

Mexico and Russia: Mirror Images?

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Does Mexico's past experience as a "managed democracy" have any relevance for understanding developments in contemporary Russia?¹ At first glance, there are important dissimilarities between Mexico and Russia. Russia is the core of a collapsed superpower, with a highly developed industrial and scientific infrastructure; Mexico is a developing nation. Russia has great power pretensions and is a major regional actor, whereas Mexico has subsisted largely in the shadow of its neighbor to the north. However, as far back as the 1940s, American journalist W. L. White suggested that Americans could better understand developments in Russia through a comparison with Mexico.² More recently, Guillermo O'Donnell, among others, has drawn important and useful comparisons between the countries of Latin America and Eastern Europe in their respective paths toward democracy, and Robert Leiken, in a recent *Foreign Affairs* article, has cited the importance of the comparison between Mexico and Russia.³

Russia and Mexico share a number of common elements in their respective political cultures. Mexico's view of itself as an "Ibero-American" fusion of European and Indian components is echoed by the notion of Russia as a "Eurasian" society, bridging the gap between European, Islamic, and Asian civilizations. Both countries have strong authoritarian and socialist-communalist currents, which have played a major role in shaping the political culture.⁴

What is most striking, however, is the degree to which Russia under President Vladimir Putin appears to be moving toward the creation of a political regime of managed democracy that resembles what emerged in Mexico after the 1940s under the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*, or Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). The post-Soviet regime that is taking shape appears to be based on a ruling party able to manage a coalition of propresidential political and business interests united by the desire to prevent the "opposition"—both political and economic—from ever achieving real power. This is combined with presidential "coordination" of key social and cultural institutions in civil society (with selected acts of repression designed to elucidate the limits of pluralism).⁵ A description of Mexico under the rule of the PRI could just as easily be applied to Putin's Rus-

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sia:⁶ the PRI is a regime “emphasizing political stability with economic growth,” which aspires to “cement existing changes but shield the system from further revolutionary change”; it is characterized by an “unusually strong executive” who initiates legislation and policy; ambiguity exists between “ample individual freedoms and . . . restricted organizational freedoms.”⁷

In fact, there are four principal areas where one can draw useful comparisons between the managed democracy of Mexico under the PRI and what is emerging in Russia under Putin: the creation of a presidential “ruling” party; the managing of the electoral process; the ways in which lines of communication between the regime and key social and economic actors are created and maintained; and the defining of the limits of dissent within the confines of the “politics of stability.” If, as many senior Russian officials claim, the period of reform—that is to say, radical changes to the country’s political and economic system—is coming to a close,⁸ then a system that mixes democratic and pluralist elements with authoritarian tendencies is the most probable outcome.⁹ The political regime that the PRI created and maintained in Mexico—likewise mixing democratic and authoritarian features—showed a great deal of resilience, lasting for over seven decades. Its supporters maintain that it ensured political stability and tranquillity (bypassing the cycle of military coups that so afflicted the rest of Latin America), allowed for the development of a flourishing civil society, and promoted economic development.¹⁰ Ultimately, it paved the way for greater democratization, as well as closer economic integration with the United States. Its detractors point to its legacies of repression and corruption, issues that also bedevil present-day Russia. Therefore, a comparison between Mexico and Russia helps to provide insights into the likely direction of the evolution of Russia’s political system over the next decade.

The Search for Consensus: The Party of the President

Post-Soviet Russia, in political terms, shares a number of similarities with Mexico after its revolution (1910–17). Although Russia avoided a full-scale civil war, the collapse of the USSR in 1991, like the collapse of the *porfiriato* (the regime of Porfirio Diaz, who ruled Mexico from 1876 to 1910), unleashed pent-up frustrations and raised expectations about the future. The *porfiriato*, like its Soviet counterpart, had reneged on an implicit social contract that promised extensive economic modernization and the introduction of prosperity in exchange for a total monopoly on political power; both systems were also increasingly characterized, toward the end of their respective lives, by stagnation and “stability of cadres,” which could not satisfy the ambitions of younger elites for a share of political and economic power. Both collapsed in a wave of democratic idealism that promised the creation of prosperous liberal democracies.¹¹

The Russian Constitution of 1993, like the Mexican one adopted in 1917, contains an extensive list of social, political, economic, and cultural rights that are to be guaranteed to the citizenry. However, the lack of any strong traditions of constitutionalism, either in Russia or in Mexico, led to fears that the gains of the revolutionary upheaval that had destroyed the old order would be lost due to mismanagement and political squabbling.¹² Thus, there was a certain logic to the

creation of a “strong presidency” that could “pursue further change” and prevent a return to the old order.¹³

This is what is referred to in the Mexican context as *presidencialismo*, where the presidency serves as a strong, centralizing institution and where the president, rather than the legislature or the judiciary, has the primary role of shaping and interpreting policy.¹⁴ Even though a formal “separation of powers” may be provided for in the constitution, in reality the other branches of government defer to the leading role of the executive. There is no “horizontal accountability” of the president—and his team—to the other branches of government.¹⁵ Indeed, the president functions as a quasi monarch, the *señor de gran poder* (the man of great power).¹⁶

Presidencialismo also encourages the development of a political culture where citizens are seen as “delegators” rather than as active participants in the political process. The president is not simply the “chief executive” but the person entrusted by the voters with responsibility for the “destiny of the nation.” Having received a mandate from the masses, the president, who is said to represent not simply majority interests but the whole of the nation, is entitled to select his cabinet and chart the overall direction of policy without significant restraints on his freedom of action.¹⁷ This also includes the right to select his successor. Indeed, the way in which Vladimir Putin was “presented” to the Russian people as Yeltsin’s successor and the closed-door nature of the succession process itself are strikingly similar to what was referred to as *tapadismo* under the PRI—the policy by which the incumbent president kept his chosen successor “under wraps” until formally presenting him to the public. The wave of speculation that swept Russia in 1998 and 1999 over who would emerge as Yeltsin’s “heir” is akin to what the Mexicans referred to as *futurismo*.¹⁸ *Tapadismo* and *futurismo* both highlight the fact that the process of succession is not carried out in the open but is negotiated between the sitting president and his political circle. Assuming that Putin chooses to run again in 2004, a major test of the degree of political openness in Russia will be whether or not Putin’s successor for 2008 is chosen via a competitive process that is relatively transparent and open, or whether he will present a successor to the public without any sort of public consultation or debate.

Presidencialismo has a great deal of attractiveness in contemporary Russia. Consider the following message of congratulations sent to Putin after his electoral victory to become president in 2000 by Patriarch Alexeii II, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church: “I hope and believe that you will realize the best hopes of the residents of great Russia. The people have suffered much in the outgoing 20th century, and are now worthy of a better fate. You are to blaze the path of our country into the new century and the new millennium.”¹⁹ The sentiments behind this message are clear: it is the president who is expected to take the lead in charting the future direction of Russian society, not the legislature or civil society. Such was the position taken by the then-head of the *Yedinstvo* (Unity) faction in the Russian State Duma, Boris Gryzlov, in describing Putin as the “national choice” for stability and progress, adding that “all political forces should respect this choice.”²⁰

Presidencialismo, however, is insufficient as a means for perpetuating a

regime, especially when an individual president is limited to a specified term of office. Moreover, to be effective, a president needs to have a support mechanism that reaches into the bureaucracy, the legislature, the major social actors, and even the large mass of the population. Plutarco Elias Calles, president of Mexico from 1924 to 1928, saw the creation of a party as the means “by which to perpetuate the regime after he himself left office.”²¹

Parallel to *presidencialismo* is the phenomenon of *movimientismo*—the mass counterpart to the figure of the president. Like the president, the “movement” is said to represent the nation as a whole and rises above particular sectional, class, or regional interests to legitimize presidential authority.²² In Mexico, Calles, and his successor, Lázaro Cárdenas (president from 1934 to 1940), saw the importance of a unified political force, organized both on regional and functional lines, able to draw in prominent businessmen, representatives of organized labor and the peasantry, and key regional leaders. Calles and Cárdenas encouraged regional and class-based *caciques* to believe that their interests would be better served through the creation of a single party able to consolidate power.²³ This process culminated in the creation of the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party, the name adopted in 1946). The PRI legitimized its existence as the party that “best represents the people’s interest” by virtue of “having [the] broadest social base in Mexico.”²⁴

More practically, the party enabled the president to recruit administrators and supporters and provided him with a mechanism to bestow rewards, from political appointments to business contracts, to his supporters. In contrast, those “who failed to join up soon found themselves powerless. Influence and benefits, after all, now came through the party.”²⁵ In addition to co-opting elites and key social actors, the party, through its membership, was designed to rally support in society for the president’s social, economic, and political agenda.²⁶

This process, however, has been delayed in Russia, in part because Boris Yeltsin, during his tenure as president, never gave his committed and explicit backing to the creation of a presidential party, preferring instead to portray himself as a figure who stood above partisan interests. Instead, the task of creating a pro-regime political movement largely fell into the hands, first, of the vice president, then of the prime minister. The result was the creation of competing political movements identified with particular political figures rather than with the presidency.²⁷ The creation of Yedinstvo to contest the 1999 elections for the State Duma, as a force explicitly supporting then–prime minister Vladimir Putin, however, was an important first step in the creation of a presidential party. After the elections, Prime Minister Putin highlighted the importance of “consensus” in ensuring further progress in Russia:

[A]ll the nation’s intellectual, physical, and moral forces need to achieve a huge concerted effort. Harmonious and creative work is what is needed. . . . Russia has had more than its fair share of political and socioeconomic convulsions. . . . I am convinced that the feeling of responsibility for the fates of the nation and country will win the upper hand and that Russian parties, organizations, movements and their leaders will not sacrifice to narrow party-based or short-term interests the common interests and prospects of Russia which require the consolidation of all healthy forces.²⁸

Following Putin's election to the presidency in 2000, the impetus to create a unified "presidential party of power" accelerated. In 2001, Yedinstvo and the Fatherland/All Russia (OVR) bloc began the process of unification, merging the two political movements into a single party of Unity and Fatherland/Unified Russia. Frants Klintsevich, a Yedinstvo leader in the Duma, was quite explicit about the reasons for the merger:

The unification's goals are obvious. . . . The merger will allow us to combine the intellectual and organizational potential of both organizations at the federal and regional levels. . . . We seek a broad alliance between the authorities and society to achieve a goal that everyone understands, which is to ensure decent living standards in Russia and make people again be proud about their Motherland. . . . The prime goal of our tasks is to create an effective political force in support of the strategic course pursued by Russian President Vladimir Putin. For this purpose, we try to unite equally the efforts by the political elite, intellectuals, entrepreneurs, workers, and agrarians.²⁹

In keeping with the precepts of *movimientismo*, the new party proclaims itself as a means for unifying the various sectors of society around a common goal: support for the president and his policies. Klintsevich was echoed by Yevgeniy Trofimov, the deputy chair of the Yedinstvo Political Council, who said that this new party is to be a "bulwark and an instrument of presidential policy."³⁰ Indeed, the emerging presidential party sees its role as a transmission belt between the presidency and society; the party is expected to recruit cadres for state service, to assist in the drafting of legislation, and to mobilize support for implementing the presidential program.³¹

In Mexico, the PRI proved remarkably successful, over a long period, at creating "institutionalized renewal" and at offering opportunities for advancement to subsequent generations. Describing the long period of political stability under the PRI, Daniel Levy and Gabriel Székely noted that "aspirants to power need not change the system when they have reasonable chances for upward mobility within it."³² A critical test in Russia will be whether the newly merged party of Unity and Fatherland will be able to institutionalize its position and co-opt political and economic elites, or whether the party will prove unable to marshal sufficient incentives for its supporters (and disincentives for its competitors) to stabilize the Russian political scene. Much will depend on the degree to which Putin himself identifies his presidency with the new party and whether or not the party leadership plays a significant role in identifying candidates for office. Should Putin, for example, not rely on the new party to provide him with cadres for government offices, or should he choose, like Yeltsin, to project an image of a non-partisan president, then Unity and Fatherland will lose its primary carrot for recruitment: access to the presidency.³³

Nevertheless, Vyacheslav Nikonov, president of the Politika Fund, concluded that Unity and Fatherland "is practically the party of power. Its outlines are still unclear, but the potential influence on Russian politics appears rather significant."³⁴ The new party's role, of course, has been visibly enhanced by the redistribution of committee chair assignments in the Duma at the end of March 2002, when the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF) was stripped of

seven chairmanships (and KPRF deputies resigned from the other two). The new political alliance between Yedinstvo and Fatherland/All Russia now controls twelve Duma committee chairs, and the KPRF has declared its intent to play the role of an opposition party.

Managing Parties and Elections

In a managed democracy, there is recognition of the fact that the ruling party can in no way encompass all interest groups and party platforms; otherwise, it risks losing its internal cohesiveness. Therefore, there must be a mechanism by which regime perpetuation can be reconciled with some degree of political pluralism. The end result should be what Vladimir Putin has termed “healthy political competition,” which does not weaken the state system or spoil the image of the authorities.³⁵ Putin would have no difficulty echoing the words of a former president of Mexico, Ernesto Zedillo, who maintained that democracy should be promoted “in a manner that will provide political stability and certainty.”³⁶

It is not in the interests of the system to drive competing groups from the public square. Instead, the goal is “managed” political competition, where “opposition” groups are guaranteed a limited voice in public affairs, including a degree of independent political space in the public square, in return for abiding by the rules set down by the government. Such an arrangement serves several purposes: it legitimizes the electoral system by providing for genuine multiparty elections; it retards the development of uncontrolled opposition forces; and it gives to opposition “elites” the opportunity to enter the political system.³⁷

For such a system to function, however, there must be a limited number of political parties that can dispense favors and serve as effective transmission belts between the state and their respective interests in society. Political liberalization in Mexico (after 1917) and in Russia (after the Communist Party abandoned its claim to a “guiding role” when Article 5 of the Soviet Constitution was repealed in 1990) led to the rise of dozens of small political parties, largely unable to form working coalitions or to forge any sort of cooperative arrangements.

In Mexico, one of the major steps taken by Calles, first in his capacity as president, and then as a key organizer of what was to become the PRI, was to encourage the consolidation of many small political movements, many based around specific regions or personalities, into larger blocs. Whereas Mexico had fifty-one registered parties in 1929, that number had shrunk to four by 1933.³⁸ A 1946 law required that parties have at least thirty thousand members and be represented in two-thirds of the states of Mexico. Recent legislation passed in Russia on the organization and registration of political parties aims to produce the same effect, by requiring parties to have at least ten thousand members, have organized chapters in no less than half of Russia’s eighty-nine “subjects of the federation,” and have a minimum of fifty registered members in each region. The explicit goal of this legislation is to encourage party consolidation and to hold out the threat that parties that do not move to consolidate face the loss of their ability to contest elections, have seated members of the legislature, or have access to the media.³⁹

In Russia, the merger between Yedinstvo and Fatherland/All Russia has creat-

ed the conditions for the emergence of a two-party system, with one—the presidential party—as the ruling party. The KPRF, the only other major national political force, is being cast in the role of opposition. Indeed, polling undertaken in December 2001 indicates that the new party of Unity and Fatherland enjoys the support of some 56 percent of the populace, with the KPRF set to become the principal opposition party with 32 percent, while several other small parties (such as Yabloko) pick up the remainder.⁴⁰

In Mexico, managed democracy under the PRI gave the other registered parties some guaranteed representation within the Congress and other state bodies, as well as access to the media and the larger “public square.” There were practical

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reasons for this, for it not only gave the opposition a “voice within the system” but also provided a means “to channel discontent and to increase the prospects for co-optation” for opposition elements.⁴¹ As one observer of the Mexican political system noted, the PRI, “in order to maintain . . . the trappings of democracy[,] . . . would allow the opposition

parties to snap up some morsels, translated into terms in Congress and state governments of lesser import.”⁴²

Because the PRI defined itself as a populist-revolutionary party, it could not always completely encompass within itself more conservative elements (sections of the business community, partisans of the Catholic Church, etc.). This was particularly the case after the 1982 economic crisis, when a growing number of entrepreneurs felt that the PRI was mismanaging the economy to the detriment of the national welfare. These forces were drawn together into the National Action Party (*Partido Acción Nacional*, or PAN), which emerged as the principal opposition party to the PRI, along with some smaller leftist parties.⁴³ The PAN, by running candidates in presidential, congressional, and gubernatorial elections, helped to “assist the PRI to legitimize the electoral process.”⁴⁴ Moreover, as long as the PAN remained dominated by its traditional wing, which emphasized ideology over pragmatism, there was little risk that the PAN might seek to form electoral alliances with other parties to upset the status quo.⁴⁵

There are a number of indications that the Communist Party is being set up to play the role of a Russian PAN in the country’s political system. Luke March concluded that “the regime was using the [Communist Party] as a ‘sparring partner’ to ensure electoral victory over a weak opposition.”⁴⁶ The Communist Party has a number of features that would make it attractive to the regime as a “loyal opposition.” March noted:

[T]he party preserves organizational coherence and a national and regional electoral presence. Moreover, there is evidence of an increasing “symbiotic” relationship

with the regime, whereby the communist opposition is increasingly allowed into power as a very junior partner in order to block the emergence of more radical alternatives which might upset the elite status quo.⁴⁷

Although there are a number of informal rules governing managed competition in elections, the regime retains the ability to ensure a desired outcome through direct interference. In Mexico under the PRI, as in Russia under Yeltsin and Putin, fraud and corruption have marred the electoral process. Both have employed tactics ranging from outright ballot manipulation (stuffed or missing ballot boxes) to reliance on local leaders (governors and mayors) to place impediments in the path of opposition candidates.⁴⁸

Russia appears to be moving in the direction of having elections that are “free and fair” up to a point. Following the 2000 presidential election in Russia, Communist Party candidate Gennady Zyuganov alleged that there had been “mass violations” of election regulations to produce a victory for Vladimir Putin. In particular, Zyuganov complained that “the zone of falsification [of votes] has expanded sharply in comparison with the previous presidential elections [held in 1996]” and presented claims of “serious violations” in over twenty-five different regions of Russia. The Communist leader further noted that “there was a substantial increase in illegal interference by officials of the bodies of state power and local administration in the electoral process. . . . representatives of authority made even more open use of the advantage they held in their official positions with the aim of electing Vladimir Putin as president”—not only through illegal canvassing but through direct pressure on both voters and electoral commissions.⁴⁹

Competitive Regulation? The Business Community, Civil Society, and the State

In Mexico under the PRI, as in contemporary Russia, the regime’s desire for consensus and political stability creates the potential for conflict with an emerging civil society and an economic system grounded in the private sector.⁵⁰ Because the state does not own all economic assets and has ceded to the citizenry a broad zone of autonomy, it cannot simply dictate by fiat; autonomous groups do have access to resources that enable them to exist independent of state control. The state is not all-powerful; nonstate actors (businesses, churches, etc.) also have the ability to “shape the rules of the game”⁵¹—to negotiate with the state to set forth the zones for independent action and to fix the limits of acceptable behavior. As a result, pluralism must be managed, with some sort of equilibrium to regulate relations between the state and society’s principal actors.⁵²

In both systems, the first impulse is to regulate and coordinate rather than suppress: “The regime permits freedom and dissent up to the point at which tolerance causes it less trouble than repression, and that point is different for different freedoms.”⁵³ Pluralism is not an automatic threat to the regime, but the regime needs to develop a mechanism by which “groups are recognized,” and that permits the political authorities to regulate and constrain their behavior.⁵⁴ Unpredictability, rather than diversity, is the primary threat to the stability of the

regime.⁵⁵ In Mexico, the challenge of pluralism was met through state coordination. The president took the initiative in negotiating “pacts” with the key nonstate actors, such as the church, the business community, and the media.⁵⁶

A managed democracy requires a managed economy. The regime’s control of the bureaucracy enables it to use its regulatory authority to reward friends and punish foes by granting or withholding permits, licenses, tax breaks, and contracts. Thus, a certain lack of transparency within the economy permits the exchange of favors and influence that help to align political and economic interests.⁵⁷

As occurred with political parties, in the economy there has been a tendency in both Mexico and Russia to favor consolidation of small, decentralized actors into large entities, at the expense of medium and small businesses. In Mexico, the dominant position in the economy is held by the *grupos*, which represent combinations of industrial, commercial, financial, and investment firms.⁵⁸ These groups are oligarchical in nature and are often family-run conglomerates. They have often been compared with the *zaibatsu* of Japan—companies that enjoy a high degree of vertical as well as horizontal integration, dominating either entire sectors or particular regions of the economy.⁵⁹ In turn, the *grupos* negotiated with the state and with the regime-controlled labor unions (encompassed within the *Confederación de Trabajadores Mexicanos*) to work out the basic framework of economic relations: in return for state protectionism and little or no labor unrest, the business community was supposed to ensure workers’ job security, a basic standard of social insurance, and steady growth rates.⁶⁰ Meanwhile, “official” businessmen’s organizations (such as *concanaco*, the Confederation of Chambers of Commerce of Mexico) served as liaisons between the regime and the business community.

The Russian counterpart to the *grupos* are the so-called financial-industrial groups, formed when industrial companies and banks came together through cross-ownership arrangements, combining financial capital with managerial experience. As Tatiana Popova concluded, “Both government-induced and market-driven financial-industrial groups became important factors shaping the development of the Russian economy.”⁶¹

After 1994, the Yeltsin administration made a conscious decision that it preferred to deal with large economic groupings rather than thousands of small businesses. The Russian economy was thus privatized in large blocs. Close ties between the business and political elites were thus maintained, highlighting the importance in post-Soviet Russia of the “capital of power” for the development of business conglomerates.⁶²

State capitalism “the Putin way,” as it appears to be emerging, is not an attempt to return to state ownership of the means of production. Although the state may continue to play a role in the military and technology sectors, it will primarily guide the overall course and direction of economic development through consultation and coordination of the major private holding companies.⁶³ Thus, it appears that an organization like the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs is emerging as one of the principal liaisons between the state and the business community, functioning as a “center of dialogue.”⁶⁴ In particular, the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs is being used by the president as a sounding board; its

working groups draw up proposals for the consideration of the president and comment on legislative initiatives affecting business and the economy in the State Duma.⁶⁵ Another area where business and political interests can dialogue is in the upper chamber of the legislature, the Federation Council. Alexei Kara-Murza, director of the Center on Theoretical Problems of Russian Reform, has called attention to the presence in the Federation Council of representatives tied to the major financial-industrial groups of Russia.⁶⁶

Other nonbusiness actors in civil society must also negotiate their place within the overall order created and maintained by the regime. One way is to opt completely out of politics. In Mexico, the Roman Catholic Church reached an accommodation with the PRI; in return for staying out of politics, the Church would enjoy relative freedom to pursue its religious mission:

Churches are organizations and they bring individuals together. The regime would not tolerate the church as a powerful political organization, capable of influencing national policy and even challenging the regime. The *modus vivendi* meant that the church surrendered this political power in return for guarantees, legal and tacit, of its legitimacy as a religious organization. Today the church has the freedom to function as it sees fit, within this context.⁶⁷

In other cases, social groups were encouraged to affiliate to state-backed or state-controlled organizations. Whenever possible, the regime encouraged the development of a “co-optation/partnership” model of interaction between the state and civil society.⁶⁸

Some have argued that similar trends are under way in Russia toward the creation of a “nonthreatening” civil society.⁶⁹ This is where different groups accept the broad outlines sketched out by the regime yet remain free to disagree on more specific matters.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, the emphasis is on promoting “a dialogue of public forces and their leaders in the interest of uniting its forces in service to the fatherland and nation.”⁷¹ The Civic Forum, which met last autumn in Moscow, was billed as a way to build linkages between civil society and the leadership, “to find some form for society’s peaceful mobilization.”⁷² Critics see this as a first step to the regulation of groups in civil society—having them pass “inspection” to ensure that the consensus that the regime has been promoting is not disturbed or seriously challenged.⁷³ Others have pointed to allegations of Kremlin interference in the affairs of the nongovernmental sector, such as in the election of the chief rabbi of the Jewish community in 2000, as further signs of a desire on the part of the regime to coordinate and regulate civil society.⁷⁴ Levy and Székely’s assessment about pluralism in Mexico under the PRI also sums up the direction events are taking in Putin’s Russia: “Extensive pluralist freedoms coexist with significant authoritarian restrictions in more sensitive areas Pluralist compromises in effecting political leadership and policy change coexist with authoritarian denial of public influence and accountability.”⁷⁵

Handling Dissent

If a managed democracy attempts to define the size and boundaries of the public square (as well as control access to it through coordination and regulation), this

still does not solve all potential clashes between the regime and the public. What happens when a newspaper, a religious community, or a business entity tests (or even crosses) the limits laid out by the regime for “acceptable” challenges?

Outright censorship or persecution carries high costs for a managed democracy—unless the repression can be hidden (especially if it takes place in remote areas of the country).⁷⁶ After all, a good deal of its legitimacy comes from its claim to be democratic, and a blatant violation of democratic norms risks its credibility in the international arena⁷⁷ and undercuts domestic stability.⁷⁸ Even when the state may not care for a particular actor, upholding constitutional freedoms may be seen as something necessary to prevent bureaucrats or other state func-

tionaries from gaining too much power to effectively challenge state policies; in other words, the state may feel that inculcating respect for the rule of law outweighs the short-term advantage of shutting down a wayward group.⁷⁹ In discussing why a number of authoritarian-minded Mexican presidents and governors tolerated the existence of critical

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media outlets, Levy and Székely concluded that, by permitting open displays of dissent, respect for constitutional freedoms “buttressed stability by enhancing the regime’s image, legitimacy, and support base.”⁸⁰

In making the decision whether to tolerate or repress dissent, a key factor to consider is the nature and extent of the deviation from the norm. In the Mexican case, the degree to which deviation from the norm was permitted in public depended to a great deal on whether it was expressed by an individual or on an ad hoc basis or whether it represented the beginnings of a larger systemic challenge to the status quo by an organized group. Although not a perfect indicator, dissent was less likely to be repressed if it was expressed by scattered groups of individuals or in media with small audiences (e.g., an academic monograph as opposed to a mass-distributed daily newspaper) and more likely to be a cause of concern for the regime if it originated from a well-organized social group or was displayed in mass media.⁸¹

Certainly, the state has at its disposal a number of legal-administrative tools to bring dissenters to heel, including sudden tax audits, the opening of criminal investigations, the withdrawal of licenses or other government privileges, or the selective application of legislation, including clauses dealing with national security.⁸² Another option is for the state to withdraw the protection of law and order from dissenters, leaving them and their offices vulnerable to assault by criminals or other “shadow” operatives who might have sub-rosa connections to the regime.⁸³ Such measures, however, are generally only used in extreme circumstances. More often, the managed democracy prefers to use subtler instruments,

relying on intermediaries (such as stockholders or shareholders concerned about their connections to the regime, or advertisers who can be pressured to withdraw their business) or finding a pretext (labor unrest, management disputes, even appeals to patriotism) that will enable the regime to pressure the actor to modify, mute, or curtail dissent, yet give the state the ability to deny that any direct interference has taken place.⁸⁴

The *Excélsior* case provides an interesting case study of how the PRI in Mexico managed dissent, and it contains a number of interesting parallels to recent developments in Russia, particularly those surrounding the fate of TV-6.⁸⁵ From 1968 until its editor-in-chief, Julio Scherer García, was ousted in 1976, *Excélsior* was Mexico's leading progressive daily newspaper, often very critical of the PRI's domestic and foreign policies. The paper hired some of Mexico's most prominent intellectuals as correspondents and columnists and gained a worldwide reputation as the leading daily newspaper in Latin America. Under editor Scherer, *Excélsior* began to skirt, and then cross over, lines of "acceptable" dissent for a Mexican daily newspaper, including directly criticizing the president and questioning the commitment of the regime to true political and economic reform.

Initially, the regime had been prepared to tolerate *Excélsior*, in part because President Luis Echeverría had, early in his presidency, made it clear that he was willing to promote a greater degree of openness in Mexican society, even to the point of providing some subsidies for *Excélsior*. Such policies also helped to burnish a positive image of his administration, both within Mexico and internationally. Over time, however, the frequency and tenor of *Excélsior's* criticism of Echeverría and his presidency eroded the patience of the president and his advisors. Nevertheless, because of the prominence of the paper, an outright assault by the state was not a feasible option.

There are three identifiable prongs in the regime's campaign against *Excélsior*. The first was the "attack of the intermediaries." Businesses withdrew advertising, and the regime funneled subsidies and support to other media outlets willing to attack the newspaper. *Televisa*, the privately owned television channel⁸⁶ of the influential financial-industrial network the Monterrey Group, spearheaded the broadcast assault against the "unpatriotic" daily. The second was a dispute between the newspaper and peasant squatters living on land owned by *Excélsior*, which hoped to construct apartment buildings there and use the revenues for supporting the newspaper. The peasants, quietly aided by PRI officials, who provided transport and supplies for the squatters, resisted efforts by *Excélsior* to expel them and invoked Mexico's land reform laws in support of their claims to the unused land. This incident allowed the state to shift the emphasis from press freedom to land reform. Finally, the regime was able to find allies within the paper, which was structured as an employees' cooperative; editor Scherer was not an owner, but simply an employee of the paper. On 8 July 1976, he and his editorial board were forced out. The Mexican government took the position that this was simply a matter internal to the paper's cooperative, with the workers exercising their rights as cooperative members to replace the paper's leadership.

At no time, however, did the government ever directly interfere with *Excélsior's*

freedom of speech. Indeed, Scherer, as editor, had even taken part in government-sponsored functions such as “Liberty of the Press” day, at which the regime reiterated its commitment to media freedom. Instead, each “prong” of the campaign enabled the regime to deflect the issue away from press freedom and the limits of dissent. The main goal of the PRI had been to break up a concentrated and influential center of dissent into more manageable pieces. Scherer loyalists created a weekly magazine called *Proceso*, while other columnists migrated to other outlets. Criticism could continue, but it was more muted in its effect. Moreover, the regime (under Echeverría’s successor, José López Portillo) continued its dance with *Proceso*, promising full press liberty, yet making it difficult for *Proceso* to obtain paper, and later cutting off state advertising, affecting its revenues.

After reviewing the *Excelsior* case, Levy and Székely concluded that it “reminds us that repression lies within the regime’s logic, but it does not prove that such repression is inevitable or constant. It also illustrates the regime’s adeptness at acting in insidious fashion to accomplish ends it would not openly declare.”⁸⁷ Such an observation also bears true in contemporary Russia, where attempts to curb the independent media have often been masked under the cover of “dispute resolution” between competing business and economic interests.⁸⁸ The *Excelsior* case also highlights what remains one of the principal weaknesses of the media in managed democracies—the lack of true financial independence, either from the state itself or from corporations that are co-opted by the state. In fact, most Russian broadcast and print media outlets are vulnerable to internal manipulation because their shareholders are either state-controlled corporations or economic entities that, although private, are prepared to work with the state to preserve their own privileges.⁸⁹ Vladimir Pozner summed this up when, in assessing the Russian media landscape, he pithily observed, “Do not think about your independence if you are not economically solvent.”⁹⁰

Implications

What I have attempted to sketch out in this article are salient points of comparison between the Mexican past and the Russian present. There are, of course, other areas that need to be further examined. In particular, the Russian government should pay close attention to Mexico’s experience in trying to use oil revenue both to upgrade the standard of living and to obtain capital for economic development. The “all-out production and export program” that Mexico adopted during the 1970s bears many similarities with plans to aggressively develop Russia’s oil and gas sector and to use export revenues as a means of funding development projects (as well as financing the state budget).⁹¹

The similarities between Mexico under the PRI and contemporary Russia should help to put to rest any lingering remnants of the view that Russia and the other successor states of the former Soviet Union “do not follow the same path as any other region of the world”⁹² and that the Russian case is “unique” and incomparable to any other. Furthermore, the evolution of Russia from a “totalitarian” party-state into a managed democracy highlights what Thomas Carothers has observed: the “normal” condition for most states is not some sort of prolonged

“transition” to democracy, but a stable “middle ground” between “full-fledged democracy and outright dictatorship.”⁹³ If that is in fact the case, then the first question is whether such managed democracies are necessary.

Yu Liu observes that “time is needed for democracy to be transformed from an ideal to a reality,”⁹⁴ especially if the old elites were not displaced by revolutionary upheaval. This is especially true for a country that has experienced catastrophic state failure, as Mexico did between 1910 and 1917 and as Russia did, as part of the USSR, in 1991. Indeed, “for Russia, the collapse of a gigantic imperial state without large-scale social turmoil and civil war is itself a huge success.”⁹⁵ Managed democracy may offer to Russia the stability and breathing room it requires to nurture new institutions that can protect a liberal democracy. Managed democracies may also be necessary when there exists a serious societal schism between the proponents of “liberalism” (high value on economic freedom, with guarantees of property rights and of law and order) and “democracy” (respecting social and political rights), a state of affairs that sociologist Georgy Satarov observes in present-day Russia. Like Robert Dahl, with his “twenty-year rule” for the emergence of developed, mature democracies, Satarov believes that it will take a generation for Russia to fully evolve into a truly liberal democracy.⁹⁶

This then raises the second question: Can a managed democracy give way to developed democracy, and can it do so without serious unrest? Again, Mexico may provide the answers for Russia. The PRI system began to be delegitimized as it was unable to guarantee continued economic growth. Moreover, a growing split within the PRI, between the old-time *políticos*, the party functionaries, and the technocrats who stressed the need for systemic change, undermined the stability of the ruling regime. When a substantial minority of PRI activists (especially those who backed the populist reformer Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas in his bid to succeed Miguel de la Madrid as president) broke with the official party, joining with several smaller leftist parties to form the *Partido de la Revolución Democrática* (the Party of the Democratic Revolution, or PRD) in 1988, the PRI’s hold on the electoral system began to weaken. Increasingly, both the PAN and PRD began to push for substantive electoral reform, and during the 1990s non-PRI candidates began to win more mayoral and gubernatorial races, breaking down the PRI’s patronage and electoral networks.⁹⁷ Mexico’s growing economic integration with the United States also strengthened the move toward greater economic and political openness. Some of the *grupos*, for example, began to forge closer links with (or even become subsidiaries of) major multinational corporations, weakening their dependence on the state. Finally, opposition political parties, the mass media, and other elements within civil society proved willing to push beyond the limits imposed by the ruling PRI, aided by growing economic independence and by the technocratic elements within the PRI who were convinced that closer U.S.–Mexican integration was vital for Mexico’s future. All of these factors culminated in the election of PAN candidate Vicente Fox as president on 2 July 2000.⁹⁸

Perhaps greater Russian integration into the global economy could create conditions whereby economic actors—and thus the civil society institutions that they

support, such as political parties and media outlets—will acquire greater independence from the regime. Yedinstvo could fragment into factions; this could especially be important should there be no obvious candidate to succeed Putin as president in 2008. Most important, the current social consensus that a managed democracy and the stability it engenders are a necessary “tutorial” before Russia will fully transition to a developed democracy might erode over time, leading to a gradual broadening of the limits currently imposed on pluralism. At any rate, it behooves those interested in Russia to pay greater attention to Mexico as a model and guide for Russia in the twenty-first century.

NOTES

1. “Managed democracy” in the Mexican (and Russian) cases can be described under the rubric of a “dominant-power” system, where there is “limited but still real political space, some political contestation by opposition groups, and at least most of the basic institutional forms of democracy.” However, the state plays a role in controlling the number of groups allowed access to the public square, as well as delineating the limits of debate and deviation from the social norm. One might also cite as a feature of managed democracy that although personnel turnover and electoral rotations of offices occur, there is no fundamental change of regime from one election to the next. See Thomas Carothers, “The End of the Transition Paradigm,” *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 1 (January 2002): 11–12; and Nikolas K. Gvosdev, “Tolerance versus Pluralism: The Eurasian Dilemma,” *Analysis of Current Events* 12, no. 7–8 (December 2000): 10; see also Robert Dahl’s discussion of “mature polyarchies” in his *Democracy and Its Critics* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 312–17. The term “managed democracy” has recently been applied to Russia both by Yegor Gaidar and Grigory Yavlinsky, in their respective remarks made at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, D.C., on 13 June 2002 and 31 January 2002, respectively.

2. W. L. White, *Report on the Russians* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1945), esp. 86, 113–114. A more recent example of this type of comparison was provided by Paul Hollander in his *Discontents: Postmodern and Postcommunist* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2002), 321.

3. Guillermo O’Donnell, *On the State, Democratization, and Some Conceptual Problems (A Latin American View with Glances at Some Post Communist Countries)*, working paper 192 (Notre Dame, IN: Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, 1993); Robert S. Leiken, “With a Friend Like Fox,” *Foreign Affairs* 80, no. 5 (September/October 2001): 102–03. Russia-Mexico comparisons have also been drawn by speakers at the Gorbachev Foundation, including Valentin Falin and Mikhail Gorbachev, in assessing the path and progress of post-Soviet Russian democracy.

4. Daniel Levy and Gabriel Székely, *Mexico: Paradoxes of Stability and Change* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1987), esp. 22, 29, 32–33; Gordon B. Smith, *Soviet Politics: Continuity and Contradiction* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1988), esp. 8–13.

5. Dmitriy Furman, “The World Community and Us,” *Obshchaya Gazeta*, 6 December 2001, 8, cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2001-1207, 7 December 2001.

6. See, for example, the comments made by presidential advisor Gleb Pavlovsky. Sergey Kredov, “Allies without Payment Up Front,” *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 12 October 2001, 7, cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2001-1012, 12 October 2001.

7. Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 1, 37, 49–50, 92.

8. For example, these were the comments made by Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin in his presentation to the U.S.–Russia Business Council during his visit to Washington, D.C., on 5 October 2001.

9. Guillermo O'Donnell highlighted this problem by pointing out that in both Latin America and Eastern Europe, one had to be prepared for the emergence of a state "that completely mixes, functionally and territorially, important democratic and authoritarian characteristics. . . . the authoritarian dimension intermixes completely and powerfully with the democratic one." O'Donnell, "On the State," 10–11.

10. David A. Shirk, however, points out the important role played by the opposition PAN (National Action Party), with its insistence on free and fair elections and a competitive multiparty system, in helping to facilitate this transition. See his "Vicente Fox and the Rise of the PAN," *Journal of Democracy* 11, no. 4 (2000): 25.

11. For Mexico, cf. Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, esp. 26–32; for Russia, cf. Christopher Marsh, *Making Russian Democracy Work: Social Capital, Economic Development, and Democratization* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2000), esp. 46–65.

12. Sociologist Georgy Satarov identified the late 1990s as the period of the "decay of the regime" in Russia when "the 'revolutionary' politicians and their opponents had exhausted their ardor." Anna Ostapchuk, "Survey Examines Putin Electorate, Russians' Ideological Preferences," *Moscow News*, 22 November 2000, cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2000-1218, 18 December 2000.

13. Marsh, *Making Russian Democracy Work*, 58.

14. John J. Bailey, *Governing Mexico: The Statecraft of Crisis Management* (New York: St. Martin's, 1988), 29.

15. Guillermo O'Donnell, *Delegative Democracy*, working paper 172 (Notre Dame, IN: Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, 1993), 8.

16. Antonio Amaral de Sampaio, "Commentary," *O Estado de Sao Paulo*, on-line version, 6 July 2000; cited in *World News Connection: Latin America*, FBIS-LAT-2000-0706, 6 July 2000. The Russian president is also sometimes categorized as an "elected monarch." See the comments of Lilya Shevtsova, *Johnson's Russia List*, 12 January 2000, and Igor Klyamkin, *Politruck* 18 (5 September 2000).

17. O'Donnell, *Delegative Democracy*, 7–9. One key presidential power in both the Mexican-PRI and Russian presidential systems that reinforces the leading role of the chief executive is the ability to issue decrees that have the effective force of law.

18. For a taste of the pre-Putin speculation as to Yeltsin's successor, see Natalya Timakova, "Interfax Views Kremlin Reaction to Luzkov, Primakov," *Interfax*, 22 June 1999; for a discussion of the maneuvering within Yeltsin's circle and the process leading up to the selection of Putin, see Natalya Timakova, "Who Will Be Yeltsin's Successor," issued by *Interfax* on 9 August 1999. For a discussion of the process in PRI Mexico, see Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 110–11.

19. Olga Kostromina, "Russian Patriarch Congratulates Putin," *ITAR-TASS*, 28 March 2000. Cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2000-0328, 28 March 2000.

20. "Unity Reasserts Itself as a Presidential Party," *Interfax*, 28 October 2000; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2000-1028, 28 October 2000.

21. Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 37.

22. O'Donnell, "Delegative Democracy," 7–9.

23. The PRI maintained "sections" to represent the interests and concerns of Mexico's major social, political, and economic actors, including peasants, workers, professionals, youth, businessmen, and women. Compare George W. Grayson, "Mexico: Guerillas, Protesters Bedevil President Fox," *Foreign Policy Research Institute E-Notes*, 17 August 2001, <<http://www.fpri.org/enotes/latin.20010817.grayson.protestorsguerillasfox.html>>.

24. Interview with President Ernesto Zedillo, *El Pais*, 18 January 1996, 10.

25. Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 37–38.

26. *Ibid.*, 71.

27. "Democratic Russia/Russia's Choice," for example, became identified with Yegor Gaidar; "Our Home is Russia" with Viktor Chernomyrdin, the "Union of Rightist Forces" with Sergei Kiriyyenko, and the "Fatherland/All Russia" movement with Yevgeny Primakov

and Moscow mayor Yuri Luzhkov. Each of these movements and parties tried to portray itself as a "party of power." See Christopher Marsh, *Russia at the Polls: Voters, Elections, and Democratization* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2002), 78–79, 87–89.

28. "Putin Details Criteria for Russia To Prosper," *ITAR-TASS*, 28 December 1999; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-1999-1228, 28 December 1999.

29. Nikolay Krivous, "We Are Not Going to Create Another CPSU," *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, on-line version, 26 October 2001; cited in *World News Connection: Near East and South Asia*, FBIS-NES-2001-1029, 29 October 2001.

30. Vladislav Vorobyev, "1+2=1," *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 30 November 2001, 5; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2001-1130, 30 November 2001.

31. Marina Chernukha, "Yuriy Luzhkov: The People's Trust is Our Goal," *Trud*, 1 December 2001, cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2001-1203, 3 December 2001. One of the ways in which the PRI sought to mobilize public support was through sloganeering ("To Justice By Liberty," "We Are All the Solutions," etc.). Chernukha points out that the Unity and Fatherland program continues a number of similar-sounding proclamations: "A Country of Free People," "A Prosperous Country," or "A Just Society."

32. Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 114.

33. During the December 2001 congress that led to the merger, Putin exhibited a certain public ambivalence about identifying the party with his presidency, although he stated that "in the party's Higher Council, as we can see, there are many people who are widely known in the country, earned popular respect, and occupy quite a high position in the state and social hierarchy. But it would be too hasty for the party to announce itself as a party of power." Putin, however, did not accept any sort of leadership post within the party; the chair of its higher council remains Sergey Shoigu, the long-standing minister of emergencies and initial organizer of Yedinstvo in 1999. Significantly, "the question of whether the incumbent Russian president will stand at the head of the All-Russian Party Unity and Fatherland, which has excited many people until now, has been automatically postponed for a while." Tamara Shkel, "Renunciation of Power by a Party," *Rossiiskaya Gazeta*, 4 December 2001, 2; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2001-1205, 5 December 2001.

34. "Cadres of the Year," *Vremya MN*, 9 January 2002; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2002-0109, 9 January 2002.

35. "President Putin Calls for Healthy Political Competition in Society," *ITAR-TASS*, 1 December 2001; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2001-1201, 1 December 2001.

36. "President Urges Political Forces to Promote Democracy," *Agence France-Presse*, 21 January 1995.

37. Bailey, *Governing Mexico*, 12.

38. Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 37.

39. See Nikolas K. Gvosdev, "Managing Pluralism: The Human Rights Challenge of the New Century," *World Policy Journal* 18, no. 4 (winter 2001/02): 51.

40. "Poll Shows Less Russians Support Communist Party," *Interfax*, 29 November 2001; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2001-1129, 29 November 2001.

41. Peter H. Smith, "Leadership and Change: Intellectuals and Technocrats in Mexico," in *Mexico's Political Stability: The Next Five Years*, ed. Roderic A. Camp (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 106.

42. Amaral de Sampaio, "Commentary."

43. Shirk, "Vicente Fox and the Rise of the PAN," 26, 28.

44. Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 74–75.

45. Shirk, "Vicente Fox and the Rise of the PAN," 28–29. A major change during the 1990s was the rise of a new brand of PAN activists who emphasized greater flexibility in coping with the PRI, especially by forming new electoral coalitions. David Shirk's article

helps to explain this process, which lies outside the bounds of this article.

46. Luke March, "The Russian Communist Party in 2000: A Cosmetic Opposition?" *Analysis of Current Events* 12, no. 7-8 (December 2000): 17.

47. March, "The Russian Communist Party in 2000," 19.

48. For a discussion of tactics in Mexico under the PRI, particularly during the 1970s and 1980s, see Amaral de Sampaio, "Commentary"; Grayson, "Mexico: Guerillas, Protesters Bedevil President Fox"; and Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 68–71. For the 1996 and 2000 presidential elections in Russia, see Marsh, *Russia at the Polls*, 101–19, and for regional and local elections, 137–38.

49. "Zyuganov Alleges 'Mass Violations' in Elections," *Interfax*, 4 April 2000; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2000-0404, 4 April 2000.

50. See, for example, Vladimir Pozner's discussion of the tug-of-war over media freedom in Russia as a consequence of the divergence of state and private interests. "State Television-Radio Show and Tell," *Obshchaya Gazeta*, 17 January 2002, 1; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2002-0118, 18 January 2002.

51. "Explaining the Post-Soviet Patchwork: A View from Berlin," comments of Dr. Klaus Segbers, *Meeting Report—Carnegie Endowment for International Piece*, 6 March 2001.

52. This is generally set out, whether formally or informally, in a "governing pact" that sets forth the rules of the political system. See Grayson, "Mexico: Guerillas, Protesters Bedevil President Fox."

53. Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 123.

54. John J. Bailey, "The Impact of Major Groups on Policy-Making Trends in Government-Business Relations in Mexico," in *Mexico's Political Stability*, 120.

55. Dmitriy Furman: "The Disintegration of Public Politics," *Obshchaya Gazeta*, 20 December 2001; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2001-1221, 21 December 2001.

56. Bailey, *Governing Mexico*, 37.

57. Grayson, "Mexico: Guerillas, Protesters Bedevil President Fox." Government restrictions, lack of transparency, and corruption, among other things, meant that Mexico, during the period of PRI governance (as well as contemporary Russia under Yeltsin and Putin) has consistently been rated as "partially free" in the rankings undertaken by Freedom House. Some have coined the term *tramitismo* (from *trámite*, a bureaucratic procedure) to describe this phenomenon.

58. Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 61.

59. Gerardo Benitez, "Where is Mexican Business Headed?" *Documents on Mexican Politics* (1995), <<http://www.cs.unb.ca/~alopez-o/politics/wherebusiness.html>>, accessed 12 February 2002.

60. *Ibid.*

61. Tatiana Popova, "Curse or Blessing? Financial-Industrial Groups in Russia," *Transition Newsletter*, July-August 1999, 14–15.

62. Yu Liu, "Russia's Fall, China's Rise? Comparing Transitions of Russia and China, Part II," *Perspectives* 2, no. 6 (2001), at <<http://www.oycf.org>>, accessed 12 February 2002.

63. Grigoriy Tikhonov, "Strong Moves by Putin," *Tribuna*, 30 March 2001; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2001-0402, 4 April 2001.

64. "Russian Oligarch Praises Putin, Slams Bureaucracy," *RIA*, 4 July 2001; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2001-0704, 4 July 2001.

65. Yelena Tokareva, "Assignment for the Fall—The Business Elite Are Trying to Cure Their Self-Centeredness," *Obshchaya Gazeta*, 9 August 2001; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2001-0809, 9 August 2001.

66. "Cadres of the Year," *Vremya MN*. This pattern is also being repeated at the regional level, as financial-industrial groups carve out regional centers of influence. See "Financial-Industrial Groups Drive Transformation of Regional Elites," *Russian Federation*

Report 4, no. 6 (20 February 2002): 1.

67. Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 89.

68. For example, the Independent Peasant Confederation was encouraged, through a mix of repression and inducements, to join the state-controlled peasants' movement (the National Peasant Confederation). Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 60. Levy and Székely conclude that co-optation is the strategy best employed for dealing with "mass" movements, whereas more elite groups and interests are encouraged to seek a practical accommodation with the state. See 109–10 for a greater discussion.

69. Furman, "Disintegration."

70. Attempts are being made to offset the centrifugal effects of ethnic, religious, political, and philosophical diversity in post-Soviet Russia through promotion of the idea that, in the midst of plurality, there is a consensus, around both certain core values that define "Russian-ness" and the general direction for Russian policy. See, for example, the statements of Patriarch Alexei II to Putin (after his election) and Putin's address to the patriarch on the tenth anniversary of his enthronement. Olga Kostromina, "Russian Patriarch Congratulates Putin," *ITAR-TASS*, 28 March 2000. Cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2000-0328, 28 March 2000, and Reuters, 9 June 2000.

71. Quoting V. Rev. Vsevolod Chaplin, in Nikolas K. Gvosdev, "The New Party Card? Orthodoxy and the Search for Post-Soviet Russian Identity," *Problems of Post-Communism* 47, no. 6 (November/December 2000): 32.

72. Kredov, "Allies without Payment Up Front," 7.

73. Furman, "Disintegration." In Baskhkortostan, for example, Rustem Khamitov, the chief federal inspector, plans to open a department that will serve as a liaison to the NGO community. See the *Russian Federation Report 4*, no. 12 (3 April 2002): 2.

74. Natalia Zubkova, "Kremlin Still Has Not Named Chief Rabbi," *Inostranets*, 4 July 2000; translated and archived by Paul D. Steeves, "News on Religion in Russia," at <<http://www.stetson.edu/~psteeves/relnews>>, accessed 14 February 2002; see also Lawrence Uzzell, "Let's Press Russia, Others on Religious Freedom Issues," *Dallas Morning News*, 14 February 2002, at <<http://www.dallasnews.com/>>. On 5 February 2002, a member of the Yedinstvo faction of the Duma, Alexander Chuev, introduced draft legislation, "On Traditional Religious Organizations in the Russian Federation." If enacted, this legislation would reclassify religious groups in Russia and give to those deemed "traditional" special status in Russian society, including tax-exempt status and the ability to enter into partnership agreements with the state for joint activity in the social sphere (education, charity and welfare, etc.) Recognition of "traditional" religious organizations would be conferred by a commission whose members would be named by the president. If enacted, this legislation would give to the presidency an enormous degree of leverage in determining which groups would be able to function in the public square. Chuev indicated in his remarks that Putin supported the draft when he met with him on 12 December 2001. "Deputy Chuev: Size Makes A Religion Traditional," *Mir Religii*, 6 February 2002; translated and archived by Paul D. Steeves, "News on Religion in Russia," at <<http://www.stetson.edu/~psteeves/relnews>>, accessed 14 February 2002.

75. Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 125.

76. Amaral de Sampaio, "Commentary."

77. The sensitivity of the Russian government to international criticism over the handling of the TV-6 affair is a case in point; see "Russia Tells EU Pasko, TV6 Cases Not Political," *Interfax*, 5 February 2002; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2002-0205, 5 February 2002. Some have argued that Mexico's desire for continued good relations with the United States, as well as the threat that the desperately needed Mexico-EU pact would not be ratified prior to the July 2000 elections, were critical factors in ensuring reasonably free and fair elections that year.

78. Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 110.

79. See Jeffrey Kahn, "Canaries in the Coal-Mine: Early Warning Signals for Putin's Federal Reforms," *Russian Federation Report 4*, no. 5 (13 February 2002): 5–8.

80. Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 123.

81. *Ibid.*, 91–95.

82. See Bailey, *Governing Mexico*, 26, and “First Page. Zaostrovetsism—OG’s Version,” *Obshchaya Gazeta*, 29 November 2001, 1–2; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2001-1206, 6 December 2001.

83. Journalists who work to expose corruption are particularly vulnerable. Consider the unsolved murders of Mexican journalists Manuel Buendia (May 1984) and José Martin Dorantes (June 1994), or of Russian journalists Igor Domnikov (May 2000) and Dmitry Kholudov (October 1994)—all of whom were investigating stories about government or military corruption or collusion with organized crime at the time of their deaths.

84. For example, in discussing the events surrounding TV-6, Deputy Foreign Minister Yevgeny Gusarov took pains to stress that the reasons for the shutdown of the controversial television station were internal to the station’s management and shareholders and that the Russian government remained committed to defending free speech in the mass media. “Russia Tells EU,” *Interfax*.

85. For more details on the *Excelsior* case, see Smith, “Leadership and Change,” 105–06, and Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 99–104. For coverage of the TV-6 case, see Laura Belin, “Verdict Against TV-6 is Latest Warning to Opposition Media,” *Russian Political Weekly*, 15 October 2001; Laura Belin, “Will TV-6 Go Out with a Bang or a Whimper?” *Russian Political Weekly*, 10 December 2001; Julie A. Corwin, “End of the Line for TV-6,” *Russian Political Weekly*, 14 January 2002; Julie A. Corwin, “Close to the Madding Crowd,” *Russian Political Weekly*, 5 February 2002. All reports can be accessed at <<http://www.rferl.org/rpw/archives.asp>>.

86. *Televisa*, although privately owned, did have state representatives on its board, since it resulted from a merger between a private channel and a state distribution network.

87. Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 104.

88. Pozner, “State Television-Radio Show and Tell,” 1. Pozner notes that in curbing the independence of several Russian television channels, the state has never had to directly intervene. NTV (Independent Television) was vulnerable because of its massive debts to Gazprom, a state-controlled corporation; the state officially possessed 51 percent of the shares of ORT and thus invoked its right as majority shareholder to control the station’s management; and in the case of TV-6, the role of eminence grise was played by LUKoil, a private corporation with close ties to the government.

89. See, for example, the discussion revolving around the board of the radio station “Ekho Moskvyy.” “Russian Broadcasters Oppose Change of Independent Radio Station Board,” *Interfax*, 8 February 2002; cited in *World News Connection: Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-2002-0208, 8 February 2002.

90. Pozner, “State Television-Radio Show and Tell,” 1.

91. Amaral de Sampaio, “Commentary,” Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 237–44.

92. “Explaining the Post-Soviet Patchwork.”

93. Carothers, “The End of the Transition Paradigm,” 18.

94. Liu, “Russia’s Fall, China’s Rise?” Liu notes that “[a]lthough Russia’s brand of democracy has not evolved into an effective mechanism through which the public could supervise the government efficiently, it is obvious that basic political and civil rights have been respected.”

95. *Ibid.*

96. Ostapchuk, “Survey Examines Putin Electorate.”

97. Shirk, “Vicente Fox and the Rise of the PAN,” 27–28. The impact of the PRI-PRD schism should not be underestimated. Without discounting reports of electoral fraud and corruption in the countryside, where the PRI continues to exert a great deal of influence, Vicente Fox was elected with only a plurality of the vote (42.5 percent) in 2000; the other two major candidates (Francisco Labadista of the PRI and Cárdenas of the PRD) received 52.7 percent. Similarly, in the elections for the Chamber of Deputies, PRI and PRD deputies outnumber PAN ones 262 to 218.

98. Leiken, "With a Friend Like Fox," 91-92, 94-96, 101; also Benitez, "Where is Mexican Business Headed?"; Smith, "Leadership and Change," 101-18; Levy and Székely, *Mexico*, 119-21.

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