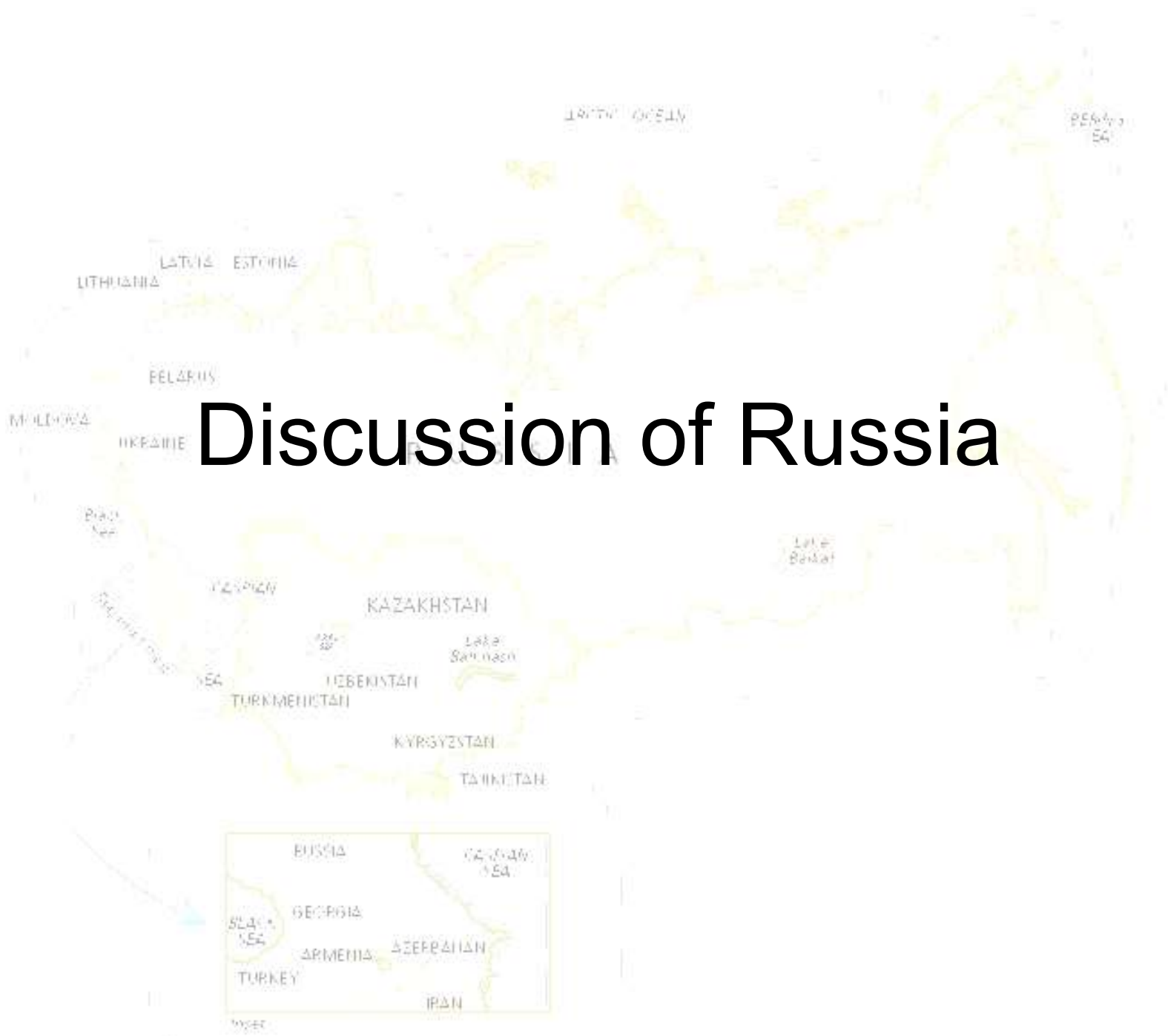


Discussion of Russia





THE BASICS

Russia

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Official Name | Russian Federation |
| Size | 17,075,200 sq. km (roughly 1.75 times the size of the United States) |
| Climate | Subarctic in much of the country |
| Population | 141 million |
| Currency | 25.54 rubles = US\$1 |
| GNP per capita | \$12,200 |
| Ethnic composition | 79.8% Russian, 3.8% Tatar, 2% Ukrainian, 14.4% Other |
| Life Expectancy | Men 59, Women 73 |
| Capital | Moscow |
| President | Vladimir Putin (1999) |
| Prime Minister | Mikhail Fradkov (2004) |

Thinking about Russia

– The Basics

- Geography: a huge country at high northern latitudes
- Diversity: dozens of cultural and ethnic identities preserved into the 21st century
- Poverty: a poor country that got poorer after 1989 until oil prices began rising
- The Environment: pollution and the health problems it causes are endemic all across the country

Thinking about Russia

Key Questions

- How and why did the USSR collapse?
- How has the legacy of the USSR affected Russia?
- Will Putin's successors be able to strengthen and stabilize the state?
- Will Russia become more democratic and legitimate?
- With economic strength, can leaders build stronger and more legitimate institutions?
- How will Russia adapt to new global realities?

Day 1



1. What are some features of the Russian political system that makes it a presidential/parliamentary system of government?

Features of a presidential system:

- Direct election of the President
- Fixed election cycle for the President
- The President may veto Duma legislation
- The President may be impeached.

Features of a mixed system may include:

- The President can nominate the Prime Minister.
- The President can dissolve the Duma.
- Dual executive.



2. What are some goals countries hope to achieve when establishing a presidential electoral system that requires a runoff election?

- Political legitimacy
- Popular mandate
- Prevent electoral/institutional gridlock
- Strong executive
- Inclusion of wide-range of parties
- National unity
- Building coalitions among the electorate
- Increased political participation (turnout)



3. Has Russia achieved any of these goals since 1993?

- See handout



4. REVIEW: What are some advantages of a government holding a referendum?

- Avoid responsibility
- Enhance power of executives
- Bypass the legislature
- More democratic
- Shift accountability
- Forces decision/shuts off debate
- Legitimacy
-



5. Who has the power to call a referendum in Russia?



6. What is an example of the recent use of a referendum in Russia?

- Ratification of the Russian Constitution.
- Yeltsin as President
- Chechnya



7. Describe some reforms initiated by President Putin to centralize the Russian state.

Reforms intended to restore order to Russia:

- Government's purchase of private media
 - Rationale: airwaves had been flooded with negativity and free press was in disarray
- Reorganized regional governments. *Appoints* regional governors instead of them being directly elected.
 - Rationale: Done to improve tax collection system.
- He has ensured the party he supports is well represented in the Duma by flooding airwaves with pro-Unity advertisements
 - Rationale: Not allowing opposition parties the time to advertise.



8. How Putin's have reforms impacted democracy in Russia?

- Purchase of media?
- Reorganizing Regional Governments?
- Not allowing opposition airtime?



Day 2



TABLE 9.12 The Russian Presidential Election of 2000

| CANDIDATE | PERCENTAGE OF VOTE |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Vladimir Putin | 52.94 |
| Gennady Zyuganov | 29.21 |
| Grigori Yavlinski | 5.80 |
| Anan Tuleev | 2.95 |
| Vladimir Zhirinovskiy | 2.70 |
| Other candidates | 2.58 |
| Against all | 1.88 |



1. Describe Russia's electoral system before the 2007 Duma elections and how did the pre-2007 system shape the Russian party system.

Electoral System before 2007 Duma election:

- A split electoral system, with one-half “first past the post” (FPTP) and one-half proportional representation (PR).
- A 5 percent threshold for parties to be included in the PR.



1. Describe Russia's electoral system before the 2007 Duma elections and how did the pre-2007 system shape the Russian party system.

How shaped Russian party system:

- It allowed multiple parties to develop.
- It allowed for more demographically diverse parties.
- It permitted many independent candidates.
- It encouraged personality-based factions more than parties with ideology.

2. Describe a change to the Russian electoral system designed for the 2007 Duma elections?

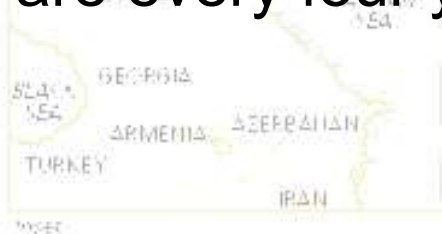
In 2004, Putin proposed eliminating single-member districts and having all 450 deputies proportionally from party lists.



3. Compare Russia' electoral system to Great Britain

Russia

- 450 members elected in two ways. Duma combines single member district representation and party-list proportional representation.
 - 225 are elected in single-member districts by a first-past-the-post, plurality rule.
 - The other 225 are elected on party lists. A party receiving 5% of the vote is entitled to as many of the 225 party-list seats in the Duma as its share of the party-list vote.
- The Federation Council represents each of 80 federal regions on an equal basis.
- Elections are every four years



3. Compare Russia' electoral system to Great Britain

Great Britain

- A general election must occur at least once every five years. There, the Prime Minister can call an election every time. Every prime minister tries to pick a date when victory is likely, this desire is denied.
- The party leader's name is not on the ballot. Within each constituency, the winner the candidate who is first past the post. The winner nationally is the party that gains the most constituency seats.
- *The party in power decides the type of electoral system*



4. How does Russia's electoral system affect its political party system? (be sure you can describe their electoral system effectively in order to answer this question)

- It eliminated all reform parties
- It strengthened United Russia and other parties that tended to support Putin's agenda.
- It decreased the diversity of political viewpoints in the Duma.

TABLE 9.10 The 2003 State Duma Election

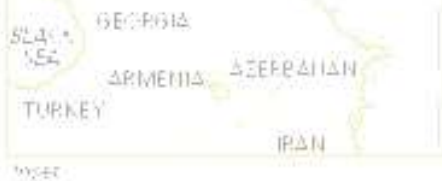
| PARTY | VOTE (PERCENT) | SEATS |
|-----------------------|----------------|-------|
| United Russia | 37.6 | 222 |
| Communists | 12.6 | 51 |
| Liberal Democrats | 11.5 | 36 |
| Rodina | 9.0 | 37 |
| Yabloko | 4.3 | 4 |
| Union of Right Forces | 4.0 | 3 |
| Independents | 21.0 | 94 |

Note: The “others” were all elected from single-member districts. Many have since rallied to United Russia.



5. How does Russia's electoral system affect legislative-executive relations?

- Pro-presidential deputies in Duma need the Kremlin much more than the Kremlin needs them. The balance of power under Putin has shifted steadily away from the parliament and towards the president.
- United Russia votes with a high degree of discipline so the Duma consistently delivers the president legislative majorities



Define economic liberalization.

- Definition: Less government regulation of the economy and great participation of private entities. Reducing government intervention in the economy.
- Examples: free markets, reducing state control over markets, pricing, employment, property, distribution





The World Bank defines *economic liberalization* as:

- Freeing prices from government controls
 - Opening the economy to international trade
- Making it easy to start new businesses.

7. Define political liberalization

- Increasing of citizen rights and liberties.
- Minimizing government supervision of society/individuals.



8. Explain the consequences of Economic Liberalization on Russia?

- Shock Therapy
- Floating prices
- Privatization of state-owned enterprises and collective farms.
- Introduction of the stock market.
- Legalization of private property.
- Invitations to foreign-direct investments (FDI).
- Distribution of vouchers. (see privatization)
- Loans-for-shares programs- Reduction in state spending (e.g., on social services.)



8. Define glasnost and explain how it has impacted Russia?

- Policy implanted by Gorbachev in Russia where, for the first time, political dissent was allowed. Citizens were for the first time allowed to criticize their government.

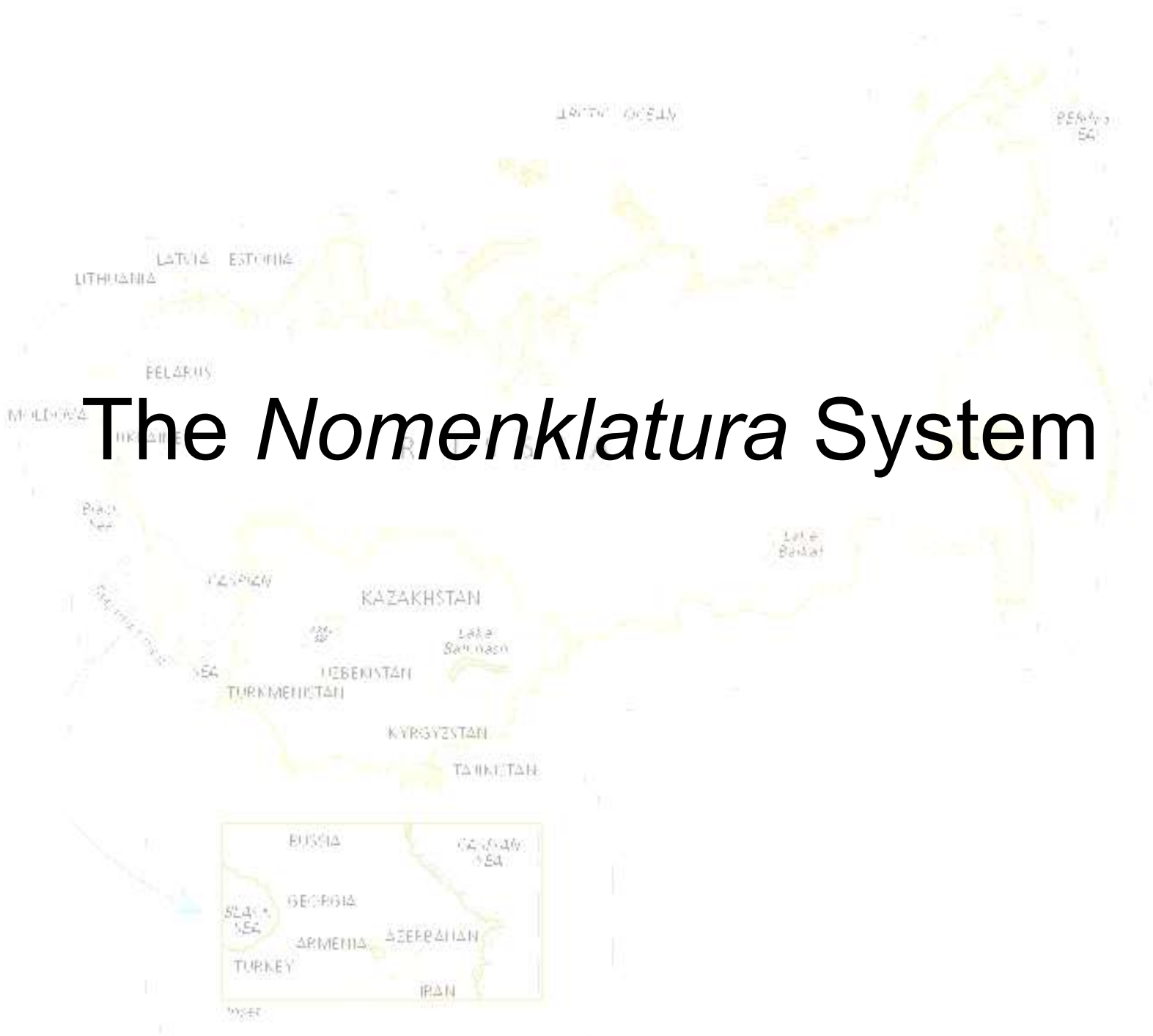


9. Define perestroika and explain its impact on Russia?

- A program of privatization which was implemented under Yeltsin. Under perestroika, state-owned industries were auctioned off to the highest bidder, causing some to become extremely wealthy.



The *Nomenklatura* System



The *nomenklatura* system in Russia...

- Brainstorm a list of the most powerful positions in government, business, and nonprofits in the U.S.
- Hypothesize about how people in the U.S. reach these positions of power



Assignment

- Divide into your presentation groups. Each group will receive a reading.
- After reading and discussing, choose one representative from the class to come to the board and write your findings. Be ready to discuss with the class.
- Record classmates' answers as we discuss!



The *nomenklatura* system in Russia...

- Patron-client politics- a relationship organized by an individual in power with an individual in a more humble position. The individual in power provides protection and/or comforts to an individual who agrees to support and vote for them in an election.



What is the *nomenklatura* system?

- An important section of the Communist Party bureaucracy maintained lists of people deemed eligible for key positions in government and the Party.
 - Having someone who could get your name on the list was a valuable asset.
 - Also, having someone in debt to you because you got them on the list was also a valuable asset.



What is the *nomenklatura* system?

- When perestroika began, the nomenklatura based patrons and clients were in positions to get inside information about changes and privatizations that gave them tremendous advantages in profiting from the changes.
- The most successful individuals in Russia today are survivors of the nomenklatura system.



Comparing...

- Compare routes to success in Russia with those in the U.S.
- How is it similar and how is it different?

