Legislatures, Cooptation, and Social Protest in Putin's Russia

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Executive Summary

A key debate in the new literature on authoritarianism concerns the role of institutions in general and legislatures in particular. While much of the literature accepts that authoritarian legislatures matter, there is little agreement as to why and how. In this paper, we argue that a key function of authoritarian legislatures is to help leaders reduce social protest. Legislatures reduce social protest by providing rent-seeking opportunities to key opposition elites who, in return for access to these spoils, demobilize their supporters. We test this argument using original data from the Database of Russian Political Elites (DRPE) on the distribution of leadership positions in 83 Russian regional legislatures and two new datasets on opposition protest in Russia. Our findings suggest that legislative cooptation may extend the lifespan of authoritarian regimes by helping to reduce anti-regime protest.

Introduction

As parliamentary election results rolled in from around Russia on Sunday December 4, 2011, it became clear that the ruling United Russia party had had a difficult day at the polls. While retaining its parliamentary majority, United Russia had beaten the second placed Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF) by a smaller than expected margin. Moreover, Communist leader, Gennady Zyuganov appeared on television, incensed at what the Communists perceived as extensive electoral fraud, and demanding a review of the results and the resignation of the Chairman of the Central Election Commission, Vladimir Churov. The following night, a wave of protest began that ultimately brought thousands of oppositionists— including liberals, nationalists, social democrats, and Communists—onto the streets. For the first time in many years, the regime seemed to wobble, as parliamentary and extra-parliamentary oppositions united on the streets.

However, within weeks, even as protest from the non-parliamentary opposition grew, Zyuganov and the Communists performed a stunning volte-face. In a public manifesto, Zyuganov rejected street protests as a strategy for contesting the election results, claiming that the protest movement "clearly showed that the ultra-liberal forces wanted to capitalize on popular indignation in order to see that those who destroyed the USSR and created the current system of electoral falsifications are returned to power." He went on to say that the KPRF's legislative agenda would help Russia "rid itself of both government arbitrariness and the 'orange threat.'"[1] Since then, Zyuganov and the KPRF leadership has maintained a safe distance from the protest movement, which then became dominated by groups affiliated with the extra-parliamentary opposition.

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[1] By "orange threat" Zyuganov was referring to the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine, in which fraudulent elections brought about street protests that toppled the incumbent.

Why the Communists pulled back from the brink was clear to most Russian observers. Zyuganov came out against the protests just a month after seeing his party's seat share in the State Duma double. Moreover, the United Russia majority in the State Duma voted to give the KPRF a vice speakership and six committee chairmanships, three times as many leadership positions as the party had enjoyed in the previous convocation – the *quid pro quo* was hard to miss.

For political scientists, this sequence of events was a useful illustration of how formal institutions in general, and legislatures in particular, play a role in the politics of contemporary authoritarian regimes (Gandhi 2008). In comparative politics it now is widely accepted that authoritarian regimes like Russia that have legislative institutions tend to be more durable than authoritarian regimes without such institutions (Gandhi and Przeworski 2007, Boix and Svolik 2013). However, the mechanisms that underpin this relationship are not well understood. Scholars have argued that the primary role of legislatures is to provide a forum outside the "inner sanctum" of the ruler where opposition forces can be coopted with policy concessions and/or spoils (Gandhi 2008, Malesky and Schuler 2010, Wright 2008, Svolik 2012). Yet accounts of cooptation agree only on the broad outlines, differing as to 1) who is being coopted, 2) the types of challenges that are being warded off, and 3) the types of concessions that are being offered.

Some view cooptation as primarily being about preventing coups and conspiracies in the ruling elite (Svolik 2012), but most authors writing about the cooptive potential of authoritarian legislatures focus, implicitly or explicitly, on legislatures' role in coopting opposition from outside of the ruling elite and in preventing challenges on the streets. In this version of the story, the dominant view is that legislative cooptation works by involving more voices in policy-making and making politics more *representative* of broad social groups (Gandhi 2008: 164, Malesky and Shuler 2010).

In this paper, we also focus on opposition cooptation in legislatures, but elucidate a different set of mechanisms through which legislative cooptation works. In contrast to the representation account, our perspective centers on the role legislatures play in *personal cooptation*, that is in allocating rents and particularistic benefits to key opposition *elites*. In return for access to these spoils, opposition elites refrain from mobilizing their followers, parties, factions, or social organizations on the streets. Thus, legislatures help dictators diffuse social protest because they are a forum where spoils can be shared among the would-be leaders of such protest.

We incorporate into the analysis the fact that opposition in authoritarian regimes is rarely a unitary actor. We consider the effects of cooptation in the empirically common situation in which some opposition forces are permitted to participate in the electoral process and some are not (Lust-Okar 2005). In this context, efforts at cooptation are likely to have different effects on different parts of the opposition. To anticipate our results, we find that *personal* cooptation of in-system opposition leaders is highly effective at reducing protest by in-system opposition groups, but it does not reduce protest among ideologically-proximate non-system groups.

Empirically, our paper provides some of the first direct evidence of legislative cooptation's effects on social protest. While there is some evidence of cooptation from studies of legislator behavior in authoritarian parliaments (Malesky and Shuler 2010), most of the evidence on cooptation's broader social effects is indirect and comes from studies that show a correlation between the existence of legislatures and regime survival (Gandhi and Przeworski 2007, Wright and Escriba-Folch 2012). In this paper, we exploit differences *between* authoritarian legislatures to identify the causal mechanisms that link legislative cooptation with social quiescence. Drawing on original data from 83 Russian regional legislatures, we look at how variation in the

distribution of legislative leadership positions to the opposition affects levels of protest by different opposition groups. By analyzing political units that have legislatures but that vary in the degree of legislative cooptation, we minimize problems related to the endogeneous creation of legislatures (Pepinsky 2013). Our findings indicate that when opposition elites hold key leadership positions in a legislature, protest by groups associated with those elites is significantly reduced, whether by strategic demobilization in anticipation of such rewards or due to demobilization in response to such cooptation.

We also distinguish leadership positions that offer significant opportunities for rent-seeking from those that do not. Our findings show that providing elites with rent-seeking leadership opportunities does more to reduce protest than providing them access to other leadership positions. Furthermore, we show that sharing legislative leadership positions with leaders of in-system opposition parties has no effect on protest by ideologically proximate groups that are excluded from legislatures. These findings support our conclusion that elite spoil-sharing, not policy concessions, is the key mechanism linking legislative cooptation and social protest in Russia.

Our theory and findings have implications for political scientists working in a number of areas. Beyond the question of what influences authoritarian regime stability, our findings also underscore the highly politicized nature of popular protest in authoritarian regimes. In modern authoritarian regimes, elite politics generates much of the variation in protest behavior. Finally, drawing on theories of legislative organization in democracies, our findings contribute to integrating the study of authoritarian institutions into the broader study of legislatures.

Cooptation in Authoritarian Legislatures

The period since the end of World War II has witnessed remarkable variation in the type, longevity, and social bases of authoritarian rule. This variation has led scholars to look carefully at the features that distinguish different authoritarian regimes and to develop general theories of how authoritarian politics works (Linz 1975 Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003, Geddes 1999). Research has focused on three kinds of institutions that are thought to influence the ability of authoritarian regimes to deliver both socio-economic development and political longevity – parties, elections and legislatures. Perhaps the largest literature has focused on the role of parties, especially ruling parties (Brownlee 2007, Geddes 2003, Gandhi and Przeworski 2007, Magaloni 2008, Slater 2011, Smith 2005, Svolik 2012). In addition to parties, substantial effort has gone into understanding the role of elections in authoritarian systems (Blaydes 2011, Boix and Svolik 2013, Lust-Okar 2006, Magaloni 2006, Manion 1996, Reuter and Robertson 2012).

By comparison, authoritarian legislatures are less well understood, despite the fact that the vast majority of authoritarian regimes have legislatures. It is by now well-established that dictatorships with legislatures outlive those without legislatures (Gandhi and Przeworski 2007, Boix and Svolik 2013), but there are disagreements as to the causal mechanism behind this finding. Existing theories focus on one of two mechanisms through which legislatures might make authoritarian rule more stable. One key channel is that legislatures help to insure members of the ruling elite against excessive centralization of power by one of their number and so help to head off a descent into personalistic dictatorship (Svolik 2012). However sharing power among the ruling group is only one challenge facing authoritarian rulers. In order to make authoritarian rule sustainable, authoritarians must also counter threats from outside the ruling circle. This means building not just an elite consensus but broadening that consensus to ensure that the

system does not face repeated challenges from actors in society. Scholars working in this area suggest that legislatures may allow authoritarian rulers to ape some features of democratic politics by including a broader set of actors who make policy concessions to important social groups (Gandhi 2008, Malesky and Shuler 2010). Over time, the argument goes, this broadening of representation is likely to make authoritarian regimes more stable by defusing opposition and mitigating anti-regime street protest.

While this may be an important channel through which legislative cooptation works, there are problems with the representation account. Theoretically, it is not clear how cooptation of elites will lead to more representative policy. Much existing work on authoritarian legislatures suggests that the primary benefits that legislators receive are particularistic: opportunities for lobbying personal business interests, immunity from criminal prosecution, and preferential access to state leaders (Lust-Okar 2005, Lust-Okar 2009, Blaydes 2011, Reuter and Turovsky 2013). Empirically too, there is only scant direct evidence in favor of a representation based account. Malesky and Shuler (2010) show that legislators ask questions that reflect constituent demands, but they do not show either that legislators are successful in delivering policy benefits to constituents or that constituents are satisfied by the questions or concessions. Consequently, there is a missing link in the representation account.

Personal Cooptation and Elite-Led Protest

Nevertheless, even if the representation story is incomplete, there are other grounds for believing that authoritarian legislatures are a useful tool for coopting opposition groups and buying social peace. Instead of focusing on representation, we argue that legislative cooptation can reduce social protest by offering elites direct access to the perks and spoils of office, which

reduces their incentive to mobilize anti-regime protest.[2] Much of the early literature on authoritarian institutions drew a fundamental distinction between regimes that maintained a legislature and those that did not (Gandhi and Przeworski 2007). However, as the literature has developed it has become increasingly clear that it is not the mere existence of a legislature that shapes cooptation but how that legislature is used. Indeed, given the fact that almost all contemporary dictatorships have legislatures, it seems that variation among authoritarian legislatures may be just as important as variation between dictatorships with and without legislatures.[3] Until now, most of the literature that differentiates among legislatures has focused on the institutional strength of the ruling party in the legislature (Wright 2009, Magaloni 2008, Svolik 2012) and indeed the weight of evidence seems to suggest that stronger ruling parties help to sustain authoritarianism (Brownlee 2007, Smith 2005, Slater 2011, Levitsky and Way 2010).[4]

Much less studied, but also important in our view, are the ways in which rents, perks, and spoils are (or are not) distributed among individual members of the legislature. As is well understood in the study of US congressional politics, the "industrial organization" of legislatures provides myriad additional opportunities for differentiating access to spoils, whether in the form of rents or policy (Fenno 1973, Weingast and Marshall 1988). Distributive theories of legislative organization suggest that in order to understand legislative cooptation better, we need to go beyond the simple presence or absence of opposition parties in the legislature and look at the distribution of important leadership positions within the legislative chamber itself. A legislative leadership position may provide its holder with rent-seeking opportunities, a platform for

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[2] We are certainly not the first to point out that authoritarian legislatures are forums for rent distribution (see Lust-Okar 2005, Lust 2009, Blaydes 2011, Reuter and Turovsky 2013, Truex 2013) but, to our knowledge, scholars have not sought to link spoil sharing in parliament with extra-parliamentary protest activity.

[3] As of 2013, only two non-transitional authoritarian regimes lacked legislatures: Guinea and Saudi Arabia. Consequently, in this paper we focus on the effects of different strategies within authoritarian legislatures rather than the separate question of why authoritarian regimes have legislatures at all.

[4] Though there is some disagreement on this (Wright and Folch 2012).

lobbying for business interests, or perquisites such as increased staff and salary. Legislative leadership positions can also provide particular individuals with direct legal authority over questions of personal interest to them.[5] Consequently, these key appointments can be used as *personal cooptation* to target representatives of the opposition and give them a special place within the bosom of the ruling regime.

In exchange for access to these spoils, elites are expected to use their influence and authority to defuse or divert anti-regime protest sentiment among their followers. Elites have considerable influence on protest in all political systems, and students of protest have long known that organizational and political resources matter enormously (McCarthy and Zald 1977). Moreover, there is evidence that protest patterns in non-democratic regimes are structured at least as much by elite politics as protest in democracies (Robertson 2011). Consequently, it seems plausible to conclude that coopting leaders of important organizations or political parties will have an effect in reducing protest organized by that organization or party.

Of course not all legislative leadership positions are equal. Differences in the nature of legislative positions allow authoritarian incumbents to calibrate the value of the spoils they share. We expect that the more important the leadership position offered within a legislature, the greater the reduction in protest by that leader's organization. This is likely to be the case both because more valuable positions constitute a more effective bribe and because more valuable positions are likely to be given to more influential politicians. While these are theoretically separable mechanisms, in practice they are hard to distinguish empirically.

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[5] This authority may be protected from interference by legal norms or informational asymmetries between the dictator and the legislature (Gandhi 2008). Alternatively, by providing a forum for monitoring and information exchange, legislatures provide elites with an opportunity to solve the collective action problems vis-à-vis leaders in order to jointly defend spoil-sharing bargains (Svolik 2012).

Second, rent-seeking opportunities, as opposed to policy influence, are likely to be more valuable in authoritarian settings for two reasons. First, legislatures and oppositions in authoritarian regimes are typically excluded from the most important broad-based policy decisions, and so access to the policy-making process is unlikely to yield tangible results. Moreover, even if the opposition were to achieve some popular policy goal, the ruling party can easily take credit for the success. Second, the corruption and lack of transparency that attend non-democratic systems increases the value of rent-seeking posts. With the blessing of the authorities, opposition elites can use such posts to enrich themselves with relative impunity. Thus, opposition politicians should value private benefits more highly than public goods and providing these elites with rent-seeking leadership positions should reduce protest more than providing them with other leadership positions.

However, even if we hypothesize that personal cooptation of opposition leaders will reduce protest by those groups affiliated with coopted leaders, we also need to consider its possible effects on other, non-coopted opposition parties. Our argument suggests that personal cooptation of elites from the systemic opposition will have no effect on protest activity by the non-system opposition. After all, these particularistic benefits are not being shared with the non-systemic opposition. Thus, if we find that personal cooptation of the systemic opposition has no effect on protest by the non-systemic opposition, this will be consistent with the notion that spoil distribution, not policy concessions, are reducing protest.

Research Design: Subnational Legislatures

We test this theory using data from subnational legislatures in Russia. This design has two distinct advantages. First, it allows us to minimize a particular type of endogeneity bias that

plagues many cross-national studies of authoritarian legislatures. With few exceptions, existing studies use cross national regressions to show that authoritarian regimes with legislatures are more long-lived than those without. The key independent variables in such analyses are either the existence of a legislature (Wright and Escriba-Folch 2012, Svolik 2012) or the existence of some parties that are granted access to the legislature (Gandhi and Przeworski 2007). While such results are interesting and important, these models are beset by endogeneity problems. In particular, the conditions that lead to the creation of legislatures may also influence the lifespan of the regime via some other causal pathway.

In order to deal with this type of endogeneity we shift the focus from a cross-national analysis to looking at variation across sub-national legislatures in one country. Using this approach, we are able to eliminate endogeneity concerns related to the creation of legislatures in the individual regions we analyze. In post-Soviet Russia, there is no variation in the existence of legislatures. All of Russia's 83 regions have a directly-elected legislative assembly, and there has been no discussion of eliminating the elected assembly in any region. Importantly, however, as we discuss below, there is variation across the regions in the extent to which legislative representation, influence, and spoils are granted to opposition parties. This means we can test the effect of personal cooptation separately from the mere existence of a legislature.

While the shift to the subnational level solves one inferential problem – institutional endogeneity – it cannot eliminate all problems of inference. Perhaps most notably, as we will see below, the data structure does not offer enough inter-temporal variation to make an empirical distinction between situations in which protest is reduced because institutional resources are used to buy-off existing protest leaders and the converse, in which institutional resources are made available to preempt protest. As a theoretical and practical matter these two effects are both

likely to be present – strategic decisions are made to preempt protest, and when mistakes are made, legislative leadership positions are used to limit ongoing protest. Both dynamics reduce generalized levels of social protest, so both (or either) are of interest, and either could be taken as evidence that personal cooptation reduces protest.

In moving to sub-national legislatures we are still considering the effects of institutions that are seen by domestic political actors as having an important role in politics. While politics in Russia has become much more centralized since Vladimir Putin came to power, Russian regional legislatures remain important arenas where elites compete to influence policy and receive spoils. In a survey of 1000 Russian firms conducted in December 2011, 30% of firm directors who conducted lobbying at the regional level reported that they preferred to focus their lobbying efforts on the regional legislature (Reuter and Turovsky 2013). This number is significant and suggests that even in an authoritarian regime there is much at stake in legislative politics at the regional level. Beyond the lobbying opportunities are the perks that legislators themselves receive. These include immunity from criminal prosecution, an elevated public profile, and a platform for lobbying one's personal business interests. Indeed, according to Reuter and Turovsky (2013), 48% of regional deputies between 2001 and 2010 were businessmen. In sum, while we make no claims about the relative importance of sub-national and national legislatures, it is clear that sub-national legislatures are significant institutions in Russia and so are a viable context within which to test general theories of authoritarian legislatures.

The Russian case is also interesting because open political protest is possible and because, like many such regimes, the political system consists of a number of "in-system" opposition parties and a set of groups, sometimes parties but more often organizations and

movements, that constitute a non-system opposition.[6] Admission to the political system is regulated through a burdensome and complex registration process that has allowed the Kremlin to determine who can participate in elections and who cannot. In the period we analyze, the main in-system opposition party was the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF).

Cooptation: Measurement and Hypotheses

One contribution of this paper is to suggest new measures of legislative cooptation that go beyond the simple presence or absence of a legislature. To measure personal cooptation, we look at the allocation of legislative leadership positions to opposition politicians. Original data on the partisan distribution of leadership positions in Russian regional legislatures was collected by the authors for the period between 2007 and 2012. We classify speakerships, vice-speakerships, and committee chairmanships as leadership positions. In the United States, committee chairmanships provide their occupants with special opportunities to secure perks and pork for their districts (Fenno 1966, 1973). In Russian legislatures committee chairmen and vice speakers are also of higher status, playing the key role in guiding legislation and allocating patronage opportunities (Remington 2001, Remington 2008). Moreover, such leadership positions come with a host of more mundane perks such as increased staff, salary, and office space. Given the reduced role of Russian legislatures in policy-making over the period of analysis, our view is that these leadership positions provide their occupants primarily with private benefits.

The KPRF received a leadership position after 61 of the 161 regional elections (38%) for which data is available between 2003 and 2012. In 40 of the 55 convocations where they

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[6] The notion of in-system and non-system parties in Russia can be traced back to the electoral reforms of 2001. In July 2001, a new Law on Political Parties first raised the barrier for the registration of political parties and, most significantly, made it impossible for candidates not nominated by officially registered parties to appear on the ballot. Then, in 2004, a PR only system was introduced for State Duma elections, thus removing the opportunity for independent candidates to compete in national elections.

received a leadership position, the KPRF received only one leadership position.[7] These leadership positions almost invariably are awarded to the top leadership of the KPRF in the region, and are usually awarded to the party's faction leader in the legislative organ. In the period under study, UR held all speakership positions.[8]

Our main independent variable is *KPRFLeadership,* which is a dummy variable equal to 1 if the KPRF holds any leadership position in a given month. We expect there to be fewer KPRF protests in regions where the KPRF holds a leadership position. It seems likely, however, that not all leadership positions are equally valuable. If our argument about personal cooptation is correct, then we would expect access to more valuable leadership positions to have a larger effect on protest than less valuable ones. In order to test this we use two additional measures of legislative cooptation. The first is a dummy variable equal to one if the KPRF holds a vice-speakership position, *KPRFViceSpeakership.* Vice speakership positions are scarcer than committee chairmanships and, in most cases, more important, providing higher status and better lobbying opportunities.[9] Vice speakers are also responsible for coordinating the work of multiple committees and carrying out the duties of the speaker in his/her absence. In addition, compared to committee chairmanships, these positions come with higher salary, more staff, larger office space, and other perks, such as a driver and expense account. A *KPRFViceSpeakership* should reduce KPRF protest, and, since these committee positions are especially valuable, it should reduce protest more than *KPRFLeadership.*

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[7] In 27% of cases, they received only a committee chairmanship, and in 7% of cases they received only a vice-speakership.

[8] The very fact that the KPRF receives any leadership positions is *prima facie* evidence of personal cooptation. In 95% of the convocations elected between 2003 and 2012, United Russia held a majority of seats and leadership positions in all regions are apportioned according to majority rule in the legislative chamber. Since there is no legislation requiring the majority party to share leadership positions with minority parties, United Russia is not obliged to share leadership positions with any other party.

[9] The average number of vice speakership positions in a regional legislature is 3.8, while the average number of committee chairmanships is 7.7.

We also develop a measure that allows us to identify the more important committee assignments and determine whether KPRF protest is further reduced when the KPRF receives a high-profile committee assignment. Judging the relative importance of these committee assignments is difficult. In US state legislatures, the most important committee assignments are usually the rules committee and the budget committee (Overby and Kazee 2000).[10] There is no equivalent of the rules committee in Russian legislatures, as the role of the rules committee is taken up by the "council" of the legislature which typically includes the speaker, vice speakers, select committee chairmen, and legislative faction leaders. The budget committee does exist in Russian legislatures and most observers agree that it is the most important committee in regional legislatures. Indeed, it is so important that United Russia almost never shares this position with the opposition and the KPRF has not held budget committee chairmanship in any regional legislature elected since 2003.

However, the fact that UR never shares this important committee chairmanship points toward a coding scheme for assessing the relative importance of committee assignments. In order to assess the importance of committee chairmanships we calculate the percent of committee chairmanships in a given policy area that are shared with the opposition across all convocations elected since 2003. Committee chairmanships in policy areas that are retained by UR more often are deemed more important. For example, United Russia retained the chairmanship of the Land committee for its members in 91% of convocations elected since 2003, but only kept the Tourism committee for itself in 73% of cases. According to this coding scheme the Land committee is more important than the Tourism committee.[11] Using this scheme we create a variable, called *Committee Importance*, that is equal to the proportion of committee chairmanships in that policy

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[10] The importance of the rules committee stems from its ability to determine the legislative rule under which bills will be considered.

[11] Further details and background data on this coding scheme are presented in the statistical appendix.

area that are held by United Russia across all convocations in the country. This coding scheme is then applied to the policy area of the committee chairmanship held by the KPRF in a given convocation. When the KPRF holds multiple committee chairmanships (it rarely does), then the most important committee chairmanship is counted. Thus, returning to the above example, the KPRF was received the Land committee in Stavropol Krai after the December 2011 elections, so *CommitteeImportance* is equal to 91 for that convocation. Among those convocations where the KPRF has a committee chairmanship, we expect *CommitteeImportance* to reduce KPRF protests.

Committee chairmanships differ not only in their salience, but also in the *type* of legislative influence they confer on their occupants. One important difference is the extent to which a particular committee provides opportunities for rent-seeking and crafting private-regarding policies. For example, the chairman of the property committee may use this position to draft privatization laws that benefit his business interests or those of his supporters. By contrast, the chairman of a committee on youth politics and civil society may have the opportunity to influence policy in these areas, but s/he has fewer opportunities to use his/her leadership position to craft particularistic policies that benefit a narrow group.

If our arguments about the importance of personal cooptation and the salience of private benefits are correct, then we would expect committees that offer significant opportunities for rent-seeking to be more valuable to opposition politicians. In turn, when the KPRF holds committee chairmanships that provide such rent-seeking opportunities, we expect there to be fewer KPRF protests. To test this hypothesis, we create a variable called *RentsCommittee* that is equal to one if the KPRF holds a committee chairmanship in a policy area that creates special opportunities for crafting particularistic policy aimed at business.[12] These committees are

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[12] The focus on business-oriented committees is due to the prevalence of business interests in Russian regional legislatures (Reuter and Turovsky 2013).

construction, agriculture, economics, industry, property, natural resources, ecology, land, or taxes.[13] When the KPRF holds a *Rents Committee* levels of protest should be reduced, and, since these committee positions are especially valuable, the reduction in protest should be larger than when the KPRF holds a regular leadership position.

One notable feature of these measures is that the decision to distribute leadership positions among opposition parties is only partially determined by the electoral strength of those opposition parties. If the share of leadership positions received by the KPRF were a mechanical function of its vote share, then we could not separate the effect of personal cooptation on protest from the effect of the opposition's latent electoral strength. In a bivariate logistic regression of *KPRFLeadership* on the share of legislative seats held by the KPRF, the pseudo-R-squared is only .06 (the two variables are correlated at r=.38), so while the KPRF is more likely to hold a leadership position when it has a larger legislative fraction, other factors explain the majority of variation in the decision to grant leadership positions to the KPRF.

While the effects of personal cooptation on the in-system opposition are straightforward, the effect on other groups will depend on whether leadership positions are used to extract personal rents or to make public policy. If appointments are used as a platform for improving policy, then appointing Communists to important positions should also reduce protest on the part of non-system groups who share their policy goals. On the other hand, if, as we suspect, the benefits are primarily in the form of personal rents, we would expect that none of the measures of personal cooptation will reduce protest on the part of ideologically proximate non-system

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[13] Rents Committee=0 for those committees that offer less opportunities for rent-seeking. For example, committees on veterans affairs, healthcare, labor, culture, tourism, local self-government, public safety, constitutional legislation, science, and social organizations are considered to be such committees. The coding of *RentsCommittee* is based on subjective judgements about the likelihood that certain committee portfolios will provide opportunities for rent-seeking and is validated by an objective quantitative analysis of the share of businessmen seeking committee chairmanships across different policy portfolios in all regional legislative convocations between 2003 and 2010. Details are provided in the appendix.

groups. Indeed, there may be some tendency toward a displacement of radicals when the leadership is coopted, so we might observe some increase in non-system protest when KPRF leaders occupy prominent positions. Examining the effect of personal cooptation of KPRF leaders on non-system protest also helps us check for a certain type of endogeneity bias. If the distribution of leadership positions to the KPRF were correlated with omitted variables that cause generalized levels of protest, then our results would be biased. However, if we find that personal cooptation of KPRF leaders only reduces protest by the KPRF, and not by non-system parties, then we can be more confident that the results are not affected by omitted variable bias.

Dependent Variable

To test our hypotheses, we develop data that capture two different protest dynamics in Russia – events organized by the in-system opposition and events organized by those activists and groups who are not part of the formal political process. To analyze the protest activity of the in-system opposition, we use data on protests organized by Russia's principal in-system opposition party, the KPRF. The KRPF long has had an ambiguous relationship with the Putin regime. On the one hand, the party wages a bitter rhetorical contest with the ruling authorities and represents the principal electoral challenge to the ruling party. On the other hand, the KPRF also cooperates with the regime in certain spheres. Most notably, it participates in formal legislative decision-making bodies at both the national and subnational level, thereby helping to legitimate them. As the December 2011 protests showed, the KPRF also moderates its opposition when necessary and refrains from cooperating with other opposition groups. In this way, the KPRF is central to the operation of electoral authoritarianism in Russia.

Our data on KPRF protests comes from the KPRF official website which publishes systematic news reports that cover KPRF protest activities. We analyzed these news reports and

compiled a dataset that records information on the KPRF's protest activities in Russia's 83

regions from July 2007 through July 2012. The database contains data on 3898 protest events

along different dimensions – date, type of event (strikes, hunger strikes, marches, demonstrations

etc), location (region, town and place), type of participants, number of participants, nature of the

demands made and duration. On the basis of this data, we create a simple count variable that is

equal to the number of KPRF protest events that occur in a region in a given month. We include

all events whatever the nature of the demands made since our theory applies just as much to how

regional political actors respond to national events as to regional political issues.

For data on protest by non-system groups we compiled monthly event counts from the

opposition website ikd.ru. The Institute of Collective Action (IKD) is a group of sociologists

who compile weekly reports of protest actions in Russia. The website covers actions reported by

IKD correspondents and newspapers throughout the Russian Federation. Detailed information on

each event is presented in the "news wire" (*lenta novostei*) section of the website. These text

reports were compiled into quantitative event data using the same procedure as for the KPRF

data, resulting in information on 5726 events.

While no single data source can possibly be seen as a definitive record of all non-system

opposition activities, the focus of the IKD provides us with a particularly good test of our theory

of cooptation. This is because there while there is considerable ideological overlap between the

KPRF and the groups represented in the IKD. IKD describes itself as a group of "activists from a

variety of social organizations – leftist groups, labor unions, environmental and youth

organizations – people who share and reflect the interests of the majority of the population of the

country who live from their labor. […]". In translating ideology into action there is considerable

overlap too. As we show in the appendix, the groups have similar distributions of demands,

focusing on material issues, wages and labor rights. Few events are based on nationalist or ethnic claims.[14] Where the agenda differed, the differences tended to be produced by the in-system/non-system divide. Moreover, narrowing the definition of IKD protest events to exclude those areas where demands differ—i.e. civil rights and environmental protests--does not alter the results (for details see Supporting Appendix). This overlap of agendas should help us separate out the effects of policy and particularistic forms of cooptation.

Alternative Explanations and Controls

A key alternative mechanism that might connect legislatures to protest levels is the extent to which the opposition parties are able to gain seats in the legislature. In addition to the personal cooptation of leaders, parties that enjoy access to seats in the legislature, even in the absence of the policy concessions that underpin representation theories of cooptation, will have to tread a fine line between opposing the government enough to please their base, while moderating their challenge enough to retain the (regime-granted) privilege of access to the system.

While we outlined clear expectations about the effect of personal cooptation on KPRF protest above, expectations about the effect of party seat shares on levels of in-system protest are more ambiguous. On one hand, coopted parties should conduct their business more within the institutions than on the streets, leading to a reduction in protest on the part of these groups. However, winning seats in the legislature, assuming elections are not completely falsified, will also be determined, to some degree, by the latent electoral strength of the opposition. Regions with a strong in-system opposition might have a higher "natural level" of protest irrespective of cooptation. This means that we cannot draw empirical conclusions about the effect of party cooptation on in-system parties. By contrast, we do have expectations about the effect of more

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[14] Nevertheless, while the KPRF and the IKD gather data on politically proximate groups, the politics of a divided opposition mean that the event data from the two sources are quite different. The IKD focuses on smaller, grassroots organizations that rarely have a formal voice in the political process.

KPRF seat shares on non-system protest. We expect that when the systemic opposition has a more significant role in official politics, more resources will be drawn into this party of the opposition and away from groups operating outside of the system. Hence we expect that there will be fewer protests by the non-system opposition the more legislative seats the in-system opposition holds. We measure party cooptation using the variable *KPRFMandateShare* – the share of seats in the regional assembly occupied by the leading the KPRF.

We also control for several competing explanations of protest. First, in line with both grievance and business cycle models of protest, we control for *Lagged Unemployment*. Second, we control for factors that could affect the ability of system and non-system oppositions to engage in collective action, such as the openness of the media, *Press Freedom*, and levels of *Urbanization*. Third, we control for the share of a region's economic output that is due to natural resource extraction and mining, *Natural Resources*. Regional governments with access to rent revenues have more fungible resources that they can use to buy support, so protest may be lower in these regions. Fourth, we control for the ethnic makeup of the region, *Percent Russian*. Russia's ethnic republics are, for a number of reasons, more repressive, so this measure may act as a proxy for repression. We also control for *Log Population*, since larger regions will have more protests, we include a dummy variable for the two capitals Moscow and St. Petersburg, and we control for the level of economic development in the region, *Log GRP/Capita.*

Modeling Strategy and Results

Our dataset contains 4980 region-month observations stretching from July 2007 through September 2012. We construct two dependent variables using the protest data described above. The first dependent variable is a count that registers the number of KPRF protests taking place in

a region in a given legislative convocation (Table1) or month (Table 2). The second dependent variable is a count that registers the number of non-system protest events identified by IKD in a given legislative convocation (Table1) or month (Table 2).

We use negative binomial models to account for the discrete, non-negative nature of the dependent variable and because it models directly overdispersion (contagion) in the observed counts, which is a typical feature of protest data (Hausman et al. 1984).[15] To account for unit effects, we include random effects parameters in all models. Since our key variables of interest either change slowly across time or not at all (i.e. the number of leadership positions held by the KPRF is often constant across time), we use random-effects, as opposed to fixed effects.[16] Consequently, as noted above, one shortcoming of our analyses is that they do not permit us to determine whether KPRF leaders are rewarded for low levels of protest or whether they are punished for high levels of protest. Unfortunately, because only 17 regions experience changes in the number of leadership positions that the KPRF holds between 2007 and 2012, it is difficult for us to disentangle these two perspectives. However, as our results will show, whether KPRF leaders are rewarded for good behavior or punished for bad behavior, personal cooptation still works to reduce protest by providing opposition leaders with strong incentives to make sure that their followers stay off the streets.

We take a first cut at the data by aggregating our monthly observations within parliamentary convocations. While this method does not allow us to examine protest dynamics in detail, it is useful in illustrating the effects of interest at the aggregate level. Taking a parliamentary convocation as the unit of analysis gives us 158 observations across the 82

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[15] A Likelihood ratio test comparing the poisson model and our negative binomial models indicates that there is significant overdispersion in our data, so we use the negative binomial specifications throughout.

[16] In the appendix we run all our models with fixed effects and show that the results are substantively the same in all specifications and statistically the same in most.

Russian regions for which we have data. In models 1-4 (Table 1), we examine the total number of KPRF protest events taking place in a region during a particular parliamentary convocation and in models 5 and 6 we consider the total number of IKD protest events. For ease of interpretation, we present incidence ratios that represent factor changes in the dependent variable for a 1 unit increase in the independent variable.

The results in models 1-4 show clear evidence in support of our arguments about personal cooptation. As expected, having a KPRF parliamentarian in a leadership position (Model 1), or as vice-speaker (Model 2) is associated with substantially lower levels of KPRF protests – about 15 percent less in the case of any leadership position and 25 percent less in the case of the vice-speakership. Moreover, as we argued, committees that offer special opportunities for rent-seeking have an even more marked impact. When the KPRF holds a *RentsCommittee*, the incidence of protest is reduced by 34%.[17] Whether these reductions in protest are a function of strategic demobilization by KPRF leaders in anticipation of receiving these private benefits or due to the demobilization in the wake of such cooptation, the results show that personal cooptation in legislatures reduces levels of protest by the KPRF.

By contrast, there is little evidence that personal cooptation of KPRF leaders has an effect on protest events held by ideologically-proximate non-system oppositionists.[18] This lends support to the view that the main benefits of legislative leadership positions are personal rents, not policy influence. The difference in the two results also increases our confidence that the decision to distribute leadership posts to the KPRF is not simply correlated with some unobserved variable that is reducing levels of protest generally.

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[17] There are insufficient observations to induce convergence in convocation sum models (Table 1) that are restricted only to convocations where the KPRF holds a committee chairmanship. Thus, models using the *CommitteeImportance* variable are omitted from Table 1 and only included in the monthly models in Table 2.
[18] In fact, there is evidence of a potential displacement effect in these specifications, as it appears that coopting KPRF leaders actually *increases* protest by the non-systemic opposition.

The convocation-level analysis shows the basic relationship between personal cooptation and protest. However, by lumping together our disaggregated protest data into convocation totals we throw away important information on the dynamics of protest, including the effects of prior protest levels and time effects. Consequently, in Table 2, we present analyses using monthly protest event counts. The models include a full set of control variables, but in addition we parameterize dynamic effects by including include a lagged dependent variable and a series of time dummies to control for time-specific shocks.[19] Specifically we take into account the effect of the annual May national holidays that are often a focus for political protest, the traditional low period in July and August when protest levels typically fall and the fall protest season of September through November (Robertson 2011). In addition, we consider the effects of national election periods – taking the pre-election period, the month of elections, the month after elections and the period between the national duma and presidential elections.[20]

Models 1-4 in Table 2 present the results of the models of *KPRF Protest* and models 5 and 6 shows the results of the models of non-system protest. Again, the results consistently show that coopting KPRF leaders through appointment to leadership positions in regional parliaments reduces KPRF-organized protest. Model 1 shows the effect of *KPRFLeadership,* on the number of protests occurring in a region-month.[21] The coefficient indicates that when the KPRF holds a leadership position in a regional legislature the number of protests in a given month is reduced

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[19] There are inferential problems associated with including a lagged dependent variable in specifications that include slowly changing independent variables. For this reason, we also show all monthly models in the appendix without the lagged dependent variable. All results remain unchanged.

[20] In the Supporting Appendix we also examine the possibility of diffusion effects from other regions. Diffusion effects are minimal and do not affect the main findings.

[21] In some models *KPRFMandateShare* has a positive impact on KPRF protest, but this effect is not consistent across models. Importantly, this variable does not achieve higher levels of statistical significance when *KPRFLeadership* is removed from the model (see appendix). This indicates that the two are not so highly correlated that the effect of *KPRFMandateShare* is being picked up by *KPRFLeadership*. In any case, there is no reason to think that the electoral strength of the KPRF should reduce KPRF protest, but holding leadership positions should, in fact, reduce levels of protest.

by 16 percent. This is a substantively important effect, meaning that, on average, regions where the KPRF holds a leadership position should have 1.56 fewer KPRF protests over the course of the year.[22] Model 2 shows that giving the KPRF the high profile position of vice-speaker has a larger dampening effect on KPRF-led protest than just coopting KPRF leaders with any leadership position – holding a vice-speakership reduces KPRF-led protest by 22 percent.

However, our theory is that cooptation is effective not because individual opposition figures are granted broad-based policy influence, but because these figures are bought off with rent-seeking opportunities. We test this implication of our theory with monthly data in Model 3. As the coefficient on *RentsCommittee* indicates, protest is reduced even further in regions where the KPRF holds a committee that provides significant opportunities for rent-seeking. Whereas the rate of protest is reduced by 16% in regions where the KPRF holds any leadership position, the rate of protest is reduced by 33% in regions where the KPRF holds a committee chairmanship that offers significant opportunities for rent-seeking.[23] This indicates that cooptation works best when opposition leaders are provided access to rents in the legislature.

In Model 4, we restrict the analysis to convocations where the KPRF held a committee chairmanship. We then look to see whether protest is lower in those region-months where the KPRF holds a more salient committee portfolio. This turns out to be the case— increasing *Committee Importance* from the least important to the most important committee held by the KPRF decreases KPRF protest by 32 percent.

Taken together, Models 1-4 indicate that personal cooptation works. KPRF protest is

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[22] The mean number of KPRF protests per year is 9.48.
[23] In a model that only examines convocations where the KPRF holds a leadership position, the coefficient on *RentsCommittee* is negative and statistically significant, Thus, the effect of holding a *RentsCommittee* is statistically distinguishable from the effect of holding a regular leadership position. This model is shown in the appendix along with a model that shows the effect of holding a Vice Speakership on protest levels in those regions where the KPRF held some leadership position.

lower when KPRF leaders receive leadership positions in Russia's regional parliaments. Our confidence in this finding is bolstered by the fact that more important leadership positions seem to reduce protest even further.

As with the convocation totals, the monthly data also supports the notion that buying-off Communist elites does nothing to reduce protest on the part of the non-system opposition. Models 5 and 6 show no effect of either a KPRF leadership position in general or the vice-speakership in particular, providing further support for the argument that the effects we find on KPRF protest are due to access to rents and not policy change. If protest were reduced as a result of policy concessions, then we would expect that protest would be reduced by ideologically proximate groups. This is not the case.

In contrast to personal cooptation, party cooptation does seem to have some effect on non-system protest. In both model 5 and model 6, a one standard deviation increase (5.8 percentage points) in the KPRF's seat share reduces non-system protest by around 12 percent. Indeed, the models in Table 2 provide consistent support for the notion that cooptation of the system opposition reduces protest among the non-system opposition.

Table 2 also provides insight into time dynamics. Communists, as most observers of Russian politics would expect, are particularly fond of May Day (May 1) and Victory Day (May 9) demonstrations, as they were in the Soviet period. The non-system opposition seems less drawn to these dates. The July-August holidays seem to have a little effect, while the traditional "hot autumns" of Russian politics (September-November) are reflected in both system and non-system protest events. In terms of election cycles, we again see interesting differences between in-system and non-system protesters. Non-system protest levels are lower during elections, at least in terms of numbers of protest events. Whether this is due to resources and energy being

drawn to in-system parties or whether it is due to a rejection of the elections as an opportunity for political expression is unclear.

By contrast, election cycles have typically had a positive effect on KPRF protest activity. This is consistent with data on the kinds of demands made at protest events (see the Supporting Appendix). KPRF protesters were very active in the month of the Duma elections in 2007, though much less active during the presidential election. This pattern was repeated in the 2011-2012 election cycle in which the KPRF was much more active around the Duma elections than around the presidential elections, despite their leader being on the presidential ballot.

The results on the controls across Tables 2 and 3 are of interest as well. Some of the control variable results are as expected. Both in-system and non-system protest is more common in more populous regions and in regions with a larger ethnic Russian population. However, most of the control variables—wealth, natural resources, urbanization, unemployment—do little to explain protest patterns, although Communists appear to be more active in less democratic regions. Overall, as in other studies of Russian protest (Robertson 2011), socio-structural factors seem to do less well at predicting protest than political factors

Conclusion

Most modern autocrats govern in the presence of legislatures. The role of these parliaments, however, is poorly understood. The findings here advance our understanding of these important institutions. They demonstrate that legislative institutions can help dictators diffuse social protest. In contrast to representation theories of cooptation, which focus on policy concessions to the opposition, we have focused on how individual opposition leaders can be coopted with rents and particularistic benefits in legislatures. We find that opposition leaders

who receive such particularistic benefits refrain from mobilizing their followers against the regime on the streets. This is one of the first direct examinations of the mechanisms linking legislative cooptation to reduced social protest in authoritarian regimes.

Our argument also examined legislative cooptation in the context of a divided opposition. Most modern authoritarian regimes ban some opposition, while allowing other parts of the opposition to participate within regime-sanctioned institutions. We argued that while we would expect *personal* cooptation to have a substantial effect on the groups whose leadership is directly coopted, the effects on the non-system opposition were less obvious. Moreover, we found the effects of personal cooptation of elites through leadership positions to be more consistent than the effects of simply allowing opposition parties to win seats in the legislature.

These results have important implications for how we understand authoritarian institutions. Specifically, they shed light on how authoritarian regimes negotiate with and coopt opposition in the contemporary world. The simple idea that institutions, and particularly legislatures, make authoritarian regimes more stable is a key insight, but the mechanisms behind this are not well understood. Our results suggest that rents matter more than policy concessions in cooptation. This is consistent with the notion that protest in authoritarian regimes is heavily influenced by elite politics. In such an environment, coopting protest is as much about coopting leaders as it is about satisfying popular desires and needs. However, our analysis also suggests the limits of buying off leaders, since the effects of this form of cooptation seem limited to the specific groups whose leaders are rewarded.

Our findings also have important implications for how scholars understand contemporary political institutions in Russia, as well as their effects on regime stability. Parties, elections, and legislatures in the post-Soviet world are frequently considered to be 'virtual' (Wilson 2005), but

consistent with recent scholarship that sees authoritarian institutions as more than window dressing, we show that Russia's authoritarian legislatures have real effects. While Russian legislatures may differ significantly from their counterparts in Western democracies, their role in allowing the regime to share spoils and coopt the opposition is crucial to regime stability.

The findings presented here, of course, are just a first step in unpacking how authoritarian institutions have an effect on protest and political stability. Nevertheless, the results do suggest some clear directions for further research. While we gained analytical leverage by limiting the study to one country and two sets of opposition groups, the particularities of the case also raise issues of what would change as the theory travels. There are at least four issues that will affect the scope conditions of the theory that we outlined.

First is the nature of the authoritarian regime in question. We looked at a case of a hybrid regime in which real, even vigorous, opposition is permitted in the legislature, but we expect our theory to have analogues in other types of regimes as well. In single party regimes positions of power within the legislature might still be used to influence the level of protest since buying off powerful elites with their own organizational capacity, even if it is not in the form of a political party, ought to have similar effects to the ones we demonstrate here.

Second is the question of how different kinds of oppositions are likely to behave. In our theory we expected that buying off the leaders of opposition groups should reduce protest on the part of those groups. We illustrated this by looking at the highly institutionalized, hierarchical, and well-disciplined KPRF. These two elements – the degree of institutionalization and discipline of the party–are certainly likely to be variables that affect the size of the effect of personal cooptation on protest. However, the underlying logic of the direction of the effect

remains the same – protests are more when the leadership provides the political and organizational resources to make them happen and less likely when they do not.

Third, we explicitly selected ideologically proximate in-system and non-system groups to compare. Doing so was important because it allowed us to directly compare the potential mechanisms—rents vs policy concessions—that link legislatures and protest. Nonetheless, the kind of spill-over effects that we identify should only make sense in a context of ideological or political proximity. To the extent that groups in the system and out have quite different agendas – for example when they represent the interests of quite different ethnic groups – then we would not expect much interaction between the two opposition spheres.

Finally, we have focused in this paper on the institutional architecture of contemporary authoritarian regimes. However, the tendency of ruling parties to share legislative leadership positions with smaller parties is, of course, also common in democracies (Vanberg and Martin 2011). The similarity of these patterns across regimes types is an important question for future research. There are a number of dimensions along which we might expect the two to differ. In the authoritarian case, we have suggested that legislative leadership appointments are less a recognition of minority party electoral success, as it would be in a democracy, and more a manifestation of intra-elite bargaining. Consequently, we would not expect to see (and do not find) positions being awarded in proportion to electoral support. Moreover, while in developed democracies the sharing of positions with minority parties seems to be associated with policy concessions to those parties, our evidence suggests that in the authoritarian context concessions are more about sharing private access to rents than about granting influence over policy-making.

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**Table 1 Random Effect Negative Binomial Models of KPRF and Non-System Protest –
Sums by Regional Legislative Convocations**

	DV: KPRF Protest	DV: KPRF Protest	DV: KPRF Protest	DV: Non-System Protest	DV: Non-System Protest
	1	2	3	4	5
KPRF MandateShare	1.01 (1.335)	1.01 (1.384)	1.01 (1.185)	0.99 (-1.312)	1.00 (0.211)
KPRF Leadership	0.85* (-1.665)			1.42** (2.070)	
KPRF ViceSpeakership		0.75** (-2.467)			1.38** (2.941)
KPRF Rents Committee			0.66** (-3.609)		
Log Population	1.64** (6.342)	1.64** (6.216)	1.70** (6.787)	3.21** (8.099)	3.14** (7.971)
Log GRP/capita	0.66* (-1.940)	0.65** (-1.965)	0.73 (-1.420)	0.59 (-1.257)	0.73 (-0.768)
Urbanization	1.00 (0.163)	1.00 (0.297)	1.00 (0.277)	1.03** (2.119)	1.02* (1.840)
Percent Russian	1.01** (2.168)	1.01** (2.354)	1.01** (2.134)	1.01* (1.704)	1.01 (1.271)
Lagged Unemployment	0.96** (-2.476)	0.96** (-2.472)	0.96** (-2.412)	1.03 (1.352)	1.03 (1.487)
Press Freedom	1.03 (0.332)	1.02 (0.231)	1.01 (0.108)	1.11 (0.645)	1.17 (0.933)
Natural Resources	1.01 (0.879)	1.01 (0.845)	1.00 (0.278)	1.01 (0.355)	1.00 (0.069)
Moscow/St. Petersburg	3.34** (2.244)	4.08** (2.529)	3.50** (2.363)	12.12** (2.410)	11.94** (2.516)
Election Date	1.00** (3.365)	1.00** (3.826)	1.00** (3.998)	1.06** (16.919)	1.06** (17.073)
Length of Convocation	1.04** (16.291)	1.04** (17.073)	1.04** (17.458)	1.00* (-1.911)	1.00** (-3.063)
Observations	156	156	156	156	156
Number of regions	81	81	81	81	81
Log Likelihood	-549.9	-548.4	-545.0	-505.3	-503.4

Cell entries are incidence rate ratios. Z-statistics in parentheses

** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 2 Random Effect Negative Binomial Models of Monthly Protest

	DV: KPRF Protest 1	DV: KPRF Protest 2	DV: KPRF Protest 3	DV: KPRF Protest 4	DV: Non-System Protest 5	DV: Non-System Protest 6
KPRF MandateShare	1.00 (0.353)	1.00 (0.041)	1.00 (-0.197)	1.03** (2.276)	0.98** (-1.965)	0.98** (-2.188)
KPRF Leadership	0.84** (-2.307)				0.97 (-0.300)	
KPRF ViceSpeakership		0.78** (-3.246)				0.93 (-0.832)
KPRF Rents Committee			0.72** (-4.025)			
Committee Importance				0.99* (-1.670)		
Log Population	1.65** (7.429)	1.65** (7.211)	1.69** (7.778)	1.35** (2.632)	2.32** (6.829)	2.31** (6.788)
Log GRP/capita	0.75 (-1.583)	0.72* (-1.732)	0.78 (-1.361)	1.03 (0.110)	0.22** (-5.822)	0.22** (-5.958)
Urbanization	1.01 (1.085)	1.01 (1.277)	1.01 (1.249)	1.00 (-0.115)	1.02** (2.626)	1.02** (2.647)
Percent Russian	1.01** (2.196)	1.01** (2.268)	1.01** (2.278)	1.01 (1.607)	1.01 (1.316)	1.01 (1.409)
Lagged Unemployment	0.98 (-1.631)	0.98 (-1.577)	0.98 (-1.487)	1.00 (-0.111)	0.98 (-1.401)	0.98 (-1.425)
Press Freedom	0.89** (-2.366)	0.88** (-2.494)	0.88** (-2.517)	0.90 (-1.107)	1.05 (0.823)	1.05 (0.778)
Natural Resources	1.00 (-0.139)	1.00 (-0.015)	1.00 (-0.468)	0.99 (-1.004)	1.05** (5.474)	1.06** (5.580)
Moscow/St. Petersburg	1.82 (1.173)	1.99 (1.286)	1.79 (1.141)	3.29** (2.074)	0.73 (-0.377)	0.80 (-0.268)
May Holidays	1.63** (7.840)	1.62** (7.776)	1.62** (7.832)	1.82** (5.456)	0.91 (-1.189)	0.91 (-1.224)
High Summer	1.03 (0.607)	1.03 (0.494)	1.03 (0.485)	1.16 (1.470)	0.68** (-5.915)	0.68** (-5.944)
Fall Protest Season	1.11** (1.968)	1.11* (1.904)	1.11* (1.924)	1.30** (2.784)	1.13** (2.213)	1.13** (2.199)
Two Months Before 2007 Election	0.80** (-2.023)	0.79** (-2.119)	0.80** (-2.063)	0.81 (-1.127)	0.55** (-5.181)	0.54** (-5.285)
December 2007	1.67** (4.134)	1.64** (3.988)	1.66** (4.091)	1.88** (2.851)	0.57** (-3.126)	0.56** (-3.171)
Between 2007_8Elections	0.46** (-4.885)	0.46** (-4.932)	0.46** (-4.967)	0.48** (-2.516)	0.84 (-1.445)	0.84 (-1.447)
March 2008	0.39** (-3.894)	0.38** (-3.939)	0.39** (-3.949)	0.55* (-1.658)	0.67** (-2.259)	0.67** (-2.269)
Two Months After 2008 Elections	1.05 (0.535)	1.05 (0.462)	1.04 (0.414)	1.16 (0.890)	0.89 (-0.956)	0.89 (-0.966)
Two Months Before 2011 Election	1.23** (2.482)	1.24** (2.598)	1.24** (2.538)	1.23 (1.455)	0.43** (-6.436)	0.43** (-6.412)
December 2011	2.28** (8.453)	2.31** (8.595)	2.31** (8.600)	2.00** (3.581)	0.82 (-1.233)	0.83 (-1.189)
Between 2011_2Elections	1.40** (3.757)	1.42** (3.926)	1.42** (3.932)	1.45** (2.270)	0.66** (-3.273)	0.66** (-3.218)
March 2012 Elections	1.16	1.17	1.17	0.72	0.14**	0.14**

	(1.087)	(1.188)	(1.200)	(-1.051)	(-5.571)	(-5.556)
Two Months After2012 Elections	0.96	0.98	0.98	0.98	--	--
	(-0.368)	(-0.219)	(-0.246)	(-0.127)		
Lagged Dependent Variable	1.07**	1.07**	1.07**	1.01	1.04**	1.04**
	(5.237)	(4.922)	(4.848)	(0.322)	(4.237)	(4.287)
Observations	4,864	4,864	4,864	1,565	4,378	4,378
Number of regions	81	81	81	35	81	81
Log Likelihood	-5182	-5179	-5177	-1614	-4344	-4344

Cell entries are incidence rate ratios. Z-statistics in parentheses

** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$