1985-2000

Russia's Revolution from Above

Reform, Transition, and Revolution
in the Fall of the Soviet Communist Regime

Gordon M. Hahn

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This book is dedicated to:
My Parents, Gordon and Carol Hahn
my wife Marina
my son Gordon III
my *tyosha* Karina
my *test'* Mark and his *novaya suprug*a Veronika
and my grandparents Nicholas and Dorothy Lombardy

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List of Abbreviations

CC	Central Committee
CP	Communist Party
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
Gorkom	Gorodskoi komitet (City Party Committee)
GKChP	Gosudarstvennyi komitet chrezvychainnogo polozheniya (State Emergency Situation Committee)
ID	International Department
Ispolkom	Ispolnitelnoi komitet (Executive Committee of a soviet)
KGB	Komitet gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti (Kommittee for State Security)
MosGor	Kom Moskovskii gorodskii komitet (Moscow City Party Committee)
MVD	Ministerstvo vnutrennykh del (Ministry of Internal Affairs)
OrgOtdel	Otdel partiinnoi organizatsii i kadrovoi raboty (CPSU CC Party Organization and Cadre Work Department)
Raikom	Raionnyi komitet (District Party Committee)
Reskom	Respublikanskoi komitet (Republic Party Committee)
RSFSR	Rossiiskaya Sovetskaya Federativnaya Sotsialisticheskaya Respublika (The Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic)
UD	Upravleniye del (Administration of Affairs) of the CPSU CC
USSR	The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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Preface

This present book is an attempt to understand what was the most important case of political change in the last decade of the twentieth century, if not in the century itself: the sudden, and to some, surprising demise of the Soviet communist regime and state in 1991 and the rise of an illiberal post-Soviet Russia stifled by a weak electoral democracy and kleptocratic capitalism. It is an attempt to elucidate the multi-causality, contingency, and factorial complexity that produced the unintended revolutionary outcome of Mikhail Gorbachev's reform program known as *perestroika*.

In thinking about the fall of the Soviet communist regime and the collapse of the Soviet Union, political scientists have tended to put the theoretical cart before the empirical horse. This regrettable practice is an outcome of political science's infatuation with "formal theory." Academic fashion pressures many young scholars to rush to plug recent historical events or "data points" (as the science reduces them to) into the theories that dominate the extant literature and dictate who gets the much coveted tenure-track positions in university political science departments, leaving time-consuming empirical approaches and possibilities for new theory-building by the wayside. Post-Soviet "Rusologists" and comparative political scientists alike began immediately to plug the fall of the Soviet regime into the proto-theories of democratization and even more problematically "transitology," largely eschewing theories of revolutionary change, let alone the present book's more exotic model of revolution from above. The present book presents a conceptualization of the Soviet communist regime and state by applying it to various theories of regime change, but it does not do so by drawing on selective data in a rush to develop presently popular theories.

Political scientists rarely "grace" the halls of archives, foreign or domestic. Rational choice theorists seem to consider the idea as preposterous as the learning of foreign languages and cultures. Opinion surveys, an important tool for political scientists, are useful for studying open societies contemporaneously, but are a blunt instrument for studying totalitarian and "post-totalitarian" societies and virtually useless for historiographical investigation. I take another approach. This book is informed by three years of living and traveling in the USSR and Russia, more than a decade of careful research, including interviews and three years of archival research into the politics, broadly conceived, of the Soviet Union and its post-Soviet successor states,

especially Russia. I have attempted to cover the empirical lay of the land thoroughly before constructing what will hopefully be considered a sturdy, if still incomplete structure housing a very different theoretical conceptualization of the great Soviet transformation—a civilian bureaucrat-led revolution from above.

Besides the field's structural and methodological pitfalls, there is another problem clouding the lens through which we might get a clear focus on the nature and causes of the Soviet demise. A good part of the old sovietological community argued that the Soviet communist regime was "unreformable." The integral and rigid nature of the Soviet system and its supporting ideology were writ large, according to some analysts, such that the system could not and would not undergo substantive change. This view has its counterpart in the early (and not so early) Gorbachev era: Gorbachev was no reformer, and *perestroika* was no more than the next KGB disinformation campaign designed to lower the West's guard against the advance of international communism. In post-Soviet analysis the USSR is viewed as having been incapable of transforming into a new form of rule by way of transition, and the new Russia is seen as not so "new", destined to revert to its authoritarian and "Asiatic" past and fail in its quest to become a member of the community of democratic states, the globalizing free market, and a re-united Europe. This book concludes that the jury is still out on post-Soviet Russia's transformation and offers an explanation as to why.

The illiberal results of Russia's revolution from above have sparked an increasingly acrimonious debate in the West about "who lost Russia" and what went wrong with its transformation.¹ If the mode of the Soviet/Russian transformation had been pre-judged as a "transition" or revolution from below but as a bureaucrat-led revolution from above, there would have been fewer illusions and more realistic expectations about the difficulties and duration of democratic, market, and state consolidation in Russia, not to mention the many other post-Soviet states where regime change did not involve alternative sovereignty and there was no transfer of political power at all. Russia's revolution from above involved the mass cooptation and incorporation of the former Soviet party-state's institutions and apparatchiks into the new regime. These institutions and bureaucrats constrained the consolidation of democracy and the market by bringing their authoritarian political culture and statist economic culture into the new regime and state, producing to date an illiberal executive-dominated polity and cleptocratic and oligarchic political economy.

Misconceptions about the nature of the Soviet-Russian transformation informed many of the mistakes in the United States' "Russia policy." Elan about the ostensible "transition" or revolution from below seized Western policymakers and experts as much as it did the Russian intelligentsia. Despite the watershed moment in world history represented by the fall of Soviet

communism, a new American president downplayed the post-Cold War challenge of democratic consolidation in the post-communist region, declaring that America's domestic economy should be the main concern of his administration not the unfinished work and the potentially apocryphal dangers threatening global security from a divided Russian regime, a weak and unstable Russian state, and a destabilizing power vacuum in the heart of the Eurasian landmass—the hub of global geo-strategic dynamics. Western analysts and political scientists were as enthused, rushing to apply the Soviet case into theories of revolution from below and transition to democracy no matter how awkward the fit. The teleology of these attitudes and assumptions was that Yeltsin's revolution was unambiguously democratic in its politics and unabashedly neo-liberal in its economics. Its consolidation was imminent and inevitable.

The realities of Russia's revolution from above meant that a rapid "transition" to liberal democracy and the market was very unlikely. To ensure its consolidation over the mid- to long-term, targeted, American-managed assistance to Russia should have been the central strategy and main concern of the Clinton administration. The democratic credentials of Yeltsin and many in his entourage (much of it borrowed from Gorbachev) were little more impressive than those of the Gorbachev team—often less so—because both of these elite groups derived from not just the *nomenklatura*, but the high partocracy. Limited American political involvement should have focused on reaching out to all political forces to dispel hardliners' paranoia and to develop ties with centrist and democratic forces on the periphery of the *nomenklatura*, at the grassroots and in the regions outside of Moscow and St. Petersburg. Recognizing the polarization of forces at this stage would have made us less sanguine about the peaceful nature of the revolution. Aware of the lack of autonomy of the regime and state from the ruling *nomenklatura* class and the lack of resources and self-organization in society, more pressure might have been exerted to ensure a privatization process that distributed wealth beyond a narrow circle within the *nomenklatura* and Moscow.

The political and economic culture of the Russian *nomenklatura* is inclined toward social democracy: democracy with a free market that includes some state enterprises, some worker ownership of enterprises, and a strong social safety net.² A more democratic privatization could have been advertised as the expression of Russian social democratic aspirations for "worker" or "people's" ownership. Each family could have been given two kinds of shares: one transferable and one non-transferable in order to limit the ability of plant directors and criminal elements to expropriate the privatization process. Such a policy would have resonated among much of the population, including many communists and supporters of the democratic opposition.

Post-Soviet Russian culture's residual suspicion of America and capitalism also dictated maintaining a low profile in economic policymaking. Ameri-

can neo-liberal prescriptions in this context risked the danger of the United States being blamed for Russian economic failures. Instead, American advice and support should have focused on building political institutions and civil society, rewarding: constitutional, legal, and judicial reforms; reform of, and early elections to the soviets to provoke party formation; and the formation of a democratic party under Yeltsin to subject him to the constraints of pluralism.

Awareness of the state's lack of institutional cohesion and the constraints on the building of new institutions needed in the economy and civil society, more attention might have been paid to institution-building. New institutions were needed to constrain the old partocratic apparatchiki who have limited knowledge about the workings of democratic and market systems and were therefore tempted to rely on the familiar, giving short shrift to civil society and skirting propriety and legality in redistributing state property. A realistic aid program for the development of economic and legal institutions could have consisted of a special Russian Democracy Fund for financing specific projects such as: the development of a system of legal education and assistance centers and business training centers (one at each administrative level down to the *okrug* and provincial capitol levels); a large exchange and development program for the training of judges, lawyers, bankers, entrepreneurs, economists, political scientists, and civil servants, as well as students preparing for these professions; the construction of infrastructure for a Russian internet system and development of a Russian computer industry; and improvements of the transportation infrastructure. Invoking the Marshall Plan, the Fund should have matched its scale and scope, given the geo-strategic importance of a democratic Russia engaged as a fully integrated ally of the West. The Fund could have been financed through low-interest loans from the World Bank, IMF, and European Bank of Reconstruction and Development.

Finally, in order to appeal to the traditional Russian national pride and messianism of the old partocrats still predominant in power and accustomed to position as the ruling elite of a great superpower, the new Russia should have been promoted by the West as the vanguard of democracy's "third wave" in Eurasia with the mission of establishing democracy's bridgehead in the heartland of this geo-strategically pivotal landmass. Instead of signaling to Russia that it was not welcome in NATO, Russia should have been given pride of first place in its expansion. NATO expansion immediately alienated Russian moderates, reawakening their cultural suspicions of the West and the United States. They had been prepared to permanently suppress these as they had their communist convictions, if the Russian transformation continued to move in a direction benign for their country and themselves. Since proponents of NATO enlargement to Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic argue that one of the benefits to the West is that prospective entry and accession to NATO encourages democratization and civilian control over the mili-

tary in candidate countries, does it not make sense that the country that can most harm western interests and security if it reverts to its authoritarian past and imperial traditions should have been brought under the constraining regime of NATO? In part, because of the Clinton administration's policy of NATO expansion without or against Russia, it may already be too late to save this most recent flirtation in Russia's tortured history with westernization and democracy.

The lack of sensitivity to these subtleties of the new Russian regime produced an ineffective "Russia policy." The resulting disappointment in the policy community and among the American people is fueling a new wave of anti-Russian feeling in the United States. My research points to a more complex and nuanced vision of the Soviet transformation, suggesting a more patient and ambitious engagement with Russia.

Over the years my work has been supported financially by the George F. Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, the American Council of Teachers of Russian, and the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. I must thank the Russian archivists who assisted me, especially Lyubov' Mikhailovna Yeliseeva at Moscow's *Tsentr khraneniya sovremennoi dokumentatsii*, who made working under the persistent gazes of Vladimir Lenin and Karl Marx in the large portraits of the reading hall a more pleasant experience than one could ever have thought possible. Intellectually, I have been supported by my first teachers, Walter Connor, William C. Green, Igor Lukes, Uri Ra'an, and most of all the late Donald Carlisle. In this regard, I am also grateful to colleagues who read all or parts of my manuscript at various stages of its preparation, including David Foglesong, David Kerans, Mark Kramer, Viktor Kuvaldin, Aleksandr Lukin, Michael McFaul, and Ronald Grigor Suny. I am also indebted to my father-in-law, Mark Avraamovich Styogantsev, a retired Soviet/Russian military officer but a social scientist at heart and by nature, who later in life has fulfilled his deferred dream of working as a scholar and published archaeologist. I have also been intellectually and spiritually inspired and challenged by many hours of discussion with my Russian friends over hearty Russian *pel'meny*, black bread, and strong vodka; among them are Anatolii Adamishin, Fyodor Burlatskii, Vladimir and Pavel Lukin, Georgii Stepanov and his late father Teimuraz, and most of all Sergei Konevskii, Dima Minaev, Masha Kurichkina, and Natasha Polyakova. Several close American colleagues have played a similar role, including Eugene Fishel, Joseph Gibbs, and again Igor Lukes.

Finally, I must thank Russia herself, which for this frequent visitor at least has always been warm, hospitable, beautiful, and fascinating. I can only wish her and her neighbors a future infinitely better than their tortured pasts. I hope this book contributes to the realization of that centuries-long dream.

Gordon M. Hahn
January 25, 2000

Notes

1. See "What Went Wrong in Russia?" *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 10, no. 2, April 1999, pp. 3-90.
2. See Alexander Lukin, *The Political Culture of Russian Democrats, 1985-1991* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming in 1999), pp. 204-5, cited in Dmitrii Glinskii and Peter Reddaway, "The Ravages of 'Market Bolshevism,'" *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 10, no. 2, April 1999, pp. 20-34, at p. 34.

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“The Bureaucratic Politics of the First Reorganization of the CPSU CC Apparatus During *Perestroika*,” by Gordon Hahn, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 49: 2 (1997): pp. 281-302.

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The Model of Revolution from Above

Introduction

One year before the Soviet Union's collapse, the Politburo met in an atmosphere of crisis and impotence for what was the once stable and powerful regime of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). Uzbekistan CP First Secretary Islam Karimov, turning to Soviet President Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev, architect of the *perestroika* reforms that had undermined the CPSU's power, expressed the regret that almost the entire Politburo now felt about embarking on the path of reform:

It was possible, Mikhail Sergeevich, I will allow myself to say this, not to begin *perestroika* in 1985. It was possible to live quietly, as they say, and in the period of stagnation to reform slowly. It might not have been necessary to stir up enormous masses of people. All would have gone on as it had, and you would have prospered, and we would have prospered. And there would not have taken place any kind of catastrophes.¹

The catastrophe Karimov was lamenting was in fact the imminent fall of the CPSU regime. Karimov's plaintive regret, that Gorbachev's *perestroika* led to the regime's demise, is basically correct and touches on the central questions debated among historians, political scientists and former statesmen of the period about the causes and nature of the Soviet "catastrophe."

Could Gorbachev and his party colleagues have lived out their lives in comfort at the pinnacle of Soviet power, ruling one of the world's two great superpowers? Or was Karimov operating under an essentially false assumption that without *perestroika* the Soviet economic system could have been reformed slowly and without political reform, upheaval and "catastrophe"? Did the breakdown of *perestroika* as reform from above evolve into a transition to democracy along patterns observed in Latin America, southern Europe, Southeast Asia, and Eastern Europe? Or was there a Soviet or Russian revolution, and if so what kind of revolution was it? Was the Soviet party-state reformable or capable of a non-revolutionary outcome after reforms

began? What changes implemented during *perestroika* were most responsible for the collapse of the Soviet regime: the implementation of *glasnost*, the failure to implement economic reforms more quickly and deeply, the reorganization of the Soviet Union's political system, or the sequencing of political, then economic reform? How did the structural crisis, institutional and political factors effect *perestroika*'s outcome? This book attempts to answer these questions.

The Soviet collapse might be conceptualized as several revolutionary-types. The potential revolution "from below"—consisting of velvet, peaceful revolutions in Russia and the Baltic republics and more violent, national independence revolutions in the Transcaucasian republics—has received most of the attention in the scholarly literature to date. *Perestroika*'s transformation from a "within system" reform of the post-totalitarian order led "from above" to a nascent, but ultimately abortive "pacted" or negotiated transition to democracy and the market has been ignored. Completely missed has been the would-be Soviet transition's devolution into a revolutionary mode of regime transformation organized "from above" or within the state itself rather than "from below" or independent of regime and state organizations by autonomous social movements and associations. The nascent revolution from below percolating in Soviet society still was too poorly organized and resource-poor to have engineered the fall of the Soviet regime in 1991.² Thus, it was by virtue of the "other" revolution—Russia's revolution from above—that *perestroika* devolved into the collapse of both the communist regime in August 1991 and the Soviet Union in December.

The 1991 Soviet Revolution was neither a "peaceful revolution"³ from below such as Czechoslovakia's "velvet revolution" from below or a negotiated transition to democracy like that in Poland and Hungary. Nor has it been like the standard revolution from below such as those of the violent first Russian Revolution against tsarist autocracy or the Chinese Revolution won by political movements organized in councils (soviets) of workers, peasants and soldiers rooted in society and independent from the state. The essence of the Soviet/Russian transformation has been bureaucratic, state-led revolution from above during both the destructive phase leading to the *ancien regime*'s overthrow and during the post-takeover stage of construction. Led by Boris Yeltsin, elected chairman of the new RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies in June 1990, opportunistic Soviet Communist Party and state *apparatchiks*, who defected from the reform camp led by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, were most instrumental in overthrowing the communist regime, not elements in Soviet society. Soviet Party bureaucrats and younger members of its *nomenklatura* ruling class won control in mid-1990 over the core "republic" in the Soviet Union—the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR)—and proceeded to carry out a creeping bureaucratic revolution against the central Soviet party-state machine. Their weapons were

RSFSR state institutions, parliamentary laws, presidential decrees, and administrative orders, not the marches, strikes, bombs, and bullets of revolution from below.

The RSFSR Supreme Soviet declared Russia sovereign in June 1990, establishing the supremacy of RSFSR law over USSR law on Russian territory. Russian law then transferred all property, financial and natural resources in Russia from USSR to RSFSR jurisdiction. The Russian Central Bank and new quasi-commercial Russian banks destroyed the Soviet centralized financial and banking systems. By winter, Russia outlawed at all levels combining the posts of Communist Party first secretary and chairman of the soviets semi-democratized by Gorbachev and took the first steps to establishing its own presidential, KGB, and military institutions. Upon election as Russian president in July 1991, Yeltsin decreed the removal of Party organizations from all state institutions and enterprises in Russia. During the failed August 1991 hardline coup, Yeltsin placed under RSFSR control all USSR institutions, including the KGB and military. When the coup failed, the Party was banned, effectively abolishing the old regime. With the Party gone, Russia easily abolished or expropriated the Soviet state ministry by ministry. With the regime and state apparatus gone, there was little reason for the republics to maintain the Union. The USSR was tossed into history's dustbin. Throughout this entire period the masses were rarely mobilized. When they were it was most often to defend Russia's revolutionaries from above (as in February-March and August 1991), not too overthrow the remnants of the partocratic regime. This explains the limited extent of social revolution and violence during the fall of the Soviet regime.

This also explains much of the troubled development of democracy and the market in post-Soviet Russia (and other former Soviet republics). The co-optation of Party and state apparatchiks and entire structures by the revolutionary Russian regime has left the *nomenklatura* in power along with its limited understanding of, and weak commitment to building political and economic institutions based on the rule of law. A good part of the elite represents economic interests formed under the old regime or its death throes, so the "new" Russian state is rendered deeply penetrated by old and new economic oligarchs. Thus, state institutions are politically divided, diminishing the cohesion needed for concerted revolutionary economic transformation. This contributed to the undemocratic, uneconomical insider "*nomenklatura* privatization" and cemented the relationship between corrupt bureaucrats and criminalized semi-private and private financial-industrial groups. The expropriation of the old regime's structures has preserved old operating procedures, maintaining the massive bureaucracy's strong role in the economy. The result is a weak Russian state unable to defend either its interests or those of society from the preferences of groups of bureaucrats and oligarchs and an inefficient state that does too many things and does them all poorly.

The limited mobilization of the masses, while it may have helped avert the violence associated with revolution, stunted the development of civil society, especially the formation of political parties and trade unions that defend societal interests and of the strong parliamentary power needed for the mediation of societal and state interests. Russian society and the parliament are too weak to encourage the powerful executive presidency, government, and former communist bureaucrats to concentrate on the development of a civil polity and economy. The consequences of these limitations in Russia's revolution are a corrupt, unstable, super-presidential quasi-democracy and an oligarchic, criminalized, and almost anarchic market.

Thus, both the optimist who expected a quick consolidation of democracy and the market in Russia and the pessimist who argues that Russia's troubled consolidation of democracy and market are the consequence of cultural factors which prevent Russia from taking to these forms of social organization have got it wrong. The optimists' unrealistic expectations have led inevitably to bitter disappointment and to the recent chorus of calls from the convinced pessimists for vigilance in the face of a supposed resurgent Russian nationalism. These are the fruits of the grand misunderstanding about the nature of Russia's transformation from totalitarian rule as the product of a social revolution. If Russia's revolution had been properly understood, there would have been more realism and longer-term perspective in both expectations and policymaking. A more detailed discussion of the model of revolution from above will clarify the unique character of this mode of regime transformation and its implications for democratic and market consolidation.

The Model of Revolution from Above

My model of revolution from above is based in part on an assumption of contingency in transitional and revolutionary situations. My model puts less emphasis on the importance of what I consider to be the background causes of revolutions and transitions—modernization, institutional decay, systemic disequilibrium, class conflict, and macrostructural factors—which are really the intermediate and immediate causes of transitional and revolutionary situations, not of transitions and revolutions themselves. My model of revolution from above regards the structural crises involving conflict between the state and the ruling class to be necessary, but not a sufficient condition for revolutionary outcomes.⁴ The focus of the model is on the mode of the demise of the *ancien regime*—the destructive phase of revolution, especially the nature of the revolutionary seizure of power—which has important implications for the constructive phase of the revolution and its institutional and political results. The short definition of “revolution from above” is: the illegal or extralegal takeover of some or all state institutions of political and/or economic power by high- and/or middle-ranking officials and bureaucrats in

order to overthrow the economic, social, and political systems of the *ancien regime* with little or no mass participation, violence, execution, emigration, or counter-revolution.⁵ But a model and theory must address how and why revolutions can originate from above and what are the problems and patterns of their outcomes. Let us briefly review the development from reform to transitional to revolutionary potentialities.

Transitions and revolutions show some congruence: the onset of state reforms or decay because of structural crisis or institutional decay (background causes) and regime split (intermediate cause). As in most transitions to democracy and revolutions from below, revolutions from above begin with reforms that are intended to address a regime's macrostructural crisis, systemic disequilibrium or less threatening pre-crisis decline of economic performance or the decay of important institutions.⁶ Change in the international environment, foreign threats, values and regime legitimacy, political institutions, or economic organization in one combination or another constitute the structural contradictions that give impetus to the reorganization of power. However, more often than not, institutional reorganization and reforms bring unintended consequences including fracturing the regime's institutional and political unity.⁷ The new mixture of institutions and practices that emerges from abrupt reforms of political institutions is much more difficult to control than the therapy.⁸ States and their institutions or "organizational configurations, along with their overall patterns of activity, affect political culture, encourage some kinds of group formation and collective political actions (but not others), and make possible the raising of certain political issues (and not others)." These configurations intentionally and "unintentionally influence the formation of groups and the political capacities, ideas, and demands of various sectors of society."⁹

Thus, the kinds of unsuccessful institutional reform that devolve into revolutionary or transitional regime change have been found to produce a regime split. The split of the regime is the most important intermediate cause in a regime's ultimate demise whether by transition or revolution.¹⁰ The post-structuralist model of democratic transition holds that in response to a crisis or a pre-crisis situation regime softliners decide on a policy response, typically beginning with some form of economic or political liberalization program. This decision provokes a regime split between hardliners, who want to preserve the status quo, and softliners who understand the need to re-establish equilibrium between the regime's performance and the requirements for stability. Once the split has occurred softliners, seeking to strengthen their hand vis-à-vis the hardliners, endeavour to win allies among moderates in society and the opposition in an attempt to exclude from the political game extremists, whether they be of the regime or opposition. Eventually, softliners are confronted with a choice. They can turn the liberalization process back and join hardliners in re-establishing the status *quo ante*, or they can engage a full democratization of the liberalized authoritarian order either from above

in an imposed transition or through a negotiated transition. In the latter case, a transition “pact” with moderate elements of the opposition establishes democratic procedures and a consensus about the rules for the contestation and assumption of power.¹¹ The negotiating of a pact is typically conducted among elites and the leaders of the most powerful factions contending for power.¹² In imposed transitions to democracy, regime softliners maintain control over the democratization process and submit to the uncertainty of elections only after the way has been paved for its supporters’ smooth transfer into the new democratic system with as little damage to their most vital interests as possible.¹³

However, regime softliners, who may back an imposed or pacted transition from authoritarian rule initially, may also defect from the regime if political disunity leads to growing institutional decay, incohesion, and incapacity. Opportunists, who defect from the regime to the opposition in attempting to accelerate reforms, force a negotiated transition to democracy or even overthrow the regime, may opt for establishing a power base by taking over an already existing state organization or institution or by creating new ones. The powers, jurisdiction, and resources of this structure may already be sufficient or may be enhanced such that alternative (dual or multiple) sovereignty is established. Such alternative sovereignty is defined as the establishment of a credible competing claims on the authority to rule over the same territory by an opposition group of significant and somewhat comparable strength in human, financial, and institutional resources to the group(s) who rule regime the opposition seeks to replace.¹⁴ A revolutionary group can establish an alternative sovereignty inside or outside the state apparatus. The institutionalization or organization of dual or multiple sovereignty is a necessary and sufficient condition for a revolutionary situation. Multiple constraints on actors’ options on the background of a revolutionary situation produces in most cases a revolutionary outcome. My “interacting constraints theory” of revolution is discussed in more detail further below.

A revolutionary situation is conceptualized here as contingent with regard to ultimate outcome. Even in a revolutionary situation there are alternative outcomes ranging from authoritarian restoration, the freezing of within-system reform, transition, and revolution. Revolutionary transformation to a new regime is contingent on the configuration of constraints on the range of choices available to political actors, particularly the institutional environment, the structure of political strategic action (or “intentional” constraints),¹⁵ and the continuation or deepening of the structural crisis. If reforms resolve the structural crisis, the regime avoids both transition and revolution. If not, then the coexistence and interaction of the macrostructural crisis and institutional and intentional constraints will sooner or later bring some mode of regime change. If reform produces a relatively balanced regime split, then an imposed transition and the maintenance of or return to the authoritarian status quo become unlikely. The regime is simply too weak to

impose its will. If a transition cannot be negotiated because of a burdensome configuration of interacting institutional, political (intentional), and macro-structural constraints on the range of choices available to key strategic actors, then the only modes of regime change remaining are revolutionary ones. If transition is not possible and the revolutionary situation is built on the opposition's establishment of a credible alternative sovereignty institutionalized autonomously within society, then the revolutionary destruction of the *ancien regime* is likely to come from below. However, if a moderates' dilemma is combined with a weak society and a weak, split regime, then the development of either a revolution from below or a transition pact becomes problematic. If during the ensuing deadlock an alternative sovereignty is institutionalized within one or more state institution by opportunistic bureaucrats and officials defecting from regime, then the political takeover and revolution are likely to come from above. The simultaneous potential of the various modes of regime change and their different trajectories and characteristics are depicted in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1

While the institution(s) dominated by revolutionaries from above can be from among the state's organs of coercion—the military, secret police, and regular police—this is not a prerequisite for revolution from above.¹⁶ Dual sovereignty can be established within a civilian state institution as well. In the USSR, it was not a civilian-military institutional cleavage in the structural organization of the state that gave revolutionaries from above a semi-autonomous organizational base inside the state from which to counter the regime's sovereignty. The Soviet state's formally separated party-state structure and formally federal structure helped produce the formation of dual power in the RSFSR proto-state located in the federation's organizational periphery but in the metropol's political capitol or "center." This institutional factor facilitated revolution from above rather than from below. Thus, alternative sovereignty can be established not only in the territorial periphery of the state as has been found to be the case in military-led revolutions from above. Thus, alternative sovereignty can be established not only in the territorial periphery of the state, as has been found to be the case in military-led revolutions from above,¹⁷ but it also can be established in the state's very capitol and/or its organizational periphery, as when in 1990 opportunistic Soviet apparatchiki declared the Moscow-based RSFSR proto-state to be sovereign throughout Russian territory.

Once an institutional base for alternative sovereignty is established, then high- and/or middle-ranking officials and bureaucrats may decide that rather than using their competitive sovereignty to force negotiations toward a paced transition it is in their interests to execute a creeping revolution from above. They then proceed to dismantle illegally or extra-legally some or all of the state institutions of political and/or economic power toward the goal of overthrowing the form of rule and the economic, social, and political systems of the *ancien regime*. They overthrow the regime gradually, using their newly won state bureaucratic structures with little or no mass participation, violence, execution, emigration, or counter-revolution. In both civilian-led and military-led revolutions from above, large numbers of officials and bureaucrats are co-opted from the *ancien regime* and brought into the revolutionary regime's administration both before and after the political overthrow of the regime.¹⁸ This has important implications, along with the incorporation of entire institutions from the old regime, for the constructive phase of the revolution from above after the seizure of political power.

To sum up the model of revolution from above in its destructive phase, there are three preconditions for the overthrow of a regime by way of revolution from above: (1) a regime split; (2) the establishment of dual or multiple sovereignty by way of the institutionalization within one or more state institutions of a credible claim to authority challenging the ruling regime; and (3) a society and opposition that are weak in comparison with the ruling regime or its group of revolutionaries from above.

The state bureaucratic method of seizing power by co-opting officials and institutions of the *ancien regime* and the non-mobilization of society characteristic of the destructive phase of the revolution from above are key features shaping patterns and outcomes of the constructive phase in the revolution from above. The new regime, staffed by members of the *ancien regime's* elite and ruling class and structured by some of the old state apparatus's institutions and organizations, has limited ties to society and a weaker commitment to fundamental political and socioeconomic transformation than has the radical opposition from below. In the short- to mid-term, the political revolution from above may or may not be followed by the completed socio-economic revolution typically associated with a completed revolution. The new state's institutional and political incohesion and lack of capacity, the limited mobilization of society, and the bureaucratic revolution's gradualism and moderation in undermining the state and the ruling classes' socioeconomic base together conspire to prevent a complete turnover of the *ancien regime's* pattern of property relations and class structure. Revolutionaries from above may acquire sufficient institutional (formal and informal) and financial resources through their tenure in alternative power to bring down the old regime. But their attack on the *ancien regime's* state apparatus, waged in order to seize full power, leaves them with a poor institutional inheritance with which to finish the revolution. Thus, the non-violent, more restrained nature of the revolution, and the limited involvement of society lend themselves to the re-empowerment of the old elite, the demobilization or corporatist co-optation of societal supporters of the new regime, and continued polarization of state-society relations during the socio-economic phase.

Typically, revolutions from above are modernizing revolutions that in the short- and medium-term establish semi-authoritarian or at best semi-democratic regimes that take decades to reach democratic consolidation. Compared to revolutions from below, they produce a state with very little autonomy from the former ruling class and the most powerful economic interests left over from the *ancien regime*, producing non-liberal, oligarchic "state capitalist" economies in which economic elites maintain close ties to government, rent-seek, and foster corruption. The road to democracy and markets in revolutions from above is littered with obstructions produced by this transformational mode: the sequence of political reform before the dismantling of the *ancien regime's* socioeconomic basis, the conservatism of co-opted and recruited old elites, the state's potential lack of autonomy from new and old economic and institutional interests, a weak state with insufficient capacity and institutional cohesion for executing policy, and a relatively non-mobilized weak civil society.

In contrast, revolutions from below involve a vast opposition movement powerful enough to overthrow the ruling regime. The state is weakened, but no more than when it is partitioned by revolutionaries from above. The new

regime may be temporarily weakened by the institutional upheaval that the state undergoes, but it receives a strong ally – a mobilized society. Imposed transitions presuppose a society that is weak relative to the state and regime, but the latter are strong enough to maintain control over the processes of liberalization, building new political institutions, and gradually attracting new forces into political competition. Pacted transitions presuppose a sufficiently strong ruling regime and societal opposition, each capable of forcing the other to negotiate a pact. They also hold “convoking elections” that provoke the formation of strong political parties.

Revolutions from above, on the contrary, simultaneously disorganize the state, demobilize the masses, and limit the development of political parties and parliamentary power. The absence of a mobilized autonomous society prevents grassroots political parties and parliaments from taking real power until many decades after the revolutionary takeover. Thus, it takes decades for full democracy to emerge. The weakness of these pivotal “mediating institutions” and the consequently attenuated tie between society and the revolutionaries allows state executives, bureaucrats, and a relatively small group of powerful economic interests—not civil society and its representatives—to produce policy outputs and political outcomes. The recruitment of old elites, the highly state-oriented strategy for driving development from above, and the late attack on the socioeconomic base of the *ancien régime* allows rural, industrial, and/or financial interests to parlay economic power into corrupt political power and remain the beneficiaries of state largesse. Thus, revolution from above consolidates the position of re-entrenched bureaucrats and old economic and institutional interests, allowing them to continue compromising the autonomy of the state and limit the scale and scope of revolutionary transformation. It may take decades before forces emerge that are strong enough to challenge the interests of state executives, bureaucrats, and oligarchs and establish truly representative, parliamentary power. The mid-term results are inclined to be illiberal, consisting of an executive-dominated and corrupt semi-democracy, an oligarchic political economy, and a state-heavy bureaucratized economy.

Finally, revolutions from above, as is the case in all modes of regime change or transformation, deploy the means that achieved success in the revolution's destructive phase of overthrowing the *ancien régime*, in order to implement the constructive phase after the revolutionary takeover of power. Whereas transitions, both pacted and imposed, see continued peaceful coexistence between former regime and opposition forces (Venezuela and Uruguay in the 1970s, Poland and Hungary in the 1990s, and post-2000 Mexico), violent revolutions from below continue to unfold through the application of violence against groups from the *ancien régime* and the former ruling groups (the 1917 Russian Revolution, 1910-1949 Chinese Revolution, the 1789 French Revolution, the 1979 Iranian Revolution). Peaceful revolutions from

below remain non-violent using lustration rather than terror to consolidate their power and a new form of rule (Czechoslovakia and perhaps the Baltic states in the 1990s). In revolutions from above, however, administrative or (quasi-) bureaucratic means are used in the attempt to complete the revolution, as political, economic, and social change is directed and controlled from above using both coopted bureaucrats and old and new institutions of state power. Atatürk's Turkish Revolution, the Japanese Meiji Revolution, Russia's *nomenklatura* revolution as well as Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova fall into this category. Iran, Venezuela, and even China may soon follow.

An "Interacting Constraints" Theory of Revolution

Processes of revolution from above and below as well as a negotiated transition coexisted in the USSR after 1987, and both remained possible outcomes in 1991. The causality of political outcomes is complex, and outcomes are highly contingent.¹⁹ This is even truer for great historical events like revolutions. The breakdown of potential transitional transformations from non-democratic rule to democratic regimes and their devolution into revolution is most often the consequence of multiple and interacting constraints. There is no single cause of a revolution. Some causes may be more distant from the "data point" and should be considered background causes of revolution. Background causes of revolution are the intermediate and direct causes of a revolution's intermediate causes. The background causes of revolutions include structural or macrostructural crisis or systemic disequilibrium and the decay of the regime's key institutions. Class conflict, relative deprivation, and rising expectations inherent in structural crises cannot by themselves explain revolutionary outcomes.²⁰ Crisis, disequilibrium, and decay prompt reform and liberalization that may or may not address the systemic crisis. Thus, failed reform is the key intermediate cause of revolutions. But neither can mere opportunity to rebel offered by the (macro-) structural crisis alone explain revolution. The establishment of organized or institutionalized dual sovereignty and a constrictive, polarized structure of strategic action are the immediate objective causes of revolution. Here, institutional and intentional constraints play a decisive role in constricting or expanding the range of choices available to strategic actors that might allow them to avoid revolutionary confrontation and negotiate a transition pact. While regime-type is an institutional factor influencing the kinds of institutional constraints that may appear, this factor alone cannot suffice as an immediate cause of a revolutionary rather than transitional outcome.²¹ Regime-type has an important place in the configuration of constraints, being a key element in the macrostructural and structural crises. Regime-type and the state institutional structure it produces can determine the vector of the revolution, influencing to a large extent whether dual sovereignty is established from above or below.

Institutional constraints lie in the rules, regulations, norms, informal and formal patterns of procedure and structure of the regime, state, and society. They may consist of the relative structural and/or functional imbalances and balances, strengths and weaknesses, and efficiencies and inefficiencies within or between the institutions of the regime, state, and society that advantage or appear to advantage regime or society or groups within them in the political struggle and so influence action and determine the state's capacity to weather the revolutionary situation. One regime or state organization may offer or may be perceived as offering more potential advantages to actors, who then choose to attach themselves to that structure. The structure of the regime or state may influence this choice as well. A state organization may or may not be as influential as thought or its powers may change in the course of reform and reorganization, rewarding or shortchanging the power expectations of its officials. The state as a whole may become too disorganized as a result of reform or liberalization to resolve the macrostructural crisis or sustain economic performance commensurate with society's rising or even stagnant expectations. The state may not have the financial means to perform certain key functions required of any regime: tax collection, maintenance of defence and domestic order, or the provision of civilian public services. The state's ability or failure to perform these functions will shape the relations between state and society and the organization of groups within both, influencing the political dynamics of the revolutionary situation and its particular structure of strategic action. On the other hand, the institutions of civil society may be too weak for development of an effective revolutionary movement from below.

Intentional constraints are rooted in the structure of strategic action which may facilitate the possibilities of one or another outcome of the revolutionary situation. A bipolar and highly polarized structure consisting of a weak regime and a strong societal opposition precludes pact-making and typically leads to revolution from below. A strong regime and weak society can lead to an imposed transition or an authoritarian restoration, depending on whether a regime split occurs and whether hardliners and softliners hold ultimate sway inside the regime. The structure of strategic action (in combination with institutional constraints) may constrict the ability of regime and opposition moderates to negotiate a transition pact, of the regime to maintain the status quo or return to the status *quo ante*, and of the opposition to overthrow the regime from below. Under such circumstances, a revolution from above is the most likely outcome.

One structure of strategic action that constricts the conclusion of a transition pact between regime and opposition is a "moderates dilemma." Here, the correlation of forces between regime hardliners and softliners and opposition moderates (pro-transition or peaceful revolution from above or below) and radicals (revolutionary, perhaps violently so and from below) is such that

moderates are not strong enough to contain their respective extremists in order to attain or maintain a negotiated transition.²² Previous studies of the Soviet transformation have tended to assume or argue a bipolar structure of strategic action rather than a moderates' dilemma and its four-way structure of strategic action this study describes and analyzes.²³ A simple bipolar structure of political action—regime versus opposition—downplays and if not precludes a regime split, an essential element of Russia's revolution from above.

Most importantly, institutional and intentional factors restricting choices and possible outcomes may interact so as to strengthen their constraining effect. The "new institutionalists" stress that states' institutional and organizational configurations affect political culture and "influence the formation of groups and the political capacities, ideas, and demands."²⁴ Approaching states "macroscopically" as "configurations of organization and action that influence the meanings and methods of politics for all groups and classes in society," they emphasize that the actions of political leaders and groups are mediated by the institutional milieu through which they must operate.²⁵ Under conditions of deliberate institutional reform and reorganization that may occur in response to a structural or macrostructural crisis, not only are new trajectories possible, but unintended complications may arise that cut off other potential paths for reform or transition. At the most basic level, institutional transformations at the beginning of reform open up newly viable paths of political development and a wider range of strategic choice available to political actors. Thus, in cases of liberalizing non-democratic regimes, choices like transition and revolution may suddenly appear viable. Maintenance of the status quo may not. With the emergence of a revolutionary situation, the paths that may be perceived by actors to be still available can include any combination of the following: (1) restoration to the pre-reform order; (2) maintenance of the implemented reforms without new reforms; (3) imposition of a transition from above by the old regime; (4) negotiation of a pacted transition to a new order; or (5) the non-negotiated overthrow of the regime from below; or (6) from above. These six choices help shape the structure of strategic political action in transitional and revolutionary situations. The available paths of development and strategic choices after a short time may be significantly restricted. The structure of choice, in turn, is shaped by the extent to which the structural constraints and new institutional arrangements provide information to key political actors that make one strategic (or tactical) choice seem more viable than others.

The relationship between institutions and politics (or culture), however, is a two-way street that constantly shapes and reshapes the entire dynamics and environment of politics. The historical institutionalists' model of "dynamic constraints" argues "the dynamic interaction of political strategies and institutional constraints" accomplishes this in part.²⁶ It is therefore imperative to

examine both how specific political institutions, particularly those at the interstices between state and society, shape political preferences and choices, and how politics reshape institutions. Institutions and their standard operating and other official procedures shape political meaning, actors' perception of their interests, goals and strategies, as well as the distribution of power at the disposal of different factions and institutions. The institutions of the regime, state, and society are shaped by the "normative social order," which is shaped by ideology, social mores and political and legal cultures, among other things.²⁷

Moreover, the dynamic constraints model holds that political actors shape and reshape the state and institutions, arguing persuasively for the important role of human agency. Individuals and organizations transform institutions by exploiting contradictions within them. Such opportunities and the multiplicity of often contradictory ideas, goals, and interests come together in alliances through a far more complex process than a simple confluence of interests calculated on the basis of "rational choice." Leadership and the "marketing" of policies influence the formation of alliances, which are often based on *perception* of self-interest and the attainability of goals. Moreover, political actors and organizations often take an "institutional approach" themselves in seeking to attain their goals. By reorganizing power and the rules of the political game, political actors can enhance their own power and their position within the overall polity. (As we shall see, this became the focus of much of the *perestroika* era's politics both inside and outside of the regime.) The result is likely to be institutional breakdown and strategic confusion, sparking an even more desperate and "intense political conflict over the shape of the new institutional arrangements."²⁸ Indeed, in revolutionary situations "(s)tate executives and their followers will be found maneuvering to extract resources and build administrative and coercive organizations."²⁹ The dynamic constraints model sees strategic maneuvering between, and conflict among political actors within institutional constraints influencing the institutional framework within which interaction takes place, while at the same time institutions continue to mediate politics. Thus, "changes in the meaning and functioning of institutions (associated with broader socioeconomic and political shifts) set in motion political struggles within but also over those institutions that in fact drive their development forward."³⁰ The overall dynamic is a cycle of interactive institutional and political transformation. This can also be true in periods of disequilibrium and institutional decay, when the state and its institutions are sometimes viewed as a dependent variable.³¹

The "dynamic constraints" model's explanation of the relationship between political action and institutional constraints taken together with the intentional or even rational choice approach to analyzing strategic political interaction suggests the need for a theory that encompasses the interaction of

structural, institutional, and intentional factors in explaining transition breakdown and revolutionary outcomes and vectors (from above or below). The institutional and intentional constraints that foil transitions and produce revolutionary outcomes may also be dynamic and interacting. If institutional and intentional constraints restricting choices and possible outcomes interact, the overall configuration of constraints is likely to be too formidable for even the most compromise-oriented actors to overcome. Hypothesizing the simultaneous presence and interaction of macrostructural, institutional, and intentional constraints, a "theory of multiple, interactive constraints" on a background of an established alternative sovereignty could explain why contingency becomes necessity, why and how potential transitions breakdown, and under what circumstances revolutionary situations bring regime change by political revolution from above or social revolution from below.

If macrostructural, institutional, and intentional constraints persist during a transitional or revolutionary situation, a pacted transition is unlikely. Instead, the interaction of multiple constraints is likely to lead to a breakdown of transition negotiations and agreements and produce either an attempted restorationist crackdown (if the softliners again side with hardliners or hardliners defect from the game) or, more likely, continuing regime disintegration, state incapacitation, a regime split, political polarization and gridlock, the disintegration of political compromise, multiple defections from the "game," and ultimately, the unnegotiated change of power from one regime to an alternative sovereign. The configuration of constraints may so weaken the regime and state that the opposition is able to seize power from below (violently or peacefully) as the regime loses the confidence, will, authority, and capacity either to crush the opposition or to successfully conclude negotiations for a transition pact. However, if civil society is not sufficiently autonomous and strong enough to produce a well-organized and powerful opposition movement, then the regime or groups within it will play the leading role in determining the political outcome, bringing revolution from above.

Totalitarian and many post-totalitarian regime-types may be most vulnerable to the revolutionary vector from above because of their atomized societies and the structures of their state organization. A regime split and the establishment of dual or multiple sovereignty inside the state organization creates the possibility of revolution from above. If the structural crisis, state incapacitation and disintegration, and political polarization within and outside the regime deepen, regime hardliners or softliners will eventually defect from the political game and seek to resolve the revolutionary situation unilaterally. Hardliners defect from the game by attempting to revert to the pre-reform status quo by way of a coup. Regime softliners who have defected from the regime may defect from the transition negotiations with softliners more loyal to the regime and instead use their alternative state power base to destroy the remnants of the regime. Whether authoritarian restoration or revo-

lution from above wins out will be decided by the correlation of power between regime hardliners and revolutionaries from above and the strategic choice about whom to support in the revolutionary crisis made by prospective allies—regime softliners and opposition radicals (revolutionaries from below). For example, during and after the August 1991 Soviet revolutionary crisis provoked by a hardline coup, both regime softliners and the revolutionaries from below took the side of Russia's revolutionaries from above against regime hardliners, producing the transformational path of revolution from above.

Two final factors, one briefly already touched on, must be discussed. Subjective factors—personality and accidents of history—may also intervene. Human agency, the role of the personality and irrationality are important in producing political outcomes and making history. Even with a highly constrictive web of multiple constraints, leaders and ordinary individuals still can exert perhaps decisive influence in the turn of events. Leaders can lead. They may do so in service of ideals rather than interests. Leaders can fail. They may or may not understand the costs of an attempt at authoritarian restoration, the danger of revolution, or what it really takes to build institutions or fashion compromises. Their personalities and skills will determine what they understand and what they can or want to do may give a key political actor at the right time and place some autonomy from a burdensome configuration of constraints. The web of constraints may preclude many choices, but personality and skill can mitigate some of the restriction. An effective leader can convince his followers and others to sacrifice self-interest for the sake of the common good of state and society or appeal to their most base instincts. That said, the constraints in revolutionary situations are weighty. In addition to the configuration of interacting constraints, politics whips up passions that may not be amenable to rational choice. In a revolutionary situation, worst case scenarios—coups, revolution, civil war, anarchy—lurk. Even willing and effective political leaders may find it nearly impossible to fashion a compromise.

Equally as important are the accidents of history. The timing of the death of an important political figure (Andrei Sakharov's passing in December 1989 at the birth of Russian democracy and the beginning of Yeltsin's rise to authority among opposition elements), a failed versus a successful assassination attempt, and natural disasters represent just a few of the wild card factors outside of human control (no less "rational choice") that can change institutions and the correlation of political forces.

To conclude, a multiple, interacting constraints theory of transition breakdown into revolution involves the development of a series of factors which in fact restrict the range of choices available to actors: a macrostructural crisis leading to institutional and intentional patterns that coexist and interact in such a way so as to limit the viability of numerous options as perceived by

key strategic actors. One or more strong personalities or an accident of history may or may not overcome the configuration of constraints and move events onto a transitional or revolutionary path seemingly closed off, but this is a struggle against the odds.

The Configuration of Interacting Constraints During *Perestroika*

A full explanation of revolutionary outcomes requires close examination of the interaction of the macrostructural crisis, institutional factors and constraints, and the strategic interaction between reactionaries, reformers, and revolutionaries. A confluence of such interacting constraints produced *perestroika*'s denouement in the August 1991 coup and Russia's revolution from above. The extinction of the Soviet regime was the result of cascading crises and constraints: an unresolved "structural" crisis, compounded by a state institutional crisis of state incapacitation and dissolution which, in turn, along with the pre-reorganization party-state's structure and influence on elites, shaped a constrictive structure of strategic action. Political polarization's institutionalization in different state institutions established dual sovereignty and a revolutionary situation. The intentional constraints posed by the four-way structure of the moderates' dilemma occurred on a background of an unresolved macrostructural crisis and the institutional impediments both to the marginalization of regime hardliners and the formation of a strong opposition from below. Institutional and intentional constraints interacted. Soviet partocratic institutions and the specifics of Gorbachev's reorganization of the party-state influenced the structure of strategic political action, and the latter in turn was expressed in new institutional transformations as political groups sought to institutionalize their power. This created a configuration of multiple constraints that confounded a potential Soviet transition pact.

The Macrostructural Crisis

Since so much has been written about the macrostructural and domestic structural crises or pre-crisis situation facing the Soviet leadership on the eve of Gorbachev's rise to power, this subject need not be delved into great detail here.³² Suffice it to say that these crises consisted of fundamental contradictions between the global scientific-technological revolution that emerged in the 1970s led by the USSR's superpower antagonist, the United States, and the increasingly stagnant and obsolete Soviet regime-type. The domestic aspect of these crises were rooted in central planning, the exhaustion of resources for maintaining the pattern of extensive development, and the highly centralized control over decisionmaking and information, investment, and labor flows, as well as other practices that prevented an intensive mode of

economic development. Economic stagnation along with various social ills, including career immobility for younger, better-educated, mid-level apparatchiki and other members of the ruling *nomenklatura* class, created an impetus for change inside the Soviet party-state. In short, these and other aspects of the macrostructural and domestic structural crisis helped bring Mikhail Gorbachev to power and the launching of the most comprehensive reform program in Soviet history.³³ A shift from Soviet “extensive” methods of economic development to more efficient, “intensive” patterns of development required both some economic and political change and liberalization, which were dangerous for the regime. Thus, the Soviet partocratic regime-type, as a key element in the macrostructural and structural crises, had an important role in shaping the configuration of constraints, particularly the unintended institutional and political consequences that ensued from state reorganization and regime liberalization.

Institutional Constraints

The institutional constraints that led to the failure of reform and transition consisted of certain institutional characteristics of the Soviet regime's organization of state and society both before and as they evolved during *perestroika*. The system inherited by Gorbachev has been called “(a) state without a political system,” a society that was “bureaucratized.”³⁴ However, the Soviet system was less than bureaucratic in the Weberian sense of procedural rationality and legality. Both regime and state were “partocratic,” characterized by “mono-organization” and meta-stability.³⁵ The essential and distinguishing feature of the Soviet partocratic regime's institutional arrangement was the “mono-organization” of the regime, state, society, polity, and economy by the CPSU and its apparatus.³⁶ The CPSU apparatus staffed, mobilized, and coordinated state structures and their sub-divisions in both state and society, economy and polity. The party apparat penetrated, controlled, and bound together both state and society. Every centrally- and locally-based ministry, soviet, every industrial, service or agricultural enterprise, all youth and women's groups, trade unions, and, most importantly, all the organs of coercion and their armed forces were organized by the CPSU and its apparat. The state, as an organization or bureaucracy, was not sovereign or “autonomous,” for it was not sufficiently differentiated from the parastatal, regime-organizing institution, the CPSU.³⁷ Without a strong party apparat, the Soviet regime and state would be rendered unstable. The party apparat ensured the level of control needed for the regime to eschew terror and high mobilization and still maintain its stability. In this way, the Soviet party-state was “metastable,” a form of stable disequilibrium, the continued stability of which is contingent on the maintenance of the existing system by which it is ordered.³⁸ While rational bureaucratic administration requires programmatic

pluralism within a multiparty system, "(t)he central feature of elites operating in the partocratic system is their institutional and ideological unity about the dominant role of the single party and obligatory consensus about the principal goals and priorities which are incorporated into the 'party line'." Such a system can tolerate only a minimum of programmatic pluralism. "Serious differences among the leaders and the administrative cadres...would weaken the elite's grip, undermine legitimacy claims and significantly hinder mobilization efforts."³⁹ It was the party apparat that ensured the political and institutional unity of the Soviet *nomenklatura* and *apparati*. When Gorbachev began major reforms by weakening the party apparat, the metastability of the Soviet party-state and state-society relations rapidly broke down.

Though centrally coordinated and controlled, some institutional and group interests were tolerated by and largely within limits defined and enforced by the party apparat.⁴⁰ Institutional and factional interests were given space for limited articulation and "lobbying" through the quasi-bureaucratic party-state's intermeshed political-administrative system. Thus, the party and state apparati were the Soviet polity. "Crypto-politics" was carried out by competing factions and clans in the shadows of the apparat's special telephones and secret memoranda using the interstices between competing, overlapping quasi-bureaucratic institutions and apparati, the contradictory orders and competing commands emanating from above, procedural slack and legal loopholes.⁴¹ This permitted high-level officials to build factional bases of support, while lower-level officials struggled to execute the party line and serve their patrons' interests. Party goals and factional-political criteria devalued rules and procedures.⁴²

Party control was implemented through its *nomenklatura* or power of appointment over all party and state officials as well as its control over the organs of coercion, especially the KGB. The former power helped the party to control state officials and institutions within the framework of the party apparat's hegemony. The latter function controlled the party rank-and-file and society at-large as well. For society, there was no or very little autonomy, no civil society, but instead a collection of atomized individuals who associated in organized groups only under the watchful eyes of the party and KGB. However, here too partocratic metastability ensured by the party-state's deep penetration into society and its monopoly on recruitment was easily disturbed upon liberalization. Many elements of limited loyalty to the existing order were recruited from society into the state and party apparatus once the revolutionary élan of the Lenin and Stalin periods passed. Like the party apparat's penetration of the state, penetration of society was a stabilizing factor under conditions of tight mono-organization, but it became the source of conflict and factionalization upon liberalization. In the decades after the revolution, as élan began to wane

and party charisma “routinized,” the CPSU had become a careerist organization made up of members some of whom had increasingly “deviant,” though usually closely held views.⁴³

There were six key institutional characteristics of the Soviet regime and state extant before and during *perestroika* that weakened the institutional cohesion and capacity or structured strategic action and the relative strength of key political actors in such a way so as to hinder conclusion of a transition pact: (1) the power of the party apparat and its control over state organs, which blocked and complicated reform, defined the meaning of *perestroika*'s politics and differences between the major strategic groupings, and led to the formation of a peculiar three-way regime split that included a powerful hardline faction and an opposition-oriented ‘liberal’ faction; (2) the potential for institutional incohesion, state incapacitation, and dual sovereignty created by the bifurcated party-state structure of the Soviet system; (3) the formal federal structure of the USSR and the place of the RSFSR proto-state in relation to the central CPSU apparatus and the Union state which led to (4) the establishment of dual sovereignty in Moscow and a quasi-bureaucratic struggle for power between the Soviet and Russian state apparati; (5) the incomplete transformation of the Soviet political system under Gorbachev's political *perestroika* which heightened uncertainty among key strategic actors as to the likely actions of their competitors; and (6) the party-state's deep penetration and thorough atomization of society and its monopoly on state (and social) resources and property.

The party apparat's conservatism provoked the regime split, polarized key political forces, and determined which institutions radicals, reformers, and reactionaries attempted to control. The power of the general secretary, the only real source of the softliners' power, was based on the party apparat. Thus, Gorbachev's ability to establish reforms was limited. The “inclusiveness” of the partocratic mono-organization of state and society rent asunder the unity of party, state, and regime upon democratization. Latent opposition elements recruited into the apparat in the post-Stalin period would come out into the open within the party and be promoted by appointment and elections. Completely deideologized, “careerist,” “embourgeoised,” and tenuously loyal elements entered high office, adding a regime split on the “left” to the one on the “right” between softliners and hardliners.⁴⁴ The tradition of crypto-politics and the partocratic state's monopoly on resources led these regime radicals to remain inside the party longer than they might have otherwise, producing a unique three-way regime split that included a democratic opposition movement. With their seizure of state power in the RSFSR, they eschewed both reforming the regime and mobilizing societal opposition against the regime other than in self-defense and instead concentrated on forcing the issue of regime transformation by strengthening their own power on the basis of a state organization. This led to dual sovereignty and the onset of the

transformational/revolutionary situation centered from above. The party and its apparat still played a vanguard role, albeit a new one, informing the political stances of key actors and groups. Allegiance and non-allegiance to, and trust and distrust of key Soviet partocratic institutions—the CPSU, KGB, and the military—informed the preferences, choices, and thus strategies of key political actors. Reactionaries, reformers, and revolutionaries were defined by others in accordance with their attitude and relationship to the party apparat.⁴⁵

The limited transfer of power from the party apparat to the state created both a political cleavage within the partocratic regime between hardliners, softliners, and radicals as well as an institutional cleavage within and between the core institutions of the party-state, particularly between the CC apparat's departments tied to state institutions, the government, the reformed soviets (especially the new USSR and RSFSR Congress of Peoples' Deputies [CPD]). The idea of party-state separation provoked a hardliner-softliner split, and Gorbachev "lost" the party apparat. Gorbachev's reorganization of power between the party and state apparati and reform of the role of the regime-, state-, and society-organizing institution—the party apparat—more deeply bifurcated the Soviet party-state's horizontal and vertical institutional cohesion. The partocratic system included a trifurcated rather than a bifurcated hierarchy—the party apparat, governmental apparat, and the apparatus of soviets and their executive committees (*ispolkomy*)—compromising the state's vertical cohesion in conditions before reform and debilitating state capacity after reform. When the party apparat was reorganized and weakened under Gorbachev's reforms, the liberalizing Soviet regime confronted a more complicated challenge in reigning in institutional pluralism and incohesion than do liberalizing non-partocratic regimes or partocratic regimes that do not tinker with their party apparatus first. Reorganization and bifurcation of the party-state operationalized the horizontal and vertical cleavages' potential for creating dual or multiple sovereignty. Regime and state both were split among competing factions and incapacitated as a result of several reorganizations.

The weakening of the regime- and state-organizing institution (the party apparat) and deeper bifurcation of the party from the state and of political from administrative functions led to a three-way regime split, power struggles for control over institutions, and state and regime incapacitation. Eventually the three regime factions each decided to rely on different structures upon which to base their political power: hardliners—the party apparat and power ministries; softliners—the new USSR presidential structures; and regime radicals (opposition moderates or revolutionaries from above within the ruling CPSU) in the RSFSR state apparatus. Gorbachev's transfer of power to the soviets and new semi-free election system failed to placate the radicals among the regime's softliners while allowing them to

take advantage of the Soviet state structure's vertical or federal cleavages and its party-state horizontal cleavage to weaken both the state and regime.

The Union party and state apparati sat atop those of fourteen union republics and the RSFSR. However, the RSFSR had a peculiar status. Its state and party structures were less developed than those of the union republics. On the state side, it lacked RSFSR-level departments of the power ministries, the Academy of Sciences, and other typical union republic state attributes. Thus, when Gorbachev's reforms began to open up avenues from demands to redress certain inequalities disadvantageous to the non-Russian union republics, Russian political actors began to demand redress in the institutional incompleteness of Russia's proto-state. This turned the focus of many politicians on the RSFSR as a potential arena where one might engage in political entrepreneurship and enhance one's power. On the party side, the RSFSR lacked its own republican CP (and Komсомол) organization (all non-Russian union republics had their own republican-level CP and Komсомол). The RSFSR proto-state and local CPSU organizations located on RSFSR territory were run directly from the CPSU's union-level party headquarters on Staraya Ploshchad' (Old Square) in Moscow. Party hardliners took advantage of the organizational anomaly on the party side to establish a CP of the RSFSR or RCP as their own alternative power base to the central party apparat headed by the softline Gorbachev. The more radical of party softliners, losing hope for real party reform and full democratization, took advantage of the organizational anomaly on the state side and took control over the RSFSR proto-state apparat through the RSFSR CPD elected in May 1990. The devolution of power from Staraya Ploshchad and the Kremlin and to the Russian White House run by regime radicals-turned-moderate oppositionists created revolutionary dual sovereignty from above. Their opportunity to hold real state power through the RSFSR CPD opened up a path of transformation never viable in Eastern Europe's pacted transitions (Poland, Hungary, and Bulgaria) or its revolutions from below (Czechoslovakia and Romania).⁴⁶ The possession of a state power base allowed Russia's moderate opposition to forego negotiations with the regime on two nascent pacts in fall of 1990 (500 Days economic transition plan) and in 1991 (the Union Treaty).

Limitations in the depth (the soviets' semi-democratization instead of full democratization, retention of party organizations in state institutions, and some continued party apparat interference in executive functions) and the scope (the party's continuing crypto-politics and its presence in the power ministries and law enforcement bodies) of Gorbachev's party-state reorganization disappointed many softliners and contributed to formation of a radical reform wing inside the party. Changes of structure, powers, standard operating procedures and rules of party and state institutions during *perestroika* created institutional contradictions and fluidity, increasing the space available for crypto-politics. Regime hardliners, softliners, and radicals, incul-

cated by crypto-politics and a non-rational-legal political culture, conducted politics as a war of laws and reorganizations in an institutional chess game designed to undermine the power bases of political competitors. Institutional instability and the persistence of crypto-politics thus produced a high level of uncertainty among political groups.

In society, liberalization and democratization permitted societal opposition organizations and parties to form. However, because the party-state had monopolized all association and resources so thoroughly for so long there was no civil society from which a strong opposition movement could quickly rise. Civil society and opposition political movements and parties had to be built overnight with very few resources. The weakness of radical societal opposition forces compared with the state power and alternative sovereignty established by moderate opposition forces made revolution from below a less likely outcome than revolution from above.

The Intentional Constraints of the Soviet Moderates' Dilemma

The politics of perestroika were not a simple polarized regime-opposition contest that precluded pact-making. The structure of perestroika's politics was a complex four-way contest along the lines of the noted moderates' dilemma. The key groups were: (1) regime hardliners who wanted to avoid any transformation whatsoever to democratic rule; (2) regime softliners or moderates who favored semi-authoritarian or semi-democratic rule but were flexible enough to settle for either an imposed or negotiated transition to democracy; (3) opposition moderates (revolutionaries from above) who favored a negotiated transition and preservation of some rump of the Union state but who opted out of pact-making for revolution from above when regime softliners proved incapable of containing hardliners; and (4) opposition radicals (revolutionaries from below) who favored immediate overthrow of the regime and break up of the Union state without negotiations. Because of the presence of moderates with significant political power in both the regime and opposition, perestroika developed a transition pacting process.

Perestroika approximated other transitions to democracy until the pacting process was aborted by the August 1991 coup attempt. This study will provide empirical evidence that such pacts are possible in liberalized post-totalitarian regimes and was a viable option during *perestroika*. In the USSR of 1990-1991, serious Soviet pact-making occurred twice, first around the "500 Days" economic transition program and second on the basis of the new Union Treaty. The resolution of such issues as the establishment of rules for the democratic contest, economic transformation, and which republics would remain in the new Union was imminent in August 1991 with the signing of a new Union Treaty scheduled for 20 August. The 19 August hardline coup attempt aborted Soviet pact-making and brought revolution from above in-

stead. However, even after the coup, Soviet pact-making between regime and opposition moderates continued. Thus, the differences between the Latin American and Southern European transitions and the phases of *perestroika* preceding the August coup do not amount to a qualitative difference. *Perestroika* followed the transition pattern and sequence: crisis, regime split, the organization of an alternative project for constructing the state and society, and pact-making. The pivotal difference was *perestroika*'s victimization by a hardline coup. However, many transitions to democracy have fallen victim to "coup poker."⁴⁷ The August Soviet coup's unintended consequence—destruction rather than salvation of the regime—dictated August's political revolutionary outcome. Much as the weakening of the regime before the coup weakened the state, the overthrow of the regime within weeks of the coup brought complete state incapacitation and ultimately the Soviet Union's collapse just months later.

Thus, the hardliners played a very decisive role in *perestroika*'s ultimate outcome. The CPSU apparat and the state organs of coercion produced strong hardline resistance to reform, which succeeded in blocking a pact agreement twice. Most strikingly, it organized the failed August 1991 coup that once and for all derailed *perestroika*'s transition. Nevertheless, the study of *perestroika*'s breakdown has tended to focus on the struggle between regime and opposition, Gorbachev and Yeltsin, communists and democrats, not a disaggregated regime and a disaggregated opposition. Curiously enough, the role played by Soviet hardliners - with their vested interests in, and allegiance to the partocratic regime - has been overlooked.⁴⁸ Years of indoctrination, occupational, and career achievements associated with and rewarded by the regime as well as complicity in crimes against humanity in service of the party-state's core institutions—the party, KGB, MVD, military, and military-industrial complex—created a large cadre of loyal *nomenklaturshchiki*, particularly of the Stalin and war generations, whose interests resided in preservation of the existing order.⁴⁹ These institutional interests and institutionally-defined ideational orientations defined a group of Soviet hardliners who turned against Gorbachev and the softliners, when they began to weaken the party apparat and other core institutions and separate the party-state. Soviet hardliners were particularly intransigent and logically so. They were implicated by association, if not by fact in the crimes of the harshest of all regimes. Moreover, in contrast to transitions from most authoritarianism regimes, not only the secret police but hardliners in the party, military, and MVD had no "immunity" derived from "state" status. Partocratic penetration of the state and society deeply implicated military and political police in the regime's crimes. The parastatal party's penetration of the state compromises the latter's autonomy and the police's and military's corporate professionalism. To hardliners it was clear that whole institutions were at risk of not just abolition, but arrest, prosecution, and long imprisonment. After all, KGB and

military elites were being so treated after communism's collapse in some Eastern European countries by 1990.⁵⁰

Thus, party *apparatchiki*, allied with state officials, delayed reform and counter-reorganized party and state structures in order to challenge the reformers, influencing institutional development and contributing to the balkanization of the party-state. Party officials, officers and commissars in the military, secret and even the regular police, lacking assurance that their professional, institutional, and political interests will be protected under the new regime, naturally sought to protect the old regime. Soviet hardliners had a relatively simple range of preferences and choices: either prevent the regime's fall or ensure protection of their basic interests if this was unavoidable. When regime and opposition moderates broke the dangerous political impasse of winter 1990-1991 and seemingly fashioned a transition pact, without any assurances about the future of the party and its "sword-bearing" institutions, hardliners organized the August 1991 coup, a main cause of the transition breakdown and the revolution from above.

The role played by the hardliners during *perestroika* was particularly pernicious by constraining the choices and actions available to other actors. They discredited, delayed, and passively sabotaged the reforms of Gorbachev and the softliners. Reform choices were constrained as hardliners' power inside the party-state threatened softliners' security in their posts. The power of the hardliners allowed softliners to contain the radicals and the opposition by suggesting that "extremism" would provoke Gorbachev's removal from power and a return to the pre-liberalization order. The hardliners' majority within the elite limited the number of softliners who, in turn, made up the pool of potential defectors to, and leaders of the moderate opposition (former regime radicals). This limited the strength of the opposition overall (the potency of which was *a priori* limited by the weakness of the Soviet "movement society") and its ability to extract concessions from the regime. Hardliners' predominance in the party apparatus, the organs of coercion, and other state structures allowed them to prolong regime practices that liberalization was to have ended. This simultaneously delimited opposition activities and discredited softliners in the opposition's eyes. The opposition's weakness combined with its growing alienation from the regime softliners delayed successful transition pacting, leaving the nascent transition vulnerable to the hardline coup, particularly since the macrostructural crisis deepened and institutional decay accelerated because of the battle of reorganizations and counter-reorganizations. A Soviet pacting process that involved stronger contingents of regime and opposition moderates, with the latter's large component of softline defectors from the regime, would have been more negotiable. Softliners who were ostensibly running the regime would have engendered more confidence among opposition groups in its ability to control the hardliners and among hardliners' that softliners were capable of en-

suring their vital interests (avoiding arrest and trial or lustration, future political career, economic well-being).

Regime softliners were in a much more complex position, having several potential outcomes to fear and threats to neutralize. From the beginning, they were an embattled minority within the party apparat and leadership who benefited from Gorbachev's patronage in his search for ideas that would reinvigorate the system without fundamentally changing it. They consisted of enlightened party *apparatchiki*, social science *institutchiki*, and *intelligentsy* with better knowledge about, and more contact with the outside world and the West in particular. With hardliners predominant in the party apparat, power ministries, and even in the governmental apparat, softliners sought to adopt reform policies that were at least minimally palatable to hardliners. Many more ambitious and radical softliners defected from Gorbachev's softline camp to the internal party opposition in 1989–1990 because of the limits placed on reform and democratization by hardliners. Enterprise managers in particular were much more opportunistic and flexible. Many of them were co-opted by way of *nomenklatura* buyouts into passive acquiescence in (versus the apparat's resistance to) reforms that *de jure* weakened, then *de facto* dismantled the partocracy, resembling processes in the Brazilian and Hungarian transitions and Russia's post-communist insider privatization program. Leaders of the enterprise directors joined Gorbachev's small cadre of party reformers in designing a belated Soviet privatization program and supported Gorbachev against hardliners' attempts to remove him from power.

Party radicals, frustrated by the slow pace of reform, became the moderate wing of the opposition. After they found an alternative state power base in the RSFSR CPD, they defected from the regime at the July 1990 XXVIII CPSU Congress. Following the softliners' example in their struggle against the hardliners, the moderate opposition used state bodies to pressure and circumvent softliners in pushing forward reform, then revolution from above. After taking control over the proto-state of the Russian republic (RSFSR) with Yeltsin's election as RSFSR supreme soviet chairman in spring 1990, regime radicals turned opposition moderates in the Russian CPD undermined the power and authority of the reformed CPSU regime. Yeltsin's strengthening of the RSFSR proto-state had as much to do with the political contest and negotiation with the softliners as it did with state-building per se. However, in using the Russian proto-state to create a revolutionary dual sovereignty, they soon came to realize that they could proceed accruing greater power and popularity without negotiating with Gorbachev and the softliners. The Russian state declared its sovereignty "within" the USSR and began to encroach on the powers of the central state apparatus and moved beyond Gorbachev's more tentative policy of the differentiation of party and state functions to full separation of party and state. Most importantly, they used the Russian state to weaken the party-state, provoking a hardline backlash in the fall of 1990 and

Gorbachev's brief alliance with hardliners through March 1991. In this way, dual sovereignty and the Soviet revolutionary situation arrived from above by way of the three-way regime split as well as by way of the particular institutional aspects of the party-state.

The revolution from above used support of the radical opposition—the potential revolution from below—which included not only Russian democratic elements but democratic and authoritarian nationalist parties and movements from the non-Russian union republics. Lacking coercive powers with which to challenge the remnants of the *ancien regime*, Yeltsin attempted to build alliances with the national liberation movements and to retain the support of the Russian democratic radicals. The revolution from below required him to take radical positions that undermined pact negotiations at key points. This, in turn, forced hardliners to turn against the softliners, who were not defending the regime.

Just as institutional factors shaped the structure of strategic political action, the structure of action and key political actors shaped the institutional framework within which the politics of perestroika were played out. Once the regime split in three, competing groups of partocratic apparatchiki struggled to institutionalize their power in various state organizations. This not only reshaped the institutional order of the party-state, it divided the party-state apparatus up among competing groups, accelerating the destruction of institutional as well as political cohesion of the party-state and its capacity to implement a concerted reform program. Regime softliners sought to get around the hardline party and government apparatus's obstruction of economic reforms by reinvigorating the dormant legislative function of the soviets. When it became clear to softliners that the new USSR CPD was still rather conservative and that radical and moderate opposition forces would win in union republic soviet elections, they established a Union presidency to insulate themselves both from hardliners and the emerging opposition. In the hope of holding radical reformers inside the party as allies against hardliners, softliners permitted regime radicals to commandeer the Russian proto-state. Regime radicals nevertheless became more oppositionist after they established dual sovereignty in the RSFSR state apparatus and later countered the Soviet presidency with a Russian presidency. Hardliners sought to counter the softliners in the CPSU and opposition in the RSFSR by creating a RCP. In this way, the once institutionally mono-organizational party-state was broken up into competing political fiefdoms controlled by different strategic orientations. In sum, the regime radicals' reliance on the Russian state apparatus to seize power and the role that hardline resistance to reform and pact-making played in the regime radicals' defection to the oppositionist Russian proto-state highlight how institutional and intentional constraints interacted to create dual sovereignty and revolution from above.

Road Map and Chronology of the Book

For purposes of organizing analysis, it is useful to use the concepts of multiple “games” or “conjunctures” and “arenas” from “nested” game theory.⁵¹ Phases or “conjunctures” are separate strategic situations or phases each characterized by “the presence of particular political forces endowed with interests which involve different mixtures of conflict and coordination, by conditions which have been generated by earlier actions and by conditions that are exogenous.” Transition from one conjuncture to another “occurs as an outcome of actions pursued by the actors.”⁵² This may involve change within a particular structure of strategic political action, change to a new structure of political action, or a new “game.” A conjuncture should also be viewed as being shaped by “the actions pursued by actors” but by the institutional context in which the strategic political action is played out. Conjunctures in transitional and revolutionary cases are in part defined by the different institutional environment or arenas created by repeated reorganization during such periods.

Perestroika’s first conjuncture (1985 - October 1987) consisted of “within system” reforms to address the macrostructural crisis. Politics consisted of traditional factional crypto-politics over issues of economic decentralization and minimal *glasnost*’ within a largely unchanged partocratic institutional arena. The first rifts toward the regime split emerged at the end of this period with the October 1987 “Yeltsin affair” and the broaching of major initiatives for a reorganization and democratization of the political system. The prospects of transition and revolution did not appear until conjuncture two (October 1987 - March 1989), when a new institutional design of the party-state was moved forcefully onto the agenda and administrative reforms weakened the party-state’s institutional cohesion and sparked a tripartite regime split, but failed to address the contradictions between the international environment and the Soviet system of socio-economic organization (see chapter 2).

Conjuncture three (March 1989 - March 1990) saw the extension of party-state differentiation to the legislative function and democratization of the elections of the USSR Supreme Soviet and Congress of People’s Deputies. While the timing and semi-free nature of the elections could not provoke the formation of political parties, they did lead to the institutionalization of the regime split on both the “right” and the “left.” On the right, hardliners organized a movement for the creation of the RCP. On the left, regime radicals joined liberals in the USSR CPD’s Inter-Regional Group of Peoples’ Deputies (MGD), formed after the first semi-free elections in Soviet history, and the Democratic Platform in the CPSU (DP). The DP’s open support of the former’s drive to abolish the CPSU’s constitutional right to monopoly rule suggested the oppositional potential of this “within-regime” movement. The situation was not yet revolutionary. The radical DP remained inside the party. The

MGD controlled no state institution and still backed reform through the system. The revolutionary societal opposition lacked the organization and resources to meet the power of the regime. It was transitional since opposition groups now existed, a nascent civil society had emerged, and the regime was making concessions to the opposition, such as eliminating the constitutional basis of the CPSU's advantages. Institution-building became a key weapon of political struggle, disorganizing regime and state. Political positions and strategies were shaped in an atmosphere of growing uncertainty created by an institutional environment that was in constant flux in a series of often simultaneous state reorganizations. Stabilization through reform was becoming an unlikely outcome. Revolution, totalitarian restoration, and transition to democracy were now possible (chapter 3).

Conjuncture four (March 1990 - July 1990) saw the deepening of the party-state's institutional incohesion, culminating in the establishment of dual sovereignty from above (chapter 4). The institutionalization of the regime split was further imbedded on the "right" with the official founding of the RCP and Gorbachev's establishment of the USSR presidency to protect himself on the right from a party coup and on the left from the DP's defection from the CPSU at its July 1990 XXVIII Congress. The transformation of the institutional arena was replicated in the union republics with semi-free elections to the soviets and the creation of presidencies there as well. The regime split also spread to some of them with the formation of DP branches and the election of opposition majorities in several republican, regional, and city soviets. Strong national liberation oppositions in other republics began to threaten the regime and state from below. The structural crisis deepened, as the economy went into a tailspin.

Conjuncture five (July - November 1990) saw the arrival of the revolutionary situation from above with the establishment of dual sovereignty in Moscow between the decaying and divided Soviet partocratic regime and state, on the one hand, and the RSFSR proto-state taken over by the CPSU renegade Boris Yeltsin, on the other hand (chapter 5). The revolutionary situation persisted through all succeeding conjunctures. The democrats' takeover of the Russian government balanced the moderates' dilemma and the correlation of forces between regime and opposition. Initially, this sparked the first "moderates' agreement" between Gorbachev's softliners and Yeltsin's moderate opposition Russian government to fashion an economic transition plan, the "500 Days" plan, moving the revolutionary situation's political dynamics seemingly in the direction of a transitional pact. However, elements within Russian government continued to push Russia's revolution from above forward through the summer and fall of 1990, seizing control of some central state institutions and resources and pushing Yeltsin to break their agreement and submit the "500 Days" program to the RSFSR Supreme Soviet unilaterally. Simultaneously, Gorbachev was risking to further separate the party

apparat from the power ministries, subordinating the latter to his presidential apparatus. Regime and opposition moderates were moving separately and at times together to undercut hardliner-dominated institutions. Mounting hardline pressure on Gorbachev forced him to turn to the “right” and into a tactical alliance with them in November.

With this, a dangerous game of “coup poker” ensued. This sixth conjuncture (November 1990 - April 1991) was characterized by a temporary and superficial depolarization of regime hardliner-softliner relations along with continuing hardline pressure on Gorbachev (chapter 6). Regime-opposition relations polarized, and stronger ties and mutual support developed between revolutionaries above and below (chapter 7). Gorbachev and Yeltsin took a series of measures and countermeasures attempting to limit their opposite number's institutional powers and rallied their respective extremists: Gorbachev—hardliners in the power ministries; Yeltsin—the societal opposition in Russia and the republics. Violent confrontations in Vilnius and Riga and potential violence between supporters of the Soviet party-state apparat and the Russian state apparat in Moscow itself in early 1991 signaled the potential of both revolution from above and below. Gorbachev took a step back from the precipice, restructured the game back into the quadripartite structure of the moderates' dilemma by offering a compromise on the issue of the distribution of power between the center and the republics.

The April 1991 “Nine Plus One” agreement between Gorbachev, Yeltsin, and the leaders of eight other republics and the ensuing Novo Ogarevo negotiations on a new Union Treaty marked the revival of another pacting phase. This seventh conjuncture (23 April - 19 August 1991) was the last “game” in which the fate of the regime was at stake. A transition pact and an institutional arena with little place for the hardliners and their institutions were in the offing. On-going, out-of-regime-type changes that had resulted from reform and revolution from above and, to a lesser extent, from below, as well as new steps toward democracy and the market were negotiated between regime and opposition moderates. These plans had as much to do with the hardliners' August coup as did the Union Treaty's implied acceptance of the secession of six republics (chapter 8). The failed 19-21 August 1991 coup led by the hardline leaders of each of the partocracy's core institutions (the party apparat, KGB, MVD, and the military) was a last desperate attempt by hardliners to weaken Gorbachev after a series of more cryptic but equally unsuccessful maneuvers to do so (chapter 9).

The eighth conjuncture, *perestroika's* last, began with the coup's collapse and a ban on the CPSU organizations, marking the fall of the partocratic regime. Salvation of the transition process was scuttled by Russia's gradual takeover of the Soviet state apparatus during the fall and culminated in the Belovezhsk agreement that buried the Soviet Union in December. The preservation of the Novo Ogarevo pacting process and even a rump Soviet state

became highly problematic, entirely dependent on the low level of good will among key leaders, particularly Gorbachev and Yeltsin. The nascent transition pact was aborted and the revolution from above was consummated in full (chapter 10).

Chapter 11 examines the illiberal results of Russia's revolution from above to date and how they have been influenced by the transformational mode of revolution from above.

Notes

1. From the transcript of the 30 January 1991 Politburo meeting. *Tsentr Khraneniya Sovremennoi Dokumentatsii (TsKhSD)*, fond 89, perechen' (opis') 42, delo 31, pp. 8-9.
2. Transitologists Karl and Schmitter found "difficult to imagine" how the still highly atomized Soviet society was able to prevail over the Soviet party-state. Philippe Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, "The Conceptual Travels of Transitologists and Consolidologists: How Far to the East Should They Go?" *Slavic Review*, vol. 53, no. 1, Spring 1994, pp. 173-85, at p. 179. Fish describes the limited nature of Soviet civil society – what he calls a "movement society." He nevertheless conceives of the Soviet transformation as one largely driven from below, ignoring the regime split and the role of actors above. Focusing exclusively on the weakness of proto-parties located in the Russian republic, he describes the movement society's constrained development in terms of the regime's inflexibility and inability to share power, a lack of confidence in its authority, and the "beginning" of the state's "decay." M. Steven Fish, *Democracy from Scratch: Opposition and Regime in the New Russian Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 75. Yet, internal regime politics and state political institutions are ignored. Instead, Fish focuses on the state's peripheral mechanisms for social control at production enterprises in four provincial capitals. At the same time, the state's control and repressive mechanisms even as they are decaying are considered instrumental in delimiting civil society. Fish, *Democracy from Scratch*, pp. 159-88. He appears to be arguing that not only the movement society and opposition, but the regime and state as well were too weak to engage in negotiations and pacting. The question of how it was that the regime fell if society was too weak to overthrow the regime and the regime was too weak to engineer a transition begs for an answer. Suggestively, the one instance where Fish explores cleavages within the regime, he dubs them "crucial" in shifting the balance of power in favor of the opposition. The Volgograd ObKom's demise during the provincial "revolutions" of February 1990 was sparked, Fish notes, by a leak to the press of documents furnished by Volgograd Gorkom First Secretary, A.M. Anipkin. He acknowledges that before the leak, "democratic activism had been modest" in Volgograd. Fish, *Democracy From Scratch*, pp. 153-4.
3. Michael McFaul, "Revolutionary Transformations in Comparative Perspective: Defining a Post-Communist Research Agenda," in David Holloway and Norman Naimark, eds., *Reexamining the Soviet Experience: Essays in Honor of Alexander Dallin* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), pp. 167-96.
4. Barrington Moore argued that "conservative" revolutions from above are led by aristocratic ruling classes against the modernizing state, offering the militarist-fascist regimes in Japan and Germany of the 1930s as examples. Barrington Moore Jr., *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the*

Making of the Modern World (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), pp. 412–43. In addition to the variable of class, Skocpol's structural approach stressed the state's inability to make the necessary economic adjustments and sociopolitical reforms because of immutable constraints and crises rooted in "macro-structural" contradictions and "historical contexts", producing social revolutions from below in France, China, and imperial Russia. Sources of the structural crisis lie not only in declining domestic performance but also in contradictions between the international environment and domestic institutions. Reform under the pressure of macro-structural constraints bring not a reformed regime and more effective state but rather further decay and incapacitation, opening the way for the social revolution. Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 65, 81. Hough's approach to the fall of the Soviet regime is similar to the above approaches. He stresses the institutional decay and systemic disequilibrium brought about by Soviet modernization, which created an ostensible Soviet middle class with values and aspirations that conflicted with the partocratic state's capabilities and social structures. He supplements this explanation with a focus on the role of the personality in history. He argues that Gorbachev, not Yeltsin, led an essentially middle class revolution supported by an embourgeoised *nomenklatura*. For him "the prime immediate cause of the revolution lay in the beliefs and unspoken assumptions of those at the very top of the economic and political hierarchies." He ignores the role of Yeltsin's revolutionary Russian state apparatus, the limited nature of Gorbachev's alternative project, and most importantly the divided nature of the ruling class and the contradictory aspirations for the future order that existed within it. Jerry Hough, *Democratization and Revolution in the USSR, 1985–1991* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), pp. 4, 63–4, 92. A similar interpretation may be found in David Kotz and Fred Weir, *Revolution From Above: The Demise of the Soviet System* (London: Routledge, 1997). But the aspiration to revolution is far from its realization. McFaul countered the determinism of Skocpol's emphasis on the macrostructural factor, arguing that while revolutionary situations may be created by structural conditions, revolutionary outcomes are contingent on "(a)ctions taken by individuals, groups, and coalitions in response to the structural crisis." McFaul, "Revolutionary Transformations in Comparative Perspective," pp. 174–5.

5. My model of revolution from above is loosely adapted in part from Trimberger's model of military-led revolutions from above. Ellen Kay Trimberger, *Revolution from Above: Military Bureaucrats and Development in Japan, Turkey, Egypt, and Peru* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1978).
6. For example, reform, transitions, and revolutions have all been found to begin with some crisis or pre-crisis disequilibrium. On revolution and macrostructural contradictions, international pressures, disequilibrium and crisis, see respectively Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*; Chalmers Johnson, *Revolutionary Change*, Second edition (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982); and Crane Brinton, *The Anatomy of Revolution*, Revised edition (New York: Vintage Books, 1965). On "great reforms," see Michael Oksenberg and Bruce J. Dickson, "The Origins, Processes, and Outcomes of Great Political Reform: A Framework of Analysis," in Dankwart A. Rustow and Kenneth Paul Erikson, eds., *Comparative Political Dynamics: Global Research Perspectives* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991), pp. 235–61. As was the case in the Soviet revolution from above, about 75 percent of transition cases followed economic downturns. Haggard and Kaufman, *The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions*, p. 33. On transition, see also Guillermo

- O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, "Tentative Conclusions About Uncertain Democracies," in Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, eds., *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), Part IV. From here forward cited as "Tentative Conclusions."
7. James March and Johan Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organized Basis of Politics* (New York: The Free Press, 1989), pp. 64-5.
 8. A "radical shock" or deliberate, fundamental reorganization of institutions undertaken in the hope that it "will destabilize political arrangements and force a permanent realignment of the existing system" is a blunt instrument, because "the same factors of institutional autonomy and stability that make shock strategies possible also make them difficult to implement and to control. Formal changes in structure are resisted or corrupted, and efforts to make radical changes are often frustrated." March and Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions*, pp. 64-5.
 9. Theda Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back In: Current Research," in Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 14 and 28. Institutionalists point toward a research agenda focused on "watershed periods in which state apparatus are constructed or reconstructed," on the "effects on policy-making capacities and the patterned relationships of state organizations and actors to social groups," and on "episodes when deliberate attempts at reform or reorganization are made within solidly established state structures," not only for their successes, "but for their failures and unintended consequences as well." Institutionalists' suspicion that the most important structural and operational features of states and their organization may not be readily visible to state officials or society and may "not be amenable to such research techniques as interviewing or reliance on the writings of public officials" endorses this study's extensive use of archival documents. Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, "On the Road toward a More Adequate Understanding of the State," in Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back In*, pp. 360-1.
 10. Skocpol stresses the dissolution of state structures resulting from state executives competing to control them as the state loses capacity in revolutionary situations. Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*.
 11. O'Donnell and Schmitter, "Tentative Conclusions," pp. 37-47.
 12. While transitions do not require pacts, they are seen as facilitating both transition and democratic consolidation under the new regime. "They are typically negotiated among a small number of participants representing established (and often highly oligarchic) groups or institutions; they tend to reduce competitiveness as well as conflict; they seek to limit accountability to wider publics; they attempt to control the agenda of policy concerns; and the deliberately distort the principle of citizen equality. Nonetheless, they can alter power relations, set loose new political processes, and lead to different (if often unintended) outcomes." O'Donnell and Schmitter, "Tentative Conclusions," p. 38.
 13. The most important task in any transition to democracy is to "institutionalize uncertainty"—that is, to gain a broad consensus among the main political actors and groups on the procedures to be established to ensure that the right to rule is contingent on free and fair electoral contestation and that "a real possibility of partisan alternation in office" is institutionalized. Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 60.
 14. McFaul's definitions of a "revolutionary situation"—(1) "when two opposing groups with antithetical conceptions of both polity and economy claim sovereignty

- over the same territory” and (2) “the articulation of the structural conflict in terms of political groups”—lack specificity, in my view. McFaul, “Revolutionary Transformations in Comparative Perspective,” pp. 173, 175. Any group can, and many do “claim” sovereignty, but that claim must be credible.
15. Youssef Cohen, *Radicals, Reformers, and Reactionaries: The Prisoners' Dilemma and the Collapse of Democracy in Latin America* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994), chapter 5.
 16. My model, therefore, differs from Trimberger's neo-Marxist one that focuses exclusively on the military's role in overthrowing developing capitalist regimes. According to Trimberger, the “destructive phase” of revolutions from above, modeled on Meiji Japan (1868) and Kemalist Turkey (1923), seems to involve four conditions necessary for the overthrow of the *ancien regime*: the military's institutional cohesion and bureaucratic autonomy from ruling class interests; the politicization of the military bureaucracy; power base in a state institution creating dual or multiple power (sovereignty); the rise of supporting movements from below; and the absence of constraints emanating from the international environment. The second wave of revolution from above, Egypt (1952) and Peru (1968), satisfy three of these four conditions. In these revolutions from above, military bureaucrats, inspired by statist and nationalist ideologies, were able to seize and reorganize state power in response to perceived threats to national sovereignty, because they possessed political-ideological cohesion and institutional and social “autonomy” from the ruling class and its interests. See Trimberger, *Revolution from Above*, chapter 1 and pp. 105-7, 120-1, 151-6.
 17. Military-led revolutions from above tend to engineer overthrow of the regime from institutional bases located in the territorial periphery. Trimberger, *Revolution from Above*, pp. 13-4, 43, 155-6.
 18. Trimberger, *Revolution from Above*, pp. 15-22, 105-7.
 19. McFaul, “Revolutionary Transformations in Comparative Perspective.” In this important article, McFaul argues for a “contingent structural theory of revolution,” which countered the determinism of structural theories of revolution. He conceives periods of fundamental regime change as consisting of multiple possible outcomes including revolution from above, “pacted” or imposed transition to democracy, and peaceful or violent revolution from below.
 20. Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970).
 21. In arguing that politics should place a contingency on structural determinism and still maintaining that the regime's method of organizing power precluded pact-making, McFaul is saying somewhat contradictorily that while politics may trump structural factors, institutions may trump politics as the key independent variable. Thus, McFaul really does not solve the problem of determinism, concluding that the key institutional feature of the Soviet post-totalitarian regime-type—its peculiar system for the “organization of power”—precluded the sequencing of regime split before the formation of revolutionary opposition necessary for the development of the kind of pact-making seen in transitions from authoritarian rule. McFaul, “Revolutionary Transformations in Comparative Perspective,” pp. 178-85. Linz and Stepan offer a similarly deterministic approach based on regime-type in Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 333 and 374. In fact, pact-making, albeit aborted, occurred on both these issues of the Union (the Union Treaty in 1991) and “socialism” (the “500 Days” plan for transition to the market in 1990).

22. Using what he called an "intentional approach", Cohen found structures of transitional politics in the Chilean and Brazilian cases under which regime and opposition moderates were patterned in a prisoner's or "moderates' dilemma." Moderates' choices were limited by the extremism of partners on their side of the regime-opposition divide and by uncertainty about their moderate counterparts' ability to act independently from their respective extremists. The polarizing tendencies are toward either a radical-led revolution or a reactionary-led restoration. Regime moderates, therefore, must control hardline reactionaries by undermining the power of institutions they lead and discrediting the legitimacy of their world view, while avoiding undermining sources of their own power and authority. Simultaneously, they must use the spectre of their "defection" from the game to join the hardliners in a crackdown and foster the belief among their moderate counterparts that they in fact can control the hardliners, thereby coercing and inducing the moderate opposition to compromise. Opposition moderates require sufficient organization, power, and authority to limit the power base of revolutionary radicals and to coopt and channel most of the opposition's energy toward negotiating concessions with regime moderates. They use the threat of their defection to the radical revolutionaries' camp to squeeze concessions from the regime softliners. Cohen, *Radicals, Reformers, and Reactionaries*, chapter 5. For a somewhat similar approach, see Josep M. Colomer, *Game Theory and the Transition to Democracy: The Spanish Model* (Brookfield, VT: Edward Elgar, 1995).
23. Fish, *Democracy From Scratch*. McFaul argues similarly that a "revolutionary challenge" in the form of "the organization of an alternative project" for the organization of state and society emerged before the regime split, polarizing the communist regime and the democratic opposition into "two intractable camps" incapable of pact-making. McFaul, "Revolutionary Transformations in Comparative Perspective," pp. 181-2, 184. Here, McFaul somewhat echoes Hough's view that there was little hardline threat to Gorbachev and that differences between regime hardliners and softliners have been exaggerated. Hough, *Democratization and Revolution in the USSR, 1985-1991*. Robert Ortung's superb, empirically-based study of reform, democratization and the four-way structure of political action in *perestroika*—era Leningrad refutes this approach, but it is confined to analysis of local politics there. See Robert Ortung, *From Leningrad to St. Petersburg: Democratization in a Russian City* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995). The one attempt to apply the prisoner's dilemma to *perestroika*'s politics on the national level suffers from mistaken assessments of the key political issues and players at *perestroika*'s various stages and a surfeit of empirical research typical of game theorists. The article identifies Boris Pugo and Gennadii Yanaev as leaders of the conservative coalition along with Yegor Ligachev before March 1990. In fact, Pugo and Yanaev were marginal players until December 1990, when Pugo was appointed MVD chief and Yanaev was selected by Gorbachev as his candidate for USSR vice president precisely because he had no authority and posed no threat to Gorbachev. It is mistakenly argued that the issue of party-state separation was crucial only in the period up to March 1990. Finally, there is no evidence for the assertion that Gorbachev was able "to hold conservatives at bay by threatening to move to a more radical position." Gorbachev's radicalization developed in an ad hoc manner, the direction often determined by constraints imposed by hardliners. Moreover, he turned to hardliners in fall 1990, in effect threatened a hardline coup to restrain moderate and radical opposition forces. Susan E. Batty and Vesna Danilovic, "Gorbachev's Strategy of Political Centrist: A Game-theoretic Interpretation," *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, vol. 9, no. 1, January 1997, pp. 89-106, at pp. 98-103.

24. Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back In: Current Research," in Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back In*, pp. 14–28.
25. Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschmeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds. *Bringing the State Back In*; James March and Johan Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organized Basis of Politics* (New York: The Free Press, 1989).
26. Katheleen Thelen and Sven Steinmo, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," in Sven Stienmo, Katheleen Thelen, and Frank Longstreth, eds. *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis* (New York: Cambridge University, 1992), p. 15.
27. Thelen and Steinmo, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," pp. 2, 7, and 10.
28. Thelen and Steinmo, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," p. 15.
29. Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, p. 32.
30. Thelen and Steinmo, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," pp. 15, 17.
31. This solves the dilemma of Krasner's institutional model of "punctuated equilibrium" which suggests that with the disequilibrium created by contradictions between the expectations, values, and professed goals associated with a particular system, on the one hand, and system institutions' performance and results, on the other hand, institutions suddenly become malleable, dependent variables, breaking down and reemerging in new form or replaced according to the vicissitudes of political struggle. Thelen and Steinmo, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," p. 15. Krasner's model of "punctuated equilibrium" construes institutions to be inevitably susceptible to intermittent crises between long periods of stability which emanate from the institution's environment, provoking abrupt institutional change. Stephen Krasner, "Approaches to the State: Alternative Conceptions and Historical Dynamics," *Comparative Politics*, vol. 16, no. 2, January 1984, pp. 223–46.
32. See Robin F. Laird and Erik P. Hoffman, "'The Scientific-Technological Revolution,' 'Developed Socialism,' and Soviet International Behavior," in Robin F. Laird and Erik P. Hoffman, eds., *The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy*, Second Edition (Hawthorne, NY: Aldine Publishing Co., 1980), pp. 386–405. Future "perestroishchiki" began warning about the consequences of the STR and the unsuitability of Soviet economic autarky and of its economic and political systems in the late 1970s. For examples, see CPSU CC International Department official and USSR Association of Political Sciences President Georgii Kh. Shakhnazarov's "New Factors in politics at the Present Stage," *Social Studies*, No. 1, January 1977, p. 48; G.A. Arbatov, "Nauchno-tekhnicheskaya revolyutsiya i vneshnaya politika SShA," in SShA: *Nauchno-tekhnicheskaya revolyutsiya i tendentsii vneshnei politiki* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnie otnosheniya, 1974), p. 26; M.M. Maksimova, *SSSR i mezhdunarodnoye ekonomicheskoe sotrudnichestvo* (Moscow: Mysl', 1977), p. 185; and for a call for more democracy, see G.Kh. Shakhnazarov, *Sotsialisticheskaya sud'ba chelovechestva* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1978), pp. 179–80.
33. Perhaps the best work on the domestic aspect of Soviet pre-crisis situation is Seweryn Bialer, *Stalin's Successors: Leadership, Stability, and Change in the Soviet Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 286–305. See also Seweryn Bialer, *The Soviet Paradox* (New York: Knopf, 1986). Among background causes of the USSR's collapse, for Alexander Dallin, were the "loosening of controls," the atrophy of Marxist-Leninist ideology, social change, economic stagnation, challenges of international competition, and the interaction of these variables. Similarly, Alexander Dallin, "The Causes of the Soviet Collapse," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol. 8, no. 4, 1992, pp. 279–302, at pp. 279–96.

34. Moshe Lewin, *Russia, USSR, Russia: The Drive and Drift of a Superstate* (New York: The New Press, 1995), p. 297.
35. I am using Pakulski's term "partocracy" to describe the party-state system and regime-type as a whole, where Pakulski uses the term to distinguish the quasi-bureaucratic nature of the party-state's bureaucracy. See Jan Pakulski, "Bureaucracy and the Soviet System," *Studies in Comparative Communism*, vol. XIX, no. 1, Spring 1986, pp. 3-24. Various historical factors made the Soviet regime the most partocratic and mono-organizational of the Soviet bloc's communist regimes. Nowhere else did communism survive for seven decades. Excluding China and Yugoslavia, only the Soviet partocratic regime was indigenously based. The Soviet-party-state more deeply penetrated state and society, since in some East European communist countries, there were sectors that remained autonomous from the party-state. In Yugoslavia, industry, agriculture, and labor were semi-autonomous. In Hungary, there was autonomy for sectors of economic society. In Poland, there was no collectivization of agriculture, and the Catholic Church remained autonomous. China was closest to the Soviet case but by the 1980s it decollectivized agriculture and began other economic reforms.
36. On the mono-organization of state and society by the party, see T.H. Rigby, "Stalinism and the Mono-Organizational Society," in Robert C. Tucker, ed. *Stalinism: Essays in Historical Interpretation* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1977), pp. 53-76.
37. Tilly defines the "state" as an "organization" that is "autonomous," "differentiated from other organizations operating on its territory," and able to coordinate organizational, administrative, and territorial sub-divisions. Charles Tilly, "Reflections on the History of European Statemaking," in Charles Tilly, ed., *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 70. The Soviet organizational-institutional "stateness" problem, rooted in the compromising of the state's organizational and administrative autonomy and cohesion, was as important a factor in the development of the three-way regime split and multiple sovereignty as the national-territorial "stateness" problem singled out by Linz and Stepan. Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, pp. 16, 295, 333, and 374.
38. Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, "U.S.-Soviet Relations," in Erik P. Hoffman and Frederic J. Fleron, eds., *The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy* (New York: Aldine Publishing, 1980), pp. 315-32, at p. 316. The Soviet regime never enjoyed sufficient legitimacy. The civil war, Great Terror, and the maintenance of tight control and repression of society were evidence of the Soviet regime's meta-stability. Throughout the post-Stalin period opposition to the regime was in strong evidence. Not only individual acts of desperation by isolated members in an intimidated and atomized society, but organized nationalist and democratic groups as well as members of the party apparat engaged in opposition activities. In 1962, sixty antisoviet groups with 215 members were uncovered. Even more worrisome from the regime's point of view, 7 percent were members and candidate party members. Over 10 percent were Komsomol members. One was even a deputy head of a city party committee's important organization-instructional department. Such activity was found in Ukraine, Azerbaidzhan, Georgia, and Latvia, Moscow, Leningrad, Stavropol', Krasnodar Rostov, and elsewhere. *TsKhSD*, f. 89, p. 51, d. 1, pp. 2-3. See also *TsKhSD*, f. 89, p. 51, d. 3, pp. 6-8; *TsKhSD*, f. 89, p. 51, d. 4, pp. 1-2; *TsKhSD*, f. 89, p. 51, d. 13, p. 1-2; and Vladimir Bukovskii, *Moskovskii protsess* (Moscow: MIK, 1996), pp. 93-4. In March 1985, two days after Gorbachev became general secretary, the KGB reported increased "antisoviet activity" for 1984 as compared to 1983. The KGB reported a small decrease for 1985 but a

- marked increase in "nationalist" and religious "extremism." *TsKhSD*, f. 89, p. 51, d. 7.
39. Pakulski, "Bureaucracy and the Soviet System," p. 23.
 40. There was no generalized "institutional pluralism," which suggests an autonomy that did not exist for Soviet institutions not closely tied to the party apparat. On institutional pluralism, see Jerry Hough, "Petrification or Pluralism," in Jerry Hough, *The Soviet Union and Social Science Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), pp. 19–48. For critiques of Hough's institutional pluralism, see Dmitri K. Simes, "The Politics of Defence in the Soviet Union," in Jiri Valenta and Bruce D. Potter, eds., *Soviet Decisionmaking and National Security* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), pp. 74–86, at pp. 75–6; Archie Brown, "Pluralism, Power and the Soviet Political System: A Comparative Perspective," in Susan Gross Solomon, ed., *Pluralism in the Soviet Union* (London: Macmillan Press, 1983), pp. 61–107. For a view that pluralism in the USSR included professional as well as institutional interest groups, see H. Gordon Skilling and Franklyn Griffiths, eds., *Interest Groups in Soviet Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971).
 41. Rigby describes crypto-politics as "not overt and channelled through specialized 'political' institutions, but covert, masquerading as the faithful performance of assigned organizational roles. It involves competition between constituent organizations and their formal subdivisions, biased reporting of information relevant to the formation or vetting of policy, informal networks or cliques, the use of personnel powers to reward friends and punish enemies, and bias in the execution of policy so as to facilitate or prejudice its success or to favor certain affected interests rather than others." Rigby, "Stalinism and the Mono-Organizational Society," pp. 58–9.
 42. Adherence to rules and procedures was sacrificed for fulfilling the plan, giving the appearance of having done so, and serving the interests of one's patron or faction, or protecting one's career. Administrative and political tasks were completed through authoritarian mobilization, centralized personnel recruitment and placement, and patronage through the party's *nomenklatura* system. Advancement up the *nomenklatura* ladder was based not on meritocracy as in rational-legal bureaucracy, but on securing the party's goals by any means and satisfying a highly-placed patron. Pakulski, "Bureaucracy and the Soviet System."
 43. There was a considerable number of pleas for multicandidate elections, secret ballots, greater freedom of speech made frequently from Khrushchev's tenure on during the "party-wide discussion" of issues that preceded party congresses. The flow of letters and appeals collected by local party organizations and sent to Moscow for careful selection and summation were always weeded out so that the summary reports were limited to proposed measures already planned by the Politburo. See Erik Kulavig, "Evidence of Public Dissent in the Khrushchev Years," in Mette Bryld and Erik Kulavig, eds., *Soviet Civilization Between Past and Present* (Odense, Denmark: Odense Universitets Forlag, 1997), 20–39.
 44. I use the terms "left" as "left" and "right" as they were used in Soviet parlance during the *perestroika* period. These designations do not correspond to ideological orientations—"left" indicating socialist and communist, "right" indicating classic liberalism. Instead, "right" means a predisposition against change and for support of the regime and party membership. "Left" refers to the opposition and is made up of democratic and/or socialist moderates and democratic capitalist or nationalist revolutionaries.
 45. The covert nature of crypto-politics and the emergence of politics outside the apparat also led scholars to miss the nature of the Soviet regime split and the

revolution's center of gravity from above, as this study's archival documentation shows.

46. Although Hungary negotiated a pacted transition in circumstances of a three-way regime split, it did not traverse the path of revolution from above because the Hungarian regime was not mono-organizational, given the considerable autonomy and resources of civil and economic society after the implementation of the New Economic Mechanism in the 1960s. Hungary's more autonomous society produced strong opposition and reform communist movements before pacting began, and hardliners were much weaker than in the Soviet case. Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, pp. 304-5. A more detailed account of Hungary's transition may be found in George Schopflin, Rudolf Tokes, and Ivan Volgyes, "Leadership Change and Crisis in Hungary," *Problems of Communism*, vol. XXXVII, no. 5, September-October 1988.
47. Transitology regards "coup poker" to be a very real, intrinsic dynamic of transition and consolidation periods. O'Donnell and Schmitter, "Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies," pp. 23-8.
48. The importance of the hardliners's role in determining political outcomes of other reform, nascent transitional/revolutionary situations, and the political economy of democratization and economic adjustment processes in authoritarian regimes is widely acknowledged. With regard to the politics of transitions, see O'Donnell and Schmitter, "Tentative Conclusions" and Cohen, *Radicals, Reformers and Reactionaries*, chapter 5. On the role of hardliners in the political economy of transition and democratization in dominant-party authoritarian political systems, see Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman, *The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 269.
49. This is not to say that the core partocratic institutions were united internally. Conflict between the core institutions of the party-state was scrupulously documented by sovietologists over the seven decades of Soviet history. On conflict between the party and the military, see Roman Kolkowicz, *The Soviet Military and the Communist Party* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967); and Timothy J. Colton, *Commissars, Commanders and Civilian Authority: The Structure of Soviet Military Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979). On conflict between the KGB and military, see Amy Knight, "The KGB and Civil-Military Relations," in Timothy J. Colton and Thane Gustafson, eds., *Soldiers and the Soviet State: Civil-Military Relations from Brezhnev to Gorbachev* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 93-125.
50. The threat of a "Nuremberg trial" was repeated like a mantra in internal party documents circulated among the power ministries and other state and party bodies. Soviet communists could look at the plans for lustration in Czechoslovakia being discussed at the time as a harbinger of their best possible future. Such fears no doubt played a role in softliners' calculus as well. Indeed, even regime defectors, such as Yeltsin, were implicated in crimes of the party.
51. Batty and Danilovic, "Gorbachev's Strategy of Political Centristism," pp. 96-103; G. Tsebelis, *Nested Games: Rational Choice in Comparative Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).
52. Adam Przeworski, "The Games of Transition," in Scott Manwaring, Guillermo O'Donnell, and J. Samuel Valenzuela eds., *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative Perspective* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), pp. 106-7.

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