alan, Ware (1996), *Political Parties and Party Systems*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Aleksandr, Kynev (2011), State Duma election 2011 and the marginal role of Russian Parties, European Union, Institute for Security Studies.

Angelo, Panebianco (1988), *Political parties: Organisation and Power* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Anders, Aslund (eds.) (1997), *Russian economic transformation in the 1990*, London: Printe.

Badan, Phool (2000), "An Analysis of Russian Parliament (State Duma) Election-1999", *Journal of Peace Studies*, Vol.7, No.2: pp.30-38.

Ball, A. R. (1978), *Modern Politics and Government*, London: MacMillan.

Balzer, Harley (2003), "Managed Pluralism: Vladimir Putin's Emerging Regime," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol.19, No.3: pp.189–227.

Barnes, Catherine (1996), "Federal Elections in Russia: The Necessity of Systemic Reforms Demokratizatsiya" *The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization*, Vol. 4, no. 3: pp. 389-407.

Barry, Zoltan and Moser, G. Robert (2001), *Russian politics: Challenges of Democratization* Cambridge: Cambridge university press.

Belin, L (2002), "The Russian media in the 1990s" *The Journal of Communist Studies and Transition politics*, Vol.18, No.1: p.22.

Berelson, Bernard, Paul Lazarsfeld and William McPhee (1954), *Voting: A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bielasiak, Jack (2002), "The Institutionalization of Electoral and Party System in Post-Communist State", *Comparative Politics*, Vol.34, No.2: pp.189-210.

Birch, S (2010), "Perceptions of Electoral Fairness and Voter Turnout", *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 12: pp. 1601–22.

- Bradley, Joseph (2002), "Citizens: Societies, Civil Society, and Autocracy in Tsarist Russia", *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No. 4: pp. 1094-1123.
- Carr, E. H (1950), *The Bolshevik Revolution 1917-1923*, Vol.1, London: Penguin Books.
- Chenoy, M. Anuradha (2001), *The Making of New Russia*, New Delhi: Har- Anand Publications.
- Christopher (2005), *Lenin: A Revolutionary Life*, Psychology Press.
- Dahal, Robert A (1967), *Pluralist democracy in United State*, Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Dalton, R. J. and M. P Wattenberg (eds.) (2000), *Parties without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- De, Smaele, H. (2006), "In the name of democracy' The paradox of democracy and press freedom in Post-communist Russia" in *mass media and political communication in new democracies*. K. voltmer (ed). London, Routledge.
- DeBardeleben, Joan and Pammett, Jon.H (2000), "Citizen Orientations to Political Parties in Russia", *SAGE Publications*, Vol.6, No.3: pp. 373-383.
- Degras, Jane (ed.) (1956), *The Communist International, 1913-43, Selected Document*, Vol.1, London, p.28.
- Duverger, Maurice (1972), *Party Politics and Pressure Group: A Comparative Introduction* Paris: Thomas nelson and sons Ltd.
- Emmons, Terence (1983), *The formation of Political Parties and The First National Election in Russia*, USA: Harvard University Press
- Evans, Geoffrey and Whitefield, Stephen (1998), "The Evolution of Left and Right in Post-Soviet Russia", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 50, No. 6: pp. 1023-1042
- Fainsod, Merle (1953), *How Russia is Ruled*, Cambridge: The Harvard University Press.

Fainsod, Merle (1969), *How Russia is Ruled*, Revised ed. Bombay: The Times of India press.

Gavril, Popov (1990), "Deputy Pluralism: Which way will the Inter Regional Group" *Moscow News*, No.1: Jan7, 1990, p.6.

Gel'man, Vladimir (2004), "The unrule of Law in the Making: the Politics of Informal Institution Building in Russia," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol.56, No.7: pp.1021–1040.

Gel'man, Vladimir (2005), 'Blurry Boundaries, Biased contests: Public offices, Private money, and Russian Party Politics' Paper presented at the workshop 'The effect of Party and campaign finance on post-communist Party development' Riga (Oct, 20-23, 2005).

Gill, Graeme (1994), *The Collapse of a Single-party system- The Disintegration of the Communist Party of Soviet Union*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gunther, Richard and Larry Diamond (2001), *Political party and Democracy*, London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Hale, E. Henry (2005), "Why Not Parties? Electoral Markets, Party Substitutes, and Stalled Democratization in Russia" *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 37, No. 2: pp. 147-166

Hale, Henry (1999), "Critical Political Mass: Russia's Emerging Party System", PONARS Policy Memo 74 Harvard University.

Hale, Henry E., Michael McFaul, and Timothy J. Colton (2004), "Putin and the 'Delegative Democracy' Trap: Evidence from Russia's 2003–04 Elections," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol.20, No. 4: pp.285–319.

Hallin, D, C. and P, Mancini (2004), *Comparing media system: Three model of media and politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hofferbert, Richard (ed.) (1998), *Parties and Democracy*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Hoffmann, Erik. P (1984), "The Evolution of the Soviet Political System" *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*, Vol. 35, No. 3: pp. 1-13.

Hopstad, Birgitte (2011), *The Russian media under Putin and Medvedev: Controlled media in an authoritarian system*, Master Thesis, Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

Ian McAllister & Stephen White (2011), "Public Perceptions of Electoral Fairness in Russia" *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 63, No. 4: pp. 663-683.

John T. Ishiyama (1999), "Political parties and candidate recruitment in Post-Soviet Russian politics" *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, Vol.15, No. 4: pp. 41-69.

Joseph A. Schlesinger (1984), "On the Theory of Party Organization", *Journal of Politics*", Vol.46: pp.369-400.

Keep, John (1976), *Imperial Russia: Alexander II to the Revolution*" Robert Auty and Dimitry Obolensky (eds), *An introduction to Russian History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kostadinova, T (2003), "Voter Turnout Dynamics in Post-Communist Europe", *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 42, No. 6: pp. 741–59.

Kynev, Aleksandr (2011), "state Duma Election 2011 and the marginal role of Russian Parties" *European union Institute for Security Studies*.

Lapalombara, Joseph and Miron Wenier (ed.)(1966), *Political Parties and Political Development*, London: Princeton University Press.

Lenin, V. I (1967), *The Reorganisation of the party*, collected work, Vol.10, Moscow: Progress.

Mäkinen, Sirke (2009), "Parties in Russia: from a Pseudo System towards Fragmentation" *The Finnish Institute of International Affairs*, Briefing Paper 34, 16 June 2009.

Marcus, Kreuzer and Pettai vello (2004), "Political Parties and the Study of Political Development: New Insights from the Post- communist Democracies", *World Politics*, Vol. 56, No.4: pp. 608-633.

Matthew Wyman, Stephen White, Bill Miller and Paul Heywood (1995), "Public Opinion Parties and Voters in the December 1993 Russian Election", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol.47: pp.591-614.

McFaul, Michael (1996), "Russia's 1996 Presidential Elections", *Post-Soviet Affairs* Vol. 12, No.4: pp.318–50.

Mcfaul, Michal (2001), "Explaining Party Formation and Non- Formation in Russia Actors, Institution and Chance" *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol.34, No.10: pp.1159-1187.

Meleshevich, A. Andrey (2007), *Party system in Post-Soviet Countries: A Comparative Study of Political Institutionalization in Baltic State, Russia and Ukraine*, Palgrave: Macmillan.

Mikkel, Evald (2006), "The Russian party system" *Academic Centre for Baltic and Russian Studies*.

Miller, H. Arthur and F. Thomas Klobucar (2000), "The Development of Party Identification in Post-Soviet Societies" *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 44, No. 4: pp. 667-686.

Moraski (2007), "Electoral System Reform in Democracy's grey Zone, *Government and Opposition*, Vol.42, No.4: pp.536-63.

Mosse, W.E (1980), "Aspects of Tsarist Bureaucracy: The State Council in the Late Nineteenth Century", *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 95, No. 375: pp. 268-292.

Myagkov, Mikhail, Peter C. Ordeshook, and Dimitri Shakin (2009), *The Forensics of Election Fraud: Russia and Ukraine*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Neil, Robinson (1998), "Classifying Russia's party system: The problem of 'relevance' in a time of uncertainty", *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, Vol.14, No.1-2: pp. 159-177.

Norris, Pippa (1997), Choosing electoral System: Proportional, Majoritarian and Mixed System, *International Political Science review*, Vol.18, No.3: pp.297-312.

Oates, S (2006), *Television, democracy and elections in Russia*, London: Routledge.

Oversloot, Hans, and Ruben Verheul (2006), "Managing Democracy: Political Parties and the State in Russia", *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, Vol. 22, No. 3: pp. 383-405.

Pammett, Jon H. and Joan De Bardeleben (1996), "The Meaning of Elections in Transitional Democracies: Evidence from Russia and Ukraine", *Electoral Studies* Vol.15, No.3: pp. 363-82.

Pammett, Jon H. (1999), "Elections and Democracy in Russia", *Communist and Post Communist Studies*, Vol. 32, No.1: pp. 45-60.

Paul, Chaisty and Petra Schleiter (2002), "Productive but not Valued: The Russian State Duma, 1994-2001", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol.54, No.5: pp.701-724.

Petrov, Nikolai, P (2004), "What the Elections Tell Us" *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.15, No.3: pp. 20-31.

Petrov, N. (2003), "Regional Elections under Putin and Prospects for Russian Electoral Democracy", Ponars Policy Memo, 287, February.

Politkovskaya, Anna and John Crowfoot (2001), *A Dirty War: A Russian Reporter in Chechnya*, London: The Harvill Press.

Reisinger, M and Moraski, Bryon J (2003), "Electoral Competition across Russia's Regions", *Slavic Review*, Vol. 62, No. 2: pp. 278-301.

Remington, F. Thomas and Smith, S. Steven (1995), "The Development of Parliamentary Parties in Russia", *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 20, No. 4: pp. 457-489

Remington, Thomas F and Steven S. Smith (1996), "Political Goals, Institutional Context, and the Choice of an Electoral System: The Russian Parliamentary Election Law", *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol.40, No.4: pp.1253-79

Richard Rose & Doh Chull Shin (2001), "Democratization Backwards the Problem of Third-World Democracies", *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 31, No. 2: pp. 331-354.

Richard Rose, Evgeny Tikhomirov (1996), "Russia's Forced Choice Presidential Election" *Post-soviet Affairs*, Vol.12, No.4: pp.351-79.

Richard Rose, Neil Munro & Stephen White (2001), "Voting in a Floating Party System: The 1999 Duma Election", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol.53, No.3: pp. 419-443.

Robert G. Moser (1998), "The electoral effects of presidentialism in post-Soviet Russia", *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, Vol.14, No.1-2: pp.54-75.

Robert W. Orttung and Scott Parrish (1996), "Duma Votes Reflect North-South Divide", *Transition*, Vol.2, No.4: pp.12-14

Robinson, Neil (2000), *Russia's Partial Democracy*, from Solvnick, S. L. *Is the center too weak or too strong in Russian federation?* In V. Sperlinerng (ed), *Building the Russian state: Institutional crisis and the quest for Democratic Governance*, Boulder Company: West view Press.

Rose, Richard and Carnaghan, Ellen (1995), "Generational effect on Attitudes to Communist regimes: A comparative analysis, *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol.11, No.1: pp.28-56.

Rose, Richard, Munro, Neil and White, Stephen (2001), "Voting in a Floating Party System: The 1999 Duma Election" *Europe- Asia Studies*, Vol.53, No.3: pp.429-433.

Rose, Richard, Tikhomirov, Evgeny and Mishler, William (1997), "Understanding Multi- Party Choice: The 1995 Duma Election" *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol.49, No.5: pp.799-823

Ross, Cameron (2002), *Regional Politics in Russia*, Manchester: Manchester University Press

Ross, Cameron (ed.) (2004), *Russian Politics under Putin*, Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press

- Ross, Cameron (2011), "The Rise and Fall of Political Parties in Russia's Regional Assemblies" *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 63, No. 3: pp. 429–448.
- Roy, Medvedev (2000), *Post-Soviet Russia – A Journey through the Yeltsin's Era*, Columbia University Press.
- Sabine, G.H (1961), *A History of Political Theory*, New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston.
- Sakwa, Richard (1995), "The Russian Elections of December 1993", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 2: pp. 195–227.
- Sakwa, Richard (1998), *Left or Right? The CPRF and the problem of Democratic consolidation in Russia*, in John Lowenhardt (ed.), *Party Politics in Post- Communist Russia*, London: Frank Cass Publishers.
- Sakwa, Richard (2005), "The 2003–2004 Russian Elections and Prospects for Democracy", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 57, No. 3: pp. 369–98.
- Sakwa, Richard (2008), *Russian Politics and Society*, London and New York:, Routledge.
- Sangtu, Ko (2011), "Democratic Consolidation and Political Parties in Russia", *Asia-Pacific Research Center*, Hanyang University, Seoul, Korea.
- Sartori, Giovanni (1976), *party and party System: A framework for analysis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schapiro, L (1975), *The Communist Party of Soviet Union*, London: Methuen.
- Schapiro, L (1979), *The Government and Politics of Soviet Union*, Bombay: B.I Publication.
- Schapiro, Leonard (1960), *The Communist Party of Soviet Union*, Great Britain: Random House.
- Schraeder, Peter J and Riggs, Jonathan W (2004), "Russia's Political Party System as an Impediment to Democratization", *Demokratizatsiya*, Vol.12, No.2: p. 265-293.

- Mainwaring, Scott (1993), "Presidentialism, Multiparty Systems, and Democracy: The Difficult Equation", *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol.26, No.2: pp.198-230.
- Shevtsova, Lillia (2007), *Russia Lost in Transition: the Yeltsin and Putin legacies*, Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment
- Shveitser, Vladimir (2009), Power and Parties in Post- Soviet Russia, *Russia in global Affairs*, Vol.7, No.2: pp.37-48
- Simms, G. and D. Strovsky (2006) "Censorship in contemporary Russia journalism in the age of the war against Terrorism: A Historical perspective" *European Journal of Communication*, Vol.21, No.2: p.189.
- Slider, Darrell (2010), "How United is United Russia? Regional Sources of Intra-party conflict", *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, Vol.26, No.2: pp. 257-275
- Smith, Steven S, Remington and Thomas (1998), "Electoral Institutions and Party Cohesion in the Russian Duma", *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 60, No. 2: pp. 417-439.
- Strakhov, A.P (2002), "The Study of Russia Electoral Behaviour –A Sociocultural Approach", *Russian Social Science Review*, Vol.43, No.3: pp.36-47
- Timothy Colton (1996), "From Parliamentary to the Presidential Elections: Russians Get Real about Politics" *Demokratizatsiya*, Vol.4, No.3: pp.371-80.
- Titkov, Alexei (2006), '*Party Number Four*' – *Rodina: Whence and Why?*, Moscow: Panorama Centre.
- Ware, Robert Bruce (2005), "Recent Russian Federal Elections in Dagestan: Implications for Proposed Electoral Reform", *Europe-Asia Studies* Vol. 57, no. 4: pp. 583-600.
- Weiner, Myron and Joseph La palombara (eds.) (1969), *Political Parties and Political Development*, Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press.
- Weiss, Claudia (2004), "Russian Political Parties in Exile", *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Vol.5, No.1: pp.219–232.

White, David (2011), “Dominant party systems: a framework for conceptualizing Opposition strategies in Russia”, *Democratization*, Vol. 18, No. 3: pp. 655–681.

White, S, Rose, R and Mcalister (1996), *How Russia votes*, New Jersey: Chatham House.

White, S., Oates, S. & McAllister, I (2005), “Media Effects and Russian Elections, 1999–2000”, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 35: pp. 191–208.

Wilson, Kenneth (2006), “Party-System Development under Putin”, *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 22, No. 4: pp. 314–348.

Wilson, Kenneth (2007), “Party Finance in Russia: Has the 2001 Law 'On Political Parties' Made a Difference?” *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 59, No. 7: pp. 1089-1113.

Zoltan, Barany and G. Moser Robert (2001), *Russian Politics: Challenges of Democratization*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Internet Sources:

CSPP (2003), Centre for the study of public policy, “Party Alignments in the Duma, 1995-July 2003”. [Online: web] Accessed on 20 April 2012 URL:
http://www.russiavotes.org/duma/duma_align_1995_2003.php

EFDS (2012), European forum for Democracy and Solidarity, “Parliamentary elections 4 December 2012” [online: web] Accessed on 15 April 2012, URL:
<http://www.europeanforum.net/country/russia#top>

LS (2010), Levada Survey, “Does Russia Need the Opposition” 22-25, Oct 2010-N 1600, [online: web] Accessed On 22 May 2012, URL:
<http://www.levada.ru/press/2010111705.html>

LS (2009), Levada Survey, “The Russians on Political Parties” – 16 – 19 October 2009 - N 1600, [Online: web] Accessed On 22 May 2012, URL:
<http://www.levada.ru/press/2009102905.html>

RF (2010), Russia Briefing, “Businesses to Donate Funds to Russian Political Party in Power” [Online: web] Accessed on 11 February 2012, URL: <http://russia-briefing.com/news/businesses-to-donate-funds-to-russian-political-party-in-power.html/>

Russian Profile (2011), The Central Election Commission, [Online: Web] Accessed on 20 March 2012 URL: http://russiaprofile.org/bg_politics/49377.html