

## *Invisible Politics: Institutional Incentives and Legislative Alignments in the Russian Duma, 1996–99*

Previous analysis of legislative voting has focused on the behavior of nominal legislative parties, regardless of whether the country under examination was an established democracy or a newly democratized country. This approach is inadequate for countries with young party systems. To establish the extent to which legislative coalitions are party based, scholars must allow for the possibility that institutional incentives predominate over party influence. For this study, I applied a Bayesian discrete latent variable method to identify the legislative coalitions in the 1996–99 Duma. I found that legislative alignments cut across party lines: electoral incentives and support for the president contribute to divides within parties that lack coherent platforms. Here I present a novel methodological approach to the identification of intraparty divisions and the major determinants of legislative coalitions in many legislative settings. This approach allows a comparison of the importance of party influence relative to other institutional incentives. It is especially useful for analyzing legislative voting in young party systems and where constitutional frameworks and electoral systems subject legislators to competing pressures.

Democratic politics is hard to imagine without political parties (Schattschneider 1942). Parties provide voters with meaningful choice by inexpensively conveying information about the preferences of representatives (Aldrich 1995; Cox and McCubbins 1993; Snyder and Ting 2002). In the legislature, parties allow legislators to form enduring coalitions that reduce uncertainty and help legislators achieve their objectives more often. While majority coalitions can form around particular issues in the absence of parties, a stable voting equilibrium is unlikely (Aldrich 1995; Shepsle 1986). Strong, cohesive legislative parties coordinate the voting behavior of their members, facilitate monitoring on the part of citizens, and allow for greater clarity of responsibility. If policymaking resources are divided among many different groups and policymaking coalitions change from issue to issue, then citizens can hardly use elections as “instruments of accountability” (Powell 2000, 11–12).

The cohesion of parties, governments, and legislatures is especially important for countries in political and economic transition. A number of empirical studies have linked characteristics of party systems to economic policies and the success of economic reform (Haggard and Kauffman 1995; Mainwaring 1997). Politically fragmented governments or legislatures are less likely to implement reform successfully. A greater number of players might make it more difficult to move from the status quo (Tsebelis 1995) or reach agreement on how to split the costs of stabilization (Alesina and Drazen 1991). Given the importance of parties for democratic consolidation, scholars have focused on political parties in the literature on democratization and party-system development in postcommunist Europe. But legislative parties in this region, in contrast to their usually highly cohesive Western European counterparts, often lack strong electoral labels, developed party organizations, and distinct platforms. Where parties cannot provide crucial electoral resources, legislators have stronger incentives to deviate from the party line (Aldrich 1995; Cox and McCubbins 1993). Legislators might even engage in alternative ways of building political support, such as making direct clientelistic exchanges with voters (Kitschelt et al. 1999, ch. 2). Formal political institutions pose further challenges to the establishment of a dominant role for formal political parties in the legislative arena. The consequences of alternative institutional designs for the unity of parties have been highlighted in the comparative politics literature. Electoral systems that encourage intraparty electoral competition or presidential systems, which usually lack confidence-vote provisions, have been associated with lower party cohesion (Ames 1995; Diermeier and Feddersen 1998; Golden and Chang 2001; Hix 2002; Shugart 1998). Electoral rules encouraging the cultivation of the personal vote were adopted in a number of postcommunist countries. Strong presidencies are less prevalent, but presidents have considerable legislative powers in a number of postcommunist countries, especially in Russia.

In settings where parties lack strong programmatic appeals or organizational resources and institutions generate competing pressures for legislative voting behavior, parties might not be the primary locus of legislative bargaining. In such political systems, presidents endowed with substantial powers can build presidential coalitions that cut across party lines. Electoral incentives encouraging the personal vote can divide parties, especially if party members are elected by two different electoral rules, as in the mixed systems. A better understanding of the evolution of party systems in new democracies requires that we establish the extent to which formal parties constitute the basis of

legislative coalitions. Scholars can gain new insights about the effects of institutions on party-system development and democratic consolidation by complementing traditional party-based approaches with methods that do not presuppose that party influence predominates over institutional incentives.

For this article, I used individual voting records to identify the voting coalitions in the 1996–99 Duma. I investigated whether or not electoral incentives and presidential politics split legislative parties, and how this pattern varies with party strength. Russia's institutional arrangements in this period generated pressures for legislative behavior that competed with those from party leaders. The combination of complex institutional incentives and a young party system led me to suspect that institutional incentives overwhelmed party influence. My results demonstrate that we can improve our understanding of legislative politics in young democracies if we look beyond nominal party affiliation. A number of the identified legislative voting coalitions are intraparty voting blocs, coalitions of ideologically similar parties, or cross-party coalitions of deputies with different party affiliations. Parties lacking coherent platforms or strong labels split into intraparty voting blocs, divided over policy preferences and presidential support. Party effects overpowered electoral-mandate divides when parties had established electorates, coherent ideologies, and strong labels. Another finding is that when the president's coalition-building approach relied on the support of individual deputies through patronage, presidential loyalty varied by issue area and with local concerns on issues salient to the district or region.

This article illustrates a novel conceptual and methodological approach for the study of legislative coalitions that is applicable to many other legislative situations. Although the Russian legislature is, in many ways, unique, it shared with various young democracies in Central and Eastern Europe a nonconsolidated party system and cross-cutting institutional incentives. The approach is especially useful for the study of party-system development in newly democratized countries, but it can also be used to identify intraparty divisions and the major determinants of legislative coalitions in any legislative setting where party-line voting is not absolute and there are cross-cutting institutional incentives, or "competing principles" (Carey 2007). Examples of such cross-cutting incentives are party loyalty versus support for the executive in presidential systems (Carey 2007) or nationality versus transnational partisanship in international organizations, such as the European Union (Hix, Noury, and Roland 2005; Kreppel and Tsebelis 1999; Noury 2002). Even if political parties are

the unit of analysis and the main object of scholarly interest, the study of intraparty divides is a matter of considerable importance. Intraparty splits can wield significant influence on coalition formation and coalition bargaining between political parties (Laver and Schoffield 1998, ch. 2).

The article is organized as follows. In Section 1, I discuss the incentives for legislative behavior inherent in the Russian electoral system and constitutional arrangement. In Section 2, I provide some background on the parliamentary parties in the Duma in the period under examination. Section 3 reviews the findings of previous research. Section 4 presents my hypotheses, and Section 5 outlines the statistical method employed in my analysis. Section 6 presents the empirical results, and I conclude with a discussion of the implications of these findings for future work.

### **1. “Why Not Parties” in the Russian Duma?**

In the first four Duma elections (1994, 1996, 2000, and 2004), 225 deputies were elected in single-member districts, and the remaining 225 were elected from national party lists of the parties that cleared the 5% electoral threshold. The different electoral pressures on proportional-representation (PR) representatives and single-member district (SMD) representatives (Lancaster and Patterson 1990; Scholl 1986; Stratmann and Baur 2002) might create divisions along mandate lines within legislative parties. The desire of SMD deputies to win a constituency should make them more responsive to local demands than demands from party leaders, in contrast to the PR deputies, who depended on party leaders for placement on the national party list.

The incentives for party cohesion should vary not only by electoral mandate, but also by party affiliation, which for many SMD deputies was purely legislative affiliation. Parties did not control the nomination process in the SMD contests in all Duma elections in the 1993–2003 period.<sup>1</sup> To compete in the single-member districts, candidates could either meet the signature requirement equal to 1% of the number of registered voters in the district or run as candidates of a political party eligible to compete in the PR tier of the election.<sup>2</sup> Approximately 61% of the SMD candidates in the 1993 election and 34% in the 1995 election ran without official party affiliation. The rate increased to 38% in the third election. SMD candidates could run unaffiliated, and, once elected, they could take advantage of the privileges of party membership without joining one of the parliamentary branches of the electoral parties.

Deputies not affiliated with electoral parties could form a deputy group, as long as they met the minimum size requirement of 35 deputies. The leaders of both kinds of legislative parties, those based on electoral parties and the deputy groups, were entitled to membership on the Council of the Duma (the steering body), office space, secretarial assistance, recognition on the floor, and access to committee assignments. In the literature, both the parliamentary branches of electoral parties and the deputy groups are usually referred to as *fraktsii*, or factions. Here I will refer to both groups as legislative parties, to avoid confusion with the usual meaning of *faction*, used later in the discussion to refer to intraparty voting blocs.

Institutional effects on voting alignments also depend on the legislative politics of the president. The president has the most powerful position in the Russian political system, which has led many scholars to characterize the system as one of “super-presidentialism” (Fish 1996; Holmes 1993; Huskey 1999). The prime minister is appointed by the president, and, even though the presidential nominee is subject to confirmation by the Duma, the president has the right to dissolve the Duma and hold new elections if the Duma refuses to approve the president’s candidate or adopts a no-confidence resolution. Presidential election is not dependent on legislative majorities. The president is popularly elected and serves a fixed term. Because partisans are not united by the threat of losing control over the government, legislative parties in this system should be less cohesive than in parliamentary systems (Shugart and Carey 1992). Still, a president wanting to pass legislation must obtain the support of a legislative majority. A presidential veto can be overridden by a two-thirds majority of the Duma and the Federation Council (the upper house of parliament). The president can enact a decree as long as it is consistent with the constitution and existing law. Previous research has shown, however, that legislation has been more stable than decrees (Remington 2003, 39). Despite the strong presidential prerogatives, obtaining the support of the Duma for legislation of interest was crucial for both Russian presidents in the 1993–2003 period (Haspel, Remington, and Smith 1998; Remington 2001; Troxel 2003). Presidential coalition-building efforts significantly affected party cohesion and the structure of legislative coalitions. The president obtained the support of one or several political parties (Remington 2006) or, alternatively, built patronage coalitions of SMD deputies from “corporatist” deputy groups (Thames 2000).

## 2. The Legislative Parties, 1996–99

If party cohesion is driven by shared policy preferences among party members (Krehbiel 1993) or the reliance on party electoral resources (Aldrich 1995; Cox and McCubbins 1993), then deputies' relationships with their parties should vary according to party resources. In the 1990s, there was great variation not only in the Russian parties' "ideational capital" (Hale 2005, 12–16)—the coherence of ideological platforms and the strength of party labels—but also in their administrative capital, such as local organizations and campaign finance.

Of the successful electoral parties that cleared the 5% threshold in the 1995 election, only the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF) possessed both a strong label and organizational resources. By 1995, Yabloko had developed a strong label but was only starting to form regional organizations outside of Moscow. The pro-government Our Home Is Russia (OHR), created before the 1995 election, had strong organizations in most parts of Russia, but its creators deliberately avoided ideology (see Hale 2005).

The strategy of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), a party centered on its leader, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, and composed almost exclusively of PR deputies, did not rely on the development of strong local organizations. The Agrarian Party (APR) and People's Power (PP) were based on electoral parties that did not pass the 5% threshold. The Agrarian Party could provide its candidates with electoral resources inherited from the communist era but started to lose popularity because of its controversial campaign messages (Hale 2005, 51–52) and won only 20 SMD seats. People's Power was established as an electoral association just prior to the 1995 elections and gained only 9 SMD seats. The Agrarian Party and People's Power satisfied the minimum size requirement for legislative party status by attracting some KPRF-nominated deputies, independents, and candidates of minor parties that did not gain representation.<sup>3</sup> Some of the legislative parties were not even connected to electoral parties. Russia's Regions did not contest the elections under its own label. It was established as a deputy group in the beginning of the first session of the 1996–99 Duma by deputies elected as independents in single-member districts.<sup>4</sup>

## 3. Previous Research

Haspel, Remington, and Smith (1998), Remington and Smith (1995), Remington (2001), and Thames (2001) have all found significant effects of party affiliation on legislative voting behavior. The

divided electoral mandate (PR/SMD) has been extensively studied, but the evidence is more mixed. Remington and Smith (1995) and Haspel, Remington, and Smith (1998) did not find evidence of a significant mandate divide within legislative parties in the 1994–95 Duma. Remington and Smith (2001) found significant electoral-mandate effects in the 1994–95 Duma but only on some issues, namely, those concerning the rights and roles of legislative parties. Thames (2001) found evidence of mandate effects in the 1994–99 period in all issue areas, including budgetary policy, even after controlling for party membership. Kunicova and Remington (2008) find that in the 1995–99 and 1999–2003 Dumas, SMD deputies were more likely to deviate from the party line on budget votes than were PR deputies. According to Haspel, Remington, and Smith (1998), Remington and Smith (2001), and Remington (2003), deputy groups were much less cohesive than parliamentary branches of electoral parties in the 1994–95 Duma.

According to previous research, the effect of presidential politics was conditional on the president's personal approach toward political parties and coalition building. President Yeltsin deliberately eschewed associating with any political party in order to avoid committing himself to a particular policy course (Hale 2005), instead relying on decrees and patronage (Remington 2006). This approach was particularly helpful to him in obtaining the support of corporatist deputy groups, such as the Agrarian Party or Russia's Regions in the 1994–95 Duma (Thames 2000). In contrast, President Putin engaged in interparty negotiations and the distribution of committee seats to obtain the bloc support of a number of parliamentary parties. In response to the tendency of deputy groups to defect, however, he occasionally had to build ad hoc majorities through patronage (Remington 2006). The effects of presidential politics on party cohesion might interact with electoral mandate. According to Thames (2007), SMD deputies, more susceptible to patronage because of their incentive to build a personal vote, were more supportive of Yeltsin's presidential agenda, regardless of partisanship. Divides along electoral-mandate lines did not manifest in the Putin period, however, when the president maintained strong legislative support.

Given the importance of political parties for young democracies, previous researchers have focused on the unity of nominal parliamentary parties. Although studies based on the analysis of party cohesion have provided many valuable insights, they are less well-suited to a survey of the relative strength of party effects, presidential politics, and electoral incentives. To determine to what extent formal parties

provide the basis for legislative coalitions, scholars must allow for the possibility that institutional incentives might predominate over party pressure and encourage the formation of intraparty voting alliances or legislative coalitions of members of different legislative parties. For this purpose, here I complement the standard party-based approaches with an approach that does not presuppose that legislative voting coalitions follow party lines. As opposed to previous studies, which proceeded from the implicit premise that the relevant actors in the legislature are formal parliamentary parties, my work takes a step back to identify relevant actors by voting behavior. Such an approach allows me to address questions such as: To what extent was formal party affiliation the basis for legislative coalition formation? Were intraparty divisions driven by electoral incentives strong enough to split parties into intraparty voting alliances? Did presidential politics predominate over party pressure and lead to party splits or cross-party presidential coalitions? How did the observed relationships vary with the ideational and organizational resources of political parties?

#### 4. Hypotheses

I expected party cohesiveness and the potential of parties to split to be a function of the resources of the nascent parties and institutional incentives, such as the divided electoral mandate and presidential politics. Assuming that individual deputies care about policy and officeholding, we would predict SMD legislators to weigh their constituencies' preferences more heavily than PR deputies weigh their constituencies'. The comparative politics literature has emphasized the importance of electoral rules for legislators' responsiveness to party leaders relative to their responsiveness to alternative interests in the electorate (Ames 1995; Golden and Chang 2001; Lancaster and Patterson 1990; Scholl 1986; Stratmann and Baur 2002). If the set of constituents or political actors on whose political support legislators depend is at least partially determined by electoral rules (Carey 2007), then SMD deputies should be more responsive to district-specific interests. Because voters exercise more control over legislators' electoral prospects in SMD contests, legislators should be more responsive to local demands, which might compete against those of party leaders. Conversely, PR deputies, dependent on party leaders for placement on the party list, should be more responsive to demands from party leaders. These different electoral incentives might divide electoral parties along electoral-mandate lines. Such divides are more likely to emerge in parties lacking coherent platforms and strong labels

or well-developed local organizations. In the context of the legislature under examination, Our Home Is Russia and Yabloko should be more likely to split than the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, Russia's only "programmatic" party.

*Hypothesis 1:* Parties with significant numbers of both PR and SMD deputies split along mandate lines. Such intraparty splits are more likely when parties lack organizational resources or coherent platforms.

Similarly, electoral incentives might split the purely legislative parties (the deputy groups) into intraparty voting blocs. The deputy groups usually are not based on electoral organizations. Their members are not united by common ideology or by their reliance on party electoral resources. They can hardly rely on party electoral assistance in the future, as the deputy groups seldom generate successful electoral parties in subsequent elections. Because the members of the deputy groups are elected in SMD contests, they should be more responsive to narrow district-specific or regional interests. The interests of different districts and regions might sometimes be in conflict and could encourage the formation of intraparty voting blocs.

*Hypothesis 2:* The deputy groups are likely to split into intraparty voting blocs.

Directly elected presidents can undermine party discipline. Presidents whose electoral support is built outside the legislative party system can use their influence to achieve goals that weaken legislative party unity, even within presidential parties (Linz 1994). In the Russian system, the president needs the support of a legislative majority to pass legislation. In the period under examination, the pro-government party did not have a majority, so the president often had to build broad coalitions. Presidential coalition-building efforts might conflict with demands from party leaders and encourage intraparty splits over presidential support. Intraparty divides over presidential support should be even more likely in Russia's nonconsolidated party system, where parties lack crucial electoral resources. Presidential patronage is more likely to split legislative parties lacking strong labels or administrative resources. Because candidates cannot rely on such parties for electoral assistance in subsequent elections, presidential patronage or promise of electoral assistance from the Kremlin should be a strong incentive to deviate from the party line. The effect of presidential politics might interact with electoral mandate: SMD deputies

might be more supportive of the presidential agenda because they are more susceptible to presidential patronage, which they can use to build a personal vote (Thames 2007).

*Hypothesis 3:* Parties lacking coherent ideologies split over presidential support.

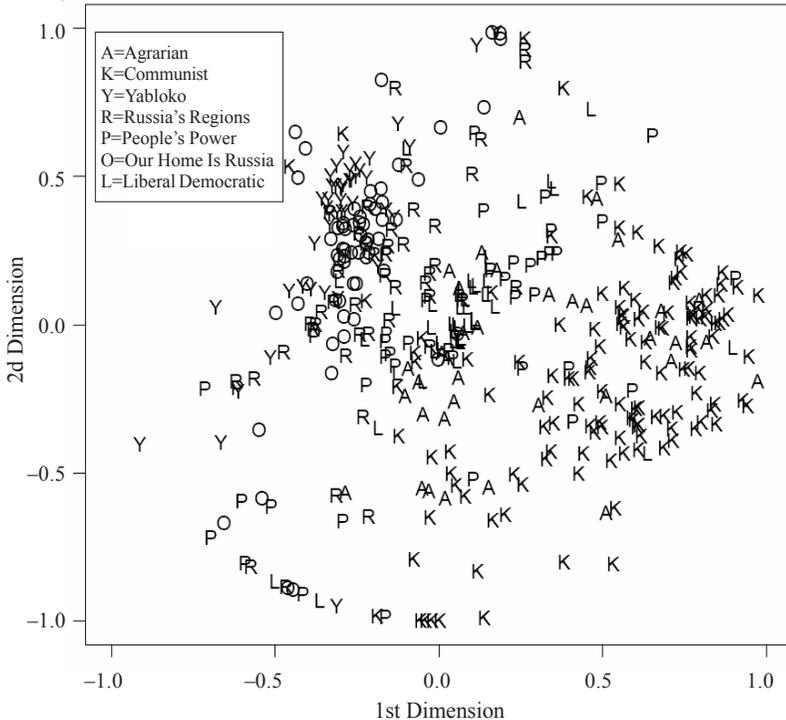
## 5. Method and Data

I identified the legislative coalitions in the 1996–99 Duma by studying individual voting records, using discrete latent variable analysis (see Buntine and Jakulin 2004, 2005a, 2005b; Jakulin and Buntine 2004;<sup>5</sup> or, for a similar methodology, Quinn and Spirling 2005).

A deputy's voting pattern is modeled using several voting patterns. A voting pattern can be conceptualized as the probability of voting in a particular way for each roll call, if we assume independence between individual deputies' votes. According to the statistical model, each deputy has proportional membership in a number of blocs and each bloc has its own voting pattern. Bloc membership is a latent variable and is estimated. Note that I use the term *bloc* not to denote a group with formal membership; the blocs are identified by similarities in voting behavior, regardless of the deputies' formal party membership. The appropriate number of blocs can be selected on the basis of post-estimation measures of model fit.<sup>6</sup>

After identifying the dominant legislative alignments by similarities in voting behavior via discrete latent variable analysis, I examined the characteristics of the voting blocs and their voting behavior. To establish which of the many competing pressures—party, electoral incentives, or presidential politics—contribute most to the pattern of legislative coalitions in the Duma, I examined bloc membership in terms of legislative and electoral affiliation and electoral mandate. I also examined the dissimilarities in voting behavior between different blocs on important votes in different issue areas. Various ideal-point estimation methods (Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers 2001; Heckman and Snyder 1997; Poole 2000; Poole and Rosenthal 1985) have been used to identify legislative alignments on the basis of individual voting records. The NOMINATE (Poole and Rosenthal 1985) scores of the Russian legislators in the 1996–99 Duma (see Figure 1) produce a spatial map consistent with the generally accepted positions of the Russian parties. While the ideal-point estimates improve our understanding of individual policy preferences and are a natural validity check, they are less appropriate for the study of the coalitional structure

FIGURE 1  
NOMINATE Estimates by Party Affiliation,  
1996–99 Duma



of the legislature under examination. In other words, it is not obvious what legislative coalitions would form as a result of such a distribution of individual preferences. Ultimately, I aim to identify the legislative alignments that best capture the voting dynamics in the Duma: Were parties the relevant players in the Russian legislature? Did institutional incentives or party influence prevail, and how did the pattern vary with party strength? The discrete latent variable approach is especially appropriate for addressing these questions.

I analyzed all electronically recorded votes from the 1996–99 Duma (a total of 14,450 votes after the exclusion of registration votes). The 1996–99 Duma is substantively important in its own right. Despite the continuing conflict between the government and the leftist parties dominating the Duma, the 1996–99 Duma was one of the most productive convocations in terms of the amount of “innovative and consequential” legislation approved (see Chaisty and Schleiter 2002).

FIGURE 2  
Parties and Voting Blocs

Bloc	Agrarian	Communist	Yabloko	Russia's Regions	People's Power	Our Home Is Russia	Liberal Democratic
Bloc 1 Russia's Regions Anti-reform	1			7	2		
Bloc 2 Left Opposition	16	125			9		2
Bloc 3 Liberal Reformers	1		5	11	5	18	1
Bloc 4 Our Home Is Russia List Deputies						18	
Bloc 5 Liberal Democratic		2					42
Bloc 6 Yabloko			32				
None <sup>a</sup>	16	5	5	23	20	20	1

*Note:* A deputy is classified as belonging to a voting bloc if he belongs to the bloc with probability > 0.6.

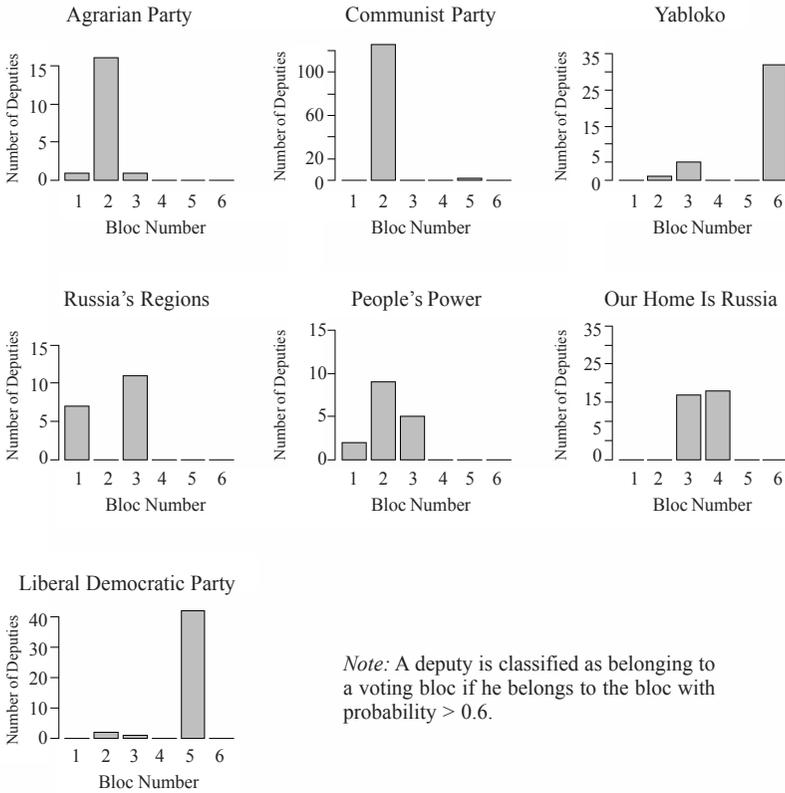
<sup>a</sup>The number of deputies from a party who belong to several blocs (i.e., do not belong to any of the blocs with probability > 0.6).

The 1996–99 Duma is often depicted as the Duma that stymied President Yeltsin's reform efforts and thus contributed to the economic crash of 1998. After the 1995 parliamentary election, a reformist coalition emerged in Yeltsin's cabinet, but the government was left with only 12% of the total seats. The lack of a stable antigovernment coalition and the strong prerogatives of the president enabled Yeltsin to govern but passing reform legislation was very difficult. The 1996–99 Duma was often the major cause of the government's failure to pass important reform initiatives, such as an austere budget, a new tax code, and a land code. Understanding the 1996–99 Duma can provide insights into the effects of institutions on the process of the Russian political and economic transition.

## 6. Empirical Results

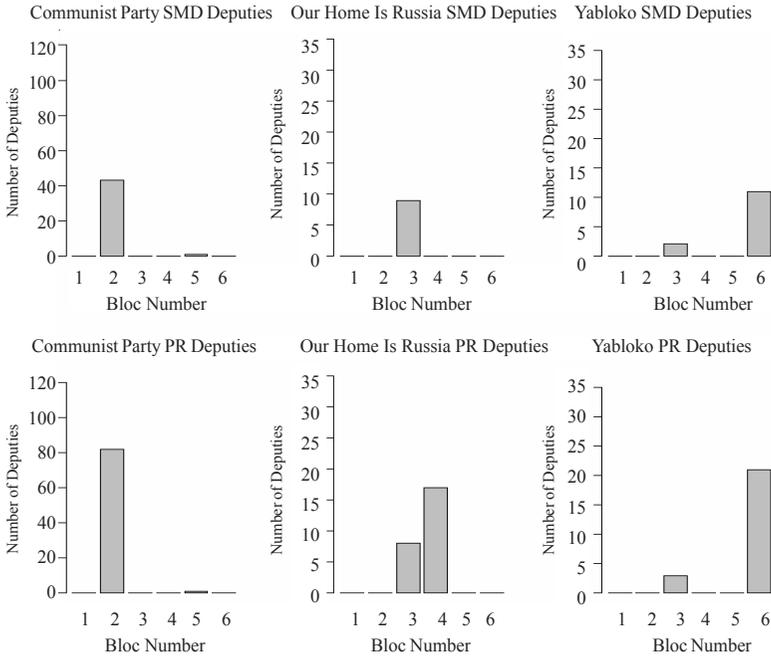
According to the empirical results, parties did exert a significant influence on legislative voting in the Duma, but legislative coalitions

FIGURE 3  
Distribution of Legislators Across Voting Blocs, by Party Affiliation



cut across party lines. Only one of the identified voting blocs, namely bloc 5 (see Figures 2 and 3)<sup>7</sup> overlaps almost completely with a legislative party, the Liberal Democratic Party. A number of the identified voting blocs are coalitions of ideologically similar parties (such as the Left Opposition bloc), intraparty blocs (voting bloc 4 and bloc 1, for example), and cross-party coalitions of deputies from different legislative parties (such as the Liberal Reformers bloc). In the following sections, I will examine how legislators prioritized their own preferences, local demands, and pressures from party leaders. I will discuss the roles of electoral incentives and presidential politics in shaping these priorities, and analyze their effect on the formation of inter- and intraparty coalitions.

FIGURE 4  
Distribution of Legislators Across Voting Blocs, by Electoral Mandate



*Note:* A deputy is classified as belonging to a voting bloc if he belongs to the bloc with probability > 0.6.

### *Electoral Mandate*

Of the three parties with significant numbers of both PR and SMD deputies, there were splits along mandate lines in Our Home Is Russia but not in the Communist Party or Yabloko. As hypothesized, OHR, the pro-government party, which lacked a coherent ideological platform, was divided along electoral-mandate lines. Most of the SMD deputies from OHR converged to the cross-party coalition of the Liberal Reformers, while most of its PR deputies converged to bloc 4 (see Figure 4). My examination of bloc voting behavior on key economic votes suggests that the Liberal Reformers bloc was distinguished by its support for radical economic reform.<sup>8</sup>

Most of the OHR SMD deputies who converged to bloc 3 were incumbents, high-profile politicians, and regional elites—candidates with strong local reputations deemed able to win the district contest

by the party. For this reason, they were the players who needed the party label and electoral resources the least and were more willing to deviate from the pro-government line. In contrast, the PR deputies from OHR were mostly first-year legislators without significant personal political capital, who were less willing to deviate from the party leadership. Although formally a reformist party, OHR favored a moderate approach to economic reform.

Yabloko did not split along electoral-mandate lines. Almost all Yabloko deputies converged to bloc 6, even though Yabloko was unable to offer its SMD candidates significant administrative or organizational electoral resources in the period under consideration. This coherence seems to suggest that whether a party is programmatic or clientelist is of primary importance for the potential of parties to split. Party effects overrode mandate effects for parties whose members were united by a common ideology. In line with my expectations, the Communist Party did not split along electoral-mandate lines. The fact that party effects predominated over PR/SMD divides only in parties with strong labels and coherent ideologies suggests that mandate effects interacted with party strength. Perhaps this interaction helps explain the mixed evidence on mandate effects in previous studies (Haspel, Remington, and Smith 1998; Kunicova and Remington 2008; Remington and Smith 1995; Thames 2000).

### *Presidential Coalitions*

The presidential conformity scores of the party-based blocs are consistent with the parties' generally accepted positions. Yabloko and the Communist Party have the lowest presidential-conformity scores, and the Liberal Democratic Party was the second-most reliable Yeltsin supporter.<sup>9</sup> Yabloko opposed Yeltsin's reform efforts because they were not radical enough; the Communist Party opposed them because they were too radical. As I hypothesized, support for the president contributed to intraparty divisions only within parties not organized by coherent ideologies (such as "the party of power," OHR) or opportunistic deputy groups (People's Power, for instance). Our Home Is Russia PR deputies were more supportive of presidential legislation than its SMD deputies. On all presidential votes and on budget legislation, voting bloc 4, to which most of OHR's list deputies converged, was more supportive of presidential legislation than the Liberal Reformers bloc (see Table 1),<sup>10</sup> which comprised most of the SMD OHR deputies. The presidential-conformity score was 49% for bloc 3 and 73% for bloc 4. The stronger loyalty of the PR deputies in the pro-

TABLE 1  
 Presidential-conformity Scores of the Blocs<sup>a</sup>  
 (in percentages)

Bloc	All Presidential Votes	Federal Budget	Land Reform
1 Russia's Regions Anti-reform	43	58	32
2 Left Opposition	37	48	11
3 Liberal Reformers	49	55	68
4 Our Home Is Russia List Deputies	73	82	82
5 Liberal Democratic Party	55	91	32
6 Yabloko	35	4	72

<sup>a</sup>Presidential-conformity scores were calculated as the absolute difference in the proportions of "yea" votes for each pair of blocs.

government party suggests that SMD legislators with significant personal political capital were not necessarily more susceptible to presidential patronage despite the electoral incentive to build a personal vote, a finding inconsistent with Thames's (2007) argument. As noted earlier, Our Home Is Russia SMD deputies were regional elites and candidates with strong local reputations, in contrast to the PR deputies, most of whom were first-year legislators. As a result, the SMD deputies needed the Kremlin's electoral assistance less and were more willing to deviate from the pro-government line.

I also found that when the president's approach to legislative coalition building relied on the support of individual deputies through patronage, as in the Yeltsin era (Remington 2003; Thames 2000), rather than on the support of one or more political parties, as in the Putin era, presidential loyalty varied by issue area and was dominated by local concerns on issues salient to the district or region. The deputies from Russia's Regions, a party usually considered pro-government (Remington 2001, 143), did not score very highly on presidential conformity but was often a part of Yeltsin's budget coalition.<sup>11</sup> The presidential-conformity scores of blocs 1 and 3, to which Russia's Regions deputies converged, were 43% and 49%, respectively, and 58% and 55% on votes on the federal budget. On land reform, however, bloc 1's support was only 32%. Voting bloc 1 consistently supported versions of the land code, which prohibited the sale of land and were vetoed by the president. In contrast, voting bloc 3, which comprised the rest of the Russia's Regions deputies, supported Yeltsin's versions of the code.

The Liberal Democratic Party was Yeltsin's second-most reliable ally (see Table 1), in line with the conventional wisdom and previous findings (Stone 2002; Thames 2001). On land legislation, the party support was much weaker, suggesting that the LDPR was better able to express its ideological opposition to land privatization than parties such as the Agrarian Party. Since virtually all of the LDPR's members were elected from the national PR tier, on land votes they were not subject to the direct constituency pressures felt by the SMD deputies from the Agrarian Party or People's Power. This relative autonomy suggests that President Yeltsin could acquire through patronage the support of the party's leadership and the whole LDPR on most crucial legislation, such as the federal budget. On other key votes, its members were free to express their ideological opposition, unencumbered by district demands.

A land code allowing for land privatization and the free trade of land constituted a major part of Yeltsin's reform effort and one of his major battles with the Duma. Land reform was anathema to communists and agrarians, who favored the large collective farms from the Soviet era. After signing as a temporary measure a decree allowing Russian farmers to buy and sell land in 1996, Yeltsin repeatedly tried to pass a land code until 1999. All government drafts allowing for the free sale of land, even those with some limitations on the right to buy and sell, were rejected by the Duma, which was dominated by communists and their agrarian allies.

Russia's Regions deputies, candidates with strong local reputations elected as independents, often voted for the budget but deviated from the pro-government line on locally salient issues, such as land reform. The other deputy group not connected to an electoral party, People's Power, usually viewed as a left-leaning organization and a communist ally, was internally divided over presidential support. While some of PP's deputies converged to the voting bloc of the Left Opposition, others converged to the much more liberal bloc 3, which was also less anti-Yeltsin than the Left Opposition. People's Power was often a part of the budget coalition and, in contrast to the Left Opposition, supported Yeltsin's antireform efforts.<sup>12</sup>

### *Electoral Affiliation*

The deputy groups not connected to electoral parties split into intraparty blocs with different policy preferences. People's Power split across the Left Opposition and the Liberal Reformers, the most pro-reform and the most antireform blocs (41% dissimilarity on average).

Similarly, Russia's Regions split across the most liberal voting bloc, bloc 3, and the antireform bloc 1. These findings demonstrate that the approach used here can uncover intraparty blocs that deviate from the generally accepted party position. In particular, within PP, usually considered a communist ally, an intraparty bloc voted with the Communist Party, whereas another one voted with its most ideologically opposed bloc, the cross-party coalition of the Liberal Reformers. Similarly, Russia's Regions, usually considered centrist, split across 3, the most liberal bloc, and the antireform bloc 1. Although previous studies have noted the weaker party discipline in the deputy groups (Haspel, Remington, and Smith 1998; Remington 2003; Remington and Smith 2001), I was able to obtain a more-nuanced picture: the deputy groups are divided into relatively cohesive intraparty blocs with divergent preferences.

Most of the deputies who do not belong to any of the identified blocs with greater probability than 60% (see Figure 2) are from purely legislative parties, such as Russia's Regions, the Agrarian Party, and People's Power, or from less ideologically coherent electoral parties, for instance, Our Home Is Russia. This trend suggests that deputies from parties lacking electoral resources and a strong electoral platform display more idiosyncratic voting behavior<sup>13</sup> than deputies from strong parties: 23 deputies from Russia's Regions and 20 from People's Power belong to none of the voting blocs with high probability, compared to only 5 from the Communist Party and Yabloko and only 1 from the Liberal Democratic Party.

### *Comparison with Ideal-point Estimates*

The validity of these results can be verified by comparing them with the NOMINATE scores (Poole and Rosenthal 1985) of the Duma deputies. The NOMINATE estimates are generally consistent with my results (see Figure 1 and Table 2).<sup>14</sup> There is significant interparty spread along the predominant first dimension (see Figures 1 and 5), with the Communists anchoring one end and Yabloko anchoring the other. The array of parties along this dimension and the pattern of voting on important votes suggest that the major dimension represents orientation toward a market economy. The parties toward the left favor more state control over the economy, while those closer to the right end favor less government interference and more-rapid market reforms.

There is considerable within-party dispersion in Russia's Regions, People's Power, and Our Home Is Russia. The differences between the mean NOMINATE scores of blocs across which Russia's Regions,

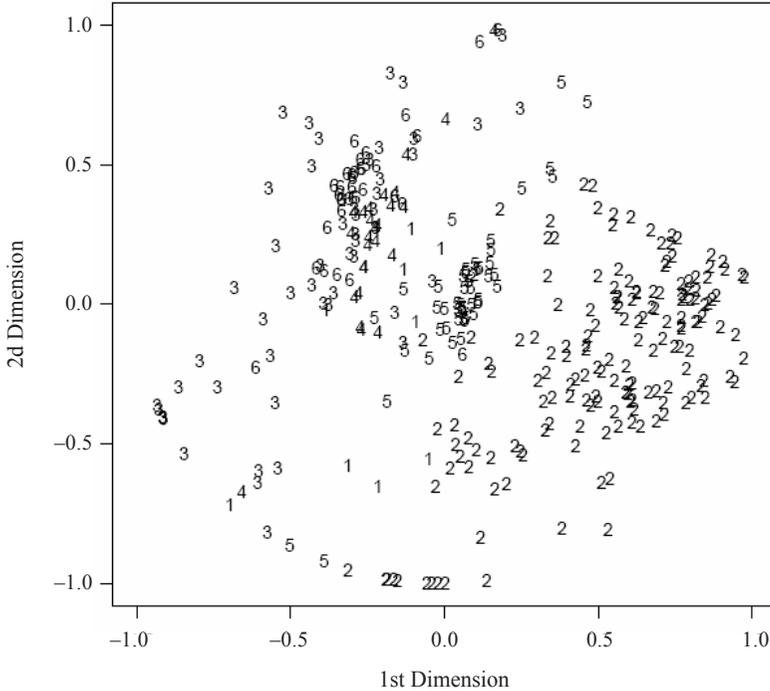
TABLE 2  
Ordering of Parties and Voting Blocs by NOMINATE Scores

1st Dimension	Mean	Standard Deviation
Communist Party	0.50	0.31
Agrarian Party	0.26	0.32
People's Power	0.03	0.39
Liberal Democratic Party	0.07	0.22
Russia's Regions	-0.18	0.20
Our Home Is Russia	-0.25	0.17
Yabloko	-0.31	0.18
Bloc 2 Left Opposition	0.51	0.29
Bloc 5 Liberal Democratic Party	0.03	0.39
Bloc 1 Russia's Regions Anti-reform	-0.19	0.22
Bloc 4 Our Home Is Russia List Deputies	-0.22	0.13
Bloc 6 Yabloko	-0.27	0.14
Bloc 3 Liberal Reformers	-0.41	0.28

PP, and OHR split are 0.22, 0.91, and 0.19, respectively (the distance between the parties anchoring the opposite ends on the reform dimension is 0.81).

The interpretation of the dominant economic-reform dimension, also identified in previous studies (Remington and Smith 1995; Remington, Smith, and Kiewiet 1994), is relatively straightforward. The substantive interpretation of the second dimension requires further investigation. To characterize the qualitative nature of the second dimension, I conducted a confirmatory estimation of the latent ideal-point space (for more detail on this method, please refer to the online Appendix<sup>15</sup> ([http://www.uiowa.edu/~lsq/Bagashka\\_Appendix.pdf](http://www.uiowa.edu/~lsq/Bagashka_Appendix.pdf))). I found that the second dimension represents issues of nationalism and relations with the West. Legislators with ideal points toward the bottom of the vertical axis favor further integration with the countries from the former Soviet bloc; legislators with ideal points toward the top end support further integration or cooperation with the West, the United Nations, and the European Union. The array of the parties along this dimension is also consistent with the generally accepted positions of the parties. Similarly, the Left Opposition bloc and the Russia's Regions antireform bloc anchor one end of the vertical axis, and Yabloko the other. Note that Russia's Regions was divided not only over economic

FIGURE 5  
NOMINATE Estimates by Bloc Membership



reform, but also over relations with the West (see Figure 1). In contrast, the ideal points of the Liberal Reformers bloc are dispersed along the second dimension, suggesting that its members were relatively united by their preference for radical economic reform but differed on nationalist issues and relations with the West. The greater variation for both legislative parties and the voting blocs along the second dimension suggests that the horizontal economic-reform dimension was a much more important determinant of legislative voting than the vertical dimension.<sup>16</sup>

Complementing the spatial map (Figures 1 and 5) of individual positions with my results reveals the intraparty divides and the structure of legislative coalitions. The ideal-point estimates are generally consistent with the results already presented, but it is difficult to identify the structure of legislative coalitions solely from ideal-point estimates: it is not obvious what legislative coalitions would form as a consequence of such a distribution of individual ideological preferences. The discrete-

latent-variable method employed here allows identification of legislative voting coalitions and comparison of the importance of party affiliation relative to the influence of local constituencies or the president. Thus, it permits a deeper exploration of the relative strength of parties in enforcing voting cohesion than previous methods could conduct.

## **7. Conclusion and Implications for Future Work**

Parties did exert a significant influence on voting in the Duma, but my findings also suggest that we can obtain a richer picture of voting dynamics in young democracies if we do not presuppose that legislative coalitions are party based. According to my results, a significant number of the identified voting blocs are intraparty factions, coalitions of like-minded parties, or cross-party blocs. In some cases, the differences between the voting patterns of the identified intraparty voting blocs are as large as those between the voting patterns of formal parties. Electoral incentives and presidential patronage split legislative parties whose members are not united by a coherent ideological platform and a strong party label. I also found that when the president's coalition-building approach relies on the support of individual deputies won by patronage rather than by commitment to a political party (Remington 2003), presidential loyalty varies by issue area and according to constituency concerns. Moreover, institutions that encourage legislative affiliation but not electoral affiliation engender opportunistic groups of deputies divided into intraparty voting blocs with dissimilar ideological preferences.

Overall, the findings support the hypothesis that in young party systems where parties often lack distinct, coherent programmatic appeals and developed organizational resources, pressures from local constituents or powerful presidents can encourage the formation of intra- and interparty coalitions. My results are consistent with previous findings in the Russia-specific literature (Haspel, Remington, and Smith 1998; Kunicova and Remington 2008; Remington 2003, 2006; Remington and Smith 2001; Thames 2001, 2005) and, more broadly, findings in the comparative literature on the effects of electoral rules and presidentialism on the unity of legislative parties. Electoral rules encouraging the personal vote and strong presidential powers have been associated with lower party unity (Ames 1995; Golden and Chang 2001; Lancaster and Patterson 1990; Linz 1994; Scholl 1986; Stratmann and Baur 2002). In contrast to the approaches used in previous studies, the method applied here does not presuppose that party affiliation is the basis of legislative voting coalitions. Thus, I am able to compare

the relative strength of party influence versus other competing pressures and to identify dominant legislative alignments, establishing the relevance of parties as legislative actors.

While this analysis focuses on the Russian Duma, the findings are relevant to many other legislative settings. Similar institutions that generate competing pressures on legislative behavior have been adopted in many new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America. Electoral rules encourage the cultivation of the personal vote such as the open party list in Poland, preferential votes for individual candidates in Slovakia and the Czech Republic, and SMD competitions in the mixed systems of many postcommunist countries. Russia and many Latin American countries support significant presidential powers. In such contexts, it is important to know to what extent parties, rather than coalitions based on clientelist exchanges, dominate legislative voting. An approach that does not presuppose that the dominant legislative alignments are party based provides additional insight into the effects of institutions on party-system development and democratic consolidation. The applicability of this conceptual and methodological approach is not restricted to nonconsolidated party systems. Legislative alignments may cut across party lines in other legislative settings where strong pressures compete with those from party leaders. We may see party loyalty versus support for the executive in presidential systems; loyalty to a national party versus a subnational unit in federalist systems (Carey 2007); and nationality versus transnational partisanship in international organizations such as the European Union (Hix, Noury, and Roland 2005; Kreppel and Tsebelis 1999; Noury 2002).

Especially if used in conjunction with other methods—for instance, ideal-point estimation or interviews—the approach can establish if incentives that compete with party pressure are strong enough to split parties into intraparty voting blocs distinguishable by voting behavior, even though the blocs might lack formal membership and organization. The potential of parties to split has important implications for the process of coalition building, especially if we study long-term interactions between political parties (Laver and Schoffield 1998, ch. 2). Parties with great potential to split would weaken the bargaining position of party leaders and thus exert a significant effect on coalition formation.

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## NOTES

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1. In all Duma elections from 1993 to 2003, Russian voters had two votes: one for a national party list and another for a representative in a single-member district. There were no compensatory seats. In 2005, electoral reforms proposed by President Putin eliminated the single-member district seats. Thus, all 450 seats are filled on the basis of party lists competing in one federal electoral district. The reforms also raised the electoral threshold to 7%. The new system went into effect in the 2007 election.

2. Candidates could also run simultaneously on a party list and in a single-member district. If a candidate runs simultaneously, then, upon winning, that candidate takes the SMD seat and the party replaces him or her with the next candidate on the party list.

3. Previous research notes that the Communist Party donated members to small, ideologically similar factions, such as the Agrarian Party or People's Power (Remington and Smith 1998). Some of the independents, especially those who later joined electoral-party factions, seemed to strategically conceal their party connections to avoid losing potential local supporters (Hale 2005, 117–20).

4. Russia's Regions is usually considered a group of pro-government deputies unwilling to formally join one of the electoral parties (Remington 2001, 143) or a clientelist organization of lobbyists for regional economic enterprises and executives (Mndoyants and Salmin 1996; Thames 2000, 2001).

5. I fit the model using the MPCA software (Buntine et al. 2006).

6. *Statistical Model*: I fit the model using Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) methods, in particular, Gibbs sampling. I ran the chain for 50,000 iterations and discarded the first 30,000 iterations as burn-in. For the bloc membership variable, I used *Dirichlet*  $\left(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_k = \frac{1}{k}\right)$ , where  $v_i$  is equal to  $\frac{1}{2}$ , which is the Jeffrey's prior for two-way voting. According to the statistical model, each deputy has a proportional membership in  $K$  blocs, given by a probability vector  $(f_1, \dots, f_K)$  that sums to 1. Let  $Y$  denote the observed  $I \times J$  matrix of  $J$  deputies on  $I$  votes and  $p_{i,y}^k$  denote the probability for voting "yea" on vote  $i$  for bloc  $K$ . A legislator's voting probabilities are modeled as independent probabilities: for the  $i$ th vote, this is  $\sum_{k=1}^K f_k p_{i,y}^k$  and the likelihood for a legislator's full set of votes would be:  $L = \prod_i \sum_{k=1}^K f_k p_{i,y}^k$ . The prior distributions applied to the model are:

$$p_{i,y}^k \sim \text{Beta}(v_p, 1 - v_p)$$

$$(f_{j,1}, \dots, f_{j,k}) \sim \text{Dirichlet}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_K).$$

Gibbs sampling introduces one additional variable set,  $\omega_{i,j}^k$ , which specifies the bloc assigned to legislator  $j$  for vote  $i$ , a latent variable. The complete joint likelihood is

$$\prod_{i,k} \text{Beta}(p_{i,y}^k | v_i, 1 - v_i) \prod_j \text{Dirichlet}(f_{j,1}, \dots, f_{j,K} | \alpha_1, \alpha_2, \dots, \alpha_K) \prod_j \prod_i \prod_k f_{j,k}^{\omega_{i,j}^k} p_{i,y}^k.$$

Note that  $f_{j,k}$  is the mean value of  $\omega_{i,j,k}$ .

*Gibbs Sampling Algorithm.* For vote  $i$  and legislator  $j$ :

1. Assign a bloc for vote  $i$  of legislator  $j$  by sampling from a *Discrete* distribution (the multivariate form of the *Bernoulli*) with  $K$  categories and the following parameters:

$$\left( \frac{f_{j,1} p_{i,y}^1}{\sum_k f_{j,k} p_{i,y}^k}, \frac{f_{j,2} p_{i,y}^2}{\sum_k f_{j,k} p_{i,y}^k}, \dots, \frac{f_{j,K} p_{i,y}^k}{\sum_k f_{j,k} p_{i,y}^k} \right).$$

2. Record the expected number of deputies who voted “yea” in each voting bloc for roll call  $i$ :

$$m_{i,y}^k = \sum_i \frac{f_{j,1} p_{i,y}^k}{\sum_k f_{j,k} p_{i,y}^k}.$$

3. Record the expected number of votes in which the deputy’s “yea” vote was assigned to each bloc:

$$n_{i,y}^k = \sum_i \frac{f_{j,1} p_{i,y}^k}{\sum_k f_{j,k} p_{i,y}^k}.$$

4. Sample the updated  $p_{i,y}^k$ , which follows  $\text{Beta}(v_i + m_{i,y}^k, 1 - v_i + m_{i,n}^k)$ .

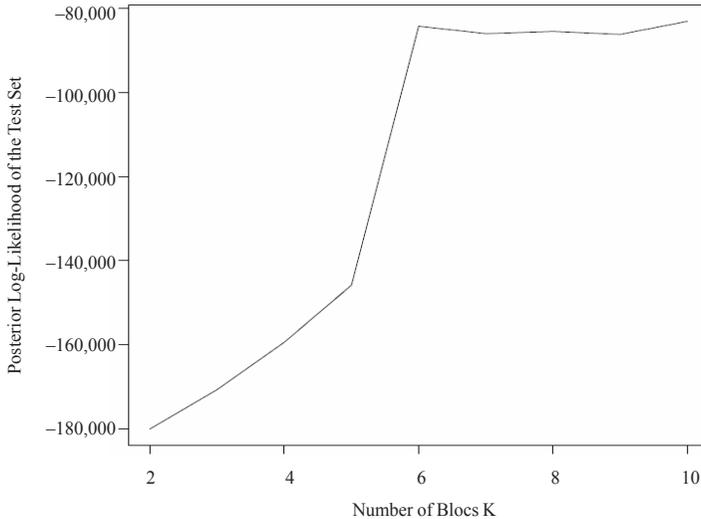
5. Sample the updated legislator  $j$ ’s membership in the blocs  $(f_{j,1}, f_{j,2}, \dots, f_{j,K})$ , which follows *Dirichlet*  $(\alpha_1 + n_{j,y}^1, \alpha_2 + n_{j,y}^2, \dots, \alpha_K + n_{j,y}^K)$ .

6. Record the total log-probability and repeat from Step 3.

To obtain the proportional membership in each bloc for each legislator vector [the probability vector  $(f_{j,1}, f_{j,2}, \dots, f_{j,K})$ ], one divides the number of times a deputy was assigned to a bloc by the number of votes. For more detail, see Buntine and Jakulin 2004, 2005a, 2005b, and Jakulin and Buntine 2004.

*Selection of the Number of Blocs K.* To select the model with the appropriate number of blocs, one can rely on different criteria for model fit, such as Bayes factors, Deviance Information Criterion (DIC), or cross-validation scores. I used cross-validation (on this issue, see Barbieri and Berger 2004, Buntine and Jakulin 2004, Carlin and Chib 1995, Geisser 1986, and Gelfand, Dey, and Chen 1992) with a random sample of 30% of the data as a test set. Examination of the test scores of models with various numbers of blocs  $K$ , that is, the log-probability of the test set conditional on the model and the rest of the data, indicates that increasing  $K$  above 6 does not further improve model fit.

FIGURE 6  
Fit of Models with Different Number of Blocs



7. To facilitate presentation of the results in Figures 2 and 3, I classified deputies to a bloc if they belonged to a bloc with probability  $> 0.6$ ; deputies who belonged to several blocs, that is, who did not belong to any of the blocs with high probability, were not included in these graphs. I replicated the graphs using the proportional membership of all deputies, the six-value probability vector for each deputy. The observed patterns are almost identical to the ones presented here. (Graphs are available from the author upon request.)

8. To examine the voting behavior of the blocs, I calculated the proportion of the deputies voting “yea” on each roll call. For comparison of the voting behavior of the blocs, I examined the pattern of bloc dissimilarities, bloc dissimilarity being the absolute difference in the proportions of deputies voting “yea” on a particular roll call for each pair of voting blocs. I used Chaisty and Schleiter’s (2002) “List of Important Laws” to identify important economic legislation. In addition, I identified other important bills by referring to analysts’ opinions and evaluations in various media sources.

9. I referred to Protsyk and Wilson’s (2003) list of presidential votes to identify legislation important to the president. In addition to these votes, I identified bills using analysts’ opinions in multiple media sources, including *Kommersant*, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, *RFE/RE Newsline*, and *East European Constitutional Review*. I calculated the presidential-conformity score as the proportion of bloc members who voted according to the president’s preference on key votes, with land reform and budget votes as subcategories. These latter represent continuing conflicts between Yeltsin and the Duma, and there is a sufficient number of votes to calculate presidential-conformity scores for these subcategories separately. For a complete list of the bills included in the calculation of the voting conformity score, please refer to the online Appendix ([http://www.uiowa.edu/~lsq/Bagashka\\_Appendix.pdf](http://www.uiowa.edu/~lsq/Bagashka_Appendix.pdf)).

10. The Liberal Reformers bloc, which was not very supportive of presidential legislation, includes some prominent figures distinguished by their support for radical economic reform, such as Boris Fedorov and Michail Zadornov. In 1994, Boris Fyodorov founded Forward Russia!, a movement very critical of the Chernomyrdin government (Victor Chernomyrdin was prime minister from 1993 to 1998) for its backsliding on economic reform. The bloc also includes most members of Russia's Democratic Choice, an unregistered deputy group, some of whom were also hostile toward Chernomyrdin and his government.

11. New Regional Policy, sometimes considered Russia's Regions' predecessor, was a part of Yeltsin's budget coalition in the 1993–95 Duma (see Thames 2000).

12. The analysis of People's Power deputies is complicated by the fact that only 16 of its members belonged to a voting bloc with probability  $> 0.6$ , and the other 20 were members of several voting blocs, meaning that their voting behavior was more idiosyncratic.

13. The behavior of deputies who do not belong to any voting bloc with probability  $> 0.6$  cannot be sufficiently well described by any of the identified blocs (patterns).

14. The different parametric methods for ideal-point estimation (Poole and Rosenthal 1985; Heckman and Snyder 1997; Poole 2000; Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers 2001) rely on the assumption that the errors are independent and identically distributed across both legislators and roll calls (the IID assumption). A possible alternative is Poole's (2000) Optimal Classification (OC) nonparametric method, which is not based on an individual utility-maximization model and the IID assumption. The estimates obtained from OC are very similar to those from NOMINATE: the Spearman correlations between them are 97% and 87% for the first and second dimensions, respectively.

15. For the confirmatory estimation of the ideal-point space, I used the MCMC pack library called from R (R Development Core Team 2007).

16. Adding a second dimension increases the percent correctly classified from 74.49% to 74.7%.

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