Failure of the Russian Democratic Reforms: The Democratization of the Big Bear

Nicolé M. Hicks, University of South Florida

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Major Professor
Darrell Slider, Ph.D.

Committee Member
Dajin Peng, Ph. D.

Committee Member
Earl Conteh-Morgan, Ph. D.

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Abstract
Looking back at the past twelve years, many would say that it appears Russia has lost the battle for liberal democratic reform. Among Russia watchers, the following question has been circulated: “Who lost Russia?” This debate has polarized most scholars into one of two camps: those who feel the reforms failed (the critics) and those who feel the reforms were a success (the supporters).

This paper will explain why the Russian reforms failed. By filling in the holes left by current research, the author will demonstrate that the truth may lie somewhere in between the two opposing sides.

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By now the reader will of course have noticed the disappointing dynamics during the period of democratization in Russia. Although the reform movement could ride a big wave of popular support in the early 1990s, by the middle of the decade it had lost energy and had even gone into reverse. Why? I wrote this book to provide a candid and accurate account of events that I participated in or was directly affected by and I hope it will help to answer this question. Paradoxes of democracy and democratization trends in Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus. 2005 / Atanesian Arthur. Political culture and democratization in Russia. 2014 / Vijay Kumar. An efficient and effective democracy at the local level: new alternatives to policy networks. Juxtaposing these two perspectives — democracy in a Russian mirror and Russia in the democratic mirror — turns out to be both revealing and demanding. Revisiting Russia's Electoral System Reform: The Importance of Context and Comparative Perspective. Government and Opposition, Vol. 44, Issue. 35 See among others, Jerry F. Hough, 'The Failure of Party Formation and the Future of Russian Democracy', in Timothy J. Colton and Jerry F. Hough (eds), Growing Pains: Russian Democracy and the Election of 1993, Washington, DC, Brookings Institution Press, 1998, pp. 669-711; Robert G. Moser, Unexpected Outcomes: Electoral Systems, Political Parties, and Representation in Russia, Pittsburgh, PA, Pittsburgh.