

# Elites in Post-communist Russia: A Changing of the Guard?

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SINCE RUSSIA'S EMERGENCE AS AN INDEPENDENT STATE considerable disagreement has arisen among both Western and Russian scholars over whether a transformation in the political elite has occurred. Representing the prevailing consensus, a number of authors contend that the Soviet political elite has largely reproduced itself in the new Russian state. On the other hand, several studies reach the opposite conclusion—that there has been a significant amount of elite circulation in Russia since the demise of the Soviet Union. Which of these views is correct? Has there been a changing of the guard in the political stratum of post-communist Russia? This article addresses this question, focusing exclusively on the continuity of a specific variety of leaders. It analyses the extent of turnover among political elites (as opposed to, say, economic or cultural elites) at both the national and regional levels in Russia.

This issue is by no means trivial for the future of democratic consolidation in Russia. As classical elite theorist Gaetano Mosca argued, large-scale societal change produces a need for new capacities in managing the state. This leads to elite turnover; indeed, unless the ruling class adapts to and absorbs representatives of the new and emerging social forces into its ranks, it will decline in power.<sup>1</sup> By extension then, we can see that a 'revolution' will be incomplete to the extent that representatives of old interests continue to exert disproportionate influence in the face of rapid social change. And in fact, scholars of regime transition point to cases where elite continuity has stalled political reform. In Brazil traditional political elites were invited to join the democratic project by opponents of the ruling military government. By exploiting their status in an effort to safeguard their control over political patronage, these traditional elites constituted an obstacle to the extension of democracy once the transition had taken place.<sup>2</sup> After democracy was restored in Chile in 1990 the continuing presence of General Pinochet as commander of the army impeded President Aylwin's efforts to restore civilian control over the military and enact constitutional and legislative reforms.<sup>3</sup>

The costs of including former elites in the democratic transition may even be higher in the East than in the South. Since the task in the formerly communist region is one of dismantling an entrenched system of state socialism, the presence of former communists may derail the wholesale reconstruction of state-society relations. In fact, Valerie Bunce argues that those post-communist countries which initially excluded their former leaders from political power have shown the most progress in economic and political reform.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, Steven Fish demonstrates that successful economic

reform in the formerly communist world depends crucially on the extent of elite replacement that occurred as a result of the initial elections held during the transition.<sup>5</sup>

Of course, former officeholders might in fact be ideologically flexible and pragmatic leaders who adapt well to (or even stir up) the winds of change and adjust their priorities and beliefs accordingly. From this perspective, social background is a poor predictor of values, beliefs and behaviour. The latter may be conditioned by a myriad of other factors, such as new information, external pressures, electoral or interest group influences, or institutional norms. In fact, David Lane submits that assessing whether there has been a circulation or reproduction of the old *nomenklatura* is a poor instrument for measuring change in the character of Russia's political leadership. The extent of political change at the top is revealed less by demographic origins than by the values and outlook of the elite stratum.<sup>6</sup>

Although the relationship between social background and beliefs is still an unresolved issue,<sup>7</sup> many in post-Soviet area studies are convinced that there is a logical connection. They thus greet ideological conversions of the old *nomenklatura* with scepticism. As Martin Malia remarked not long after communism's collapse, most of the presidents of the newly independent states of the former USSR were communist party members until August 1991; hence 'their commitment to democracy and the market is tenuous and opportunistic'.<sup>8</sup> Such views are buttressed by numerous examples of the 'enrichment of the *nomenklatura*', facilitated by a myriad of advantages available only to insiders (e.g. trading and other business privileges granted to Komsomol organisations, and massive tax exemptions given to certain organisations with ties to El'tsin, such as the National Sports Fund).<sup>9</sup> Many in Russia would concur with the sentiments expressed by former minister of social welfare and democratic reformer, Ella Pamfilova, who wrote:

The unsinkable Soviet *nomenklatura*, with the help of the former Soviet security forces and the support of a new wave of politicians and businessmen, has put on respectable pro-capitalist and pro-democratic garb and continues to wield power, directing the country in its own interests. We have grown used to calling this phenomenon 'the New Russians', but if one looks carefully, one sees surprisingly few new faces. The majority have long party, Soviet or Komsomol pasts.<sup>10</sup>

And it is here, in the realm of public perceptions, that the persistence of former elites may have the most corrosive effects. If former elites are perceived to be using their positions to abscond with the national wealth, this can foster cynicism about the fairness of the transition process. It can also hinder the incubation of a crucial ingredient of democratic consolidation—public trust in political institutions. One study of mass trust in post-communist parliaments concludes that 'citizens' confidence in their parliaments is, in these Central and Eastern European polities, very substantially a function of their general view of the integrity of politics and politicians'.<sup>11</sup> In addition, insufficient turnover in the elite may depress citizen engagement in politics. Given the heavy hand of the state under communism, it is crucially important that post-communist citizens believe that the channels of government are open to *them* and that their participation can make a difference. Political efficacy will be in short supply if the public believes that old communist connections

are sturdy and that the average citizen is little match for the former elite and its resources.

Yet the exclusion of former authoritarians is not unequivocally positive. In countries where an organised, competent opposition has not yet emerged, leaders of the old guard possess needed expertise and institutional memory. Moreover, the precariousness of the transition process cautions against unnecessarily alienating the outgoing elite. O'Donnell & Schmitter accentuate the role of 'important divisions within the authoritarian regime' in launching the democratic transition.<sup>12</sup> The co-operation of authoritarian elites at subsequent stages is likewise needed, or they may refuse to let democratisation proceed further.

Although Russia's fate does not hinge exclusively on elite continuity or reproduction alone, the composition of the elite sector can offer one window on the prospects for political stability and fundamental transformation in Russia. To that end, this article uses data from an original survey of deputies and bureaucrats that I conducted in 1996 in Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod and Tatarstan to examine the continuity of political leaders in Russia. The evidence suggests that some segments of the current political elite do have significant *nomenklatura* roots but that, overall, it is not drawn overwhelmingly from the *political elite* of the Soviet period. Yet the current leadership also did not engage in highly politicised activities *opposing* the old regime. Finally, sectoral differences are shown to be important, as federal bureaucrats and regional elites from Tatarstan have deeper roots in the former political apparatus. These sectors may well present an obstacle to the furtherance of political, and especially economic, reforms in the Russian Federation.

#### *Studies on elite turnover: a reassessment*

Existing research on the topic has generally taken two forms—one arguing that elite circulation has occurred, and the more common view emphasising high levels of elite reproduction. The latter viewpoint is represented in the work of Olga Krysh-tanovskaya & Stephen White, who use data from 1993 to examine the origins of El'tsin-era leaders in various sectors of the economy and government. They observe significant cross-sectoral variations: on the one hand, approximately half of all business elites and party leaders are 'new people', but about three-quarters of the presidential administration and government have *nomenklatura* origins. Furthermore, more than two-thirds of the El'tsin-era elite as a whole began their political careers in the Brezhnev or Gorbachev periods.<sup>13</sup> A cross-national study conducted in the same year finds that 85.8% of Russia's current political elites were once members of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and slightly over half held *nomenklatura* positions in 1988. When viewed against the experiences of Hungary and Poland, the authors conclude that, in Russia, there has been significant elite reproduction.<sup>14</sup>

Others contend that the picture looks different. Gennadii Ashin points out that a list of the 500 most influential people in Russia published in 1992 contains roughly only 50 persons who had been members of either of the last two CPSU Central Committees.<sup>15</sup> A study by David Lane & Cameron Ross investigates whether El'tsin-era political leaders had ever worked in the old Soviet political apparatus. Their study of the Supreme Soviet elected in 1990 shows that these individuals did not hold

high-status jobs in either the USSR or Russian government; nor were they high-ranking figures in the central party apparatus. Instead, a significant number were middle-ranking officials with origins in regional governmental and party structures. The El'tsin governments in place between 1991 and 1993 had little overlap with the Gorbachev political elite, and almost a quarter of their members had no government experience at all. As such, the authors conclude that 'as far as the ruling elite is concerned, the revolution in Russia cannot simply be regarded as the same wine in different bottles—the old *nomenklatura* has not reproduced itself'.<sup>16</sup> Their later study of Russian political elites as of 1995 confirms the view that the Soviet political elite has not been reconstituted in the post-communist era.<sup>17</sup> In this same vein, T. H. Rigby's study of top political elites in 1988 and 1996 suggests a discontinuous line from the old to the new, although most of the new elites had held fairly senior jobs in the previous system.<sup>18</sup>

These contradictory conclusions illuminate the importance of three fundamental questions that must be answered before attempts to assess elite turnover are made: (1) which segment of the current elite is the object of study?; (2) how is elite 'reproduction' or 'circulation' defined?; and (3) what is meant by a 'member of the old regime'? With regard to the first point, researchers have successfully highlighted differences among various elite sectors. Kryshtanovskaya & White show that certain parts of the elite stratum are more accessible to those who were not in the Soviet *nomenklatura*. Over a third (and in some cases more) of all party leaders, business elites and parliamentary deputies are 'new people'; by contrast, roughly 75–80% of the presidential administration, Russian government and regional leadership have origins in the Soviet *nomenklatura*.<sup>19</sup> James Hughes contends that Russia's regional elite is quite different from its national elite. In the provinces, the occupational backgrounds of political and economic elites are not distinct; rather, the regional political elite has been recruited from both administrative officialdom and the economic managerial stratum—thus comprising a unique 'interlocking' network of political and economic elites.<sup>20</sup>

The second definitional aspect—what is implied by 'elite reproduction'—is slightly less clear. Most scholars treat this as the physical continuity of individuals, but some attention has been paid to changes in (or continuity of) the aggregate social characteristics of the elite stratum.<sup>21</sup> In another interpretation, David Lane submits that 'unless one can couple élite mobility to actual (or intended) political values or interests, one cannot make any deductions about the consequences of an élite circulation with regard to social structure'.<sup>22</sup> In his view, a circulation of elites defined in physical terms may not necessarily result in different political orientations. Yet, since most contemporary research focuses on the continuity of individual elites from past to present, this article will follow that convention.

It is with respect to the third dimension—how to define members of the old regime—that this study departs from earlier research. In the post-communist context, most projects analyse whether individual elites once occupied a *nomenklatura* slot in the Soviet system. However, there is usually scant information provided on the rank of *nomenklatura* position enjoyed and/or the sources used to identify posts within the *nomenklatura*.<sup>23</sup> In a few cases, prior communist party membership is the relevant criterion for assessing continuity with the former regime.<sup>24</sup> Only in a few cases

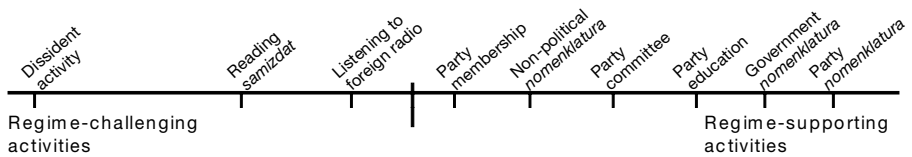


FIGURE 1. ASSOCIATION WITH PREVIOUS REGIME.

is the analysis focused on previous party and governmental posts held by current political elites.<sup>25</sup>

My contention is that we need a more finely tuned, differentiated view of what constitutes membership in the old elite in order to evaluate levels of continuity. In my view, ‘membership in the previous regime’ can be conceptualised as a *continuum of association* with the Soviet order (where to be ‘associated’ with an entity means to be ‘joined together or connected’ with it). In this context, association means an outward affiliation with the Soviet regime by virtue of engaging in a particular activity—thereby (tacitly or not) contributing to the maintenance of the party-state’s hold over Soviet society. Based on the justifications that will be offered in subsequent sections of this article, various activities in the pre-*perestroika* period can be arrayed on a continuum of regime-challenging to regime-supporting behaviours (see Figure 1). This stylised representation can then be used to measure the degree to which an individual was associated with the prior regime. This approach can offer a more nuanced interpretation of the extent to which present-day elites worked for or opposed the Soviet order and will advance a more careful appraisal of the origins of the current elite.

#### *Data and methods*

The data for this article are drawn from an original survey of 133 political elites that I conducted in Russia between February and July 1996.<sup>26</sup> This time period is ideally suited for such an analysis, since it is just after the second fully competitive elections to the Russian parliament and after elections to the newly constituted regional assemblies. Although various ways of sampling elites (positional, reputational and decisional) have their merits, I proceed from the assumption that positional analysis is adequate to identify Russia’s political elite correctly and efficiently.<sup>27</sup>

For the purposes of this study, the *current* political elite is defined as comprising two groups—legislators and high-level civil servants. For the national sample, this entailed drawing a simple random sample of all the deputies from the lower house of Russia’s national legislature (the State Duma). The bureaucrats comprise an interval sample of top-level bureaucrats working in all federal ministries except for the ministries of defence and internal affairs. As in a comparable study of Western elites,<sup>28</sup> the bureaucrats directed departments, divisions or bureaux in federal ministries, were situated in the nation’s capital, and occupied positions roughly one to two rungs below the minister.<sup>29</sup> In the two regions, interval sampling was used to select deputies from the regional legislative bodies (the *Zakonodatel’noe Sobranie* in Nizhny Novgorod and the *Gosudarstvennyi Sovet* in Tatarstan). The selection of regional

TABLE 1

RESPONSE RATES FOR THE 1996 SURVEY OF POLITICAL ELITES

	<i>Moscow</i> respondents (response rate)	<i>Nizhny Novgorod</i> respondents (response rate)	<i>Tatarstan</i> respondents (response rate)
Deputies	45 (81.8%)	11 (73.3%)	13 (86.7%)
Bureaucrats	38 (74.5%)	14 (60.9%)	12 (80.0%)
Total	83	25	25

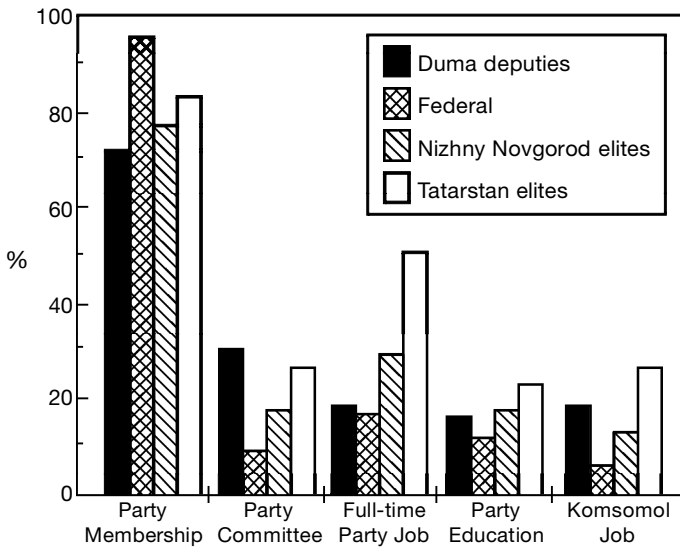
executive officials differed slightly in each region. In Nizhny Novgorod, an industrial region known for its charismatic former governor (Boris Nemtsov) and his experiments with market reforms, I targeted all department heads in the regional administrative offices (*administratsiya oblasti*). Yet in Tatarstan, an ethnically defined republic under the tightly controlled political leadership of Mintimer Shaimiev, I focused on the key advisers and department heads in the presidential apparatus.<sup>30</sup> In all three locations, departments not directly involved in policy making (e.g. personnel, accounting, building maintenance) were excluded at the outset. This design was quite manageable, as response rates mirrored and in some cases well surpassed rates achieved in other elite studies in a variety of contexts (see Table 1). For example, Robert Putnam's classic study achieved response rates of 85% for British MPs and 78% for Italian parliamentarians.<sup>31</sup>

The interviews encompassed open-ended queries, closed-ended questions, and a battery of detailed demographic questions, all of which were refined through pre-testing and back-translation. All of the interviews were conducted in Russian and (with a few exceptions) were tape-recorded. With very few exceptions, the interviews were conducted at the respondent's place of work in the privacy of his/her office and the interviewer was generally alone with the respondent. The interviews lasted 53 minutes on average.

### *Regime-supporting activities*

The analysis begins with an exploration of activities on the right side of the continuum depicted in Figure 1, i.e. with regime-supporting activities. One standard indicator of association with the Soviet regime is previous membership in the CPSU. Party membership was indeed exclusive (conferred on only about 10% of the adult population) and membership did obligate involvement in certain activities and formal espousal of a prescribed set of views.<sup>32</sup> However, I would argue that, in comparison with other activities, it should rank low on the continuum of association with the previous regime. In this limited respect, elite continuity appears to be exceedingly high among elites in my surveys. Figure 2 illustrates that, across the board, national and regional political leaders were overwhelmingly former party members. This is particularly true of federal bureaucrats, 95% of whom once carried party cards.<sup>33</sup> These data roughly match party membership rates reported in several other recent surveys of Moscow-based elites.<sup>34</sup>

The next aspect of association with the Soviet regime that we will consider is prior



Note: Full-time jobs and party committee slots are at the *raion* level or higher. Missing data and refusals are excluded.

FIGURE 2. CPSU BACKGROUND OF RUSSIAN ELITES.

membership in the *nomenklatura*. The *nomenklatura* systems of appointments was a hierarchical network of important posts dotted over the country, where CPSU party committees held the exclusive right to appoint individuals to (and dismiss individuals from) those positions. This was a highly exclusive and secretive system, the details of which were available only through inferential reasoning, émigré accounts and piecemeal information sources. Through these sources, the total number of *nomenklatura* positions was estimated to range from 2 to 3 million, or roughly 1.5–3% of the labour force.<sup>35</sup> These included not just key party and government posts but also the most important positions in various sectors of the economy and society—such as chief surgeons, heads of research institutes, collective farm chairmen, enterprise directors and shop heads, chief engineers and newspaper editors. The lists existed on every level of the party hierarchy, extending to the lowest levels. Those posts requiring approval of the CPSU Central Committee were of supreme importance to the country, such as all-union and republican ministers, secretaries of republican party organisations and regional party committees, managers of key industrial enterprises, ambassadors and editors of important media outlets.

Although the *nomenklatura* did not ‘own’ property in the traditional sense, they controlled it by virtue of their positions. Their special access to scarce goods and services surpassed those available to mere party members. Commenting on their privileges, one scholar notes that ‘the members of the *nomenklatura* were not so much rich in the “Western” sense of the word as they were strikingly different from ordinary people in their standard of living’.<sup>36</sup> Another account reads as follows:

Their lives simply take place on a different plane from the rest of society. As the chauffeured

cars of the upper crust suggest, they enjoy an ease of living unknown to ordinary people, whether they want to travel at home or abroad, indulge their fancy for Western music or movies, arrange a good education or job for their children, or simply go out to dinner.<sup>37</sup>

In this sense—based on their control over resources—the *nomenklatura* were the privileged and powerful in Soviet society.<sup>38</sup> Yet they did not all belong to the ‘political elite’ of the Soviet period, even though some have argued that this is so based on the fact that appointments to *nomenklatura* slots were political in nature.<sup>39</sup> Rather, I concur with Lane & Ross that the Soviet ‘political elite’ should be limited to those within the *nomenklatura* who held positions in the Communist Party and the government;<sup>40</sup> these are located at the far right of Figure 1. The rest of the *nomenklatura*, i.e. those not directly involved in governing, rank just one step higher than the party rank-and-file on the scale of association with the previous regime.

So how many of Russia’s current political elite emerged from this privileged class we call the *nomenklatura*—both of the political and non-political variety? I used a variety of sources to code the occupational backgrounds of elites in my survey at two points in time (1988 and 1984) and I then ascertained which of these positions were likely to have been in the *nomenklatura* of a party committee at the *oblast’* level or higher.<sup>41</sup> The results are displayed in Table 2. The first point of interest is that some segments of the current elite do have significant *nomenklatura* roots in general. Although in 1984 52.6% of the federal bureaucrats were not employed in the *nomenklatura*, only 36.8% remained outside its bounds in 1988. Federal bureaucrats can be compared with Duma deputies, whose backgrounds are depicted in the first column. Of all four sub-samples, this group is most likely to have come from outside the *nomenklatura* (57.8% and 66.7% did not hold *nomenklatura* positions at the *oblast’* level in 1988 and 1984 respectively). The amount of new blood in the parliament is striking, given the high percentage of deputies from the Communist

TABLE 2  
OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUNDS OF RUSSIAN POLITICAL ELITES (%)

	<i>Duma deputies</i>	<i>Federal bureaucrats</i>	<i>Nizhny Novgorod elites</i>	<i>Tatarstan elites</i>
<i>1988</i>	( <i>n</i> = 45)	( <i>n</i> = 38)	( <i>n</i> = 25)	( <i>n</i> = 22)
Not in the <i>nomenklatura</i>	57.8	36.8	52.0	45.5
In the <i>nomenklatura</i>	42.2	63.2	48.0	54.6
CPSU/Komsomol	11.1	5.3	8.0	18.2
State (incl. military)	8.9	44.7	12.0	18.2
Economic (incl. agriculture)	13.3	7.9	12.0	9.1
Cultural, educational	8.9	5.3	16.0	9.1
<i>1984</i>	( <i>n</i> = 45)	( <i>n</i> = 38)	( <i>n</i> = 25)	( <i>n</i> = 21)
Not in the <i>nomenklatura</i>	66.7	52.6	60.0	52.4
In the <i>nomenklatura</i>	33.4	47.4	40.0	47.6
CPSU/Komsomol	8.9	10.5	8.0	14.3
State (incl. military)	6.7	29.0	16.0	14.3
Economic (incl. agriculture)	11.1	5.3	8.0	9.5
Cultural, educational	6.7	2.6	8.0	9.5

Note: A *nomenklatura* position is defined as any post believed to have been in the *nomenklatura* of a party committee at the *oblast’* level or higher. Missing data and refusals are excluded. Categories may not sum to 100% owing to rounding.



Party of the Russian Federation in the Duma. With respect to the regions, Tatarstan has somewhat more leaders with *nomenklatura* roots than does Nizhny Novgorod.

Yet overall, none of the four elite groups is overwhelmingly made up from the political elite of the Soviet period. If one sums up the two rows depicting CPSU/Komsomol and state *nomenklatura* backgrounds, one can observe that only 20.0% of the Duma deputies held positions in either the party or state *nomenklatura* in 1988 (and even fewer in 1984). Similarly, no more than a quarter of the leaders from Nizhny Novgorod were in a party or state *nomenklatura* job in either 1988 or 1984. Federal bureaucrats, not surprisingly, have more extensive roots in the ministerial apparatus, but at most (in 1988) only 50.0% held posts in the party/state apparatus. Again, more continuity of elites is visible in Tatarstan than in Nizhny Novgorod, with 36.4% having held jobs in the old political elite in 1988 in the former region.

These trends are confirmed by referring back to Figure 2, which depicts party involvement at even lower levels than do the occupational background data (i.e. to the *raion* level). The graph shows generally modest rates of involvement in activities that constitute the middle range of the regime-supporting half of the scale of association with the previous regime. No more than 29% of individuals in any of the four elite groups ever held an elected post on a party committee.<sup>42</sup> Similarly, no more than 22% had ever studied full-time at a party school, which was a sign of upward mobility within the party apparatus.<sup>43</sup> Again, Tatarstan constitutes an exception when we consider the most pro-regime position on the scale of association, i.e. slots in the party *nomenklatura*. The data show that, at some point in their lives, 50% of current elites had worked full-time in the CPSU at the *raion* level or higher. This can be compared with Moscow and Nizhny Novgorod, where the rate of participation as full-time (*osvobozhdennye*) party workers is not high—never exceeding 28%. Moreover, in Moscow and Nizhny Novgorod very few individuals were active in multiple respects: just 8% of the respondents based in each of those two cities had both worked full-time in the party and occupied an elected post on a party committee. Thus, moderate levels of involvement in Communist Party activities at the *raion* level or higher buttress the claim that the current elite is not drawn from the Soviet political elite.<sup>44</sup>

One important qualification to the foregoing analyses must be stated. Most of those identified in Table 2 as having non-*nomenklatura* origins did not hold low-ranking positions. Many worked in research institutes, the media, education—even in the bureaucracy—at the lower rungs, i.e. positions that did not quite hold *nomenklatura* status at the *oblast'* level but were clearly stepping stones on an upward trajectory. As a matter of fact, this preponderance of former mid-level employees in many sectors of the current Russian elite is confirmed in other research.<sup>45</sup> Very few in my sample were students in either 1984 or 1988. Consequently, many of these elites in 1988 or 1984 might well be understood as a set of potential elites, or individuals with the capacity for upward mobility.

### *Regime-challenging activities*

The previous section has argued that, although there are important sectoral differences, current Russian elites are not drawn primarily from the old Soviet political elite, defined as those in relatively high-ranking party or government jobs. In addition,

TABLE 3  
PARTICIPATION RATES FOR VARIOUS POLITICAL ACTIVITIES (%)

	<i>Duma deputies</i>	<i>Federal bureaucrats</i>	<i>Nizhny Novgorod elites</i>	<i>Tatarstan elites</i>
<i>Those who engaged in the following activities 'very often' before 1988</i>				
Reading <i>samizdat</i>	9.3	0.0	4.0	16.7
Listening to foreign radio	11.4	5.4	16.0	20.8
<i>Those who were active in the following activities since 1988</i>				
Party work (non-CPSU)	77.8	7.9	20.8	8.3
Non-state civic associations <sup>a</sup>	20.9	10.5	9.1	4.4

Notes: Missing data and refusals are excluded. <sup>a</sup>Excluding groups linked with the Soviet period (e.g. state-sponsored public organisations), trade unions, professional organisations and groups representing industrial or state enterprises, businesses or entrepreneurs.

their involvement in lower-level CPSU activity does not approximate intense engagement in regime-supporting work. At the same time, respondents were also rarely involved in political activity *opposing* the Soviet regime (i.e. the regime-challenging activities depicted in Figure 1). Only 6.0% of the central elites and none of the regional leaders reported experiencing some degree of political persecution (*politicheskije presledovaniya*) for anti-regime activities before *perestroika*. Instances of this kind mentioned in the interviews included expulsion from the Communist Party or Komsomol, delays in being able to defend a dissertation, extension of the probationary stage for entry into the CPSU, and termination of employment.

Similarly, reported rates of reading *samizdat* and listening to foreign radio are also quite low, given that higher-status individuals often had greater interest in and access to these media during the Soviet period.<sup>46</sup> For instance, ownership of a high-frequency, preferably foreign-made, and thus difficult-to-obtain radio receiver was needed in order to consistently bypass Soviet jamming of Western radio broadcasts. Nevertheless, as Table 3 displays, only 9.3% of the Duma deputies and none of the federal bureaucrats reported reading *samizdat* 'very often' before 1988. Tuning into a foreign radio programme was likewise not a frequent activity for most respondents, though the regional deputies report higher rates than do the federal elites—perhaps because of the greater poverty of information sources in the provinces.

What about activities to help tear down the old regime and build a new one once a window of opportunity opened up during *perestroika*? How energetic have Russia's elites been in constructing the rudiments of a healthy civil and political society? Table 3 shows that the picture varies greatly by sector. Not surprisingly, Duma deputies manifest the highest participation rates in parties and civic groups established since 1988. Over three-quarters of all deputies have been active in parties other than the CPSU,<sup>47</sup> and 20.9% have been engaged in new civic associations not linked with the Soviet past. By contrast, only 7.9% of the federal bureaucrats report active engagement in party-building efforts since the onset of political pluralism.<sup>48</sup> The two regions are quite different, with Nizhny Novgorod exhibiting higher participation rates than Tatarstan (where only 8.3% of regional elites have been actively involved in party life

since 1988). On balance, therefore, the overall tendency depicted in Table 3 accords well with our representation of an elite stratum neither highly associated with nor actively opposed to the Soviet regime.

### *Comparison with other democratic transitions*

What is behind the variations we have observed in the extent of elite circulation and reproduction in, say, Nizhny Novgorod on the one hand and Tatarstan on the other? Few studies move beyond a description of elite turnover to an examination of its causes.<sup>49</sup> This section draws on comparisons of the Russian experience with other democratic transitions in order to develop some preliminary hypotheses about what drives elite turnover. Although such comparisons are plagued by diverse ways of defining the political elite and measuring elite continuity (and in particular, by the use of definitions which I have argued are problematic), a few initial observations can be made.

First, how does elite turnover in Russia compare with East Central Europe and the Baltic states? Comparative sociological data hint that current Russian political elites are more closely tied to the old order than are Polish and Hungarian leaders. In 1993 over four-fifths of Russia's political elites were former members of the Communist Party, while in Poland and Hungary former party members comprised not quite a third of the new political stratum.<sup>50</sup> (As for the Baltic states, a different 1993–94 survey shows that 44.3% of Estonian political elites were former Communist Party members, with figures of 66.8% and 47.2% for Latvia and Lithuania respectively.<sup>51</sup>) More relevant is the observation that in comparison with the 49.0% of Russian elites who were “deputies” and other influentials located just below the top *nomenklatura* rank in 1988, in Hungary and Poland the figures are 37.4% and 26.0% respectively.<sup>52</sup> Although the degree of elite circulation in East Central Europe might be overstated owing to the time period in which the interviews were completed,<sup>53</sup> it appears that Russia's political elites have more staying power than their counterparts in Hungary and Poland and, to a lesser extent, the Baltic states.

A comparison of the Russian and Spanish experiences—albeit very limited—is also instructive. The first row of Table 4 displays the percentage of deputies serving in the post-transition legislatures of Spain and Russia who had prior experience in legislatures of the authoritarian period. Like East Central Europe, Spain displays a lower level of elite reproduction when compared with Russia. Of the 596 members of Spain's first post-Franco parliament, elected in 1977, 12.9% had been legislators in the parliament during the Franco regime. The majority of them had served in only one or two such legislatures. In the second post-Franco parliament, elected in 1979, the percentage of all legislators with experience in a Francoist legislature dropped to 7.9%. By contrast, my survey shows that one-third of the deputies in Russia's second post-transition legislature had been members of legislatures (soviets) during the communist period.<sup>54</sup> Some 11% had served in the interim legislatures of Russia and the Soviet Union, those bodies elected before the dissolution of the USSR (i.e. the 1990 RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies or the 1989 USSR Congress of People's Deputies).<sup>55</sup>

Moreover, the background of Spain's post-transition parliamentarians also attests to

TABLE 4

EXPERIENCE OF PARLIAMENTARY DEPUTIES IN THE LEGISLATURES OF THE PRE-DEMOCRATIC PERIOD: COMPARISON OF SPAIN AND RUSSIA (%)

	Spain <sup>a</sup>		Russia <sup>b</sup>	
	Deputies elected 1977	1979	Deputies elected 1993	1995
With experience in pre-democratic legislatures	12.9	7.9	n.d.	33.3
With experience in interim legislatures	—	—	n.d.	11.1

Notes: <sup>a</sup>For Spain, the percentages refer to those who had served in the Franco-era parliament, the Cortes. The deputies elected in 1977 and 1979 include members of both the Congress and Senate. For 1977 this includes the 41 senators chosen by the King. <sup>b</sup>For Russia, the pre-democratic legislatures include all soviets (from the *raion* level up) to which the individual was elected prior to 1988, inclusive. The interim legislatures include the USSR Congress of People's Deputies elected in 1989 and the RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies elected in 1990. The deputies elected in 1995 constitute a random sample of the members of the lower house of the parliament, the State Duma. Sources: Author's data base; Salustiano del Campo, José Félix Tezanos & Walter Santin, 'The Spanish Political Elite: Permanency and Change', in Moshe M. Czudnowski (ed.), *Does Who Governs Matter? Elite Circulation in Contemporary Societies* (DeKalb, Northern Illinois University Press, 1982), pp. 125–153 at 134–143.

the low continuity of authoritarian elites: 28% of the parliamentarians in both the 1977 and 1979 bodies were high-level public servants, indicating that Franco's organs of state power were represented to some extent—but not extensively—in the new order. However, some would interpret the high-status professions of these state employees as speaking to the 'outstanding political power of these groups, which, in a large measure, maintain the positions they had under Franco's regime, especially full professors of universities, technicians of civil administration, and state counselors'.<sup>56</sup>

Other qualifications argue for caution in interpreting these data. The data for Spain focus on previous experience in a national legislature, while the figures for Russia include prior membership in all soviets at or above the *raion* level—i.e. local, regional, republican and national. Consequently, this surely overstates the level of previous involvement in the national-level legislature of the USSR, the USSR Supreme Soviet—perhaps thereby overestimating the extent of elite continuity in Russia when compared with Spain. This is buttressed by the following interpretation of the Spanish data: even though only 16.3% of parliamentarians from the centre-right party (the UCD) that won the elections in 1977 had served as legislators during the Franco regime, 44% of them had 'occupied diverse political posts during the Franco government, especially in the intermediate levels of central executive power, as well as in the areas of local government and the syndical apparatus'.<sup>57</sup> Thus, a focus only on prior membership in Franco-era parliaments may understate the extent of actual elite continuity in Spain.

A final lesson on the extent of elite turnover can be extracted from the case of post-war Germany. At the end of World War II the victorious allies issued a directive aimed at 'denazification' of the German elite. Their objective was 'the removal from public and semi-public office and from positions of responsibility in important private

TABLE 5

POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS FOR CONTINUITY OF POLITICAL ELITES IN POST-COMMUNIST REGIMES

	<i>Elite continuity</i>	
	<i>Higher</i>	<i>Lower</i>
Organised opposition elite during transition phase	Weak	Strong
Exclusion mechanisms (e.g. lustration)	Absent	Present
Electoral preferences—function of:		
Public dissatisfaction with previous authoritarian regime	Low	High
Refashioning of communists as social democrats	Present	Absent

undertakings of all members of the Nazi party who have been more than nominal participants in its activities', as well as those who had rendered support or assistance to the Nazi Party. At the same time, it was aimed at encouraging the emergence of a democratic counter-elite comprising those who had actively opposed the Nazi regime. In a limited respect they succeeded, as only 7% of those in elite positions in 1956 had held positions in the Nazi-era non-political elite, i.e. had occupied positions of authority which were heavily involved in the operation of the Nazi regime.<sup>58</sup> Yet early plans to rely on a counter-elite for rebuilding Germany were scuttled. In the face of the need for rapid economic and political recovery, skilled experts were needed in public administration and other areas, and there were simply insufficient numbers who could be thought of as belonging to a counter-elite. Hence, most post-war elites in West Germany were individuals 'who had been neither strong opponents nor strong supporters of the totalitarian regime, neither strongly involved in running that regime nor in fighting it'.<sup>59</sup> For our purposes, suffice it to say that the denazification plans—what I will call an exclusion mechanism—assisted in the removal of the most active proponents of the old order from positions of responsibility.

These cases invite preliminary speculation about the reasons why some post-communist countries experience more continuity in political elites than others. At least three possible explanations can be extracted from these comparisons; these are displayed in Table 5. First, some analyses predicted a greater degree of elite circulation in Hungary and especially Poland as compared with Russia owing to the presence of an organised, well-established opposition elite. Opposition leaders deeply involved in negotiations with the regime should have been able to enter the political arena during the transition phase. One study argues that

... members of the opposition movements in Hungary and Poland had significant roles in initiating the breakdown of the communist regimes. The political figures who emerged in the negotiations in the late 1980s were able to convert their 'negative' political capital into actual leadership positions, as a reward for their perceived integrity and persistence, as well as a consequence of their participation in the actual process of distributing these positions.<sup>60</sup>

Similarly, the involvement of a viable democratic opposition in Spain's 'pacted' transition may have contributed to the discontinuity between former and current elites evident in the data on parliamentary deputies presented earlier.

A second explanation concerns the extent of efforts directed specifically at excluding elites formerly associated with the regime. These have been largely ignored

in the literature on elite circulation and renewal. As noted, the reconstruction of post-war Germany included specific directives prohibiting Nazi elites from holding public office. Several countries in Eastern and Central Europe have passed lustration laws similar in some ways to the denazification decrees, although the effects have been relatively moderate. In general, these screen high-ranking officials for collaboration with state security agencies or involvement in criminal activities. A far more extensive law was passed in the former Czechoslovakia, where 'former communist functionaries from the township level up were barred from holding certain positions'.<sup>61</sup>

A third factor determining the degree of turnover among political elites is the configuration of electoral preferences in the country. And it is here that measures of elite continuity can vary widely, depending on the time period over which the analysis is conducted. For example, publics in both Poland and Hungary voted out former communists in the early post-transition period, only to return them to power in the legislature (and the presidency, in the case of Poland) during subsequent elections. In those parts of the post-communist region where voter preferences are faithfully translated into electoral outcomes, public dissatisfaction with either the previous authoritarian regime or the policy choices associated with it should produce elite turnover. In the later Polish and Hungarian parliamentary elections that returned the communist successor parties to power, voters opted for a more 'human face' to the free market—one that would cushion the pain of the economic reform process.<sup>62</sup> The fact that the communist successor parties in those countries had successfully recast themselves as credible social democratic parties facilitated their electoral successes in that round.<sup>63</sup>

It goes without saying that these potential explanations must be evaluated with systematic, cross-national data in order to determine the relative merits and strength of each.<sup>64</sup> In the absence of the latter, they must remain possibilities to be explored in future work.

### *Conclusions*

In conclusion, this article makes the case that prior membership in the Communist Party or even the *nomenklatura* is not an adequate indicator of 'membership in the old political elite'. Rather, it argues for a more differentiated approach to analysing elite continuity in Russia. Previous involvement in political life can be placed on a continuum of association with the Soviet order, ranging from regime-challenging to regime-supporting activities.

With regard to the latter, my 1996 survey data show that, on the whole, Russia's new national-level elites were not drawn from the upper ranks of the party or state apparatus. Although many had *nomenklatura* backgrounds, these were often positions in the 'non-political *nomenklatura*'. Reported involvement in CPSU activities during the Soviet period is also moderate. Although important sectoral differences surface in the data (with federal civil servants exhibiting deeper roots in the old *nomenklatura* than Duma deputies, and regional elites from Tatarstan having clearer links with the old political elite than those from Nizhny Novgorod), the data show that Russia's new political leaders are not a simple reproduction of the old Soviet political elite. At the

same time, they were not members of an active counter-elite; rather, they generally refrained from engaging in activities that most closely symbolised active opposition to the old order. This suggests that most of today's political leaders are not drawn from highly politicised segments of the old regime; they were neither Communist Party activists nor committed dissidents.

If we return to the writings of elite theorist Mosca, we can draw a few conclusions about the implications of these findings for societal stability in Russia. It is clear that Russian society has changed significantly since the introduction of market reforms; the question then becomes the extent to which the leadership has incorporated new societal forces borne of the economic transition. If the new elite is simply a continuation of the old Soviet elite, this might portend a dislocation of the ruling class, and possibly social revolution. Yet if, as my data show, the political elite *has* undergone significant turnover, this might augur higher levels of societal stability than one might expect. And perhaps we can see evidence of this stability in the failure of the Russian parliament to incite mass-level rebellion in 1993 and the concomitant avoidance of large-scale civil war. Moreover, the re-election of El'tsin as president in 1996 gives some indication that the new social forces created by marketisation have found the El'tsin leadership acceptable, at least when faced with its more statist alternatives.

As noted earlier, however, this article has explicitly adopted a narrow focus of investigation, which is the continuity of *political* elites. As such, it has ignored the question of the continuity and/or influence of *economic* elites in society and the polity—the degree of responsiveness to and absorption of economic groups by ruling elites, whether former (and current) political elites have translated their resources into economic power, and the degree of turnover in the economic elite itself. The close interconnection between economic and political power in the Russian context, the pervasive government corruption, and the resistance to economic reforms among so many enterprise directors all may have starkly different implications for public trust and economic prosperity—and thus societal stability—than does the restricted analysis offered here.

Finally, based on the existing literature on this topic, the article reports that elite continuity varies cross-nationally. Poland, Hungary and the Baltic states seem to exhibit more elite circulation than does Russia. Based on these cases, as well as the experiences of post-Franco Spain and post-war Germany, the article speculates that continuity in post-communist political elites will be lower in countries where the transition experience has included an organised opposition elite, exclusion mechanisms such as lustration, high dissatisfaction with the previous communist regime, and minimal efforts by communist successor parties to reposition themselves as social democrats.

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<sup>1</sup> Gaetano Mosca, *The Ruling Class*, translated by Hannah D. Kahn (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1939), pp. 65–69.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Traditional elites’ are regionally based politicians prominent before the 1964 military coup, who exercised power through personalised, clientelistic networks. Frances Hagopian, ‘The Compromised Consolidation: The Political Class in the Brazilian Transition’, in Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O’Donnell & J. Samuel Valenzuela (eds), *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative Perspective* (Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), pp. 243–293 at 246–248.

<sup>3</sup> Brian Loveman, ‘¿Misión Cumplida? Civil Military Relations and the Chilean Political Transition’, *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 33, 3, Fall 1991, pp. 35–74.

<sup>4</sup> Valerie Bunce, ‘Regional Differences in Democratization: The East Versus the South’, *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 14, 3, 1998, pp. 187–211.

<sup>5</sup> M. Steven Fish, ‘The Determinants of Economic Reform in the Post-Communist World’, *East European Politics and Societies*, 12, 1, Winter 1998, pp. 31–78.

<sup>6</sup> David Lane, ‘Transition under Eltsin: The *Nomenklatura* and Political Elite Circulation’, *Political Studies*, 45, 1997, pp. 855–874.

<sup>7</sup> Donald Searing demonstrates that some social background factors are more useful in predicting elite attitudes than others. He also shows that the relative importance of similar background categories for elite attitudes varies widely from one political system to another. Donald D. Searing, ‘The Comparative Study of Elite Socialization’, *Comparative Political Studies*, 1, 4, January 1969, pp. 471–500. This is supported by Samuel Eldersveld’s research on local elites, which finds that socioeconomic status is correlated with beliefs about economic equality in Sweden, but less so in the Netherlands and not at all in the USA. Samuel J. Eldersveld, Lars Strömberg & Wim Derksen, *Local Elites in Western Democracies: A Comparative Analysis of Urban Political Leaders in the U.S., Sweden, and The Netherlands* (Boulder, Westview Press, 1995), pp. 196–197. Donald Matthews reports that the linkages between the social backgrounds of legislators and their policy preferences in several settings are generally weak. Donald R. Matthews, ‘Legislative Recruitment and Legislative Careers’, in Gerhard Loewenberg, Samuel C. Patterson & Malcolm E. Jewell (eds), *Handbook of Legislative Research* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 17–55 at 24–26. Robert Putnam suggests that social background may play a greater role than post-recruitment socialisation in developing countries because ‘new or unstable institutions are less able to inculcate distinctive norms in their members’. Robert D. Putnam, *The Comparative Study of Political Elites* (Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1976), p. 98. On the other hand, periods of high uncertainty when institutions and rules are in flux may in fact disorganise societal interests and hence behaviour based on them. Valerie Bunce & Mária Csanádi, ‘Uncertainty in the Transition: Post-Communism in Hungary’, *East European Politics and Societies*, 7, 2, Spring 1993, pp. 240–275. And indeed, studies of the voting behaviour of Russian parliamentarians arrive at contradictory conclusions about the sturdiness of the relationship between individuals’ social backgrounds and their voting decisions. Richard Sakwa, *Russian Politics and Society* (New York, Routledge, 1993), p. 61; David Lane & Cameron Ross, ‘The Changing Composition and Structure of the Political Elites’, in David Lane (ed.), *Russia in Transition: Politics, Privatisation and Inequality* (New York, Longman, 1995), pp. 52–75. See also David Lane & Cameron Ross, *The Transition from Communism to Capitalism: Ruling Elites from Gorbachev to Yeltsin* (New York, St Martin’s Press, 1999), pp. 129–134.

<sup>8</sup> Martin Malia, ‘From Under the Rubble, What?’ *Problems of Communism*, 41, 1–2, January–April 1992, pp. 89–106 at 92.

<sup>9</sup> On the Komsomol, see Ol’ga Kryshstanovskaya, ‘Novaya Sovetskaya biznes-elita’, unpublished manuscript, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1992; Steven L. Solnick, *Stealing the State: Control and Collapse in Soviet Institutions* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1998). On the National Sports Fund, see Jonas Bernstein, ‘Victim’s Tape Reveals Kremlin Corruption’, *Moscow Times*, 10 July 1996, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Ella Pamfilova, ‘Our Worst Nightmare’, *Moscow Times*, 15 February 1995, p. 8. See also the perspectives on ‘*nomenklatura* capitalism’ in Yurii Burtin, ‘Novyi stroi: vidy na budushchee’, *Moskovskie novosti*, 6–13 November 1994, p. 9; K. I. Mikul’skii et al., *Rossiiskaya elita: opyt sotsiologicheskogo analiza—Chast’ III* (Moscow, 1997), pp. 35, 51.

<sup>11</sup> John R. Hibbing & Samuel C. Patterson, ‘Public Trust in the New Parliaments of Central and Eastern Europe’, *Political Studies*, 42, 1994, pp. 570–592 at 583.

<sup>12</sup> Guillermo O’Donnell & Philippe C. Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore and London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), p. 19.

<sup>13</sup> Olga Kryshstanovskaya & Stephen White, ‘From Soviet *Nomenklatura* to Russian Élite’,



*Europe-Asia Studies*, 48, 5, 1996, pp. 711–733. See also Ol'ga Kryshnanovskaya, 'Transformatsiya staroi nomenklatury v novuyu rossiiskuyu elitu', *Obshchestvennye nauki i sovremennost'*, 1995, 1, pp. 51–65.

<sup>14</sup> Eric Hanley, Natasha Yerzhova & Richard Anderson, 'Russia—Old Wine in a New Bottle? The Circulation and Reproduction of Russian Elites, 1983–1993', *Theory and Society*, 24, 5, October 1995, pp. 639–668.

<sup>15</sup> Gennadii Ashin, 'Pravyashchaya elita i obshchestvo', *Svobodnaya mysl'*, 1993, 7 (May), pp. 58–69 at 68. However, other studies of a similar nature have found much more continuity. For example, Mawdsley & White report that 99 of the 412 members of the last CPSU Central Committee (elected in 1990) are listed in a 1993 edition of *Kto est' kto v Rossii i blizhnem zarubezh'e*. Evan Mawdsley & Stephen White, *The Soviet Elite from Lenin to Gorbachev* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000). I thank an anonymous reviewer for calling this to my attention.

<sup>16</sup> Lane & Ross, 'The Changing Composition and Structure of the Political Elites', p. 75.

<sup>17</sup> David Lane & Cameron Ross, 'The Russian Political Elites, 1991–95: Recruitment and Renewal', in John Higley, Jan Pakulski & Włodzimierz Wesołowski (eds), *Postcommunist Elites and Democracy in Eastern Europe* (New York, St Martin's Press, 1998), pp. 34–66.

<sup>18</sup> T. H. Rigby, 'New Top Elites for Old in Russian Politics', *British Journal of Political Science*, 29, 2, April 1999, pp. 323–343.

<sup>19</sup> Kryshnanovskaya & White, 'From Soviet *Nomenklatura* to Russian Élite', pp. 727–728.

<sup>20</sup> James Hughes, 'Sub-national Élites and Post-communist Transformation in Russia: A Reply to Kryshnanovskaya & White', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 49, 6, 1997, pp. 1017–1036. Darrell Slider comes to the same conclusion about the predominance of administrative officials, enterprise managers and chairmen of collective/state farms in regional assemblies in 'Elections to Russia's Regional Assemblies', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 12, 3, 1996, pp. 243–264. For additional information on regional elites, see Nikolai Petrov, 'Politicheskie elity v tsentre i na mestakh', *Rossiiskii monitor: arkhiv sovremennoi politiki*, 1995, 5, pp. 41–63; Neil J. Melvin, 'The Consolidation of a New Regional Élite: The Case of Omsk 1987–1995', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 50, 4, 1998, pp. 619–650.

<sup>21</sup> Kryshnanovskaya & White, 'From Soviet *Nomenklatura* to Russian Élite', pp. 724–728.

<sup>22</sup> Lane, 'Transition under Eltsin: The *Nomenklatura* and Political Elite Circulation', p. 861.

<sup>23</sup> In one of the few exceptions (the 1993 cross-national survey that provides the basis for several articles on post-communist elite transformation), *nomenklatura* slots at the level of the communist parties' central committees are the standard. See the description of the study in Jakub Karpinski, 'Sociologists Compare *Nomenklatura* Members and Contemporary Elites', *Transition*, 2, 11, 31 May 1996, pp. 36–37.

<sup>24</sup> This is one of the indicators used to measure elite continuity in Anton Steen, *Between Past and Future: Elites, Democracy and the State in Post-Communist Countries—A Comparison of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania* (Brookfield, Ashgate, 1997), pp. 35–38.

<sup>25</sup> Lane & Ross, 'The Changing Composition and Structure of the Political Elites'; Lane & Ross, 'The Russian Political Elites: 1991–95'. There is yet another complication with respect to measuring the degree of elite continuity—the time periods selected to represent the 'old' and 'new' regimes. In fact, Lane and Ross point out that "a *nomenklatura* post" is often attributed to positions begun when the Soviet system was disintegrating or had disintegrated ...'. Lane & Ross, 'The Russian Political Elites, 1991–95', p. 54.

<sup>26</sup> Elites in the survey are overwhelmingly male, highly educated and middle-aged. Specifically, 95.2% of all national elites and 89.8% of all regional elites in the sample are male; 98.8% and 98.0% respectively have at least a university degree; and the mean age for both groups is 49.1 years and 47.7 years respectively.

<sup>27</sup> On the use of the reputational method in the Russian context, see David Lane, 'The Gorbachev Revolution: The Role of the Political Elite in Regime Disintegration', *Political Studies*, 44, 1996, pp. 4–23; David Lane, 'Political Elites Under Gorbachev and Yeltsin in the Early Period of Transition: A Reputational and Analytical Study', in Timothy J. Colton & Robert C. Tucker (eds), *Patterns in Post-Soviet Leadership* (Boulder, Westview Press, 1995), pp. 29–47; Sharon Werning Rivera, 'Tendentsii formirovaniya sostava postkommunisticheskoi elity Rossii: reputatsionnyi analiz', *Politicheskie issledovaniya*, 1995, 6, pp. 61–66, and 1996, 3, pp. 156–157.

<sup>28</sup> Joel D. Aberbach, Robert D. Putnam & Bert A. Rockman, *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1981).

<sup>29</sup> In the Russian case, I count first deputy ministers and deputy ministers as constituting one level.

<sup>30</sup> Thanks to its status as an autonomous republic (ASSR) in the Soviet era, Tatarstan had its own ministerial apparatus under the Soviet system. This has continued into the present era, and there has also been a presidential apparatus since Mintimer Shaimiev's election as president of the Republic of

Tatarstan in 1991. Although, in a formal sense, the staff members of the presidential apparatus are not precisely equivalent in function to the department heads interviewed in Nizhny Novgorod and Moscow, I believe that they do not differ markedly from the aforementioned 'bureaucrats proper'.

<sup>31</sup> Robert D. Putnam, *The Beliefs of Politicians: Ideology, Conflict, and Democracy in Britain and Italy* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1973), p. 15. See also Peter McDonough, *Power and Ideology in Brazil* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 253; Aberbach *et al.*, *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies*, p. 26; Sidney Verba *et al.*, *Elites and the Idea of Equality: A Comparison of Japan, Sweden, and the United States* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1987), pp. 280–281.

<sup>32</sup> See the demands of membership in the party rules listed in Jerry F. Hough & Merle Fainsod, *How the Soviet Union Is Governed* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1979), pp. 320–322.

<sup>33</sup> These numbers are virtually unaffected by the age of the respondents. That is to say, only seven of the 133 respondents were under 35 years of age, meaning that all of the rest could have been party members in 1988 (considering that party membership was generally conferred in one's mid to late 20s).

<sup>34</sup> A 1993 survey of Russia's foreign policy elite reports an average former party membership rate of 85%. Vserossiiskii tsentr izucheniya obshchestvennogo mneniya & SINUS Moskva, *Vneshnyaya politika Rossii—1993: analiz politnikov i ekspertov* (Moscow, 1993), pp. 14–15. In the 1993 Szelenyi study of economic, political and cultural elites, 77% of all respondents and 83% of all political elites were former party members. Boris Golovachev, Larisa Kosova & Lyudmila Khakhulina, '“Novaya” rossiiskaya elita: starye igroki na novom pole?', *Segodnya*, 14 February 1996, p. 5; Karpinski, 'Sociologists Compare *Nomenklatura* Members and Contemporary Elites', pp. 36–37. Two surveys of national-level economic, political, military, academic and media leaders involved in foreign policy conducted in 1992–93 and 1995 show prior membership rates of 70.2% and 74.4% respectively. See William Zimmerman, 'Markets, Democracy and Russian Foreign Policy', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 10, 2, April–June 1994, pp. 103–126, for a description of the data set used to compute these figures. The only exception to this general pattern is the Lane & Ross analysis of 145 top government leaders working in the El'tsin administration between June 1991 and October 1993, which reports that only 47.6% of that group were former party members. It may be that underreporting is at work here, or alternatively, that the highest echelons in El'tsin's administrations during the early 'post-revolutionary' period were recruited from a decidedly different pool than those who occupied less visible positions in the government and society. Lane & Ross, 'The Changing Composition and Structure of the Political Elites', p. 71.

<sup>35</sup> T. H. Rigby & Bohdan Harasymiw, *Leadership Selection and Patron-Client Relations in the USSR and Yugoslavia* (Boston, George Allen & Unwin, 1983), p. 3; Bohdan Harasymiw, 'Mosca and Moscow: Elite Recruitment in the Soviet Union', in Moshe M. Czudnowski (ed.), *Does Who Governs Matter? Elite Circulation in Contemporary Societies* (DeKalb, Northern Illinois University Press, 1982), pp. 265–292 at 284–285.

<sup>36</sup> Kryshatanovskaya, 'Transformatsiya staroi nomenklatury v novuyu rossiiskuyu elitu', p. 53.

<sup>37</sup> Hedrick Smith, *The Russians*, revised edition (New York, Ballantine Books, 1976), p. 55. See also Mikhail Voslensky, *Nomenklatura: gospodstvuyushchii klass Sovetskogo Soyuza* (Moscow, Sovetskaya Rossiya and Oktyabr', 1991), pp. 267–352.

<sup>38</sup> See Ian McAllister, Stephen White & Richard Rose, 'Communists, Privilege, and Postcommunism in Russia', *International Politics*, 34, March 1997, pp. 79–95. However, as Michael Kennedy points out with respect to Poland, political power did not translate well into prestige because it was held with such low legitimacy. Rather, prestige was accorded to occupations that were of service to society, required certain educational levels or professional knowledge, or demanded sacrifice, responsibility or exertion on the part of the individual. On the whole, material rewards and political power were much less important criteria of occupational prestige. Michael D. Kennedy, *Professionals, Power and Solidarity in Poland: A Critical Sociology of Soviet-Type Society* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 243–248.

<sup>39</sup> Bohdan Harasymiw, *Political Elite Recruitment in the Soviet Union* (New York, St Martin's Press, 1984), pp. 10–13.

<sup>40</sup> Lane & Ross, 'The Russian Political Elites, 1991–95'. It should also be noted that this conceptualisation of the Soviet political elite is close to the approach adopted by Kenneth C. Farmer, who defines it as 'those who control *nomenklatura* lists' in *The Soviet Administrative Elite* (New York, Praeger, 1992), pp. 76–77.

<sup>41</sup> Sources used to make these determinations were the following: Harasymiw, *Political Elite Recruitment in the Soviet Union*, pp. 160–173; Bohdan Harasymiw, 'Nomenklatura: The Soviet Communist Party's Leadership Recruitment System', *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 2, 4, December 1969, pp. 493–512; Farmer, *The Soviet Administrative Elite*, pp. 78–81; Merle Fainsod,

*Smolensk under Soviet Rule* (New York, Vintage Books, 1958), pp. 62–67; *Nomenklatura dolzhnoesti TsK KPSS: po sostoyaniyu na 10 avgusta 1988 g.*, mimeo; Harasymiw, 'Mosca and Moscow: Elite Recruitment in the Soviet Union', pp. 284–285.

<sup>42</sup> There was occasionally some confusion about the meaning of this question. Several respondents interpreted 'an elected party post' to mean a secretary of a party committee, rather than merely an elected member of a party committee. Thus, there may have been slight underreporting at work here.

<sup>43</sup> The most important schools were the Academy of Social Sciences and the Higher Party School, both of which were attached to the CPSU Central Committee. There were also a substantial number of higher party schools on the inter-*oblast'* and republic levels (as well as the Higher Komsomol School). Study in these schools required a recommendation from a party committee and was reserved for those already in party or state careers and targeted for advancement in the party apparatus. For example, if an aspiring cadre was promoted from a full-time party secretaryship at a large enterprise to the medium or upper ranks of the party apparatus, he would often study at a higher party school for a period of time. In addition to these two and four-year programmes of study, the higher party schools also offered short intensive seminars. There were also courses offered on the republic and *oblast'* levels for lower-level party workers. (Courses taken at institutes of Marxism-Leninism were excluded from this analysis because they were not part of the separate system of party schools explicitly designed to recruit and train future party leaders). Merle Fainsod, *How Russia is Ruled*, revised edition (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 242–245; Geoffrey Hosking, *The First Socialist Society: A History of the Soviet Union from Within*, 2nd edition (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 379; 'Ob Institute obshchestvennykh nauk pri TsK KPSS', *Izvestiya TsK KPSS*, 1990, 5, pp. 128–130.

<sup>44</sup> Another validation of this conclusion is the fact that relatively few elites in the sample received their post-secondary education in elite establishments such as Moscow State University, the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, Leningrad State University or the Plekhanov Institute of Economics. Of those with higher education, the percentages with an elite education are: federal bureaucrats—21.1%, Duma deputies—18.2%, Nizhny Novgorod and Tatarstan elites—0%.

<sup>45</sup> One study reports that the current elite stratum in Russia is not staffed by those from the highest echelons of the *nomenklatura* but rather by its lower-level 'reserves'. About 49% of political, economic and cultural elites interviewed in 1993 had constituted the '*nomenklatura* reserve' in 1988, meaning they were persons slated to move up the hierarchy when vacancies occurred. Only 16% had never held any kind of managerial position. Golovachev *et al.*, '“Novaya” rossiiskaya elita: starые igroki na novom pole?', p. 5. See also Iván Szélényi & Szonja Szélényi, 'Circulation or Reproduction of Elites during the Postcommunist Transformation of Eastern Europe: Introduction', *Theory and Society*, 24, 5, October 1995, pp. 615–638 at 622–624.

<sup>46</sup> William Zimmerman, 'Mobilized Participation and the Nature of the Soviet Dictatorship', in James R. Millar (ed.), *Politics, Work, and Daily Life in the USSR: A Survey of Former Soviet Citizens* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 332–353 at 340–343.

<sup>47</sup> All but one of the deputies who mentioned previous active involvement in the CPSU also reported activity in other parties, usually the Communist Party of the Russian Federation.

<sup>48</sup> In fact, party affiliation among Russian civil servants is extremely low in general. Only 52.6% of all bureaucrats could (or would) name a party that best expressed their views. Often they selected the pro-governmental party, Our Home Is Russia, simply because they knew they 'should'. The following exchange is typical (G-100):

*Interviewer:* What party or movement best expresses your views? I mean, at the present moment?

*Bureaucrat:* Oh ... they're all politically immature.

*Interviewer:* Well, what would you say?

*Bureaucrat:* You know that party, Chernomyrdin's, what's it called?

*Interviewer:* NDR, right? Our Home Is Russia.

*Bureaucrat:* Yes. I work in the government, after all. Our Home Is Russia!

<sup>49</sup> Though even descriptive efforts are complicated by the absence of empirical standards for defining what constitutes 'a significant amount' of change.

<sup>50</sup> See description of the study in Karpinski, 'Sociologists Compare *Nomenklatura* Members and Contemporary Elites', p. 37. For former party membership rates of MPs in Russia, Ukraine, Hungary and the Czech Republic (holding office at the end of 1994), see William L. Miller, Stephen White & Paul Heywood, *Values and Political Change in Postcommunist Europe* (New York, St Martin's, 1998), p. 179.

<sup>51</sup> Steen, *Between Past and Future*, p. 36. As with all comparisons, one must be cognisant that the definition and identification of the 'political elite' vary across studies.

<sup>52</sup> Cited in John Higley, Judith Kullberg & Jan Pakulski, 'The Persistence of Postcommunist Elites', *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 2, April 1996, pp. 133–147 at 135–136.

<sup>53</sup> The data for Hungary and Poland were collected before parliamentary elections that returned communist successor parties to power—in May 1994 and September 1993 respectively.

<sup>54</sup> One might object that in the former Soviet Union the soviets were meaningless because—owing to the monopoly of power held by the Communist Party—they had no real policy-making power. While this may be an apt characterisation of the *function* of the soviets, it is not true with respect to the *status* of many of those who 'ran' for deputy slots in the soviets, i.e. they were key figures in party and state organs. One bureaucrat in my sample explained the process this way (G-070): 'When you had a higher rank, after you had grown in stature, then you would run for a deputy slot and so forth. That was the kind of system it was. We were very high-ranking bureaucrats, well-paid and so on. We traveled abroad, which at that time was considered to be the height of good fortune. Therefore a person in the *nomenklatura* simply had to grow in stature, and at the appointed moment he would run for election somewhere and would begin to climb the ladder'.

<sup>55</sup> By way of contrast, one study computes that less than 5% of Hungary's communist legislature was re-elected in the country's first free parliamentary elections. Ákos Róna-Tas, 'The Selected and the Elected: The Making of the New Parliamentary Elite in Hungary', *East European Politics and Societies*, 5, 3, Fall 1991, pp. 357–393 at 360. On the early post-communist parliamentary elite in Hungary, see also Rudolf L. Tóké, 'Hungary's New Political Elites: Adaptation and Change, 1989–90', *Problems of Communism*, 39, November–December 1990, pp. 44–65.

<sup>56</sup> Salustiano del Campo, José Félix Tezanos & Walter Santin, 'The Spanish Political Elite: Permanency and Change', in Moshe M. Czudnowski (ed.), *Does Who Governs Matter? Elite Circulation in Contemporary Societies* (DeKalb, Northern Illinois University Press, 1982), pp. 125–153 at 134–143.

<sup>57</sup> Del Campo et al., 'The Spanish Political Elite: Permanency and Change', pp. 137–138.

<sup>58</sup> Lewis J. Edinger, 'Post-Totalitarian Leadership: Elites in the German Federal Republic', *American Political Science Review*, 54, 1, March 1960, pp. 58–82.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>60</sup> Eva Fodor, Edmund Wnuk-Lipinski & Natasha Yershova, 'The New Political and Cultural Elite', *Theory and Society*, 24, 5, October 1995, pp. 783–800 at 789. However, contrary to expectations, the circulation of elites was greater and faster in Hungary than in Poland, where the counter-elite was more institutionalised. Szelényi & Szelényi, 'Circulation or Reproduction of Elites during the Postcommunist Transformation of Eastern Europe', pp. 619–621.

<sup>61</sup> Helga A. Walsh, 'Dealing with the Communist Past: Central and East European Experiences after 1990', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 48, 3, 1996, pp. 413–428 at 415. See also Thomas A. Baylis, 'Plus Ça Change? Transformation and Continuity Among East European Elites', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 27, 3, 1994, pp. 315–328 at 320–321; Tina Rosenberg, *The Haunted Land: Facing Europe's Ghosts After Communism* (New York, Random House, 1995).

<sup>62</sup> Sharon Werning Rivera, 'Historical Cleavages or Transition Mode? Influences on the Emerging Party Systems in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia', *Party Politics*, 2, 2, 1996, pp. 177–208; Louisa Vinton, 'Poland Goes Left', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 2, 8 October 1993, pp. 21–23 at 21; Edith Oltay, 'Hungarian Socialists Prepare for Comeback', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 3, 4 March 1994, pp. 21–26 at 21.

<sup>63</sup> For an argument suggesting that the transformation of communist successor parties into 'credibly pro-reform social democracies' is a promising strategy mainly in countries with reasonable prospects for economic and political integration with Europe, see Mitchell Orenstein, 'A Genealogy of Communist Successor Parties in East-Central Europe and the Determinants of their Success', *East European Politics and Societies*, 12, 3, Fall 1998, pp. 472–499.

<sup>64</sup> Thomas Baylis points to yet another explanatory factor that differentiates the extent of elite turnover in the former German Democratic Republic from that in the former Czechoslovakia: the import of West German elites to fill critical positions. Thomas A. Baylis, 'Elite Change after Communism: Eastern Germany, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia', *East European Politics and Societies*, 12, 2, Spring 1998, pp. 265–299.