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0521844096 - Why not Parties in Russia?: Democracy, Federalism, and the State

Henry E. Hale

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Why Not Parties in Russia?

Democracy, Federalism, and the State

Russia poses a major puzzle for comparative theorists of party development: Virtually every classic work takes parties to be inevitable and essential to electoral competition, but Russia remains highly nonpartisan more than fifteen years after Gorbachev first launched his democratizing reforms. The problem is that theories of party development lack a “control case,” almost always focusing on cases where parties have already developed and almost never examining countries where independent politicians are the norm. This book focuses on Russia as just such a control case. It mobilizes fresh public opinion surveys, interviews with leading Russian politicians, careful tracking of multiple campaigns, and analysis of national and regional voting patterns to show why Russia stands out. Russia’s historically influenced combination of federalism and “superpresidentialism,” coupled with a postcommunist redistribution of resources to regional political machines and “oligarchic” financial-industrial groups, produced and sustained powerful “party substitutes” that have largely squeezed Russia’s real parties out of the “electoral market,” damaging Russia’s democratic development.

Henry E. Hale (Ph.D. Harvard 1998, A.B. Duke 1988) is an assistant professor of political science at the George Washington University, where he researches and writes about issues related to democracy, federalism, and ethnic politics with a focus on the cases of the former Soviet region, especially Russia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. Many of the leading journals in comparative politics and postcommunist studies have published his work, including the *British Journal of Political Science*, *Comparative Politics*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Europe-Asia Studies*, *Perspectives on Politics*, *Post-Soviet Affairs*, and *World Politics*. His research has been funded by the National Science Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research. Before moving to the George Washington University, he taught at Indiana University from fall 2000 to spring 2005. From 1998 to 2000, as research associate at Harvard’s Strengthening Democratic Institutions (SDI) Project, he managed a program that studied political party development in Russia and brought Russian party leaders to meet with counterparts in the United States. During the 2003–4 and 1999–2000 rounds of Russian national elections, he was chief editor and writer for *Russian Election Watch*, a monthly electronic publication circulating updates and analysis to readers in the policymaking, business, nonprofit, and academic communities. Hale has held a Davis Center for Russian Studies Post-Doctoral Fellowship (1998) and a Peace Scholarship from the U.S. Institute of Peace (1995–6). His other teaching experience includes adjunct or visiting professorships at the European University in St. Petersburg, Russia (Spring 1999), and Tufts University’s Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy (1997–8). He travels frequently to the post-Soviet region and has interviewed many leading Russian politicians. Active in numerous professional organizations, Hale is a member of the Program on New Approaches to Russian Security and has been a visiting scholar at the Carnegie Moscow Center, the East-West Institute’s Policy Studies Program, the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, and Columbia University’s Harriman Institute.

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To Isabelle Kaplan

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