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Reviewed work(s):

Source: *World Politics*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (Jul., 1996), pp. 551-578

Published by: [Cambridge University Press](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25053981>

Accessed: 26/03/2012 13:21

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PERSONAL NETWORKS AND POSTREVOLUTIONARY STATE BUILDING

Soviet Russia Reexamined

By GERALD M. EASTER

WHY do some state-building efforts succeed and others fail? This question may seem to be a throwback for comparative politics, but in fact recent world events have refocused attention on precisely this issue. The collapse of communism across the nations and regions of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union has precipitated a resurgence of state-building activity unmatched in intensity and scope since the breakup of the colonial empires a half century ago.

This study contributes to the recent efforts of comparativists to extend the explanatory reach of state-building theory by redirecting attention to microlevel forces. Specifically, the study contends that personal networks provide an informal social structure, which under postrevolutionary conditions may facilitate successful state building. To test the utility of this contention, the study revisits a case once considered among the most successful state-building experiences of the twentieth century: postrevolutionary Soviet Russia.

The reexamination of this case is especially interesting at this time for several reasons. First, Soviet Russia was a paradigmatic case for some of the more influential comparative theories of state building, yet recent empirical findings have challenged the premises of the once conventional view. Second, the sudden and unexpected collapse of the Soviet state has invited a reconsideration of the underlying sources of support in a strong state. And finally, with the opening of previously closed archives in Russia, scholars now have access to a store of previously untapped empirical data on the state-building process.

I. STATE BUILDING, PERSONAL NETWORKS, AND SOVIET RUSSIA: THEORETICAL ISSUES

COMPARATIVE POLITICS AND STATE BUILDING

A decade and a half ago political comparativists refocused their research efforts on the state. The advocates of "bringing the state back in" were reacting to a perceived neglect of the causal role of state institutional structures in shaping political outcomes.¹ To many comparativists, the "statists" appeared to be staking out their claim by exaggerating and polemicizing their differences with the "behavioralists."² Moreover, the emphasis on a state-society dichotomy became an easy target for critics. Bob Jessop, for example, dismissed the state-society dichotomy as a "common-place distinction" with "superficial" and "misleading appeal."³

Despite such criticisms, comparative research on the state thrived in the 1980s.⁴ The efforts soon produced more nuanced conceptualizations of the state as a causal agent and greater sensitivity to the interactions between state and society. Michael Mann's influential article distinguishing a state's "despotic," or decision-making, powers from its "infrastructural," or implementation, powers brought some needed clarity to the discussion.⁵ From this distinction emerged a focus on state capacities, or capabilities, which offered more concrete subject matter for analysis. Capacities referred to functions of the early modern state concerning territorial administration, military-coercive power, and revenue extraction, as well as the later developed socioeconomic functions.⁶

Studies of state building increasingly sought to determine the extent to which central, or strategic, state actors were able to develop enduring institutional forms through which these capacities could be realized.⁷

¹ See, for example, Stephen Krasner, *Defending the National Interest: Raw Material Investments and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); and Eric Nordlinger, *On the Autonomy of the Democratic State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981).

² Gabriel Almond, *A Discipline Divided: Schools and Sects in Political Science* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1989), chap. 8.

³ Bob Jessop, *State Theory: Putting Capitalist States in Their Place* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), 2.

⁴ For an excellent overview of this literature, see Theda Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research," in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

⁵ Michael Mann, "The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms and Results," in John Hall, ed., *States in History* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986).

⁶ The classic definition is found in Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Interpretive Outline of Sociology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 2:901-5.

⁷ Among the many good examples of this work, see Charles Tilly, ed., *Formation of the National*

Scholars tended to gauge state capacity in "high-low" terms: states that developed a high capacity to perform these activities independent of societal influences were labeled "strong" states, whereas states that maintained a low capacity to perform these activities were labeled "weak" states.⁸ It was commonly found that most states exhibited high capacities in some areas and low capacities in other areas.⁹

To explain state-building outcomes, the literature tended to stress macrolevel causes, with the structure of the international environment frequently cited as a main determinant of state-building processes. Accordingly, the more hostile the international environment appeared to centrally located state actors, the greater the likelihood that measures would be undertaken to construct a strong state, or at least a state with well-developed coercive and extractive capacities.¹⁰ Likewise, it was argued that strong states were more likely to emerge in societies where macrolevel social and economic structures acted as obstacles to industrial development.¹¹ But it was exactly on the issue of causes and outcomes that the state-building literature spawned a new set of questions and criticisms, even among those sympathetic to the approach. Barbara Geddes aptly noted that "the short-coming of these macro-level explanations is that they describe virtually all developing countries"¹²

States of Western Europe (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975); Vivienne Shue, *The Reaches of the State: Sketches of the Chinese Politic* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1988); John Brewer, *Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988); Lisa Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation in Libya and Tunisia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); Peter Katzenstein, *Small States in World Markets* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1985); Stephen Skorownek, *Building a New American State: Expansion of National Administrative Capacities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); and Peter Hall, *Governing the Economy: The Politics of State Intervention in England and France* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1986).

⁸ Joel Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Societal Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 4-7. A good critique of the way in which comparativists have attempted to measure state capacity is Robert Jackman, *Power without Force: The Political Capacity of Nation-States* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), chap. 3. Robert Putnam has recently developed a more sophisticated comparative measurement of institutional performance, which includes comprehensiveness, internal consistency, reliability, and correspondence to objectives. See Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), chap. 3.

⁹ R. Kent Weaver and Bert Rockman, eds., *Do Institutions Matter? Government Capabilities in the United States and Abroad* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1993); G. John Ikenberry, *Reasons of State: Oil Politics and the Capacities of the American Government* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988).

¹⁰ Skocpol (fn. 1), 19-33; and John Hall and G. John Ikenberry, *The State* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

¹¹ Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Peter Evans, "The State and Economic Transformation," in Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol (fn. 4); and Alice Amsden, *Asia's Next Giant: South Korea and Late Industrialization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

¹² Geddes, "Building State Autonomy in Brazil, 1931-1964," *Comparative Politics* 22 (January 1990), 217.

Comparativists are now exploring new areas in an effort to extend the explanatory reach of state-building theory. This search has led to a reconceptualization of the state as a microlevel unit of analysis. Toward this end, Margaret Levi called for "bringing people back into the state," specifically, revenue-hungry rulers.¹³ Geddes, meanwhile, proposed a conceptualization of the state as a collection of politically self-interested individuals.¹⁴ According to this approach, all state actors confront the "politician's dilemma," in which policy choices are constrained by patterns of power acquisition.

Wary of the tendency for reification in the "state as rational actor" approach, Joel Migdal, Atul Kohli, and Vivienne Shue have pushed the literature in another direction. They argued for a "state in society" approach so as "to disaggregate" the state as a unit of analysis and to resituate its component parts in concrete social settings.¹⁵ This approach conceptualizes the state as a four-tiered structure consisting of central leadership, central administration, regional administration, and field offices. Each tier provides its own set of arenas within which power struggles are waged among various state and nonstate actors. Ultimately, the overall "patterns of domination" in the state-societal relationship are shaped by the outcomes of these power struggles in the different arenas. This paper follows in a similar direction.

STATE BUILDING AND SOVIET RUSSIA

The Russian Revolution was notable for the relative ease with which Vladimir Lenin and his small party of radical socialists, the Bolsheviks, came to power in October 1917. The process of consolidating power in new institutional forms, however, was conflictual and prolonged. Soviet state capacities were developed incrementally over a period of two decades. Why the Soviet Russian state developed along the lines it did remains a disputed question in Western scholarship. A different question, however, is why Bolshevik state-building efforts were successful, given the formidable array of obstacles confronting the postrevolutionary regime. Even Lenin at first doubted that a Bolshevik state would prevail in Russia.

For more than two decades there was virtual consensus among West-

¹³ Levi, *Of Rule and Revenue* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).

¹⁴ Geddes, *Politician's Dilemma: Building State Capacity in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

¹⁵ Migdal, Kohli, and Shue, eds., *State Power and Social Forces: Domination and Transformation in the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), introduction, chap. 1.

ern scholars on the question of the success of Soviet state building. They stressed strong leadership, coercion, and, especially, formal organization.¹⁶ According to this view, by the early 1920s the Communist Party provided the state center with a tightly organized and centralized structure for administering Soviet Russia's vast periphery. On top of this apparatus sat the party's general secretary, Iosif Stalin, whose hands were in firm control of the organizational levers of power. "The tentacles of the Secretariat," it was said, "reached into the smallest territorial units throughout Russia."¹⁷

This depiction by area specialists of the means by which a strong state was constructed in postrevolutionary Soviet Russia was incorporated into the comparative theoretical literature on state building. Indeed, two of the most influential studies in comparative politics over the past thirty years borrowed directly from the Soviet studies literature to support the argument that formal organizational structure was necessary for successful state building.

Samuel Huntington's *Political Order in Changing Societies* preceded the "return to the state" in comparative politics by a decade, but his focus on "political order" is, in fact, a study of the dilemmas encountered by new states seeking to develop their capacities to rule. Huntington held up the Soviet case as a model of effective political institution building for other modernizing countries; he stressed, in particular, the role of formal organization. "The relative success of communist states in providing political order," he wrote, "in large part derives from the priority they have given to the conscious act of political organization."¹⁸ Theda Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions* likewise presented Soviet state building as a success. While Skocpol pointed to macrolevel international and socioeconomic structures to explain the emergence of a strong state in postrevolutionary Soviet Russia, she also adopted the conventional area studies argument that formal organization was the means to that end. She noted that the Communist Party "consisted of hierarchically ordered cadres subject to appointment and

¹⁶ Merle Fainsod, *How Russia Is Ruled* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955); Leonard Schapiro, *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (New York: Vintage Books, 1960); Robert Daniels, "The Secretariat and the Local Organizations in the Russian Communist Party, 1921-1923," *American Slavonic and East European Review* 6 (March 1957); and Robert Service, *Bolshevik Party in Revolution: A Study in Organizational Change, 1917-1923* (London: Macmillan, 1979). A notable exception, which pointed out the shortcomings in the organizational structure of the center, was Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk under Soviet Rule* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958).

¹⁷ Adam Ulam, *Stalin: The Man and His Era* (New York: Viking, 1973), 258, 259.

¹⁸ Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 1, 137, 336-41, quote at 400. Huntington followed these remarks by directly quoting from Schapiro's study.

explicit discipline by the top Party leadership, thus allowing much more effective central coordination than the tsar could achieve."¹⁹

Comparative state-building theory, however, has not kept pace with new findings in Soviet area studies. Empirical investigations of the past ten years have revealed anything but a tightly organized and centrally coordinated party structure outside Moscow for well over a decade after the revolution.²⁰ In a comprehensive study of local politics during the 1920s, Roger Pethyridge expressed what is now the prevailing view among area specialists concerning the new state's formal organizational structures in the periphery: "Chaos reigned. Orders arrived from higher authorities in a raw form . . . (t)hey were not often understood and so ignored."²¹

But if functioning centralized organizations were the exception and not the norm in the Soviet periphery, then a major question is left unanswered for both area specialists and comparative theorists: how did this "infrastructurally" weak state just over a civil war manage to carry out a comprehensive campaign for radical economic reform by decade's end? For all the mass economic dislocation and social resistance incurred by the campaign, not only did the regime survive, but it was also able to build the foundations and framework for its command-administrative economic system.

Among area specialists, this question provoked a debate between adherents of the conventional view, who stressed organizational forces from above, and a new generation of "revisionists," who stressed social forces from below.²² While the revisionist arguments exposed the explanatory limits of the once conventional view of Soviet state building, their emphasis on forces from below did not become the basis for a new consensus. Commenting on this theoretical impasse in the field, Mark Von Hagen observed that "the boundaries between state and society are not so neatly fixed. This is true everywhere, but it is perhaps especially clear in the Soviet Union." He urged scholars instead to examine "a large middle ground of social groups and political formations" that directly shaped Soviet state-building processes.²³

¹⁹ Skocpol (fn. 1), 162, 215, quote at 226.

²⁰ J. Arch Getty, *Origin of the Great Purges* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Roger Pethyridge, *One Step Backwards, Two Steps Forward* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); Graeme Gill, *Origins of the Stalinist Political System* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); James Hughes, *Stalin, Siberia, and the Crisis of the New Economic Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

²¹ Pethyridge (fn. 20), 294.

²² The classic treatment is Sheila FitzPatrick, *Russian Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

²³ See Von Hagen's review article in *Slavic Review* 48 (Winter 1989).

If the earlier assumptions about formal organizational structure were in error, then what factor does explain the success of Soviet state-building efforts? In proposing an answer, this study follows Von Hagen and argues that informal personal networks played a significantly larger role in Soviet Russia's state-building process than has previously been recognized. The infrastructural weaknesses of the postrevolutionary state were eventually overcome by the *intersection* of informal social structures and formal political organizations. Certainly, scholars of communist political systems have long been aware of the workings of personal networks within established political and economic institutional settings.²⁴ By contrast, the role of personal networks in the process of institution building has gone largely unnoticed.²⁵

STATE BUILDING AND PERSONAL NETWORKS

State-building efforts often occur in contexts marked by the breakdown of long-established and widely accepted political roles. Under such conditions, personalistic relations can provide the basis for new institutional forms. Comparativists, for example, have readily noted cases in which charismatic authority and patrimonialism have shaped institution-building processes.²⁶ Less attention, however, has been devoted to personal networks.²⁷ In this study, the term *personal network* is similar to Warner and Lunt's definition of a clique, that is, a nonkinship, in-

²⁴ Fainsod (fn. 16), 236, 237; C. M. Hann, *Tazlar: A Village in Hungary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); John Willerton, *Patronage and Politics in the USSR* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); T. H. Rigby and Bohdan Harasymiw, *Leadership Selection and Patron-Client Relations in the USSR and Yugoslavia* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1983); Jerry Hough, *Soviet Prefects: Local Party Organs in Industrial Decision-Making* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969); Andrew Walder, *Communist Neo-Traditionalism: Work and Authority in Chinese Industry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); Jean Oi, *State and Peasant in Contemporary China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

²⁵ A notable exception was Gill (fn. 20), 44, 128, 129, 217. But Gill ultimately concluded that informal relations undermined the process of institution building in the new state.

²⁶ For charismatic authority, see Weber (fn. 6), 2:1111-23; for patrimonialism, see Guenther Roth, "Personal Rulership, Patrimonialism, and Empire-Building in the New States," *World Politics* 20 (January 1968).

²⁷ A personal network is distinguishable from charismatic relations in that it is not a leader-follower relationship, and it is distinguishable from patrimonialism in that it is not based on mutual obligation. A personal network does not by definition exhibit structural inequality in the connecting "ties," as it would in these other two types. In this case, personal networks originated with peerlike ties of camaraderie, based on shared experiences in the illegal underground and in the civil war. As network ties became enmeshed with the formal organizational structures of the new state, some network ties began to exhibit more of a hierarchical structure.

David Knoke has distinguished between "influence" networks, in which information is exchanged among relatively equal members, and "domination" networks, in which scarce goods are controlled in unequal relationships. See Knoke, *Political Networks: The Structural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 11-16. Personal networks in postrevolutionary Soviet Russia exhibited elements of both types of networks.

formal association, within which exists group feeling and intimacy, as well as group norms of behavior.²⁸ Network analysis is the attempt to uncover the microlevel social ties that exist within a macrolevel social or institutional complex. According to Barry Wellman and S. D. Berkowitz, "network analysis is neither a method nor a metaphor, but a fundamental intellectual tool for the study of social structures."²⁹

Network analysis has grown over the past three decades in Western social science. First elaborated in the 1950s and 1960s by British anthropologists investigating the sociological and psychological effects of urban in-migration, its findings challenged existing theories of "mass society."³⁰ In the 1970s and 1980s network analysis gained prominence among American sociologists who used new quantitative techniques to reveal the underlying social relationships that accounted for the otherwise seemingly "hidden hand" of economic markets.³¹ By contrast, American political science has moved more slowly to employ network analysis.³²

The power elite approach popularized in the 1950s by C. Wright Mills and Floyd Hunter is considered by some to be a forerunner of network analysis of policy-making.³³ In the 1970s network studies of community power structures demonstrated that local actors informally connected by overlapping organizational and social memberships are decidedly more successful in influencing policy outcomes than are "nonconnected" local actors.³⁴ More recently, network analysis has been

²⁸ W. Lloyd Warner and P. S. Lunt, *The Social Life of a Modern Community* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941); see also John Scott, *Social Network Analysis* (London: Sage Publications, 1991), 16–26.

²⁹ Barry Wellman and S. D. Berkowitz, "Introduction: Studying Social Structures," in Wellman and Berkowitz, eds., *Social Structures: A Network Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 4.

³⁰ The pioneers of this approach were J. A. Barnes, "Class and Committees in a Norwegian Fishing Parish," *Human Relations* 7, no. 1 (1954); and Elizabeth Both, *Family and Social Network* (London: Tavistock, 1957). Some of the best-known works are represented in J. Clyde Mitchell, ed., *Social Networks in Urban Situations* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1969).

³¹ The work of Harrison White has been at the forefront of this effort; see White, "Where Do Markets Come From?" *American Journal of Sociology* 87 (November 1981); Ron S. Burt, *Corporate Profits and Cooptation: Networks of Market Constraints and Directorate Ties in the American Economy* (New York: Academic Books, 1983); and Mark Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology* 78 (May 1973).

³² Knoke (fn. 27) is a notable exception.

³³ Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956); and Hunter, *Community Power Structure* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1953).

³⁴ Robert Perucci and Marc Pilisuk, "Leaders and Ruling Elites: The Interorganizational Bases of Community Power," *American Sociological Review* 35 (December 1970); Edward Laumann and Franz Pappi, *Networks of Collective Action: A Perspective on Community Influence Systems* (New York: Academic Press, 1976); and Joseph Galaskiewicz, *Exchange Networks and Community Politics* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1979). Their conclusions contrasted sharply with the images of power projected by pluralists. The classic example of a pluralist approach to community politics is Robert Dahl,

employed to uncover the informal ties that cut across the realms of state and society to shape national policy-making processes. These studies conclude that national policy networks emerge from either bureaucratic or class interests and operate primarily to advance those interests.³⁵ While these policy-oriented studies focus on networks in established institutional settings, it is less common to find network analysis employed to study processes of institution building.

There are at least two reasons why network analysis has not made greater inroads in political science research. At a theoretical level, the assumptions of network analysis conflict with the conceptual premises of the more dominant pluralist, statist, and rational choice approaches. Moreover, at an empirical level, informal networks can be found beneath the flow charts of all formal organizations.³⁶ Because this makes for difficulty in discerning systematically which informal ties are more important and how their influence is manifested, there is a tendency to look past the role of personal network ties when trying to explain political outcomes.

This study attempts to uncover informal network ties and specify their modes of influence and thereby provide a new perspective on the state-building process in postrevolutionary Soviet Russia. Its working hypothesis argues that the structure of personal network ties affects a state's capacity for territorial administration. Two structural features are particularly significant in this regard: the reach of network ties and the location of core network members.³⁷ First, are network ties limited in reach, largely concentrated in a host region, or do they extend across the physical and institutional boundaries of the host region? Second, are core network members confined to a host region or have they relocated to the state center or another strategic position outside the host region? If the structure of network ties indicates a cross-regional reach and core network members have relocated to the center, then a state's capacity for territorial administration is enhanced. By contrast, if the

Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961). See the critique of pluralism in G. William Domhoff, *Who Really Rules: New Haven and Community Power Re-Examined* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1978).

³⁵ See the excellent case studies of health and energy policy formation in the Carter administration by Edward Laumann and David Knoke, *The Organizational State: Social Choice in National Policy Domains* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987); and Michael Useem, *The Inner Circle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).

³⁶ One of the early organizational theorists to make this observation was Chester Barnard, *The Functions of the Executive* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1937).

³⁷ A core network member is an individual with a high degree of "centrality" in the network. Centrality is simply a measure of the number of direct network ties of an individual member. Scott (fn. 28), 86.

structure of network ties indicates a limited reach and core network members remain located within a host region, then a state's capacity for territorial administration is diminished. The assumption is that personal network ties provide an informal mechanism by which information and resources are exchanged, or perhaps withheld, which in turn directly affects a state's implementation powers in its periphery.

II. PERSONAL NETWORKS AND TERRITORIAL ADMINISTRATION IN SOVIET RUSSIA: THE TRANSCAUCASIAN REGIONAL NETWORK

INTERSECTION OF INFORMAL AND FORMAL STRUCTURES IN THE POSTREVOLUTIONARY STATE: AN OVERVIEW

Personal networks among the Bolsheviks originated as a survival strategy in the prerevolutionary underground and were later strengthened through a combination of circumstantial and instrumental factors in the postrevolutionary period. To begin, under Russia's old regime the Bolshevik Party was an illegal political organization and therefore had to conduct most of its activities through regional underground committees. As underground life was marked by the constant threat of police infiltration, most underground workers endured multiple arrests, which often entailed exile to remote Siberian settlements.³⁸ Survival dictated the observance of certain codes of behavior. Trust and reputation were essential attributes for underground workers, an aspect of underground existence that fostered an environment conducive to the formation of personal networks.³⁹

Underground ties provided a social base for more elaborate personal networks during the civil war and became especially important in the Bolsheviks' effort to consolidate territorial holdings along the major battlefronts. In the wake of the Red Army's territorial advance, martial law was imposed by military-revolutionary committees headed by political commissars recruited from the prerevolutionary underground. Underground ties were employed by political commissars to establish a political foundation in the periphery, to provide rear-line support for the Red Army, and, on occasion, to engage in front-line fighting.

³⁸ See Ralph Elwood, *Russian Social-Democrats in the Underground* (Assen, Holland: Van Gorcum, 1974).

³⁹ Trust here refers to a system in which an intermediary acts to assure one actor of the performance reliability of another actor. For different systems of trust, see James Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), chap. 8. For the importance of trust in the internal workings of illegal groups, see Diego Gambetta, ed., *Trust: Making and Breaking Cooperative Relations* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988).

Finally, early patterns of provincial administration shaped personal networks.⁴⁰ The new state lacked the organizational resources to administer the periphery from the center. A survey of forty local party organs, conducted in October 1920, found that no two had the same internal organizational structure.⁴¹ For over a decade, the informal social structures of personal networks substituted for a formal organizational structure in regional administration. Regional party leaders were empowered to appoint personnel, to manage finances, and to allocate goods. Personal network ties were thus strengthened as they became a means of access to scarce and valued resources. The center did not impose a formal functional division of labor on the internal structure of the regional party organs until the early 1930s.⁴²

Toward the end of the civil war, members of regional personal networks began to move into political-administrative work. They did not, however, find employment in the local soviets, which at this time served as the center's preferred administrative organ for territorial administration.⁴³ In 1919 only one local soviet chairman, Valerian Kuibyshev in Samara, had ever belonged to the prerevolutionary underground. Network members found work instead in local party committees. Over the course of the 1920s, personal networks became embedded in the territorial party apparatus. As an indication of this process, between 1922 and 1924 the number of local party committee secretaries who had previously worked in the prerevolutionary underground rose from 52 percent to 71 percent.⁴⁴ By 1927 the number had increased to 78 percent.⁴⁵ By decade's end the party apparatus had emerged as the main institutional link between the center and the rural periphery.⁴⁶

It was, however, not simply the movement of personal networks into local political organs that facilitated the extension of central administrative capacities to the periphery. Indeed, in the early 1920s informal

⁴⁰ See T. H. Rigby, "Early Provincial Cliques and the Rise of Stalin," *Soviet Studies* 38 (July 1986).

⁴¹ *Izvestiia TsK RKP(b)*, no. 24 (1920).

⁴² L. Maleiko, "Iz istorii razvitiia apparata partiinykh organov" (From the history of the development of the party apparatus), *Voprosy istorii KPSS* (February 1976), 113–15.

⁴³ The center's efforts to work through the soviet structure was described by Iakov Sverdlov, who among the early Bolshevik state builders was considered "the organizational genius" of the revolution. See Sverdlov, *Izbrannye stat'i i rechi* (Collection of articles and speeches) (Moscow: Gospolizdat, 1939), 92.

⁴⁴ *Izvestiia TsK RKP(b)*, no. 3 (March 1922), 20; and *Trinadsatyi s'ezd RKP(b): stenograficheskii otchet* (Thirteenth congress of RCP[b]: Stenographic report) (Moscow: Gospolizdat, 1963), 118.

⁴⁵ *Pianadsatyi s'ezd VKP(b): stenograficheskii otchet* (Fifteenth congress of ACP [b]: Stenographic report) (Moscow: Gospolizdat, 1961), 1:115.

⁴⁶ Center-regional institutional relations evolved somewhat differently in industrial regions, where economic administrators emerged as powerful players in local politics.

network ties often acted to constrain the center's attempts to administer particular regions. In these regions the structure of network ties indicated limited reach and core members were located in the region. Efforts to uproot these regionally concentrated networks provoked protracted power struggles.⁴⁷ The new state's capacity for territorial administration was gradually enhanced as the structure of regional network ties changed during the 1920s. By the end of the decade, the structure indicated more extensive cross-regional reach and the relocation of core members to the center.

This process occurred in two successive stages at the regional and central levels. First, in the early 1920s new regional bureaus (*oblastnyi biuro*) were created to bridge the administrative gap between the center and the more distant regions. The regional bureaus consolidated large peripheral areas into single administrative-territorial units.⁴⁸ Regional bureaus were first formed in 1920 for the Transcaucasus, Central Asia, Siberia, the Urals, and the Far East. They served as a model for a more comprehensive administrative-territorial reform implemented in the second half of the decade.⁴⁹ The first leaders of the regional bureaus were chosen from among the proven veterans of the prerevolutionary underground, who employed network ties to carry out the tasks of political consolidation.⁵⁰

The second stage involved the promotion of regional leaders to the center. An examination of the individuals occupying the central leadership posts from the civil war period through the mid-1930s indicates the upward movement of regional network members.⁵¹ Thus, between 1919 and 1925 of the twenty-six individuals who held central leadership positions, only five had been regional leaders. Between 1927 and 1934, however, fourteen of the twenty-three individuals occupying central leadership positions had been regional leaders.

⁴⁷ Anastas Mikoian, *V nachale dvadtsatykh* (In the beginning of the 1920s) (Moscow: Politizdat, 1975), chap. 2.

⁴⁸ *Izvestiia TsK RKP(b)*, no. 33 (October 1921), 22.

⁴⁹ I. G. Aleksandrov, "Ekonomicheskoe raionirovanie rossii," in G. Krzhizhanovskii, ed., *Voprosy ekonomicheskogo raionirovaniia sssr: sbornik materialov i statei, 1917-1929 gg.* (Questions of the economic regionalization of the USSR: Handbook of materials and articles, 1917-1929) (Moscow: Gospolizdat, 1957).

⁵⁰ N. Petukhova, "Sozdanie oblastnykh biuro TsK RKP(b) i nekotorye storonye ikh deiatel'nosti, 1920-1922" (Creation of the regional bureaus of the CC RCP [b] and several aspects of their activities, 1920-1922), *Voprosy istorii KPSS* (April 1965).

⁵¹ The central leadership refers to full and candidate members of the politburo, the main policy-making organ, and the secretariat, the organizational head of the territorial party apparatus. Regional leaders refers to individuals who worked for at least two years in a particular region during the civil war (1918-21) and/or the postwar political consolidation (1920-23).

As core network members moved to the center in the mid- to late 1920s, they named fellow network members to their regional leadership posts. In turn, these newly appointed regional leaders assumed responsibility for overseeing the lower levels of the administrative apparatus. Rather than severing network ties, then, this process of upward promotion took on a vertical dimension within the formal administrative structures of the state. Table 1 lists the first party secretaries, in 1929 and in 1934, of the major administrative-territorial regions beyond the central industrial region. Figure 1 then presents a matrix indicating the informal ties, which linked the 1929 and the 1934 regional leadership groups to the central leadership.⁵²

This period saw an increase in the reach of informal network ties across formal territorial administrative lines. When informal network ties are taken into account, the image of constant change among the regional leadership at this time should be modified. The leadership changes in Table 1, for example, reveal that turnover was far more common in the non-Russian regions than in the Russian regions. But even in the non-Russian regions continuity existed in the informal connec-

⁵² A network tie is determined by two criteria: (1) evidence of a working relationship (two or more years) in at least one of three milieus (prerevolutionary underground, civil war, postwar consolidation); and/or (2) evidence of friendship or family relationship. Below are the source materials used to determine the informal ties of the regional leadership listed in Figure 1. They include personal correspondence, memoirs, and biographies; RTsKhIDNI refers to the Russian Center for the Preservation and Investigation of Documents of Recent History.

—A. Andreev: RTsKhIDNI, f. 73, op. 1, d. 1–9; *Vospominaniia, pis'ma* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1985).

—L. Beria: RTsKhIDNI, f. 80, op. 24, d. 166, ll. 1, 2.

—R. Eikhe: RTsKhIDNI, f. 124, op. 1, d. 2215, ll. 1–6; *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, no. 7 (1965), 92–97.

—I. Gamarnik: *Vospominaniia druzei i soratnikov* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1978).

—N. Gikalo: RTsKhIDNI, f. 85, op. 15, d. 34, ll. 1–5; RTsKhIDNI, f. 80, op. 8, d. 25, ll. 3–9.

—F. Goloshchekin: RTsKhIDNI, f. 124, op. 1, d. 484, ll. 1–12.

—A. Ikramov: RTsKhIDNI, f. 79, op. 1, d. 708, ll. 1–7; *Pravda*, April 9, 1964.

—L. Kartvelishvili: RTsKhIDNI, f. 80, op. 29, l. 1; f. 124, op. 1, d. 835, ll. 16–17.

—M. Khataevich: RTsKhIDNI, f. 124, op. 1, d. 2043, ll. 2–6; *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, no. 6 (1963), 98–101.

—S. Kosior: RTsKhIDNI, f. 124, op. 1, d. 951, l. 1; *Vospominaniia, ocherki, stat'i* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1989).

—A. Kostanian: *Kommunist* (Erevan), July 28, 1967.

—A. Krinitskii: *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, no. 12 (1964).

—L. Mirzoian: RTsKhIDNI, f. 80, op. 7, d. 3, l. 1; *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, no. 1 (1965), 101–4.

—M. Orakhelashvili: RTsKhIDNI, f. 85, op. 11, d. 28, ll. 1–4; *Mamiia Orakhelashvili* (Tbilisi: Izdatel'stvo sabchota sakartvelo, 1986).

—I. Rumiantsev: RTsKhIDNI, f. 124, op. 1, d. 1662, ll. 3–5.

—B. Semenov: *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, no. 12 (1989), 110.

—B. Sheboldaev: RTsKhIDNI, f. 124, op. 1, d. 2138, ll. 1, 2.

—V. Shubrikov: *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, no. 12 (1989), p. 112.

—I. Vareikis: RTsKhIDNI, f. 124, op. 1, 302, ll. 1–5; D. Lappo, *Iuozac Vareikis* (Voronezh: Tsentral'no-chernozernoe izdatel'stvo, 1989).

TABLE 1
LEADERSHIP IN RURAL RUSSIAN AND NON-RUSSIAN REGIONS
(1929, 1934)

<i>Region</i>	<i>First Party Secretary</i>	
	<i>1929</i>	<i>1934</i>
1. Western	Rumiantsev	Rumiantsev
2. Central Black Earth	Vareikis	Vareikis
3. Lower Volga	Sheboldaev	Krinitskii
4. Middle Volga	Khataevich	Shubrikov
5. Urals	Kabakov	Kabakov
6. Siberia	Eikhe	Eikhe
7. Far East	na	Kartvelishvili
8. Ukraine	Kosior	Kosior
9. Belorussia	Gamarnik	Gikalo
10. Crimea	Kostanian	Semenov
11. North Caucasus	Andreev	Sheboldaev
12. Trans Caucasus	Orakhelashvili	Beria
13. Kazakhstan	Goloshchekin	Mirzoian
14. Uzbekistan	Ikramov	Ikramov

tions to the center. Nikolai Gikalo in Belorussia and Lev Mirzoian in Kazakhstan were both members of the Transcaucasian network and had personal ties with Orjonikidze and Kirov.⁵³ Meanwhile, other regional leaders were simply transferred horizontally, which did not sever their informal network ties to central actors. Mendel Khataevich (who does not appear on the 1934 list) moved from the Middle Volga to the Dnepropetrovsk province in Ukraine; and Boris Sheboldaev moved from the Lower Volga to the neighboring North Caucasus region.

This section sketched an overview of the intersection of informal network ties and formal organizational structures in the decade following the civil war. Notably, during these years the new state developed sufficient capacity for territorial administration to implement a program of radical economic reform. The next section focuses more specifically on how one set of informal network ties was employed in this process.

TERRITORIAL ADMINISTRATION AND THE TRANSCAUCASIAN REGIONAL NETWORK

This section presents the findings of an investigation of the Transcaucasian regional network based mainly on archival sources previously

⁵³ *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, no. 1 (1965), 101-4.

	Andreev	Chubar	Kaganovich	Kalinin	Kirov	Kosior	Kuibyshev	Mikoian	Molotov	Orjonikidze	Petrovskii	Postyshev ^b	Rudzutak	Rykov ^a	Stalin	Syrtsov ^a	Voroshilov
Andreev ^a	X	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	X	0	0	0	0	0
Beria ^b	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	X	0	X	0
Eikhe	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Gamarnik ^a	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	X	0	0	0	0	0
Gikalo ^b	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	X	0	X	0
Goloshchekin ^a	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	X	0	0	0	0
Ikramov	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Kabakov	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kartvelishvili ^b	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	X	1	X	1
Khataevich ^a	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	X	0	0	0	0	0
Kosior	0	1	1	0	0	X	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Kostanian ^a	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	X	0	0	0	0	0
Krinitskii ^b	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	X	0	X	0
Mirzozian ^b	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	X	0	X	0
Orakhelashvili ^a	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	X	0	0	1	1	1
Rumiantsev	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Semenov ^c	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	X	0
Sheboldaev	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Shubrikov ^c	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vareikis	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Totals	2	3	7	1	10	4	7	7	3	10	3	3	5	0	2	2	4

FIGURE 1
NETWORK TIES BETWEEN CENTRAL LEADERSHIP
AND REGIONAL LEADERSHIP^d
(1929, 1934)

^aHeld position in 1929 only.

^bHeld position in 1934 only.

^cHeld position in 1934 only; incomplete information on early career.

^dBased on criteria set out in fn. 52: 0 = no tie, 1 = a tie, X = not applicable.

unavailable to Western scholars.⁵⁴ The study uses personal correspondence, biographical data, and official personnel files to piece together the informal ties of the Transcaucasian regional network and to discern the ways in which these ties were employed to enhance the state's capacity for territorial administration.

The Transcaucasian network was drawn from the participants in several underground party committees in the region. In this period the Bolshevik Party was not well established in the Transcaucasus (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, North Caucasus), the exception being Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan and center of the oil industry.⁵⁵ According to Anastas Mikoian, a veteran of the Baku committee, "underground conditions" required "secrecy, reliability and dedication of the people."⁵⁶ Following the revolution, the Transcaucasus became a battleground of old regime loyalists, nationalists, Mensheviks, and foreign interventionists. Indeed, at first the Bolsheviks in the region were cut off from the parent party in Russia and forced back into an underground existence. The Transcaucasian network was most strongly shaped by civil war experiences as new members enlisted, personal ties were strengthened, and patterns of hierarchical relationships were defined.

At this time formal organizational structures simply did not exist for the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks. Only when the Red Army eventually made its way into the region did the Bolsheviks reemerge from the underground to join the military campaigns. The Bolshevik underground network provided the personnel and structure for the military-revolutionary committees that were formed to consolidate the army's territorial gains.

Sergo Orjonikidze and Sergei Kirov emerged as leaders of the Transcaucasian military-revolutionary committees.⁵⁷ Personal correspondence and telegrams found in the archival fonds of Orjonikidze and Kirov demonstrate how network ties served to establish a foundation for the Soviet state in the region. As regional leader, Orjonikidze quickly developed a system of information gathering built on preexisting network ties. He relied almost exclusively on network ties (Kirov,

⁵⁴ The archival sources are from the former Central Party Archive of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, which has been renamed the Russian Center for the Preservation and Investigation of Documents of Recent History (RTsKhIDNI).

⁵⁵ Ronald Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988); and idem, *The Baku Commune, 1917–1918* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972).

⁵⁶ Anastas Mikoyan, *The Path of Struggle* (Madison, Wis.: Sphinx Press, 1988), 450.

⁵⁷ For Ordzhonikidze's official appointments, see RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 85, op. 1, d. 15, l. 1; f. 85, op. 1, d. 18, l. 1; for Kirov's official appointments, see RTsKhIDNI, f. 80, op. 3, d. 34, l. 1; f. 80, op. 4, d. 47, l. 1; f. 80, op. 5, d. 24, l. 1.

Kvirikeli, and Gikalo) to track the progress of territorial consolidation in the mountainous and ethnically fractious North Caucasus.⁵⁸ In the campaign to incorporate independent Georgia by force into the new Soviet state, Orjonikidze relied on network ties to coordinate the military and political aspects of the takeover and, later, to staff the formal positions of power in Soviet Georgia.⁵⁹ Similarly, in early 1920 Kirov and Mikoian relied exclusively on personal network ties to open supply and communication lines between the North Caucasus and the advancing forces of the Red Army.⁶⁰ In June 1919, when Kirov had to report to Lenin and Stalin on the progress of establishing Soviet power in Armenia, he based his assessment almost exclusively on a letter he had recently received from Mikoian.⁶¹

In 1920 the new state center established a "regional bureau" for the Transcaucasus, which for the next decade would be the main institutional link between the Transcaucasus and the state center. The creation of this bureau marked the intersection of informal and formal structures in the Transcaucasus, as a nascent formal organization for territorial administration was built upon the preexisting informal ties of the Transcaucasian network. Members of the network dominated the formal positions of power in the regional bureau. Thus, Orjonikidze and Kirov were appointed to the top leadership; and in 1921 a separate regional bureau was formed for the North Caucasus region, headed by Anastas Mikoian, another core member of the Transcaucasian network. Much as they had done in the underground and in the military campaigns of the civil war, these leaders employed their informal network ties to perform the task of territorial administration.

As informal network ties fused with formal state structures, core network members gained access to financial resources and valued goods. Regional party leaders and their staffs were besieged with requests for financial assistance, food, housing, employment, and education. These scarce resources were distributed as rewards that reinforced network ties. Orjonikidze's office, for example, was able to secure admittance to a higher technical school in Moscow for the son of Gegechkora, a for-

⁵⁸ For Kirov, see RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 4, d. 44, ll. 1-4; d. 94, ll. 2-4; op. 5, d. 13, ll. 1-4; d. 20, l. 1; d. 25, l. 1.; op. 85, op. 11, d. 8, ll. 1-7. For Kvirikeli, see RTsKhIDNI, f. 85, op. 11, d. 13, ll. 3-18; d. 14, ll. 1-3; d. 19, ll. 1, 2; d. 34, ll. 2-7. For Gikalo, see RTsKhIDNI, f. 85, op. 11, d. 28, ll. 1-4; d. 34, ll. 1-5; d. 59, ll. 1, 2.

⁵⁹ For the coordination of military and political tasks, see RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 85, op. 15, d. 57, l. 1; d. 61, l. 1; d. 71, ll. 1, 2; d. 103, l. 1. For the placement of network members in positions of power, see RTsKhIDNI, f. 85, op. 15, d. 182, ll. 4-9; d. 243, l. 1; d. 246, ll. 1-5.

⁶⁰ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 22, d. 11, ll. 3-7; 15, ll. 1-10.

⁶¹ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 3, d. 20, ll. 1-8.

mer colleague in the Georgian underground.⁶² And there is the case of Kirov's private letter to Orjonikidze, describing the overwhelming demand for financial support coming from local party organizations. Given the limited resources available for distribution, Kirov chose to dispense funds to Gikalo, to whom he had personal ties, leaving other local organizations, at least on this occasion, to go without.⁶³

In the second half of the 1920s core members of the Transcaucasian network began to move out of the region to the state center or to other regions. In 1926 Orjonikidze, Kirov, and Mikoian were promoted to the party's central executive organ, the politburo, as candidate members. In addition, they moved into new formal positions with access to vast organizational resources: Orjonikidze to the central control apparatus, Kirov to the Leningrad party organization, and Mikoian to the commissariat of internal and external trade.

In turn, network members with whom they shared strong ties were promoted to the leadership posts they had vacated within the region. Orjonikidze's replacement as head of the Transcaucasian party organization was Mamia Orakhelashvili, with whom he had formed an informal tie in the civil war and during their early political-administrative work together.⁶⁴ He was described in *Pravda* as Orjonikidze's "close friend" and "wartime counselor."⁶⁵ Orakhelashvili also had personal ties to Kirov, with whom he had worked closely in the North Caucasus during the consolidation of Soviet power.⁶⁶ In addition, Amaiak Nazaretian, with whom Orjonikidze and Kirov shared a personal tie, was also named to the regional party leadership.⁶⁷ In Azerbaijan, Levon Mirzoian and Nikolai Gikalo, who had personal ties to Kirov, were promoted to leadership positions.⁶⁸ In this way, as informal ties were stretched from the region to the center, the Transcaucasian network developed a vertical dimension.

By the late 1920s and early 1930s the Transcaucasian network reached across the regional and formal organizational structures of the postrevolutionary state. The regional leaders at this time who were also members of the Transcaucasian network included Boris Sheboldaev in

⁶² RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 85, op. 24, d. 261, l. 1.

⁶³ RTsKhIDNI, (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 3, d. 15, ll. 1, 4; f. 80, op. 4, d. 7, ll. 3-7.

⁶⁴ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 85, op. 11, d. 28, ll. 1-4; f. 85, op. 15, d. 246, ll. 2-5.

⁶⁵ *Pravda*, June 10, 1963.

⁶⁶ G. K. Dolunts, *Kirov v revoliutsii* (Kirov in the revolution) (Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1967), 65.

⁶⁷ For evidence of Nazaretian's close ties with Orjonikidze, see RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 85, op. 11, d. 85, ll. 2-5; for Nazaretian's ties with Kirov, see RTsKhIDNI, f. 80, op. 4, d. 117, l. 1.

⁶⁸ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 7, d. 3, l. 1; op. 8, d. 25, ll. 3-9.

the Lower Volga and the North Caucasus; Levon Mirzoian in the Urals region and Kazakhstan; Iosif Vareikis in the Central Black Earth region; and Nikolai Gikalo in Belorussia.

Significantly, as network members moved into new formal positions outside the region, they continued to employ their informal ties. Personal network ties provided members with an informal social structure for exchanging information, obtaining valuable resources, and coordinating activities. The archival materials show that personal network ties were used in this way to facilitate the development of the new state's capacities for territorial administration in the decade following the civil war. Moreover, this occurred at a time when the state's formal administrative mechanisms were still not reliable beyond the central industrial region.

A basic aspect of territorial administration, for example, is information exchange. Yet as late as 1930, the state center was by its own admission incapable of assuring that local organizations were informed of its decisions.⁶⁹ More than one-third of the North Caucasus region was still without telephone and telegraph connections.⁷⁰ In the Transcaucasus network ties were a principal means by which the center both disseminated information about policy priorities to the region and gathered information about regional affairs. Personal correspondence in Orjonikidze's archive showed that after his promotion to the center he continued to monitor events in the region regularly through his informal ties to Orakhelashvili and Nazaretian.⁷¹ These letters typically included personal information, a steady stream of gossip from the region, and, more significantly, mutual consultations on policy matters. By such informal means, Orjonikidze directed the reorganization of economic administration in Georgia in anticipation of the five-year plan.⁷² Through other network ties, Orjonikidze monitored political developments in Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia for the center during the late 1920s and the early 1930s. His informal supervision of the regional leadership continued into the early 1930s, even though by that time he was employed in the central industrial bureaucracy with no formal responsibility for regional political affairs.⁷³

⁶⁹ See the remarks of politburo member Lazar Kaganovich delivered to the Sixteenth Party Congress in the summer of 1930. *XVI s'ezd vsesoiuznoi kommunisticheskoi partii (b): stenograficheskii otchet* (Sixteenth congress of the all-union Communist Party (b): Stenographic report) (Moscow: Gospolizdat, 1935), 156.

⁷⁰ *Spravochnik partiinogo rabotnika* (Handbook for party workers) (Moscow: Partizdat, 1934), 8:272, 273.

⁷¹ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 85, op. 27, d. 127, ll. 2–12; d. 140, ll. 1, 2; d. 300, ll. 1–26.

⁷² RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 85, op. 27, d. 304, l. 1.

⁷³ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 85, op. 27, d. 308, ll. 5–52; f. 85, op. 1, d. 317, ll. 1–17; f. 85, op. 27, d. 321, ll. 1–9.

Kirov, likewise, relied on informal ties to old network members, Mirzoiyan and Khanbudagov in Azerbaijan, to gather information about regional affairs and to emphasize the center's policy priorities.⁷⁴ In 1928, more than two years after he had left the region, Kirov still employed his tie to Kartvelishvili in Georgia in order to insist that local officials immediately undertake the establishment of production trusts in the economy.⁷⁵ And in 1931 Kirov instructed Central Black Earth regional party leader Iosif Vareikis, with whom he shared a strong network tie, on implementing a program to resettle peasants uprooted by the collectivization campaign.⁷⁶

Another aspect of territorial administration is personnel policy and the resolution of local disputes. From the mid-1920s to the early 1930s, Transcaucasian regional politics was riven by intraorganizational feuds and power struggles. Again, despite their formal departures, Orjonikidze and Kirov continued to direct personnel policy and to broker power conflicts in the region. Kirov involved himself in personnel politics on numerous occasions. In 1926, for example, six months after his transfer to Leningrad, he intervened to resolve an internal dispute between the party organization and the control bureaucracy in Azerbaijan; in 1928 he overturned the decision of the Transcaucasian regional bureau to reassign Khanjian outside Georgia; in 1929 he personally appointed a new party leader, Gurzof Osipov, to the local organization in Astrakhan.⁷⁷ Similarly, Orjonikidze was barraged with personal correspondence from various actors seeking to secure his favor in the seemingly endless leadership struggles and interethnic conflicts that marked Transcaucasian politics at this time.⁷⁸

Intervention by core network members in regional administrative affairs was especially common in the first years of the state's radical campaign for economic restructuring. The plan for rapid industrialization called for a comprehensive reorganization of the rural economy—the consolidation of small peasant holdings into large collective farms. In this way, the state sought to develop a system in which revenue, in the form of agricultural products, would be extracted directly from the

⁷⁴ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 25, d. 11, ll. 1–14; op. 26, d. 40, ll. 1–5.

⁷⁵ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 12, d. 29, l. 1.

⁷⁶ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 15, d. 45, l. 1.

⁷⁷ See, respectively, RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 10, d. 42, l. 1; op. 12, d. 22, ll. 1, 2; op. 13, d. 16, l. 1.

⁷⁸ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 85, op. 27, d. 307, ll. 3–15; op. 27, d. 308, ll. 16–29, 33–50; op. 27, d. 312, ll. 10–18; op. 27, d. 315, ll. 1, 2; op. 27, d. 321, ll. 1–9. See also Amy Knight's excellent biography of Lavrenti Beria, Stalin's secret police chief, who worked in Transcaucasia at this time and was a protégé of Orjonikidze's; Knight, *Beria: Stalin's First Lieutenant* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), chaps. 2, 3.

agrarian sector and reallocated to the industrial sectors of the economy. The state's initial plunge into collectivization, however, generated widespread social unrest and economic crises, a situation that was exacerbated by the underdeveloped organizational capabilities of regional administrators. While bogus information routinely passed from villages to regional leaders to central planners, central economic plans often failed to reach their intended destinations along the territorial administrative command chain.

Collectivization proved especially difficult in the predominantly rural Transcaucasus, where small private holdings had long characterized the structure of agriculture. Moreover, as the region was not a major grain-producing area, some Transcaucasian leaders favored a moderate implementation schedule. Orjonikidze and Kirov were forced to intervene frequently into local affairs during the first two years of the campaign to ensure regional compliance with the center's more radical implementation schedules.⁷⁹ One notable example involving Kirov came to be known as "the Azerbaijan affair." By the autumn of 1930 Azerbaijan had fallen so far behind in its implementation of collectivization that the state center ordered an investigation of the regional leadership. Although Kirov had not formally worked in the republic for almost four years, he was charged with the task of sorting out the political blame, recommending solutions to the center, and reasserting the center's implementation priorities in the republic.⁸⁰

It is significant that even after individuals from the Transcaucasian network were transferred to posts outside the region, Kirov continued to use his informal ties to them to define policy priorities and to guide the implementation process.⁸¹ Levon Mirzoian, for example, was named party head of Kazakhstan in late 1932. He was assigned the task of developing a grain-production sector and integrating it with the central economy in this geographically remote and undeveloped region. While Kirov had never previously been involved in the administrative affairs of Kazakhstan, he quickly developed regular informal communications with Mirzoian, instructing the latter on the internal organization of collective farms, grain production quotas, and bread allocations.⁸² Kirov further lobbied the head of the central railroad administration on Mirzoian's behalf for the construction of a new railroad line connecting Kazakhstan to the central industrial region of Soviet

⁷⁹ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 85, op. 27, d. 308, ll. 36–48; d. 317, 11. 8, 9; f. 80, op. 15, d. 13, ll. 1–8.

⁸⁰ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 14, d. 10, ll. 9–64.

⁸¹ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 15, d. 45, l. 1; op. 17, d. 58, l. 1.

⁸² RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 17, d. 55, l. 1; op. 18, d. 103, ll. 1, 2; op. 18, d. 105, l. 1.

Russia.⁸³ In this way, the cross-regional reach of the Transcaucasian network ties enhanced the center's capacity to administer the periphery.

As the state campaign for economic restructuring unfolded, central planners showed themselves incapable of efficiently reallocating resources across regions. The campaign was at once threatened by chronic and widespread shortages of material resources.⁸⁴ Again, archival sources show that personal network ties were employed to compensate for the shortcomings of the state's new formal administrative-command structures. Kirov was especially adept at using network ties to bypass the central planners in obtaining badly needed supplies and human resources. During the food shortages of the early 1930s, Kirov was able to secure extra provisions by appealing directly to Boris Sheboldaev in the North Caucasus for bread, to Iosif Vareikis in the Central Black Earth region for vegetables, and to Ivan Rumiantsev in the Western region for potatoes.⁸⁵ Although these individuals were now party leaders in various Russian agricultural regions, they still had ties to Kirov through the Transcaucasian regional network.⁸⁶ During the 1932 grain crisis Kirov used his personal ties to Orjonikidze and Mikoian in the center to obtain "vodka and spirits" for Leningrad's factory workers for the New Year holiday.⁸⁷ In 1933 Kirov used his network tie to Nikolai Gikalo, who had recently been appointed party head of Belorussia, to request that available workers from Belorussia be transferred to Leningrad's growing industrial labor force.⁸⁸

In sum, the Transcaucasian personal network, by providing a means for information exchange, resource allocation, and coordinated action, served as an informal power resource for the development of territorial administration in the new Soviet Russian state.

The next section briefly discusses the problems of constraint and coercion, which arose in the 1930s as a direct consequence of the intersection of informal personal networks and formal political structures in the postrevolutionary state.

⁸³ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 18, d. 107, ll. 1, 2.

⁸⁴ R. W. Davies, *The Soviet Economy in Turmoil* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 283–309.

⁸⁵ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 15, d. 51, l. 1; f. 80, op. 15, d. 49, l. 1; f. 80, op. 17, d. 57, l. 1; f. 80, op. 14, d. 49, l. 1.

⁸⁶ For Sheboldaev, see RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 124, op. 1, d. 2138, l. 1; for Rumiantsev, see RTsKhIDNI, f. 124, op. 1, d. 1662, l. 5; for Vareikis, see D. Lappo, *Iuozas Vareikis* (Voronezh: Tsentral'no-chernozemnoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1989), 85–99.

⁸⁷ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 16, d. 45, l. 1.

⁸⁸ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 80, op. 17, d. 58, l. 1.

CONSTRAINT AND COERCION IN THE POSTREVOLUTIONARY STATE

This study has attempted to show how personal network ties contributed to the development of a state capacity for territorial administration. But it was also found that this informal power resource sometimes acted as a constraint on the state center, leading some central state actors to have misgivings about utilizing network ties for territorial administration. As the 1930s unfolded, the Transcaucasian network, in particular, became the object of criticism.

The state center's radical campaign of economic reform placed extraordinary and mostly unrealistic economic demands on regional leaders. While in principle regional leaders supported this campaign, in practice they sometimes advocated less radical implementation schedules. The archival findings show that regional leaders employed their personal ties to core network members in the center to lobby for modified economic targets.⁸⁹ Notably, the small group of central leaders identified as a "moderate bloc" in this period (Orjonikidze, Kirov, and Kuibyshev) were the most strongly connected by personal network ties to the regional leadership (see Figure 1). Indeed, on occasion, these particular individuals emerged as advocates of less radical economic goals.⁹⁰ Moreover, Orjonikidze and Kirov acted to protect fellow network members who incurred the wrath of other central leaders.⁹¹ Referring to Orjonikidze's efforts to shield Transcaucasian network members from official sanction, Stalin remarked in frustration that he "behaved like a feudal lord, even like a prince."⁹²

In such ways, the intersection of informal network ties and formal political structures acted as a constraint on the state center. In response, central actors attempted to employ their formal organizational powers to enforce compliance and to remove recalcitrant regional officials. But these efforts produced limited results. In late 1929 Orjonikidze's appointee Mamia Orakhelashvili was replaced as Transcaucasian party leader by Aleksandr Krinitskii, an outsider to the region. But Krinitskii

⁸⁹ RTsKhIDNI (fn. 54), f. 85, op. 27, d. 317, ll. 6–10; f. 79, op. 1, d. 744, l. 2.

⁹⁰ Eugene Zaleski, *Stalinist Planning for Economic Growth, 1933–1952* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 115–29; Franco Benevenuti, *Kirov in Soviet Politics, 1933–1934* (Birmingham, England: CREES Papers on Soviet Industrialization), no. 8 (1977); A. Vaksberg, "Kak zhivnyi" (As alive as the living), *Literaturnaia gazeta*, June 19, 1988, p.13.

⁹¹ For examples of Orjonikidze's and Kirov's intervention to protect fellow network members, see *Pravda*, March 17, 1964; *Pravda*, January 29, 1991.

⁹² Oleg Khlevniuk, *In Stalin's Shadow: The Career of Sergo Ordzhonikidze* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1995), 35.

lasted less than six months, only to be replaced by Beso Lominadze, who had a strong network tie to Orjonikidze. When Lominadze ran afoul of central leaders in late 1930, however, another wave of personnel changes followed and Orakhelashvili returned to the regional leadership.⁹³

When taking into account informal network ties, the regional leadership exhibited greater continuity than what is generally assumed in the Western literature. In 1932, however, the center began a concerted effort to uproot personal network ties from the Transcaucasus. In contrast to the personnel changes of 1929–31, the later changes signified a deliberate attempt by the state center to decouple informal social structures from formal political structures in the new state. Later in the decade, this strategy was applied coercively across the periphery.

It can be argued that the “great purges” were an extreme response to the intersection of informal and formal structures. The campaign for radical economic reform provoked disputes and a power struggle between central and regional leaders: whereas the formal lines of command concentrated power in the state center, the informal network ties used by regional leaders acted to constrain the center’s formal powers. In 1934 a small group of regional leaders even conspired to remove Stalin as party leader. The majority of the participants in this cabal were members of the Transcaucasian network; they met in Orjonikidze’s apartment and nominated Kirov to replace Stalin. The scheme fell apart, however, when Kirov refused to participate.⁹⁴

In 1937, on the eve of the state center’s campaign of terror against the regional leadership, Stalin spoke out against the informal social structures that cut across formal organizational structures. “Most often,” he remarked,

acquaintances and personal friends are selected, regardless of their suitability from a political or practical perspective. . . . It is not difficult to understand that such family circles allow no place for criticisms of shortcomings in performance. . . . In selecting cadres for their personal devotion, these comrades evidently want to create conditions which make them independent from the center.⁹⁵

The center’s indiscriminate application of coercion against the regional elite in the late 1930s was an extreme response to the intersection of informal and formal structures in the new state.

⁹³ Suny (fn. 55, 1988), 243–54.

⁹⁴ Confirmation of this aborted conspiracy comes from the memoirs of Anastas Mikoian, who was also a member of the Transcaucasian network. See “V pervyi raz bez lenina” (The first time without Lenin), *Ogonek*, no. 50 (December 1989), 27–29. The chief conspirators included Boris Sheboldaev, Iosif Vareikis, and Mamia Orakhelashvili.

⁹⁵ *Pravda*, April 1, 1937.

Although regional network members eventually fell victim to the great purges, the informal networks were nonetheless instrumental in the state-building process. Recalling Mann's distinction between "despotic" and "infrastructural" powers, the conflict between central and regional leaders in the 1930s was over the formal division of decision-making, or "despotic," powers in the new state. In this conflict, personal network ties afforded regional leaders an informal source of power that constrained the formal organizational powers of the center for a while but ultimately was crushed by the center's systematic campaign of coercion. By contrast, the development of a capacity for territorial administration reflected the implementation capabilities, or "infrastructural" powers, of the new state. In this regard, the evidence suggests that personal network ties contributed positively to this end at crucial moments.

III. STATE BUILDING AND PERSONAL NETWORKS: CONCLUSIONS

Does uncovering personal network ties among the Bolsheviks contribute something new to our understanding of state building in postrevolutionary Soviet Russia? Moreover, does it help to explain the subsequent collapse of the state? Are there implications for comparative state-building theory?

Two findings emerged from the case study of the Transcaucasian regional network. First, the study uncovered informal personal ties, existing within and across the formal organizational boundaries of the new Soviet state. These informal ties were cross-regional in reach, and core members were relocated to central positions. Second, the study examined a sample of the personal correspondence of core network members and found anecdotal evidence that informal ties were utilized to help extend the administrative reach of the new state. The case study was limited, however, by the fact that the ties had to be pieced together from an incomplete source base and that these network members could not be interviewed.

Beyond these findings, the study is more suggestive than definitive. The evidence, for example, does not conclusively demonstrate that informal ties had a greater impact than formal channels in conveying the center's priorities to regional actors. The archival data were too incomplete to support a more general assertion that personal networks were the essential element in the Soviet state-building process. At best, the findings showed that informal ties played a supplemental role, helping to bridge formal organizational lapses in the new state. But even if that

is the most one may conclude, it is significant in that it suggests answers to the larger questions raised above.

First, if the formal organizational structure of the state remained underdeveloped and weak for more than a decade after the civil war, how was the state able to carry out such extensive economic reform in the early 1930s? And although coercion and social forces were both part of this process, neither is sufficient to explain how the new state implemented these policies across Soviet Russia's vast periphery. In this regard, the intersection of informal network ties and formal organizational structures offers an alternative explanation to the ongoing "forces from above" and "forces from below" debate. Personal networks provided an informal social structure along which information was exchanged, resources were obtained, and activities were coordinated—all of which contributed to the extension of the state's capacity for territorial administration.

Second, if the Soviet state was a "strong" state, as noted comparativists once argued, what explains its collapse in the early 1990s? Earlier comparative theories assumed that the success of Soviet state building rested on formal organizational structure. If one argued instead that the building process was driven by the intersection of informal and formal structures, then both the building phase and the subsequent collapse could be explained.

Studies of career patterns among the Soviet regional political elite have noted a marked decrease in vertical and horizontal movement since the 1970s.⁹⁶ This development is a consequence, partly, of Brezhnev's "trust in cadres" policy and, partly, of a trend toward greater administrative specialization. As a result, the structure of informal network ties exhibited a more limited cross-regional reach and core network members remained in their host regions. This structure contrasted with the state-building phase, in which informal network ties exhibited extensive cross-regional reach and core network members were relocated to central posts.

By the early 1980s the territorial administrative elite had become more insular and particularist as a result of the gradual diffusion of power away from the state center along informal lines. Informal network ties were employed by regional elites to capture political and economic resources from the center, a situation that led to pervasive

⁹⁶ William Clark, *Soviet Regional Elite Mobility after Khrushchev* (New York: Praeger, 1989); Michael Urban, *An Algebra of Soviet Power: Elite Circulation in Belorussia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); and John Willerton, *Patronage and Politics in the USSR* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

economic corruption among the regional political elite.⁹⁷ When Gorbachev attempted to introduce a radical reform program in the second half of the 1980s, he found that the structure of informal network ties diminished the center's capacity to implement policies outside Moscow. In the end this informal diffusion of power contributed to the state's inability to stave off its own territorial demise. From this perspective, it can be argued that the Soviet state eventually fell apart along the very lines upon which it had been built six decades earlier.

Finally, the findings suggest implications for comparative state-building theory. Israel and Communist China, for example, represent two of the more successful state-building cases in the twentieth century. In both, cadres who actually participated in the state-building process, as in Soviet Russia, were veterans of illegal underground experiences. Furthermore, China's Communist Party and Israel's Histadrut Labor Federation and Mapai Workers Party were compelled to utilize informal network ties to carry out basic political tasks in the early years, before the formal organizational structures of the new states were operative. In a study of the Israeli Mapai Party, Peter Medding argued that in the postindependence period the party was sustained by a "chain of personal contact" that served as a "mechanism for the centralisation of political power."⁹⁸ And Victor Nee, in a study of the efforts by the Communist Chinese state to develop an administrative capacity in the rural countryside, noted "the existence of an 'old boy' network of sub-county cadres." "Not only did this network enhance the power of the party-state," he contended, "but it also laid the basis for a new relationship between center and locality."⁹⁹

More recently, the collapse of communism has generated new state-building experiences in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Some scholars have already noted the formative role of personal network ties, especially among the former communist nomenklatura, in shaping postcommunist economic institutions.¹⁰⁰ Postcommunist Rus-

⁹⁷ Peter Rutland, *The Politics of Economic Stagnation: The Role of Local Party Organs in Economic Management* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

⁹⁸ Medding, *Mapai in Israel: Political Organisation and Government in a New Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 136, 137.

⁹⁹ Nee, "Between Center and Locality: State, Militia and Village," in Victor Nee and David Mazingo, eds., *State and Society in Contemporary China* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), 232, 242.

¹⁰⁰ David Stark and Victor Nee, "Toward an Institutional Analysis of State Socialism," in Nee and Stark, eds., *Remaking the Economic Institutions of Socialism: China and Eastern Europe* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1989), 15. See also Dorothy Solinger, "Urban Reform and Relational Contracting in Post-Mao China: An Interpretation of the Transition from Plan to Market," in Richard Baum, ed., *Reform and Reaction in Post-Mao China* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

sia, moreover, is presently undergoing center-regional power struggles reminiscent of the postrevolutionary Soviet period. In a study of contemporary regional politics, Peter Kirkow described "a revitalization of power exerted by former *nomenklatura* members and an activation of previous social networks."¹⁰¹ These observations suggest that the hypothesis that the structure of personal network ties affects a state's capacity for territorial administration is applicable beyond the Soviet case.

This article argued that the ways in which informal and formal structures intersect provide an insight into state-building processes that has largely been neglected by scholars. The article developed a rudimentary framework that attempted to show how personal networks in postrevolutionary Soviet Russia provided an informal structural mechanism that facilitated the development of a capacity for territorial administration. While the results may suggest answers to some larger state-building questions, the article represents only a first step. To make the argument more definitive requires further empirical research and a more systematic comparison of informal network structures and state-building outcomes. The analytical framework should also include an investigation of the ways in which personal network ties shape the social identities and preferences of individual members. Despite the limitations of the present study, this analytical focus has potential to build on the recent work of comparativists seeking a better understanding of the ways in which informal, microlevel social structures influence formal, macrolevel institutional forms.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Kirkow, "Regional Warlordism in Russia: The Case of Primorskii Krai," *Europe-Asia Studies* 47, no. 6 (1995), 923.

¹⁰² Among comparative state theorists, the "state in society" approach exemplifies this redirection of analytical focus; see Migdal, Kohli, and Shue (fn. 15). More generally, a recognition of the informal dimensions of institutions has been associated with the work of William Riker; see, for example, Riker, "Implications from the Disequilibrium of Majority Rule for the Study of Institutions," *American Political Science Review* 74 (June 1980). Several notable recent studies include Sven Steinmo, Kathleen Thelen, and Frank Longstreth, eds., *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Jack Knight, *Institutions and Social Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); and Putnam (fn. 8).