

INFORME

NEW TENDENCIES OF FEDERALISM: THE CASE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

por **Anastassia Obydenkova**

Senior Researcher (*Investigadora Ramon y Cajal*) and Professor of Political and Social Science at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona) and Ministry of Innovation and Science of Spain (Madrid).

ABSTRACT

This article traces the development of federal reforms in modern Russian Federation. It starts the analysis from the decentralization reform started under the Yeltsin's government in the 1990s, proceeds with the analysis of centralization territorial reform of Putin's government in the period of 2000-2008, then it analyses the period of Medvedev's government and the return of Putin to power as a president up till these days. Apart from the detailed analysis of the complicated dynamics of territorial reforms and re-federalization of Russia, the article also demonstrates the importance of including in the studies of modern federalism sub-national and international aspects.

RESUMEN

En este artículo se analiza la evolución de las reformas federales de la Federación Rusa. El análisis comienza en la reforma de descentralización iniciada bajo el gobierno de Yeltsin en la década de los 90, a continuación se estudia la reforma territorial del gobierno de Putin en el período 2000-2008, y finalmente se examina el período de gobierno de Medvedev y el regreso de Putin al poder como presidente. Aparte del análisis detallado de las complejas reformas territoriales y re-federalización de Rusia, el texto demuestra también la importancia de incluir en los estudios del federalismo moderno y aspectos internacionales y sub-nacional.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the 1990s Russia experienced democratic political and economic regime transition paralleled by territorial restructuring and federal reform. The territorial reforms can be subdivided into a few waves: the wave of decentralization (in the 1990s), followed by the wave of the centralization (with Putin's coming to power in the 2000s) and nowadays demonstrates some small trends of decentralization. This article presents and analyzes these recent developments in the Russian federalism.

II. RUSSIA AT A GLANCE

The Russian Federation (RF) is the biggest territorial federation in the world with the highest number of regions.¹ In the 1990s, there have been 89 regions, in the 2000s, the number decreased to 83 regions.

Taking language as an indicator, the degree of internal diversity is high. Despite that Russian is the official language spoken by practically the whole population of 145 million, there are also other also twenty-seven languages officially recognized and numerous dialects. According to the Census 2002, there are about 160 ethnic indigenous groups in Russia. With the exception of constitutionally recognized 32 ethnic regions, the rest of the regions are not ethnic. Most of the ethnic groups (also called indigenous people) do not have their own territorial regions as constituent units and live across the borders of the constituent units. Some of the ethnic regions may have a very small percentage of the corresponding ethnic group (e.g., in 1989, the Jewish autonomous oblast only had 2% of Jewish regional population, now it would be even less).

Overall, Russia is a multi-ethnic state with a notable degree of plural internal diversity. About 83 percents of the population of the Russian Federation are Russians (Eastern Slavs).² Among other relatively big ethnic groups are Tatars (3.8% of the population), Bashkirs (1,15%), Chuvash (1,13%), Finno-Ugrian people in the North of the country, different indigenous groups in Siberia and Far East, etc. Overall, Russia encompasses about 170 ethnic groups.

The regions of Russia are very different in terms of size, geography, economic-social development. What is even more striking is that these regions demonstrated very different political regimes by the beginning of the 2000s – that is some regions became democratic, others autocratic, while another group constitute different shadows of hybrid regimes (Dinino and Orttung 2005; Gel'man and Lankina 2008; Libman and Obydenkova 2013a; 2013b). More relevant is the disparity regarding numerous ethnic groups and indigenous peoples most of which live across the territorial borders of constituent units in the Russian Federation with the exception of some of the so-called ethnic regions. Thus, out of the current 83 regions, there are 26 ethnic regions which are meant to be home to relevant ethnic minorities.

The following sections will present and analyze the territorial reform that took place in such a multi-ethnic state as the Russian Federation. It traces the development of federalism from the decentralization of the 1990s to centralization of the 2000s and some reforms of decentralization after re-election of Putin as a new president in 2011.

1. By "regions" are meant territorial constituent units, also defined as "subjects" by the Constitution 1993. The Constitution uses "territorial subjects" and "territorial constituent units" interchangeably. This article refers to these as "regions".

2. See, for example, Burgess (2009, p. 42).

III. FIRST PERIOD: THE DECENTRALIZATION IN THE 1990s UNDER YELTSIN'S GOVERNMENT

Back to the 1990s, Russia has been described as asymmetric federal country according to its' juridical-institutional arrangements. In Russia such labelling corresponded mainly to the period under Yeltsin's rule (1993-2000), when several heterogeneous provisions were put into place.³ Up to the end of 2000, 74 elections of regional heads of administration had taken place (Busygina and Heinemann-Gruder, 2010: 271).

In Russia, the 1990s witnessed change of the regime with the adoption of important documents shaping the future of Russia, such as the Federation Treaty (1992) and the Constitution of the Russian Federation (1993). The Federation Treaty signed by President Yeltsin and by the regional leaders on 31 March 1992 established the Russian Federation alongside three other treaties: (1) on ethnic republics; (2) on administrative-territorial formations including the establishment of six *krais*, forty-nine *oblasts* and the cities of federal significance (Moscow and St. Petersburg); and (3) on national-territorial formations, such as the Jewish Autonomous *oblast* and ten autonomous *okrugs*. The Federal Treaty of 1992 outlined the special status of the republics and gave them more rights than to non-republican regions associated with fiscal benefits and increased autonomy in creating their regional institutions and legal provisions (Brown 2001).

The Federation Treaty of 1992 was followed by the Constitution of the Russian Federation of 1993. The constitutional typology of the regions of Russia is very complex and provoked a debate on the symmetrical versus asymmetrical federal structures it promulgated. Thus, on the one hand, it can be argued that the constitution established a symmetrical federation because there are no clearly defined constitutionally embedded differences between the regions. Article 5 of the Constitution states that regions are "equal subjects of the Russian Federation". According to the constitution, all regions were to be equal in terms of their representation in the Upper Chamber of the Federal Parliament (the Council of the Federation). Article 95.2 of the Constitution entitled two representatives to each region to be members of the Upper Chamber of the Russian Parliament. However, on the other hand, the Constitution of the RF is also a highly ambiguous document and includes a number of contradictions regarding federalism (Kahn, 2002). The constitutionally embedded contradictions allow the definition of Russia as an asymmetric federation. As the Constitution defines the status of the republics in varying manners, there are contradictions such as considering some regions as republics (Article 5.2).

In the 1990s, out of 89 regions (now 83 regions), there were 21 republics, ten autonomous districts and one autonomous province constitutionally defined as *ethnic* regions. Ethnic regions are territorial constituent units which were meant to be territorial homes for ethnic groups (also called "titular nationalities"). Within this group of ethnically-defined regions, regions with republican status were in a special position or category. Among other factors, autonomous provinces and districts were legally incorporated into territories and provinces, while republics were not. Furthermore, the legal difference between the constitutions of the republics and statutes as the basic laws of all other regions, as well as the attributions between the republican presidents and the regional executives (also called governors) were not clearly stipulated in the 1993 Russian Constitution. Thus, it has been argued

that there is no actual difference between ethnic regions and non-ethnic ones, and between republics and the rest of the regions (Golosov, 2004).

Asymmetries included in the 1993 Constitution also established the status of ten regions incorporated territorially into bigger regions, but with legal equality in status and rights.⁵ This problem has often been described as *matrioshka* (Russian doll). The Constitution did not define the relationship between the administrations of the regions with the status of autonomous *okrug* and those territories in which they were located. These regions were to be constitutionally equal to their geographically “parent regions” (Ross, 2002, Butler, 2003). Article 66 ambiguously states that “... the relations between an autonomous district within a territory or province may be regulated by federal law or a treaty between the bodies of state authority of the autonomous districts and, accordingly, the bodies of state authority of the territories or province” (Golosov, 2004: 59).

Other than the constitutional asymmetries described above, a so-called contractual asymmetry was also developed. In the period of 1994-1998, forty-seven bilateral treaties and several hundred supplementary agreements between regions and the federal centre were signed (Kahn, 2002, Ross, 2002). The bilateral treaties between regions and the central government became the hallmark of Russian asymmetrical federalism in the 1990s. These bilateral treaties became a convenient and acceptable way for all the regions regardless of their status to achieve higher autonomy within the Federation in the 1990s (Kirkow, 1995; Kempton 1996).

Thus, the outcome of the devolution reforms was the establishment of both constitutional and contractual asymmetries (Moreno and Obydenkova 2013; Obydenkova and Swenden 2013). During the period of de-centralization under Yeltsin’s government, both ethnic and economic diversities across the regions played an important role in establishing constitutional and contractual asymmetries (Obydenkova, 2008). During the 1990s, this double federal asymmetry contributed to the accommodation of centre-regional disputes. However, a side-product of these reforms was an increased contradiction between the provisions included in regional and national legal documents. Some regions implemented their own legislation, charters, and statutes which often contradicted federal legislation and violated principles included in the 1993 Constitution (Smith, 2002; Stoner-Weiss, 2006). For instance, legislation approved in Ingushetia, Stavropol *krai*, the Moscow region, Moscow city, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachay-Cherkessia, North-Ossetia, and Volgograd region included provisions violating citizens’ right to travel freely (Smith, 2002). The level of corruption in regional politics was seen to be higher in regions with more autonomy (Dinino and Orttung, 2005).

The 1990s also was a period of growing number of political parties across Russia and its regions. However, according to some studies, they had little influence in regional and federal politics (Golosov, 2004), or played a minor role in regional-level elections over the 1990s. Party politics and regional elections have been also described as net of “local connections, patronage and elite links” (Hutcheson, 2003: 139-140). In the beginning of the 2000s, Russian parties continued to penetrate provincial politics “... only weakly and thus do not help to integrate the state and enhance its abilities to govern in the periphery by extension” (Stoner-Weiss, 2002: 125). Indeed, very few governors and members of regional executives would identify themselves with any specific political party and they would seek to stay “above” parties politics at the regional level.⁷ In contrast to this view, it has been also argued that a transition to a party-based system was actually underway during the 1990s (Panov, 2009). However, due to the absence of a multi-party system in the Soviet Union and because of the very short period of democratic transition, the establishment of the party system was slow and uncertain.

Throughout the 1990s, there has been also an active presence of radical separatist groups in Chechnya and Presidents Putin have used terrorist acts associated with Chechnya as a pretext to his re-centralization reform in the 2000s.⁴

IV. SECOND PERIOD: RE-CENTRALIZATION UNDER PUTIN'S GOVERNMENT

The ambiguity of certain constitutional provisions provided Putin's Governments with legal grounds to embark in its re-centralization program and to re-build a highly centralized state.⁵ Article 78 of the Constitution, for instance, enabled the central government with the opportunity to establish unspecified "territorial organs" and to appoint "appropriate officials". Likewise, article 77 underlined the importance of a "*unified* system of executive power" in the Federation (cursive is mine).

One of the first legislations implemented by Putin at the beginning of 2000s was to diminish the role of political parties (Gel'man, 2008). According to the new law, political parties could only be all-Russian and should have no less than 10,000 members and branches of one hundred or more members in at least half of the eighty-three regions (Ross, 2009). Inter-regional and regional movements were no longer allowed. As a consequence of this reform, the number of political parties was drastically reduced to only fifteen. All regional parties were abolished.

Another consequence of Putin's legislation was the growing influence of national parties and, in particular, so-called "party-of-power", United Russia, that penetrated regional and local politics (Gel'man and Lankina, 2008). In contrast to developments in 1990s, the 2000s witnessed the formation of strong political parties as major actors in the electoral and parliamentary arenas, both at the national and sub-national levels. However, there has hardly been any competition, as almost all of them "... became effectively controlled by the Kremlin and incorporated into the formal and informal hierarchy of Russia's government" (Gel'man, 2008: 913). The influence of the "party-of-power" was stretched across the regions of Russia as it took control over regional legislatures. In the context of other reforms, such as substituting regional elections to governors by direct presidential appointments with the approval of regional legislatures, the role of the governmental party has increased. Certainly, United Russia played a key role in re-centralization program implemented by Putin (Konitzer and Wegren, 2006). With the increasing number of members of United Russia in regional legislatures, central decisions for the composition of regional executives are simply rubber-stamped at the level of the constituent units in the Russian Federation.

From the very beginning of Putin's presidency, new federal reforms were implemented following the "the establishment of a dictatorship of law". The purpose of the new reforms was to bring regional laws in line with federal legislation. From May to September 2000 major reforms in centre-periphery relations were put into practice, such as: (a) the establishment of seven Federal Districts; (b) the enhancement of the power of the federal authorities over federal spending in the regions; (c) the reform of the Federation Council; (d) the granting to the president of the Russian Federation of the right to dismiss regional executives if they were to enact laws contradicting federal legislation; (e) changes in local legislation allowing regional governors to dismiss local governments

4. The key terrorist act officially motivating re-centralization reforms of Putin was a three-day hostage of a school with about 1100 people in Beslan (September 2004). As a result, 380 people were killed. Beslan is a city in the autonomous Russian Republic of North Ossetia.

5. On Putin's government, see for example, Slider (2008).

enacting measures in violation of federal and regional laws; or (f) a juridical harmonization aimed at bringing the regional laws and constitutions into line with federal law and the constitution (Smith, 2002, Kahn, 2002, Ross, 2002, Ross, 2009).

One of the radical reforms carried out by Putin was the reform of the Federation Council. This reform implied that the governors of the regional executives would not have a seat in the Federation Council (the Upper Chamber of the Russian Parliament). Under Putin's rule, sub-state executives lost powers. The representatives of the regions should be appointed by the regional governor for the period of his term of office. As regional governors were appointed directly by the federal president, the division between legislative branch (Parliament) and executive branch (federal president) became subtle. Formally, the appointment of a candidate to seat in Federation Council should be confirmed by the legislative branch of a region.

Yet another body was created called the State Council. The State Council was created as officially a consultative body. It has a seven member presidium and comprises leaders from each of seven federal districts and has a membership rotation every six months (Herd and Aldis 2002). The State Council meets once every three months and is meant to act as an alternative source of information for the president of Russia. Among the main functions of this body is to monitor the implementation of federals, to evaluate the implementation of the legislative bills, and oversee the implementation of the federal budget (Goode 2004).

Officially, Putin's reforms were carried out with the goal to "synchronize" legislation and to establish an "executive vertical of rule of law" and bringing power structures under central control. Accordingly, the ministries of defence, justice, interior and emergency, and the Federal Service of Security secured their representations in each of seven federal districts in order to monitor the activities of their regional subordinates. Unofficially, the regional governors needed to coordinate their activities with the presidential representative in their federal districts. This reform was aimed to put regions under rigid control of central government with the help of presidential representatives as unofficial "heads" of federal districts. As an illustration of these changes, regional paradiplomacy, which was used profusely throughout the 1990s on matters concerning foreign policy on trade, cultural and other issues, was not prohibited legally but became "unwelcomed" by the presidential representatives and has now a very low political profile.

Yet another important reform aimed at centralization and territorial restructuring of Russia that had been started during the Putin's first two terms as a president is so-called amalgamation project – project of the merger of the regions. Back to the 1990s, Russia had 89 regions. Through merger of the regions, this number was cut down to 83. Some of the examples of the regions that make part of the amalgamation project are the following: Nenets autonomous *okrug* (AO) was incorporated into Arkhangelsk *oblast*; Ust-Orda Buryat into Irkutsk *oblast*; Koryak AO is situated within Kamchatka *oblast*, Komi-Permiak within Perm *oblast*; Chukotka is geographically incorporated within Magadan *oblast*; the Agin-Buryat AO is within Chita *oblast*; both Yevenk and Taimyr are placed within Krasnoyarsk Krai; and Khanty-Mansiisk and Yamala-Nenets were integrated within Tyumen *oblast*.

The project foresees further merger of the regions. The reform has both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it is considered that the number of the regions of Russia was too high (Watts 1999) and it makes it difficult to secure more or less homogenous socio-economic development of the regions. Some of the regions became a home for billionaires (e.g., Moscow and St. Petersburg), while other regions are marked by increasing poverty and very harsh living conditions for the population as well as increasing crime rate and drag-trafficking (e.g., Primorskii Krai). Thus, at

least officially, the amalgamation project inspires to contribute to the solution of this important problem. On the other hand, it might result in overlooking of local needs of population and regional specific that might be ignored at the higher level of governance. It is, however, still too early to evaluate the actual results of this reform.

V. THIRD PERIOD: CONSOLIDATION DURING THE MEDVEDEV'S PRESIDENCY AND THE RETURN OF PUTIN

The period from 2008 up till now can be seen as the same in terms of federal reforms. After Vladimir Putin completed two terms in power as a president (2000-2008), a new member of the Party United Russia, Medvedev was elected as a president. Since 2008, Medvedev's presidency can be regarded as a mere consolidation of the centralized territorial structures established under Putin's government. However, there are some differences concerning the proclaimed Medvedev's priority for a "radical" administrative reform in the regions. Such an approach was set to combat corruption in regional politics and to allow the "lowering of the barriers to small businesses that are impeding Russian economic development" (Slider, 2008: 4). Another difference is that Medvedev has become more assertive in exercising presidential powers to "discipline" incumbent regional leaders (the best example of it was the removal on September 28, 2010 of the governor of Moscow, Yuri Luzhkov).

In sum, Medvedev's government implemented and consolidated the reforms and decisions that had been accepted under Putin's government in his first two terms in power.

After the elections to Federal Parliament followed by the presidential elections in 2011, there were a number of protests and public demonstrations in both Moscow and some regions of Russia against the probability of falsification of results of the elections. As a result of this public pressure, Vladimir Putin, as a newly elected President, announced some moderate reforms as steps of return to decentralization. Among other things, Putin promised to re-establish the elections of the regional executives (regional governors) that he had previously abolished in the course of his centralization reforms in the 2000s. Needless to say that also a number of rules were made to ensure to remain strong control of central government over these regional elections and candidates. Some scholars noted that the electoral campaigns run in 2012 did not allow for any political competition at all. The strong position of the "party-of-power", the United Russia, had secured "the right" winners. Thus, regional elections and their outcomes were under strong control of the central government.

VI. SUB-NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL, AND SUPRA-NATIONAL DIMENSIONS

In modern studies of federalism, multi-level approach becomes important (Obydenkova 2011). That is, federalism should be evaluated not only from the national perspectives but also from the impact and development at sub-national level as well as international one.

Speaking of sub-national dimension in the context of regime transition, it is important to keep in mind, the vectors of regime transition might not coincide at national and sub-national levels. For example, Russia in the 1990s was democratizing, according to Polity IV and Freedom House ratings at least. However, during the 1990s, some of the sub-national regions of Russia successfully established and consolidated sub-national autocratic regimes. Similar phenomenon was also found in Mexico and Argentina that just confirms the idea of multi-level regime transition that might be contradictory

in the vectors of its' development at national and sub-national levels. On the other hand, Russia started the consolidation of autocratic and centralization trends with Putin's coming to power in 2000s at a national level. The ratings Freedom House and Polity IV went down while evaluating the level of democracy at a national level. At the same time, the regional politics improved radically in terms of accountability of regional executives towards federal president. Ideally, in a democratic state, regional executives would be accountable to the regional population that has the power to elect and re-elect them. However, in a state experiencing regime transition, such as Russia, there is no political culture of accountability to regional population. The regional elections can be won through massive falsification by those actors who already seized the access to the lost lucrative and important rents of the regions. With this in mind, the increase of centralization control coming from federal government is sometimes welcomed by the regional population because it may at least ensure the regional executive is accountable to someone in the center (if not the regional population). Thus, the interconnection between regime development and (de-)centralization reforms at national and sub-national levels is not as straightforward as it may be in established democratic states and has many peculiarities.

Yet another important dimension in modern federalism is international context (Obydenkova 2012a; 2012b). Some studies demonstrate that decentralization sometimes becomes part of democratization implying certain geographic focus, that it has so-called geographic spillover. Even sub-national regions tend to copy the most successful democratic and decentralized models from the neighboring regions. The Commonwealth of Independent States (the successor organization emerged in the aftermath of the dissolution of the USSR) has copied the charter and other legal documents from the European Union (including the issues of decentralization and the principles and values of democracies).⁶ Thus, external factors may often serve as a model of imitation. That does not imply of course, that this model is successfully imitation – there is often a gap between legal norms and their actual implementation. However, some presence and some impact of international democratic actors (such as the EU) can be found even in the case of Russia and the regions of Russia.

Moreover, there had been numerous paradiplomatic activities between the regions of Russia with the European Union member states, with the Committee of the Regions, and other external democratic actors (such as for example municipalities and regional governments of Norway and Sweden) that cooperated with the regional governments of some of the territorial constituent units of Russia (see Lankina and Getachew 2006). What is more important is that these contacts between regional governments of Russia and the EU's related actors made an impact on the establishment democracy at a sub-national level in Russia. In other words, the regions of Russia that cooperated more actively with the EU's actors had a higher rating of sub-national democracy by the beginning of the 2000s than other regions that did not have such cooperation. Moreover, there is a similar hypothesis, that sub-national regions of Russia that might have enjoyed more intensive contacts with yet another democratic neighbor of Russia such as Japan also had a higher level of sub-national democracy. Thus, external democracy-reinforcing actors might actually influence the level and the speed of regime transition at a sub-national level. In its turn, the sub-national democracy may become a spillover to a national level as well.

On the other hand, the presence of external autocracy-reinforcing actors and their influence should be forgotten either. Such neighbors of Russia as China and a

6. On partisan logic of decentralization in Europe, see Sorens (2009).

number of autocratic post-Soviet Central Asian states also have certain impact on sub-national development in Russia. Some studies demonstrated, for example, that trade of sub-national regions of Russia with autocracies of Central Asia decrease radically the level of sub-national democracy in the respective regions (see Obydenkova and Libman 2012).

Finally, except of sub-national and international levels, one may distinguish a supranational level. For a example, the European Union through the Committee of the Regions aims at increasing sub-national democracy and management improvement in the regions of the EU's member and candidate states as well as in some neighboring countries. In contrast, membership of such supranational international organizations as the CIS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Customs Union for example may undermine the development of both sub-national democracy and federalism in a member-states, presenting model of autocratic governance in a region (on the CIS, see for example Libman and Obydenkova 2013a; 2013b; 2013c).

Thus, the interconnection between supranational, national, and sub-national levels is highly important in the modern studies of federalism in general and in the case of Russia in particular and remains on the agenda for further studies.

VII. CONCLUSION

International contexts factors have an important role in the developments of internal domestic affairs. The impact of the EU on Russia has not been as decisive as in some central European countries due to the absence of any prospects for the EU membership. However, during the democratization process in Russia in the 1990s, the EU often served as a model of successful regional integration and regionalization and contributed to the development of sub-national democratization. As a number of studies demonstrated, the regions with higher paradiplomatic contacts with the EU had developed successfully the sub-national democracy over the 1990s (Obydenkova, 2012a; 2012b; Libman and Obydenkova 2013a; 2013b, 2013c). Despite this, the external impact of the EU on national democratization in Russia was considered negligible. By now, Russia remains a non-democratic state with a strong central control over the regional politics. Recent studies conclude that Russia is a federation by name only without actual principles of federalism implemented. It remains to be a highly territorially centralized state.

REFERENCES

- Brown, A. (2001), 'Vladimir Putin and the Reaffirmation of Central State Power', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 45-55.
- Burgess, M. (2009), 'Between a rock and a hard place: the Russian Federation in comparative perspective', in C. Ross and A. Campbell (eds), *Federalism and Local Politics in Russia*. New York: Routledge, pp. 25-53.
- Busygina, I. and Heinemann-Gruder, A. (2010), 'Russian Federation' in L. Moreno and C. Colino (eds), *Diversity and Unity in Federal Countries*, McGill-Queen's University Press: Montreal and Kingston, London and Ithaca, pp. 258-287.
- Butler, W. E. (2003), *Russian Law*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- De Silva Migara O., Kurlyandskaya, G., Andreeva, E. and Golovanova, N. (eds) (2009), *Intergovernmental Reforms in the Russian Federation: One Step Forward, Two Steps Back?* Washington DC: The World Bank.

- Dinino, P., and Orttung, R. (2005), 'Explaining patterns of corruption in the Russian regions', *World Politics*, Vol. 57, N. 4 (July), pp. 500-529.
- Gel'man, V. (2008), Party Politics in Russia: From Competition to Hierarchy. *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 60, No. 6, pp. 913-930.
- Gel'man, V. and Lankina, T. (2008), Authoritarian vs. Democratic Diffusions: Explaining Institutional Choices in Russia's Local Government', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 24, No. 1, pp. 40-62.
- Golosov, G. (2004), *Political Parties in the Regions of Russia: Democracy unclaimed*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.
- Goode, P. (2004), 'The Push for Regional Enlargement in Putin's Russia', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 3, pp. 219-257.
- Herd, G. P. and Aldis, A. (eds) (2002), *Russian Regions and Regionalism: Strength through Weakness*. New York: Routledge.
- Hutcheson, D. S. (2003), *Political Parties in the Russian Regions*. London: Routledge Curzon.
- Kahn, G. (2002), *Federalism, democratization, and the rule of law in Russia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kirkow, P. (1995), 'Regional Warlordism in Russia: The Case of Primorskii Krai', *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 6, pp. 923-947.
- Konitzer, A. and Wegren, S. K. (2006), 'Federalism and Political Recentralization in the Russian Federation: United Russia As the Party of Power', *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, Vol. 36, No. 4, pp. 503-522.
- Lankina, T. and Getachew, L. (2006), 'A Geographic Incremental Theory of Democratization: Territory, Aid, and Democracy in Postcommunist Regions', *World Politics*, Vol. 58, No. 4, pp. 536-582.
- Libman, Alexander and Anastassia Obydenkova (2013a) "Informal Governance in International Organizations" *Review of International Organizations* DOI 10.1007/s11558-012-9160-y
- Libman, Alexander and Anastassia Obydenkova (2013b) "Communists or Communism? Corruption in the Regions of Russia" in *Economic Letters* doi: 10.1016/j.econlet.2013.02.003
- Libman, Alexander and Anastassia Obydenkova "International Trade as a Limiting Factor in Democratization: An Analysis of Sub-National Regions in Post-Communist Russia" in *Studies in Comparative International Development* (2013c) DOI: 10.1007/s12116-013-9130-2.
- Moreno, Luis and Anastassia Obydenkova (2013) "Federalization in Russia and Spain: The Puzzle of Reversible and Irreversible Outcomes" in *Regional and Federal Studies* DOI:10.1080/13597566.2012.742071.
- Obydenkova, A. (2006), 'Democratization, Europeanization and Regionalization beyond the European Union: Search for Empirical Evidence', in *European Integration online Papers*, Vol. 10, No. 1.
- Obydenkova, Anastassia (2008), 'Regime transition in the regions of Russia. The freedom of mass media: Transnational impact on sub-national democratization?' *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 47, No. 2, pp. 221-246.
- Obydenkova, Anastassia (2011) A Triangle of Russian Federalism: Democratization, (De-) Centralization, and Local Politics *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 41, pp. 734-741.

- Obydenkova, Anastassia and Alexander Libman (2012) “The Impact of External Factors on Regime Transition: Lessons from the Russian Regions” in *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 28(3), pp. 346-401.
- Obydenkova, Anastassia (2012) Democratization at the Grassroots: the European Union’s External Impact in *Democratization*, Issue 19, N. 2, 230-257.
- Obydenkova, Anastassia (2012) “Comparative Democratisation: National-International Nexus of Analysis in Post-Communist Regime Transition” *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 64, Num. 6 (August), pp. 1127-1135.
- Obydenkova, Anastassia and Wilfried Swenden (2013) “Looking West, Moving East? The Dynamics of Territorial Politics in Western Europe and Russia” in *Territory, Politics, Governance* Volume 1, Issue 1, DOI: 10.1080/21622671.2013.763733. Routledge Publishing House: Association for Regional Studies.
- Panov, P. (2009), ‘Russian political parties and regional political processes: the problem of effective representation’, in C. Ross and A. Campbell (eds), *Federalism and Local Politics in Russia*. New York: Routledge, 150-183.
- Ross, C. (2002), *Federalism and democratisation in Russia*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Ross, C. (2009), *Local Politics and Democratization in Russia*. Routledge: London.
- Slider, D. (2008), ‘Russian Federalism: Can It Be Rebuilt from the Ruins?’, *Russian Analytical Digest*, No. 43 (17 June), pp. 2-4.
- Smith, M. A. (2002), ‘Putin: an end to centrifugalism?’, in G. P. Herd and A. Aldis (eds), *Russian Regions and Regionalism. Strength through Weakness*. New York: Routledge, pp. 19-38.
- Sorens, J. (2009), ‘The Partisan Logic of Decentralization in Europe’, *Regional and Federal Studies*, Vol. 19, No.2, pp. 255-272.
- Stoner-Weiss, K. (2002), ‘Central Governing Incapacity and the Weakness of Political Parties: Russian Democracy in Disarray’, *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, Vol. 32, No. 2, pp. 125-146.
- Stoner-Weiss, K. (2006), *Resisting the State: Reform and Retrenchment in Post-Soviet Russia*, by Kathryn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Watts, R. L. (1999), *Comparing Federal Systems*. (2nd ed.) Kingston: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations – Queen’s University. ■